



COTOPAXI

RAPID ASCENT™

DURATION: 5 DAYS

LOCATION: ECUADOR

SKILL LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY

ALPENGLOW



COTOPAXI RAPID ASCENT

Expedition Details

DURATION: 5 DAYS

LOCATION: ECUADOR

SKILL LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY

SEASON: YEAR ROUND

COST: \$3550 OPEN ENROLLMENT

DIFFICULTY LEVEL DESCRIPTION:

Technical climbing and altitude experience are not necessary. This expedition requires good physical fitness, specifically an ability to move in rugged terrain for long days. Alpenglow can happily provide physical and technical training programs to prepare for this introductory expedition.

PREREQUISITES:

This expedition is designed for beginners or those looking to brush up on skills. However, prior experience above 5,000m, 16,000' is required.



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[ALPENGLLOWEXPEDITIONS.COM](https://alpenglowexpeditions.com)

Expedition Introduction

Why Climb in Ecuador?

Ecuador is situated on the equator and boasts a year round climbing season with some of the easiest to access 5,000 and 6,000-meter peaks in the world.

For climbers, Ecuador is one of the most user friendly countries to climb in with an international airport into the world heritage site of Quito and all main objectives within a few hour drive from this cultural hub.

Quito also serves as the home to a majority of our international guides. Joining them in Ecuador is akin to climbing well-loved peaks in someone's back yard. Collectively, they've climbed all of the main peaks thousands of times and know each and every inch of the routes.

Our Cotopaxi Rapid Ascent Expedition is designed to be a quick hit for anyone who is keen on an adventure but doesn't have the time to do a traditional ascent of the mountain. 9 days get cut down to 5, and those extra days saved can be the make or break for being able to take the time away from family or work to join an expedition.



ROUTE CHOICE

We'll be climbing Cotopaxi via the "Normal" Route that ascends the glaciated North Face of Cotopaxi. The climbing is fun and engaging and sees our team weave through the varying glacial features to the summit.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Then first ascents of many of the volcanos in Ecuador came in the late 1800's from a British Mountaineer named Edward Whymper. Cotopaxi, however, was first summited by Wilhelm Reiss and Angel Escobar in 1872





5 Day Itinerary

Our itinerary will start with pre-acclimatization. A 28 day acclimatization schedule will allow us to reach the summit of Cotopaxi within just a few days of arriving in Ecuador.

We'll move straight to Cotopaxi and have skills days where we will review all of the technical skills needed for the climb ahead. After we dial in our technical skills we start our climb and go for the summit of Cotopaxi.

Our objective, Cotopaxi, greets us with a glacier at altitude so we can develop further our skills with crampons, ice axes, self arrest techniques and the fine points of climbing in a rope team.



Following the Cotopaxi, climbers should feel confident making plans to climb peaks in the 6500 to 7000 meter range like Aconcagua, Illimani or Ojos del Salado.

See more trips at [ALPENGLowEXPEDITIONS.COM](https://alpenglowexpeditions.com)



After 15 years of guiding expeditions all over the world, including more than a dozen 8,000-meter peak expeditions, we have refined and distilled the acclimatization and climbing process to maximize safety, health, success, and enjoyment.

Rapid Ascent™

Alpenglow Expeditions' Rapid Ascent™ climbs are an entirely new way to approach big-mountain expeditions.

Rapid Ascent™ Strategy

First developed by Adrian Ballinger, Rapid Ascent™ is a unique approach to climbing big mountains across the world.

This innovative program combines hypoxic training at home with precise logistics and small team sizes to reduce the overall time spent away from home, all while greatly increasing the chance of success on your international climbing expedition.

By pre-acclimatizing for 4 weeks at home, we're able to reduce the overall expedition time to 5 days, reaching the summit of Cotopaxi at 19,347' feet a mere 72 hours after your arrival into Ecuador.





About Alpenglow Expeditions

Alpenglow creates and fosters a community of climbers prepared to achieve their dreams in the world's greatest mountain ranges.



About the Company

Alpenglow Expeditions is an AMGA accredited business, and prides itself on working with guides who uphold and exemplify the highest standard in the profession of mountain guiding.

