



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

2011

Breakfast at Guagua Pichincha Volcano

Summit Sunrise; Volcanic Vents and Archaeology

Some would say Quito is a little too close to its neighbour, the active volcano, Guagua Pichincha, the city literally wrapping itself around, and climbing up, the eastern slopes. Guagua, 'baby' in Quichua, has at times terrorized the city expelling gases and ash over Quito since the first recorded eruption in 1565. Guagua Pichincha has erupted twelve times, its eruption in 1566 sent ash as far as Panama and its latest, in 1999, a 15km plume of ash and gas over Quito.

Its crater, 600m deep and 1.6km wide opens to the west and from the depths fetid, brimstone, vapour rises up from the volcanic vents.

This spectacular site and the surrounding landscape are well deserving of the short walk from our drop off point at the refuge to the volcano's fourth summit at 4776m.

At this advantageous viewing point, sits the patron virgin of the volcano, La Merced; the locals believe that she protects Quito and built this mini altar to pay reverence to her. From here, with hot cups of tea in our hands, we will watch the sun rise over the great Avenue of the Volcanoes. On a clear day we can see the majestic snowy peaks of Cotopaxi, Cayambe, Chimborazo, Illinizas to name a few. After a short descent into the meadows, a picnic breakfast awaits; fruits, yoghurt, fresh bread, cheese, ham, olives and other delicacies.

An energising meal to recharge after our early 4.00am start to catch the sunrise from the summit.

We head back down the volcano to the archaeological site at Rumipamba, the only historical remains in the city where an abandoned hacienda has been converted into a workshop of archaeological restoration.

The Yumbo trails that pass through this site were known as 'culuncos', so named for the 'culunc, culunc' sounds the barrels of trafficked alcohol made travelling along these routes. Walls, objects and tombs have also been excavated here

We will take you back to your hotel to rest and, if you wish, we can take you on a tour of the city's historic centre in the afternoon.



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