TREK OVERVIEW
This walking itinerary has been specially developed for people who wish to visit this fascinating area without feeling the need to ‘tick off’ the tops of the volcanoes for which the region is best known. Ecuador’s ‘Avenue des Volcans’ is at the northernmost tip of the Andean Chain and contains some of the world’s highest and most impressive free-standing volcanoes. From the colourful capital of Quito we first visit the Otavalo region in the north of the country for four days, hiking round lakes and lagoons and staying in a variety of camps, cabins and hostels.
After a brief stop in Quito, we now head south to explore the Cotapaxi National Park where we trek up to the base of the glacier tumbling off the mountain before heading across to the Western Cordillera for our last few days of trekking. We stay the night beside the emerald lake in the Quilotoa crater, and walk out the following day along the Toachi River to finish our trek at the Indian village of Tigua.
There will be time to shop in the Indian markets before returning to Quito and flying home, or, since you have come so far you may be tempted to extend your stay to either climb Chimborazo (6310m) or take a cruise around the renowned Galapagos Islands.

Participation Statement
Adventure Peaks recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

Adventure Travel – Accuracy of Itinerary
Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops and the duration of the day may vary from those outlined. You should be aware that some events are beyond our control and we would ask for your patience.
PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE/FITNESS
If you are used to regular multi day hill walking you will have the right level of fitness to fully enjoy your time on this trek. Previous walking experience is not essential but will help you get the most out of this trip. Non hill walkers must come with a reasonable degree of fitness. Most days involve 4 - 6 hours walking, with plenty of options to extend or shorten the walks.

Ecuador is also well known famous for its exotic tropical fruit which you will be able to try.

ACCOMMODATION
A wide variety of accommodation is used on this trip as shown in the itinerary on the back page. Double / twin share rooms will be provided in the inns and hotels. There are three nights camping where we accommodate two people in 3-person tents – so plenty of space. Sleeping mats are provided.

LANGUAGE AND TIME
Language: Spanish is the national language and English is not widely understood, except by your guide and tourist restaurant staff in the main towns. Kichwa is the most common indigenous language.
Time: GMT -5. No daylight saving time at present.

HEALTH
All our UK leaders hold first aid certificates and carry a fully equipped first aid kit for medical emergencies. However you should bring your own supplies of plasters, blister prevention pads (Compeed), Paracetamol etc. and any medication you are taking. Contact your GP around eight weeks before your trip to check whether you need any vaccinations or other preventive measures. Country specific information and advice is published by the National Travel Health Network and Centre, and useful information about healthcare abroad, including a country-by-country guide of reciprocal health care agreements with the UK, is available from NHS Choices. Tap or stream water should never be drunk without first sterilizing with chlorine dioxide tablets or by boiling.

INSURANCE
Insurance which covers mountain rescue, evacuation and medical expenses is essential. You should note there are no official mountain rescue services in Ecuador and that any evacuation in the event of a serious medical emergency to the nearest hospital may be by land and not by helicopter. We will require a copy of your insurance prior to departure. Please also ensure your insurance covers you for walking above 4000m (some will exclude this option).

ALTITUDE
You can expect to feel the effects of altitude as you fly in to 2800m at Quito, and will need to take thinks especially slowly for the first day or so. Some of the treks do go quite
high. If you are new to altitude you may have concerns about the effects. Don’t worry because our itineraries allow sufficient time to acclimatise, and altitude rarely causes anyone any problems on this trip. The best way to avoid such symptoms is to walk at a gentle steady pace and drink plenty of fluid.

USEFUL TIPS
Just in case your main luggage goes missing en route, it is a good idea to wear your boots on the plane. Most other things can be replaced but comfortable, well worn-in boots cannot. Pack important items in strong plastic bags.

EQUIPMENT
A detailed equipment list is provided on booking but normal walking equipment is all that is required, together with a three season sleeping bag which can be hired from us. For equipment purchases Adventure Peaks offers a 15% discount off the RRP from their shop in Ambleside or online.

