



Mexico Volcanoes Frequently Asked Questions

The following questions and answers were designed to provide you with all of the details of our Mexico Volcanoes program. Please don't hesitate to call or email if you have additional questions or need any clarification.

WHO ARE MY GUIDES? Your American guide is a professional who is medically trained and has experience guiding with us in Alaska and around the world. They are fun people to adventure with and they place your safety as their top priority.

HOW MUCH WEIGHT WILL I CARRY? For trekking days you will carry up to 45lbs. For summit climbs you only carry your daypack with water, lunch, extra layers, camera, etc. Guides will carry the first aid kits, satellite phones, rescue equipment, and other essential group gear.

WHEN SHOULD I RESERVE MY TRIP? The earlier you reserve your date, the better chance you have to get the date of your choice, and the best airfare. In addition, prices do go up each year; we charge you the advertised price at the time of deposit.

HOW DO I SIGN UP? Just mail or fax us a completed registration form and pay the \$500 deposit.

WHAT ARE YOUR CANCELLATION POLICIES? Our complete trip policies are available via email and on the web at <http://mountainguidesinternational.com/internationalpolicies.html> Please let us know if you would like a copy.

WHAT IS THE HIGHEST ALTITUDE AT WHICH WE WILL SLEEP? On Iztaccíhuatl we will spend one night at 15,400ft. Other wise our camps will be located at 12,800ft on Iztacciuatl and 13,800ft on Orizaba.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I TIP? We suggest budgeting \$75 -\$100 for your guide. There will be no need to tip local drivers throughout the trip, as your guide will provide it.

DO I NEED A VISA? You do not need a visa for your stay in Mexico.

DO I NEED ANY SHOTS OR VACCINATIONS? We recommend that you check with your doctor for the most current immunization information. If you have received immunizations, either in the past, or for this trip, makes certain to bring your immunization book/card. You can also go to the Center for Disease control website to learn more. <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>

WHAT ARE YOUR RESCUE PROTOCOLS? Our number one job as guides is to catch any medical issues before they become serious. For this reason we take twice daily pulse oximeter readings and constantly monitor our guests' health. In the event someone does become ill, our first action will be to

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descend. Our staff also carry satellite phones for instant contact with park officials and EMS services. There are good hospitals in both Puebla and Mexico City.

WHAT WILL WE EAT? The meals are healthy and hearty. Breakfast and dinner are served hot or cold, while most lunches are cold. Summit day food will be high calorie, simple carbohydrate foods such as energy bars, candy bars, dried fruit, etc. We provide plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and can accommodate special diets if you give us notice. Coffee, tea and cocoa are served at breakfast and dinner.

WHAT ABOUT THE TENTS? We utilize 3 person, 4 season tents made by Sierra Designs, Kelty and Black Diamond. We try to only put 2 people in these tents so there is plenty of room.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR THE CLIMB? We suggest training by hiking, running, biking, swimming, aerobics, or another program. Please call us if you have questions about your fitness.

HOW HARD IS IT? Most fit people find Iztaccíhuatl relatively easy, while on the other hand Pico de Orizaba is often considered more challenging. The summit day on Orizaba can be up to 14 hours in length and is physically demanding. With proper conditioning and good training it is well within the limits of most beginner climbers. And as always the better shape you are in the more enjoyable the climb will be.

CAN I LEAVE MY NON-CLIMBING GEAR AND VALUABLES AT THE HOTEL? Yes, there is a room for luggage and a safe deposit boxes for valuables.

WHAT EQUIPMENT DO I NEED? A detailed equipment list will be provided.

CAN I RENT ANYTHING? Plastic mountaineering boots, sleeping bags, trekking poles and backpacks are available for rent.

WHEN SHOULD I ARRIVE? We meet in the evening of Day 0 at 6:00 PM. Day 1 is the advertised trip date. We'll spend the first day in D.F. acclimating and visiting local cultural sites. This does add an extra night hotel stay to the cost of the trip (\$45). We will leave Mexico City on the morning of Day 2. Some people arrive on Day 1 if there is a time crunch.

