



**ANDANDO^o
TOURS**
Mainland Ecuador &
Galápagos Islands

2011

Cotopaxi and Rose Plantation

The path of the Roses, near snowcapped volcanic peaks

As we make our way south, out of Quito, the true length of the city reveals itself as it stretches down the valley below Pichincha.

Cloud fills the valleys like steaming cauldrons and the Avenue of Volcanoes opens up the way towards Cotopaxi, the neck of the moon (in an ancient indigenous language).

We cross over the tracks of the old 'Ferrocarril', Ecuadorian Train network of 965km across ten provinces to the coast and is in the process of being restored.

On our way down the Avenue we stop in at the Hacienda La Alegría for a typical highland breakfast of humitas, fresh eggs, fruit juices of mora and naranjilla and cow's milk from the dairy.

We will take a walk around this old working hacienda and learn about Humboldt's expedition to the cordillera, the natural mineral waters of the region and the surrounding haciendas with Inca ruins. If it is a clear day there will be spectacular views of the Avenue of the Volcanoes.

Cotopaxi at 5,898m above sea level is one of the highest active volcanoes in the world and easily the most visited summit in Ecuador due to its easy access for amateur climbers and experts alike.

Our drive through the park brings us out onto the plain of Laguna de Limpiopungo, a lake fed by water from the volcano Rumiñahui which towers over it. It is thought that the Inca Rumiñahui hid his gold up on the mountain and many search parties have set out to find it, some never to be seen again. At the water's edge the park wildlife comes to drink; ducks, swallows, frogs and toads, and you may spot an eagle or maybe the great Andean Condor.

At Lake Limpiopungo we will have a hot cup of tea and a snack before setting on a short walk around the lake.

If the sky is clear we can catch beautiful views of Cotopaxi and the surrounding volcanoes; Rumiñahui, Sincholagua, Pasochoa and with luck, the shy Antisana.

As we walk across the páramo we might see hawks, foxes, llamas and maybe deer. Next we head over to Nevado Roses, a flower plantation near the lake of Yambo. Here we will be given a tour and shown how the flowers are cultivated, selected for exportation and packed.

The Nevado Roses guide will also tell us about the economic and social benefits the plantation has created in the local area. Before heading back to Quito we will have a country side style lunch at Hostería Rumipamba de las Rosas.



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