BAGGAGE
For your own comfort travel light. Normally airlines restrict baggage to 20kg. Some items can be left at the hotel in Quito for your return.

VISAS AND PERMITS
Visas for entry into Ecuador are not required by nationals of the UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and most EU countries.

LOCAL COSTS
All accommodation and most meals are included; please see the itinerary page for full details. Additional costs would include any drinks or snacks outside of mealtimes, tips for local staff and personal spending.

CURRENCY
Ecuador uses the US dollar (USD). ATMs and change bureaux are available in the arrivals hall at the airport and in the main towns. We suggest you bring some USD cash with you, ensuring you have some small denomination notes.

TIPPING
Tipping is an accepted part of life in Ecuador. We generally tip our local guides and drivers as a group and would recommend around $40 - $70 per person to cover all tips for the trip. A ‘tips pool’ often works better than all individuals digging into their pockets every time. Tipping at meals and in hotels is normal practice.

ADVENTURE PEAKS KITBAG
All Adventure Peaks clients who reside in the UK will receive a FREE kitbag for any treks outside the UK. The bag will be posted to you approx. 3 weeks prior to your departure. If you have travelled with us before and already have an Adventure Peaks kitbag, or reside outside the UK, we will send an alternative gift.

FLIGHTS AND JOINING ARRANGEMENTS
Within the published ‘With UK flight’ price of your trip is an element we have allowed to cover the cost of flights, which is the difference between the ‘Land Only’ and the ‘With UK flights’ prices. This element is for a changeable, economy ticket on flights between LONDON and the destination city, using an airline that, in our experience, offers the best combination of cost, routing, flexibility and baggage allowance. It is stated in good faith and is based on research and costs in previous years, but is subject to change. Clients who have booked a flight inclusive package will be met on arrival and transferred to the first hotel. If you have booked your own flights you need to make your way to the rendezvous shown below. If your arrival time is close to the group flights, then we will be happy for you to share our transport.

The rendezvous for this trip is the HOTEL IN QUITO on Day 2.

Return flights can be booked to depart any time on Day 15.

PLEASE ENSURE YOU DO NOT PURCHASE YOUR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL (FLIGHTS OR OTHER) UNTIL WE HAVE GUARANTEED YOUR TRIP IS RUNNING.
ECUADOR EXPLORER ITINERARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Today we...</th>
<th>We stay at...</th>
<th>Accommodation...</th>
<th>Meals...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>Depart UK</td>
<td>Plane</td>
<td>Plane</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Arrive Quito</td>
<td>Quito (2850m)</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Transfer to Otavalo</td>
<td>Otavalo (2500m)</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>BL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Trek</td>
<td>Mojanda Lagoons (3720m)</td>
<td>Camp</td>
<td>BLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Trek</td>
<td>Cuicocha Lake</td>
<td>Cabins</td>
<td>BLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>Trek</td>
<td>La Esperanza</td>
<td>Rural Hostel</td>
<td>BLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>Trek and return to Quito</td>
<td>Quito (2850m)</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>BL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>Transfer and trek</td>
<td>Cotopaxi (3600m)</td>
<td>Camp</td>
<td>BLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Trek</td>
<td>Cotopaxi (3600m)</td>
<td>Camp</td>
<td>BLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Trek</td>
<td>Insilivi</td>
<td>Rural Hostel</td>
<td>BLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Trek</td>
<td>Chugchilan</td>
<td>Mountain Inn</td>
<td>BLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Trek</td>
<td>Quilolota</td>
<td>Mountain Inn</td>
<td>BLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>Trek</td>
<td>Tigua</td>
<td>Family Farm</td>
<td>BLD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>Transfer to Quito</td>
<td>Quito</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>BL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>Depart Quito</td>
<td>Plane</td>
<td>Plane</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Arrive home</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Own bed!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Days 1 and 2  Depart UK and arrive Quito. You will be met at the airport, transferred to your hotel and in the evening enjoy a welcome dinner with your guide.

