



Bolivia Alpine Mountaineering & Ascents Program with optional Illimani Expedition

Expedition Notes

Trip 1: Jun 2 - Jun 11, 2012
Trip 2: Jun 30 - Jul 9, 2012
Trip 3: Jul 28 - Aug 6, 2012
Trip 4: Aug 25 - Sep 3, 2012

The Cordillera Real of Bolivia is one of the world's major ranges and offers some of the finest and most varied alpine climbing. Our Bolivia programme allows for significant instruction time while completing some fantastic climbs at low-intermediate grade at altitudes up to 20,340 ft/6,200m.

For those who would like the experience of climbing in an un-crowded area, exploring a remote and exotic land leaving minimal impact, the Cordillera Real offers an unparalleled opportunity.

A five-day ascent of the massive Nevado Illimani (21,201ft/6462m) is an ideal add-on to capitalise on your existing acclimatisation and make this expedition even more enjoyable. It is the highest peak in Bolivia's Cordillera Real and allows you to climb a serious high altitude peak without the hardships of climbing in very low temperatures.



History

The Cordillera Real of Bolivia is one of the world's major ranges and offers some of the finest and most varied alpine climbing, but it is probably the least known and least climbed range among comparable mountain groups. This is due to the country's remoteness and its lack of any traditional tourism. As a result, for those who are used to climbing and backpacking in wilderness areas, for whom the experience of a minimally impacted and uncrowded area is important, and who find great appeal in exploring a remote and exotic land, the Cordillera Real offers an unparalleled opportunity.

The Climb and Itinerary

The first day is spent traveling by boat on Lake Titicaca and driving across the altiplano to a trailhead in the central part of the Cordillera Real. Covering a substantial part of Bolivia's altiplano, Lake Titicaca is the world's highest navigable waterway, and from its waters we enjoy memorable views of the scores of seventeen to twenty-thousand-foot peaks that make up the Cordillera Real. This range has great vertical relief, and the steep faces of ice that characterize its peaks rise up in dramatic contrast to the broad and undulating altiplano. We visit a small island where 15th century Inca terraces can be observed, and we see villagers who carry out farming, spinning, weaving, and reed boat construction much as their



ancestors did during the rule of the Incas.

In the afternoon we drive east from the lake to the foot of the central Cordillera Real and then to a trailhead where we meet our llamas and support staff and camp for the

night. With the animals carrying the bulk of our gear, we make an easy-paced ascent to our base camp at 15,000 feet.

The trek takes us through some beautiful valley landscapes, and our camp provides excellent views of the many surrounding mountains and puts us in position to make a series of single-day ascents. During the first days of the program we tailor our schedule of instruction and practice climbing to suit the needs of the participants acclimatizing at different rates. We give instruction in climbing technique on a glacial practice area near our camp while team members gradually acclimatise more fully to the 15,000 to 16,000-foot altitudes, and then cover additional skills in the process of making summit climbs. We make a beautiful short trek to the Condoriri Lake District and there make two ascents on 17,000 and 18,000-foot peaks. This area includes two of the most beautiful mountains on the continent, Cerro Condoriri and Pequeño Alpamayo.

Our approach is once again made easy by the help of llamas, and we set up camp near a lake below the magnificently sculptured white tower of Condoriri. We practice additional climbing and rescue techniques and then make our first major climb, most likely of the beautiful Pyramide Blanca. After a day of rest or more practice climbing, we tackle our primary goal in this group, Pequeño Alpamayo, a hidden peak with a very impressive pyramidal summit. We climb a broad glacier to a col, traverse along a ridge to the base of the summit pyramid, and then ascend directly to the top. The entire route is photogenic, offers excellent climbing, and makes use of all the skills taught earlier in the program.

We then move south past a series of colorful altiplano lakes to the Pass of Zongo, right at the very foot of Huayna Potosi (variously calculated from 19,996 to 20,011 feet), from which we take a full day to establish a high camp at 18,000 feet. Setting off from that camp the following morning with sunrise over the Amazon Basin to our east, we climb a beautiful route which includes serious glacier travel and intermittent sections of moderately steep ground — challenging climbing but well within the skill level developed by the climbing team during the preceding days of the program. With Huayna Potosi's summit a well-defined point at the end of a beautifully sculptured ridge, the last few steps to the top provide an exhilarating finish to a great climb.

Topics intended to be covered during instruction include:

- selection & use of personal equipment
- anchors for fixed & running belays
- selection & use of ropes, knots, & harnesses
- an introduction to high altitude physiology
- design & selection of technical equipment
- response to high altitude illness
- principles of glacier travel
- nutrition during extended trips at altitude
- belaying techniques on snow & ice
- introduction to natural hazards evaluation
- French & German cramponing techniques
- crevasse rescue procedures
- principal ice axe positions
- rappelling
- concept & application of the self-belay
- route finding & evaluation

Following our ascents above, we return to La Paz and have a day and a half to prepare for this next stage of the expedition. We leave the city traveling southeast over very rugged roads to a small settlement where we meet our Arriero and his lamas. With our gear loaded on his animals, we climb gradually higher while enjoying brilliant views of Illimani, and eventually pass through the isolated village where he and his family live. Here Aymara life is very traditional, with thatch-roofed homes constructed of mud brick and stone and villagers busy attending to the soaking, drying, and freezing of their potatoes (in the world's original freeze-drying process).

