

Volcanoes of Mexico Climbing School

Iztaccihuatl and Orizaba Expedition

9 Days in Mexico / Skill Level: Introductory



November 16 - 24, 2019

\$2,750*

December 7 - 15, 2019

November 21 - 29, 2020

December 5 - 13, 2020

*All costs included with the exception of alcohol, in-town meals

Difficulty Level: *Introductory- Technical climbing and altitude experience are not necessary but this course requires good physical fitness, specifically an ability to move in rugged terrain for long days. Alpenglowlow can happily provide physical and technical training programs to prepare for this introductory expedition.*

Overview

Alpenglow's Mexican Volcanoes Climbing School is perfect for those who want to learn about climbing high altitude glaciated peaks while increasing their self-sufficiency in the mountains, but just can't take 2-3 weeks off to travel to South America or the Himalaya. Mexico is one of the only places in the world where we can gain skills and summit peaks in just one week.

For the aspiring climber with no glacier experience, the Mexican volcanos school offer moderate glaciated routes at altitudes which can be attained with only a few days of acclimatization. Seasoned climbers shouldn't discount this trip though - this expedition is also for the more experienced climber looking to refresh and dial in methods for glacier travel, crevasse rescue, and rope systems. Regardless of whether or where you have climbed in the past, this weeklong whirlwind climbing trip will satisfy your need to get to the big mountains again, and will build your technical skills and experience. It is an excellent introductory or refresher course with a focus on education, and a way to sneak some mountaineering into a busy life schedule!



While learning skills in the Mexican volcanoes school, our classroom will be in the field while attempting two peaks during this trip. After a quick exploration of Mexico City and the surrounding highlands, we head to Iztaccihuatl. At 17,160 feet (5,230 meters), Ixta (as it is locally known) is Mexico's third highest peak. It is the perfect mountain to acclimatize on, and while not highly technical, will provide an ideal opportunity to get used to traveling on rope teams and in crampons and is a beautiful route and summit. The view from the summit takes in all of the volcanoes of Mexico, including nearby Popo, which is currently erupting! On Ixta, we will ensure that everyone's mountain skills are up to speed so that you are able to be an active participant on the climbing and decision-making team.



We then spend a day of rest and recovery in the traditional highland town of Puebla. The day will pass quickly exploring the local's market, buying souvenirs, and eating the excellent Mexican cuisine.

From Puebla we head to our second objective, Orizaba, where you will utilize the more technical skills learned on Ixta. As Mexico's tallest peak and the third highest in North America its summit sits at 18,410 feet (5,611 meters) and is heavily glaciated. We will be technically and mentally prepared, as well as well-acclimatized and rested for our summit push, which is comparable to summit days on many of the world's biggest peaks. The climb of over 4,000 vertical feet (1,020 meters) on crevassed glacier and steep slopes will test all of the training you have done throughout the week. A summit of Orizaba and the skills you've learned to get there are excellent preparation for expeditions to mountains like Denali, Aconcagua, or Huascarán, as well as an achievement in its own right.

Our Mexico school will be guided by one or more of Alpenglów Expeditions' AMGA certified lead guides. AMGA (American Mountain Guides Association) certification is the highest possible training available to guides, and only the most experienced and dedicated attain it. Our guides have also traveled and climbed extensively in North and South America. Their knowledge of the mountains, combined with their passion for teaching others to become competent mountaineers, guarantees that your experience will be one to remember and you'll leave with many more skills to help you progress through the ranks of the big mountains of the world! In contrast to many guide services working in Mexico, we climb in small teams, with a maximum climber to guide ratio of 3:1. This helps ensure that you understand the systems you learn about, stay healthy and strong, and are able to enjoy each component of your experience.