WHEN SHOULD I DEPART? Plan to depart no earlier than the morning after the last scheduled day of the trip. For example if the trip ends on a Monday don't schedule your flight until Tuesday morning. There is a possibility that the trip will not return until very late the night of the last day.

WHAT ABOUT KIDS? Because of the high altitude considerations and the strenuous climbing conditions participants must be at least 17 years of age or older.

WHAT IS INCLUDED? Guides, food, tents, airport transfers, transportation during trip dates, park fees, and a great time.

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WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED? Any expenses while in Mexico City including: hotel rooms, meals, bottled drinks, taxis, museum fees, etc. Guide gratuities are not included.

IS THE WATER SAFE TO DRINK? Yes, we treat or filter the water that you drink. While in Mexico City or other towns we recommend only drinking bottled water.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO CLIMB? November and December are the best months of the year to climb. The weather during the period is typically very stable and most days are sunny and warm. September, October, January and February are also good months but the weather tends to be a little less stable. Climbing during the summer is not recommended because it is the rainy season and summits can be challenging to obtain.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL BE ON MY TRIP? No more than 6 people and often only 3 to 6. We believe that group size is one of the most important factors determining the kind of experience our guests will have. Smaller group sizes give us the flexibility to meet individual goals and expectations, as well as to avoid some of the challenges associated with large groups. We are happy to work with larger groups by special arrangements.

WHAT IF I ALREADY HAVE A GROUP? Groups of 4 or more receive a 10% discount. Groups of 6 or more will be treated as a private trip and no one outside the group will be added to the trip. These groups can also choose any dates that work for them and are not limited in size.

WHERE SHOULD I FLY TO? Mexico City is the starting and ending point for our trip. Flights to Mexico City are common and if booked in advance can be relatively cheap. We will meet you at the Mexico City International Airport with a sign that reads AMG. If for some reason you cannot find your pickup you should take an Authorized taxi to the Hotel Catedral. The Authorized taxis are located at the right hand end of the terminal when looking towards exit doors.

WHERE ARE WE STAYING? We stay in Mexico City the first and last night of our trip. Our accommodations here are very comfortable. The Hotel Catedral is a four star hotel and the reception desk staff speak English well. Inside the hotel is a very nice restaurant and bar with good local food.

WHAT ABOUT AIRLINE TICKETS? Make certain that your ticket matches the full name on your passport. Plan your arrival in Mexico City at least one day before the trip starts if time permits. Please make certain that we have your flight and arrival information so that we can meet you at the airport! Make certain to reconfirm your flights before arriving at the airport.

ARE THERE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TAXES? Currently there is no arrival or departure tax in Mexico.

WHAT ABOUT TRAVELER'S CHECKS AND CREDIT CARDS? Traveler's checks and cash are both easily exchangeable. Credit Cards also work well but are not accepted everywhere.

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SPENDING MONEY? We recommend bringing at least \$400 cash or travelers checks for restaurants, gifts, and travel after our climb. Always carry a credit card for emergencies as well.

LANGUAGE? Spanish is the main language, but English is common. Learning a few phrases goes a long way towards meeting some friendly local people.

MEDICAL ISSUES? Please make certain to answer the questions regarding health on your registration form. We also recommend that everyone check with their doctor to learn about the possible effects of high altitude and hot climates. If you require any personal medications, or, have any pre-existing medical problems, make certain to re-confirm with your guide upon arrival.

TRAVEL INSURANCE? *We highly recommend purchasing travel insurance for your trip.* Travel insurance policies frequently cover costs associated with plane tickets, personal or medical emergencies, rescue, evacuation, trip cancellation, and theft. Individual participants are responsible for any costs associated with leaving the trip early for any reason. Resources for travel insurance include:

TRAVEL INSURANCE? We highly recommend travel insurance. In many case travel insurance will cover medical expenses, evacuation costs, lost baggage, travel delays, and other costs in the event you need to cancel your trip. We have worked with almost every provider of travel insurance and feel strongly that the Adventure Travel Protection Plan from AIG/ Travel Guard is the best one available. It is one of the only plans that covers high altitude climbing and has significant benefits if purchased within 15 days of making your trip deposit. Details can be found on our website at http://alaskamountainguides.com/?page_id=226

Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, or, if you would like any additional information.

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