Led by IFMGA mountain guide Adrian Ballinger, Alpenglow focuses on creating expeditions that reflect our high standards in mountain guiding by providing precision logistics, cutting edge technology, and thoughtful itineraries that combine for successful climbs.

History of Alpenglow Expeditions

Founded in 2004 by IFGMA mountain guide Adrian Ballinger, Alpenglow Expeditions began as a boutique guide service that focused on high altitude climbing. In those 15 years we've expanded our offerings, both internationally and in the United States. We are now proud to offer courses and expeditions ranging from a climbers first experience on the Tahoe Via Ferrata, to basic backcountry education for those interested in exploring winter landscapes, to climbing the world's highest mountain for those on the Road to Everest.

About Alpenglow Expeditions



Founder — Adrian Ballinger

Adrian Ballinger founded Alpenglow Expeditions in 2004 envisioning a more holistic climbing experience for his clients than the status quo.

Adrian is the only American who has skied two 8,000 meter peaks, was the first person to ski Manaslu, the 8th tallest mountain in the world, and in 2011 became the first person to summit three 8,000 meter peaks in only 3 weeks (Everest twice and Lhotse once).

Adrian holds both an AMGA and IFMGA guide's certifications and has achieved more than 10 summits of 8,000 meter peaks (including 6 summits of Mt. Everest).



Partner / Chief Guide — Logan Talbott

Logan has been guiding professionally for over a decade in the disciplines of Rock, Alpine and Ski Mountaineering. When not out guiding, Logan spends time in the office helping the team with the day-to-day operations of the business. From one day ascents of El Capitan to big Alpine climbs in the Himalaya, or from ski descents on Denali to backyard ski tours in Lake Tahoe, he can't help but smile when out running around the hills.

Logan is an AMGA/IFMGA mountain guide, an Avalanche course leader with AIARE, as well as a wilderness EMT. In addition to guiding, Logan has extensive experience in mountain rescue, having worked for rescue teams in both Yosemite and Denali National Parks, and volunteering locally for Tahoe Nordic SAR.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE, LOCAL PARTNERS

We partner with local logistics companies in each country and region that we operate in. Often we have partnerships that have been with us since the beginning of Alpenglow. Whenever we bring on a new operator we have vetted them thoroughly to insure their reliability and quality. Our local and regional logistics partners are the backbone of our in-country logistics and help us achieve the success that we're known for.



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The Alpenglow Difference

Alpenglow Expeditions' Rapid Ascent™ climbs are an entirely new way to approach big-mountain expeditions.

Teaching Fundamentals

Educating mountain travelers who have a passion for climbing is a core value at Alpenglow expeditions, and our climbing schools both in Lake Tahoe and around the globe are examples of that value put into practice. These schools are designed to take a new climber to new heights, and will help an experienced climber brush up on skills and teamwork.

Guides

Not only are all guides IFMGA licensed or aspirants working towards finishing their certification, but for most of them Ecuador is home base. Guides like veteran Jaime Avila helped to develop

our Ecuador program, while others like Topo Mena, Gaspar Navarrete and Carla Perez have countless ascents of the peaks that make up their backyard.

Comfortable Lodging

Often when we think of mountain expeditions, we think about a base camp of tents, and high camps built on the freezing ground of a glacier, but Ecuador provides beautiful huts on 2 out of the 3 climbs. Chimborazo does include a camp before the summit push, but we do this intentionally to give our climbers a chance to work on camp craft, furthering the skills they've learned along the way.



The Alpenglow Expeditions Team

Alpenglow's Guides

All of our guides for this expedition are IFMGA licensed or aspirants working to finish their certification. Ecuador is unique at Alpenglow as our expeditions are led by one or more guides who have significant experience climbing every peak on the itinerary. Quito is a home base for many of our international guides, and they love showing off all that the city and surrounding peaks have to offer.

Local Logistics Team

Our guiding team in Ecuador is also our logistics team. Because many of our international guides are based in Quito, the same guide that climbs with you to the summit is also the person who has arranged your hotel and meals for the day making for a precise but flexible plan for each day.