Day 3 We visit the old city of Quito, the best conserved colonial town in South America. The fabulously rich decorated churches, museums, squares and the numerous colonial buildings come under the banner of 'Cultural Heritage of Humanity'. Lunch will be provided in a restaurant on the way to 'La Mitad del Mundo' (the Middle of the World), site that marks the equatorial line and which is located 22km north of Quito. We visit a small ethnographic museum before continuing north for about two hours to the small Indian town of Otavalo.

Day 4 We drive up to the Mojanda lagoons and hike around this beautiful complex of 4 lagoons. There is an option to climb the volcano of Cerro 'Fuya-Fuya' (4294m) which takes about 3 hours to reach the summit. 5 to 6 hours walking.

Day 5 A pleasant hike downhill takes us towards the San Pablo lake. Here we meet with our vehicle for the short transfer to the beautiful Cuicocha Lake (3000m) were we spend the night in comfortable cabins overlooking the crater. 5 to 6 hours walking.

Day 6 After breakfast we explore the beautiful Cuicocha lagoon, an old volcanic caldera transformed by nature into a lake. We walk right around the large caldera, with the Cotacachi volcano forming a beautiful backdrop. A short vehicle transfer takes us to the small village of La Esperanza. 3 to 4 hours walking.

Day 7 We leave early for the climb up Imbabura volcano. The climb takes us from 3400m to 4200m, with beautiful views of the Otavalo area and Yahuarcocha Lake. If everyone is feeling good we can continue to the summit of Taita Imbabura (4630m), which does not involve any difficulty but makes a long day. In the afternoon we drive back to Quito. 6 to 8 hours walking.

Day 8 After breakfast we leave for the Cotopaxi National Park (1.5 hrs drive). Hiking across the high plateau at the foot of the volcano through Andean 'Páramo' we are rewarded with beautiful views of all the surrounding peaks, such as the Sinchologua and the Rumiñahui. We will visit some pre-Inca ruins. 4 to 5 hours walk. Our camp is at the foot of the splendid snow-covered cone of the Cotopaxi (5897m) volcano. 4 to 5 hours walking.

Day 9 Today we climb to the summit of the volcano Rumiñahui (4722m). The ascent is straightforward with some easy scrambling near the top. 5 to 6 hours walking.

Day 10 After breakfast we drive on a dusty road towards the Cotopaxi refuge (4600m). The road ends 200m below the refuge which is reached on foot in 45 minutes. We continue up slowly to visit the Cotopaxi glacier and return to the refuge for lunch. After lunch we walk back down to the campsite taking a beautiful path on the flanks of the volcano. A short transfer takes us to the small village of Insilivi in the Western Cordillera, starting point of our next trek. 5 to 7 hours walking.

Day 11 We now start our 3-day trek through the contrasting Western Cordillera. No camping as our nights will be spent in delightful Innsrun by the native Indians. This hike is an opportunity to immerse ourselves into the Indian life and to traverse beautiful Andean landscapes. This is an undulating walk passing through hamlets and cultivated valleys such as the Rio Toachi.

Day 12 Walking through an impressive canyon and passing through villages we eventually arrive at one of the most beautiful sites in Ecuador; the lagoon of Quilotoa. This is a still active volcanic crater filled with a lake. We spend the night overlooking the lake.

Day 13 For our final trekking day we hike between the lagoon of Quilotoa and the village of Tigua following the canyon of the Toachi River. At the end of the afternoon we put our feet up for the last time in a small refitted family farm near the Indian village of Tigua.

Day 14 We visit the Saquisili Indian market, authentic, colourful, and one of the most important native markets of Ecuador. Age-old typical Indian habits and customs can still be observed there. The market spreads across eight plazas in the village, each having its own specialty. Trade and indigenous crafts occupy an important place here - a great opportunity to buy souvenirs. A 2-hour drive then takes us back to Quito for our last night in Ecuador.

Days 15/16 Transfer to the airport to connect with your flight home, arriving back the following day.