Iztaccihuatl & Orizaba Expedition Itinerary

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| Day 1 | Leave your home for Mexico, arriving into Mexico City by mid-afternoon (7,300 feet/2,225 meters) Most flights leave in the morning from major US hubs. Your guide will meet you at your airport and you'll transfer to your hotel. After a quick stop at our hotel, we tour the city's historic district, taking in the colonial architecture and beginning our process of acclimatization. |
| Day 2 | Drive to Altzomoni hut on Iztaccihuatl (13,000 feet/3,060 meters) We travel by 4WD Landcruisers to the town of Amecameca, in the Mexican highlands. This traditional town is famous for its market, and we take time to explore and have lunch before continuing our drive. Spend the night in the Altzomoni Hut (13,000 feet, 3,060meters) on the flanks of our first objective, Iztaccihuatl. |
| Day 3 | Acclimatization hike and skills day Today we take an acclimatization hike through the incredible pine forests that surround the base of Ixta, our first mountaineering objective. We also spend time today going over roped glacier travel, and familiarizing ourselves with crampons and axes. |
| Day 4 | Move to high camp on Ixta (15,000 feet/4,572 meters) Today we move to a high camp at around 15,000 feet. Our packs will be heavy and the air thin, so we will move slowly, taking plenty of time to appreciate the incredible views as we climb out of the forests into the high alpine region of the mountain, all the while, continuing to practice our mountain travel skills. |
| Day 5 | Summit day on Iztaccihuatl (17,160 feet/ 5,230 meters) Wake up around 3 am for our summit push. After a quick breakfast and hot drink we begin our climb, up steep moraines to the edge of the glacier. After roping up and putting on crampons, we continue up the glacier, navigating occasional crevasses before it steepens into a final summit couloir. A final push puts us on top, where we have incredible views of all of the Mexican highlands. A long descent and quick drive will get us to much deserved showers, beds, and a celebration dinner in Amecameca (8,140 feet/2,489 meters). |
| Day 6 | Drive to Puebla (7,000 feet/2,134 meters) After a relaxing morning and big breakfast, we leave our hotel for the village of Puebla. The drive is incredible and gives us a good sense of the people of the highlands and how they live. Puebla sits at 7,000 feet (2,134 meters), and is a great place to recover fully in preparation for Orizaba. It is also the place to buy souvenirs for everyone at home! |
| Day 7 | Drive from Puebla to a camp near the Piedra Grande hut* (14,000 feet/4,267 meters) On the flanks of Orizaba, a camp near the Piedra Grande Hut serves as our home base for our final climb. We eat an early dinner, discuss our impending climb, organize our summit packs, and get to bed. *Unfortunately the Piedra Grande is in a state of disrepair. We've made the decision to camp to increase our comfort before summit day. |

Iztaccihuatl & Orizaba Expedition Itinerary

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| Day 8 | Summit day on Orizaba (18,491 feet/ 5,636 meters) Today is the day where your fitness training at home, your climb of Ixta, and your new skills really pay off. We wake soon after midnight and begin our climb to Orizaba's summit. Moderate glacier climbing takes us around a rock band and over crevassed terrain before reaching the crater rim. From there we climb the ridge of the crater to the true summit. Our view will stretch from all of Mexico's volcanoes on one side to the Gulf of Mexico on the other! We then descend back to the hut and drive to Puebla to celebrate our climb and spend the night. |
| Day 9 | Depart for home Wake early in the morning to drive back to Mexico City. Depart Mexico City for your flight home. Flights should not leave before 2pm from Mexico City. |

Client Expectations and Timeline

| 90+ Days to Departure | |
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| Reserve Expedition | Make your deposit to confirm registration - if you haven't already, head over to our website and click "Reserve Spot" and select your dates. The rest of the process is as easy as buying a book online. Make sure that you select to add an extension if you wish to extend any expedition. |
| Q&A | Q&A with Alpenglow - time to ask any question about travel, logistics, training and everything in between. |
| Application | Complete full application including medical questionnaire & travel information. |
| Reserve Rentals | Reserve rentals if needed within application. For our climbing schools, we have a small rental inventory of boots, ice axes crampons, helmets and harnesses. These are provided at no cost on a first come first serve basis. Please let us know what you plan on renting as soon as possible. |
| Within 90 Days to Departure | |
| Complete Payment | Full Payment will be collected at the 90 day mark. Alpenglow will contact you prior to taking final payment and once you confirm we'll simply move your booking into the final stages. For international trips, a wire transaction is the best way to send payment. We also accept credit cards with transaction fee of 3% or you can pay by check. |

