



Volcanoes of Mexico Climbing School Iztaccihuatl and Orizaba Expedition



November 19-27, 2016; December 3-11, 2016

November 18-26, 2017; December 2-10, 2017 \$2,750
(land costs, including on-mountain meals only)

Difficulty Level: Introductory - No technical climbing or altitude experience is necessary. It is imperative, however, that you are in good physical shape, and able to hike in rugged terrain for long days. We are happy to detail physical and technical training programs as needed to get you ready for our introductory expeditions.



Alpenglow's Mexican Volcanoes Climbing School is perfect for those who want to learn about climbing high altitude glaciated peaks and increase 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. But 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, as we attempt two peaks during this trip. After a quick exploration of Mexico City and the surrounding highlands, we head to Iztaccihuatl. At 17,154 feet (5,229 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 Orizaba. 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 Huascaran, as well as an achievement in its own right.

Our Mexico school will be guided by one or more of Alpenglow 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 and Orizaba Expedition Itinerary

Day 1	Leave your home for Mexico, arriving into Mexico City by mid-afternoon (Saturday). After a stop at our hotel, we tour the city's historic district, taking in the colonial architecture and beginning our process of acclimatization (7,300 feet/ 2,225 meters).
Day 2	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 Paso de Cortez, the last town before the road ends in Popo-Ixta National Park (11,750 feet/3,581 meters).
Day 3	After breakfast, drive to La Joya (13,024 feet/3,970 meters) where we set camp. This is an important altitude to spend a night at before sleeping higher on the mountain. After setting camp we take an acclimatization hike through the incredible pine forests that surround the base of Ixta (17,154 feet/5,229 meters), our first mountaineering objective. We also spend time today going over roped glacier travel, and familiarizing ourselves with crampons and axes.
Day 4	Today we move to a high camp at around 15,000 feet (4,572 meters). Our packs will be heavy and the air thin, so we will move slowly, taking lots 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 newfound skills.
Day 5	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.

Day 6	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 the Piedra Grande hut, which sits at 14,000 feet (4,267 meters) on the flanks of Orizaba. We eat an early dinner, discuss our impending climb, organize our summit packs, and get to bed.
Day 8	Today is the day where your 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 (18,410 feet/5,611 meters). 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	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. (Sunday)



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