We climb above the village and establish base camp at a small lake at 15,000 feet, where in the evening we enjoy the dependable arrival of a flock of Andean geese that spend the night at the water, and from which we have a beautiful view of sunset over the altiplano.

The next day our Arriero returns with members of his family who help us as porters. With them we make a 3000-foot ascent up trails and a rock ridge to reach a snowy bench at 18,000 feet where we establish our high camp. From that camp we get great views into the enormous, steep-walled cirque of Illimani and across Lake Titicaca into Peru. The next morning we begin our ascent of the peak's steep southwest buttress. The route is broken by a series of large crevasses, and we carefully zig zag our way up, using snow bridges and ice ramps where we can to shorten our route.

Eventually we climb a 40 to 45-degree glacial face and gain the final ridge to the summit — a gently rising, exposed, and very photogenic finish that provides some of the finest views in the Andes. Always scenic and offering rewardingly varied alpine climbing, this is an exciting expedition on one of South America's greatest peaks.

Climbing Team

The maximum climber to guide ratio is 4:1. The team will have a minimum size of **3 climbers and 1 guide** maximum size of **8 members and 2 guides**.

The level of experience required

To climb in Bolivia you need to be physically fit, have strong mental stamina and be capable of strenuous exercise for several days' duration. Expedition members need to be capable of carrying a moderate pack.

Climbing at altitude affects people differently; most climbers notice a lower performance rate than normal. Our climbing days are mostly short to accommodate this and vital rest days are usually welcomed! Our graduated acclimatisation program allows you to progressively consolidate your fitness.

Expedition Fee

The cost of the expedition is US\$2,480 and US\$1040 for the optional Illimani Expedition add on.

This is an inclusive cost and covers the following:

- Mountain guides
- All expedition organizational requirements
- Land and lake transportation
- Hotel in La Paz and Cuzco and tents while trekking or climbing- on a shared basis
- Meals while trekking and climbing
- Admissions to archeological zones
- Group equipment: stoves, tents, ropes, etc. and all supplies necessary to make a safe and strong bid for the summit.

The expedition fee does not include the following:

- Roundtrip airfare to La Paz, Bolivia
 - Meals except while trekking and climbing
 - Personal clothing and equipment
 - Personal insurance including medical evacuation and trip cancellation
 - Excess baggage
 - Any rescue costs
 - Any costs associated with early departure from the expedition
 - Gratuities to guides
 - Government and airport taxes
 - Inoculations
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Visas

Generally entry Visas are not required for travellers staying less than three months but please check with your travel agent. (Climbing permits are a separate matter dealt with by the expedition agent).

Payments

All payments should be made by bank transfer to the following bank and account:

**Bank of New Zealand
Offshore Branch
Wellington, New Zealand**

for the account of **Adventure Consultants Limited**
Account # 1000-594771-0000

We can also accept your payment by credit card – **Visa, Mastercard** or **AMEX**.

Deposit

A non-refundable deposit of US\$500 is payable to secure a place on the expedition.

Balance

The balance of **US \$1980** or **US \$3020** with Illimani add on, is payable 90 days prior to the trip departure date.

Cancellation & Refund Policy

An expedition member may cancel his/her participation on the following basis:

- Cancellations outside of 90 days will result in the loss of the trip deposit.
- For cancellations made within 90 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 50% of the full fee.
- For cancellations within 60 days of the departure date a cancellation fee of 100% of the full fee applies.

Team members should take out private insurance if they wish to be covered against cancellation due to medical or personal reasons. This is called Trip Cancellation and can be obtained through your normal travel agent.

Food

During the expedition you will enjoy high quality and nourishing food. Please indicate any specific dietary requirements you may have on your application form.

Equipment List

Expedition members will be sent a list detailing all necessary individual clothing and personal equipment to be provided.

Medical Examination

Expedition members will be provided with a medical questionnaire and asked to visit their family physician and receive a full medical examination. This information will be sighted only by our medical adviser and treated with full confidentiality. Advice on immunisations will be provided at this time.

The advantages of climbing with us

Adventure Consultants is renowned for the quality of its service and strategy applied to high altitude expedition climbing. Our reputation is attributed to meticulous planning and experienced logistics coordination. We have a philosophy of investing in every expedition to offer our climbers the best possible chance of success.

We employ strong and specialized Expedition leaders and support staff, who are some of the most pre-eminent in the industry. We pride ourselves on operating with small teams, the best back-up and support available. This includes nutritious and ample quantities of food, comfortable base camp facilities, reliable communications systems and the necessary medical back up.

Many of our expedition members come to us because they have seen us in action on a previous trip and decide to opt for our level of service and proven experience. Others return because they know we do our very best to make expeditions safe and successful.

How to join this expedition

If you would like to join the expedition please request an Expedition Application Form and forward along with your climbing résumé and the deposit for the trip.

If you require more information please contact us at;

Adventure Consultants Ltd

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