Within 90 Days to Departure

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| Book Travel | We recommend reviewing flight options outside of 90 days and confirming with Alpenglow on travel times. Use us to guide you to the best flight schedules to make travel as easy as possible. Once you book your flights don't forget to share with the Alpenglow office so we pick you up on time from the airport. |
| Training | This is the hard part. The hours of training you put in directly correlates to your success in the mountains. Train hard and be ready for the adventure of a lifetime! |
| Equipment | Compile all equipment using the equipment list as a guide. |
| Purchase Insurance | Purchase travel and rescue insurance. We recommend Global Rescue and Travel Guard. Click here to find links to each. |

General Trip Information

Payment

1. A deposit of 20% is required for all expeditions. Deposits are due when registering for an expedition, and can be paid by check made out to "Alpenglow Expeditions, LLC". All payments should be mailed to Alpenglow Expeditions at P.O. Box 3122, Olympic Valley, CA 96146 or sent via wire transfer. If wiring payment, please contact us for bank details and be certain that you are covering ALL fees!
Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable. This is not a flexible policy. Planning our trips takes significant time and has non-refundable costs as well.
2. Balances are due 90 days before the expedition departs from the United States. Payment should be made as described above.
3. The cost of your trip includes your land costs (excluding in-town meals). This includes: double occupancy lodging while in town, meals on the mountain, scheduled transportation while in the countries we are visiting, group camping and climbing equipment, individual technical climbing equipment (boots, ice axes, crampons, helmets, harnesses), and guides.
4. The cost of your trip does not include: flights to/from the city where the expedition begins, airport taxes, visas, in-town meals, immunizations, tips for guides or local staff, travel, rescue, or any other type of insurance, hospitalization or evacuation costs, single supplement charges, excess baggage charges, alcohol, or other personal expenses.
5. The costs of delays or changes to itinerary that are beyond the control of Alpenglow Expeditions or its agents are not included.

Cancellations

1. We reserve the right to cancel any trip at any time. Reasons for cancellation might

include (but are not limited to) political instability, natural disasters, or inadequate enrollment. If we cancel a trip prior to its start for low enrollment, we fully refund your payments. If we cancel your trip prior to its start due to political instability, natural disasters, or other reasons of that nature, we will refund all but non-recoverable costs. Changes to a trip itinerary made by our guides for any reason do not constitute a cancellation, and no refunds will be made in this case.

2. If you cancel your trip more than 90 days prior to departure, Alpenglow Expeditions will refund your payment minus the non-refundable deposit. 60-89 days prior, Alpenglow Expeditions will refund 50% of your payment. Fewer than 60 days prior, there are no refunds or credits.
3. On any trip, our guides reserve the right to remove any person, for any reason. These reasons generally stem from a person jeopardizing the safety of themselves or another team member. This includes a person who is not physically able to climb at the level necessary for the chosen route. In all these cases, there are no refunds whatsoever, and the client will be responsible for any additional costs incurred in leaving the trip.

Flights

We recommend using Kayak.com as a primary source for finding low-fare airfares.

****Please confirm your itinerary with Alpenglow Expeditions before you purchase it.****

Insurance

We require that all participants carry rescue insurance, travel insurance, and health insurance. Your policy numbers must be provided to us prior to leaving the USA. Homeowner/Renter's insurance is also recommended.

- Rescue Insurance- For US citizens, we recommend obtaining rescue insurance through American Alpine Club and upgrading that service via Global Rescue. Visit www.americanalpineclub.org to become a member and obtain the appropriate level of coverage based on the altitude of the peaks you will be climbing with us. Helicopter rescues in foreign countries, while unlikely, can cost up to \$20,000. International climbers have several options as well for rescue insurance. Our recommendation is Global Rescue as we have had great success with them in the past. Your insurance must not have a mountaineering exclusion and must cover up to your trip's highest altitude. This coverage is very important.
- Travel Insurance- We recommend using [Global Rescue's IMG Signature Travel Insurance](#). Coverage should include lost/damaged baggage, unexpected delays, accident/life, and trip cancellation. Trip cancellation will cover you for non-refundable air and land costs should you need to cancel your trip due to an emergency. Since our costs are often not refundable, this coverage is very important as well, and should be purchased as soon as possible after registering for an expedition.
- Health Insurance- All members of our teams are required to have current health insurance. This insurance should cover emergency hospitalization abroad as well as domestically.
- Homeowner/Renter's Insurance- While unusual, thefts can occur while overseas. We recommend a policy to cover these losses.

