

Mountain Biking

A wonderful source of exercise and fun is mountain biking. People of all ages can enjoy the fun of mountain biking. Like all activities there various levels of difficulties which vary from manageable to very difficult. The difficult level is reserved for highly experienced individuals. Each tour is classified into three categories- easy, moderate and challenging. While categorizing the trips the distance, weather conditions, terrain and altitude is taken into consideration. As an additional precaution a driver follows closely with a support vehicle so that if rest is needed, the biker can rest and then proceed to join the group.

Mountain Biking: An Insight The most sought after biking trip is down the Cotopaxi Volcano at amazing speed. Pedaling through the steep slopes the lakes, Inca ruins and giant boulders are a treat to watch. Stunning beauty of the 8 volcanoes from the highest point can be enjoyed in a bike adventure. The adventure goes through the highest active volcano of the world along dirt roads, volcanic ash and Inca ruins at an altitude of 3,700 meters. The afternoon ride goes through pine forests along dirt roads. The best way to have a view of Ecuador's ecosystem within a day is a trip to Paramo which is the equivalent of Arctic tundra. It ends in a mountain cloud forest at the periphery of the Amazon basin. A hot spring Papallacta is nearby and one can have a comfortable swim in the natural pools. On a clear day, Antisana volcano can be viewed and it dazzles in clear sunlight.

Other tourist hot-spots Towards the north-west the highest point of the trip at a height of 3,000 ft is reached during an easy trip. A picturesque, old fashioned village Nono is on the way. The vegetation changes from Paramo and cloud forest to low Mountain forest as you descend the mountain till reaching the ecstasy of Tandayapa. Parrots, toucans, hummingbirds and caciques can be seen on careful observation. The biking tour ends after passing through desert like areas till Equatorial Line Monument is reached.

The trip to Guagua Pichincha Volcano is challenging but spectacular. Descending is steep and a treat to watch the mountain side which is the best downhill slide in the country. On a day which has bright sunshine the sprawling city of Quito is seen which is back-dropped by a number of snow covered volcanoes. Towards the other compass points the great span of Pramo and soaring condor is seen. Towards the cloud forest of Lloa on the western side a great picnic spot exists. It is located at a height of 15,000 ft.

Another great destination is Otavalo with its single tracks and paved roads, which lead to volcanoes Cotacachi and Imbabura through arresting countryside. An area rich with culture is found at the approach of Otavalo. Local people with indigenous dress come to put up for sale their traditional wares which are hand made. Besides the Cuicocha Lake, it is a picnic spot filled with natural beauty to the fullest.