TEAM MEMBER REQUIREMENTS

While there are no prior technical mountaineering skills required, team members must have been to/above 16,000', 5,000m to join our Cotopaxi Rapid Ascent Expedition



Route Description + Itinerary

The expedition begins in the capital city of Quito, with most arrivals happening late in the evening where your guide will welcome you to Ecuador before transporting you to your hotel for the night. The next morning the team will be together for the first time over fresh coffee and breakfast, before setting out towards the mountain.

Leaving Quito, we head south into Cotopaxi province. We'll head to a beautiful hacienda at the foot of the mountain called the Tambopaxi Lodge. The lodge that will be our base camp for our ascent of Cotopaxi. After we get settled into our rooms we'll head out for an afternoon of skills work. The following day will see us also working on skills in preparation for our ascent of Cotopaxi the day after.

The morning of our summit attempt, we'll wake up around midnight, have a hot drink and perhaps a snack, and then begin our climb. The route takes us across scree to the toe of the glacier, and then winds up through progressively steeper slopes and heavily crevassed areas. This section of climbing is incredible, and seeing the headlamps of your fellow climbers bobbing in the dark against the silhouette of the summit high above will instill in you a deep sense of awe and adventure.

As dawn breaks, we should be below the final headwall, 800 vertical feet (250 meters) of the steepest climbing on the mountain. In daylight, we work our way up this slope until we are standing on the edge of Cotopaxi's crater, with stunning views in every direction.

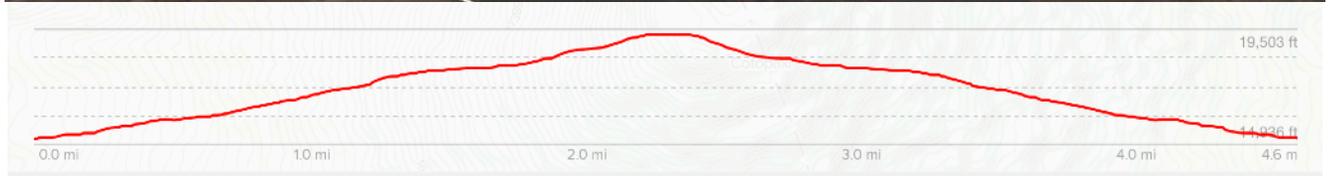
After a few high fives, we'll descend all the way back to the Tambopaxi Lodge, where we'll get a hot shower and warm food before driving back to Quito that night.

Cotopaxi is an incredible peak. The combination of skill work, altitude experience, and time spent on glacier will leave us dialed for the coming expedition.





Map Overview





Daily Itinerary Overview

DAY 1 — Arriving in the capital city of Quito, you'll immediately notice the mountainous nature of the country. A short drive takes you up into the city itself, and you'll meet your team and guides and discuss the upcoming adventure!

Activity. Arrive in Quito, EC
Sleeping Elevation. 9,300'
Lodging. San Jose Del Puembo
Meals. None

DAY 2 — After a big breakfast, we drive to Tambopaxi, at about 14,000 feet (4,267 meters) in Cotopaxi National Park. From the dining room of this beautiful lodge, we have a perfect view of our entire route on Cotopaxi. In the afternoon we practice a full gamut of big mountain skills including rope team travel and crevasse rescue. We also prepare all of our equipment for the climb.

Activity. Drive to Tambopaxi
Moving Hours. 1.5 hours
Sleeping Elevation. 12,300'
Lodging. Tambopaxi
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch, & Dinner

DAY 3 — Waking up in beautiful Tambopaxi lodge, you'll be treated to incredible views of Cotopaxi rising across the valley. Today you'll hike up the flanks of Cotopaxi and receive training in more advanced climbing and rescue techniques and ideas. Returning for dinner and warm bed, we'll prepare for our summit bid tomorrow.

Activity. Skills Day
Distance Covered. 3 miles
Moving Hours. 4-5 hours
Elevation Gain/Loss. +/- 1,500'
Sleeping Elevation. 12,300'
Lodging. Tambopaxi
Meals. Breakfast, Lunch, & Dinner

DAY 4 — Cotopaxi Summit Day — Your training and preparation are ready to be put to the test. After an early wakeup and hot drinks and snacks (typically around midnight), you'll find yourself moving up the rock steps and onto the vast glaciers above. The rhythmic crunching of crampons, the sway of the rope, the first inklings of morning light from high above the clouds are all classic aspects of mountaineering, and will frame the first several hours of your climb. The final section of climbing will be the most difficult before you are rewarded with a stunning summit at (19,347', 5,897m). After descending and packing up, we'll drive back to Quito and stay in a hacienda near the airport.