Medical

All of our expeditions and treks are physically demanding. Regardless of the skill level or experience needed, it is essential that you arrive in good physical shape, and prepared to handle extreme conditions, including cold, heat, and long tiring days. Alpenglow Expeditions,

LLC and its guides reserve the right to remove any member of our trips at any time if we do not believe they are ready for the rigors of the trip.

Our guides are certified in wilderness medicine, CPR, and are experienced in client care in remote high altitude locations. However, Alpenglw Expeditions, LLC is not a medical facility and Alpenglw Expeditions, LLC assumes no liability regarding medical care.

You are responsible for your own medications, inoculations, and deciding whether you are physically able to participate in an Alpenglw Expeditions trip. You should discuss your participation in this trip, and the dangers involved, with your physician.

Some of the medications you may consider carrying with you include:

1. Tylenol – a simple painkiller for headaches and minor pains.
2. Ibuprofen – mild altitude headaches, along with body aches and pains, are common.
3. A cold and flu remedy of your choice (strong decongestant).
4. Pepto Bismol - for minor stomach upset, best taken in caplet form.
5. Immodium AD – to control diarrhea, when necessary. Again, tablets are preferred.
6. Cough Drops – the air at altitude is very dry, and many climbers develop hacking coughs.
7. A laxative agent of your choice.
8. Dramamine (or equivalent) – an anti-motion sickness agent of your choice as bus/plane rides to our trailheads are often very bumpy.
9. Diamox (Acetazolomide) required – prescription medication often used prophylactically to prevent altitude sickness. You should have a large enough supply to take 250mg/day (best as scored tablets so you can take 125mg twice a day).
10. Z-pack required – a broad spectrum anti-biotic.

Also be sure to discuss vaccinations with your doctor. Often a travel clinic has the most up-to-date information on which shots are necessary for the country you are visiting. Be sure to mention that most of our trips explore only the highlands and capital cities. This might mean that you need fewer immunizations, and anti-malarials are often not necessary. Determine this with your doctor, and refer to your trip itinerary for the exact locations we will be visiting. At the very least, your tetanus shot should be up-to-date and you should have protection against Hepatitis A.

Aerobic Conditioning

We cannot stress enough the importance of being in excellent aerobic condition before arriving on your trip. Arriving fit will increase your safety on the trip and reduce the risk of medical issues. It will also dramatically increase your enjoyment and learning during your trek or expedition. At the minimum, we recommend an exercise regimen that includes a minimum of 3 one-hour workouts per week (biking, running, swimming) along with a few long days hiking as you get close to your departure date. Please call us if you would like to discuss a specific routine to fit your needs.

Money

The countries we visit can still be challenging places to use a credit card or find an ATM. While you may choose to bring these for backup, we recommend you bring enough cash for your planned spending. American dollars are still the easiest way to carry money. Be sure you carry

clean, new bills and have some smaller denominations. Carry your money and important documents in a hidden waist pouch under your clothes.

The amount of money you need varies by how many presents you plan on bringing back! In addition to souvenirs and gifts, plan on spending on airport departure taxes, alcohol and snacks, and tips for local staff and your guides.

Additional Notes

- Single Supplement - If you prefer a single room while we are in hotels, please let us know as soon as possible. There will be an additional cost associated for this.
- Cameras – high quality point and shoot digital cameras are an excellent option. We have found that small pocket cameras are much better than big DSLRs for summit days. You need a simple light system, and the new generation of digitals take great photos. A guide favorite is the Sony RX 100.
- Be sure to create a data sheet of all of your essential information – passport, credit card or ATM numbers, airline ticket information, visa number (if applicable), etc. This sheet should then be photocopied and scattered amongst your luggage. If any of your documents are stolen, having this information will be essential.
- Rental Equipment - Alpenglow Expeditions offers a limited number of mountaineering boots, crampons, ice axes, helmets, harnesses, carabiners, perlon, and belay devices for use by our clients. There is no additional charge for using this equipment, but please let us know as soon as possible if you intend to use Alpenglow Expeditions' equipment. Check your expedition's equipment list to see what technical climbing equipment is necessary for your climb or trek. Rental gear from Alpenglow is only available for shipment within the US. Rental gear must be taken home by the renter and shipped back to Alpenglow within two weeks of end of trip at the renter's expense.