



## THE ALTAR CRATER LAKE

**El Altar (5319m.) is one of the most spectacular mountains of Ecuador. A long time ago this was an active volcano higher than Cotopaxi, but a huge eruption almost completely destroyed the cone leaving 9 snow-capped summits in a horseshoe shape around a beautiful crater lake.**



**El Altar is part of the Sangay National Park.**

**Day 1.** At 9.00 a.m. we leave Riobamba. After a 1-hour drive we reach Hacienda Releche, at 3200m. altitude the starting point of our trek. We put our equipment on pack horses and start to hike up a steep hill.

After 1 hour we reach the trail to El Altar and soon we will enjoy the first views of the extinct volcano and the valley of Collanes river. We continue hiking for about 5 hours until we reach the Collanes shelter at 3850m., where we will spend the night.

**Day 2.** After breakfast we follow the Collanes Plain to El Altar's crater lake. From the plateau at 4300 m., the highest point of this trek, we have marvellous views of the turquoise-green lake and the snow-capped peaks. If you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse of the Andean condor. In the afternoon we return to the refuge.

**Day 3.** In the morning we hike down from the refuge to Releche. From there we drive back to Riobamba. Arrival at Riobamba at about 14.00 p.m.

**DIFFICULTY:** moderately difficult; a basic acclimatization is recommended

**DEPARTURE:** any day with minimal 2 persons

**INCLUDING:**

- Trekking guide
- Private transfers from / to Riobamba
- accommodation in basic mountain refuge
- meals (3 box lunch, 2 x dinner, 2 x breakfast), coffee, tea, purified drinking water
- equipment (including warm sleeping bag with fleece sheet, rubber boots, gloves, balaclava, over pants, thermos bottle)
- pack horses for the equipment

**NOT INCLUDING:**

- entrance fee Sangay National Park (if applicable)
- travel insurance
- tips