Activity. Drive to Otavalo, Hike
Distance Covered. 2.5 miles
Moving Hours. 2 hr drive, 2-3 hr hike
Elevation Gain/Loss. +/- 1,500'
Sleeping Elevation. 8,300'
Lodging. Hacienda Pinsaqui
Meals. Breakfast

Daily Itinerary Overview

DAY 5 — After a great expedition, we'll pack up and depart Quito for home

Activity. Fly Home.



Travel Details

VISAS

Visas are available on arrival for most citizens from other countries. If you are not from the United States, double check visa requirements for your country.

GROUND TRANSPORT

We use private vehicles or buses for this expedition. Once you arrive in Ecuador, ground transportation is arranged for you including your airport arrival and departure transfers within the scheduled itinerary. Transportation outside the scheduled itinerary (early arrival/late departure) is available at an additional cost.

FLIGHTS

All flights will arrive into Mariscal Sucre International Airport just outside of Quito. Most arrival flights will arrive late in the evening.

If you do not have a travel agent, we recommend using [kayak.com](https://www.kayak.com) as a primary source for finding low-fare airfares.

Please confirm your itinerary with Alpenglow Expeditions before purchasing.





Accommodations

This expedition includes double occupancy lodging in town group lodging in refugios on the mountain. During the extension, Chimborazo includes a night of camping in a double occupancy tent. No matter where we travel, Alpenglow strives to stay in safe, clean and comfortable accommodations. Our tents are always in good shape and are replaced regularly.

IN-TOWN

While the hotels we stay in can change from expedition to expedition, we always arrange clean, comfortable and safe accommodations. In Quito, we'll stay in a great hotel called the San Jose Del Puenbo.

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.

ON-MOUNTAIN ACCOMMODATIONS

Ecuador's on-mountain accommodations are made up of a beautiful hut system. During our time on Cotopaxi, we stay in the beautiful thatch roofed Tambopaxi lodge at the foot of the mountain.





General Trip Information

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

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.

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

On Mountain Medicine

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

FOOD

Ecuador makes it easy to have access to healthy and nutritious food for the duration of the expedition. We enjoy simple mountain cooking on Chimborazo, and all other locations will feature food prepared in kitchens.

MOUNTAIN TRAINING

Physical fitness is the primary area you can prepare for when it comes to our expedition in Ecuador. Any mountain training plan should be at least 12 weeks long and include cardiovascular as well as strength training. For a personalized training schedule, please reach out to Lynette at Billy Goat Swift: lynette@billygoatswift.com.



INCLUSIONS

The cost of your trip includes your land costs (excluding in-town meals). This includes:

- All lodging according to itinerary, including double occupancy lodging while in town and group lodging in mountain huts.
- Breakfasts in town, all meals while on the mountain
- Group camping and climbing equipment
- All park / climbing permits
- Scheduled in-country transportation
- Airport transfers
- Certified guides

INSURANCE

We require that all participants carry rescue insurance and health insurance. Travel insurance is strongly recommended. Your policy numbers must be provided to us prior to leaving the USA.

EXCLUSIONS

The cost of your trip does not include:

- Flights to/from the city where the expedition begins
- Additional nights in hotel outside of the itinerary
- Airport taxes
- Visas
- In-town dinners
- 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
- Other personal expenses
- The costs of delays or changes to itinerary that are beyond the control of Alpenglow Expeditions or its agents are not included.

View our cancellation policy online at:

alpenglowexpeditions.com/cancellation-policy-international-expeditions/





Expedition of a Lifetime

Summit success is only achievable with your hard work and perseverance, and of course the right team of people around you.

We think of ourselves as your partner in dreaming, planning, climbing and celebrating. Our entire team from Adrian, guides, support personnel and logistics partners are excited to have you along for the expedition of a lifetime.

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BOOKING + INQUIRES

For booking details, questions, or more information please call or email us:

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All expeditions are directed by Logan Talbott and Adrian Ballinger, AMGA/IFMGA Mountain Guides.

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