Bolivia Alpine Mountaineering & Ascents Programme
with optional Illimani Expedition

2019 Expedition Notes

Trip 1: May 18 - June 4
Trip 2: June 15 - July 2
Trip 3: July 13 - 30
Trip 4: August 10 - 27

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 6,200m/20,340ft.

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

A five-day ascent of the massive Nevado Illimani (6,438m/22,401ft) 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. However, due to the country’s remoteness and its lack of any traditional tourism, the Cordillera Real is probably the least known and least climbed range among comparable mountain groups. 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 is an ideal destination.
The Mountaineering and Ascents Programme

After spending two days in the city of La Paz, we head north to the central region of the Cordillera Real. We begin our trek and travel over a series of valleys and passes over the period of three days, and enjoy camping out each night. This is an opportunity to take in the scenery and enjoy spotting the native wildlife. The final day of trekking ends in Plaza de Llama, where a vehicle is waiting to transport us back to La Paz. The team will have a day in La Paz to prepare for the next stage of the adventure.

We travel by boat on Lake Titicaca and then drive 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 characterise its peaks, rise up in dramatic contrast to the broad and undulating altiplano. We visit a small island where 15th Century Incan terraces can be observed, and we see villagers carrying 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 to camp for the night. With the animals carrying the bulk of our gear, we make an easy-paced ascent to our Base Camp.

The trek takes us through some beautiful valley landscapes and our camp provides excellent views of the many surrounding mountains and puts us in a 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 acclimatising at different rates. We give instruction in climbing technique on a glacial practice area near our camp, while team members gradually acclimatise to the higher 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 here we make two ascents on 5,180m/17,000ft and 5,486m/18,000ft 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 colourful altiplano lakes to the Zongo Pass, right at the very foot of Huayna Potosi (approximately 6,088m/19,974ft), from which we take a full day to establish a high camp at 5,500m/18,000ft. Setting off from 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 and the last few steps to the top provide an exhilarating finish to a great climb.

Topics intended to be covered during instruction include:

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

Following our ascents, we return to La Paz and either depart for home, or for those also undertaking the optional Illimani Ascent, begin preparations for the next stage of the expedition.

 Illimani Ascent Add-On

We leave the city travelling Southeast over very rugged roads to a small settlement, where we meet our Arriero and his llamas. With our gear loaded, we climb gradually higher while enjoying brilliant views of Illimani and eventually pass through the isolated village, where our Arriero 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 4,600m/15,000ft, where in the evening we enjoy the beautiful view of the 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 915m/3,000ft ascent up trails and a rock ridge to reach a snowy bench at 5,500m/18,000ft, where we establish our high camp. From this 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.
Day to Day Itinerary

Day 01: Arrive La Paz and overnight at hotel
Day 02: La Paz exploration and city tour
Day 03: Depart La Paz for the Cordillera Real and trek into the first camp (4 hrs)
Day 04: Trek over a pass at 4,600m/15,000ft and continue to the next camp (6 hrs)
Day 05: Trek over mountain passes and onwards to camp
Day 06: Trek to Plaza de Llama and transfer back to La Paz for the night
Day 07: Preparation day in La Paz for remainder of expedition
Day 08: Lake Titicaca exploration and boat ride (3,812m/12,507ft)
Day 09: Hike to Base Camp in the Condoriri Valley (4,600m/15,000ft)
Day 10-14: Work on climbing skills and ascending peaks in the Condoriri Cirque area
Day 15: Trek out and drive to Zongo Pass
Day 16: Begin the ascent of Huayna Potosi and establish camp at 5,500m/18,000ft
Day 17: Climb Huayna Potosi (6,088m/19,974ft) and return to La Paz
Day 18: Either depart for home or spend a day in La Paz preparing for the optional Illimani Ascent
Day 19: Drive from La Paz, meet Arriero’s and their horses and trek to Illimani Base Camp
Day 20: Climb to High Camp (5,500m/18,000ft) with the assistance of the porters
Day 21: Climb to the summit of Illimani (6,438m/22,401ft) and descend to Camp One, or Penaya at the base of the mountain
Day 22: Return to La Paz for an evening of celebration and relaxation
Day 23: Depart for home

2019 Illimani Extension Dates

Trip 1: June 5 - 9
Trip 2: July 3 - 7
Trip 3: July 31 - August 4
Trip 4: August 28 - September 1

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.

Level of Experience Required

To climb in Bolivia you need to be physically fit, have a 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$4,470 or US$5,800 including the optional Illimani Expedition add on.

This is an inclusive cost and covers the following:

- Mountain guides
- All expedition organisational 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 archaeological 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).

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**Payments**

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

**Bank of New Zealand**  
**Offshore Branch**  
**1 Willis Street**  
**Wellington**  
**New Zealand**

for the account of **Adventure Consultants Limited**

Account #: 1000-594771-0000  
Account Type: US Dollars  
Swift Address: BKNZNZ22
Note: All bank transfer charges are for the remitter's account.

We can also accept your deposit and balance payment by credit card (Visa, Mastercard, Amex) plus a 3% card fee.

**Deposit**

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

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**Balance**

The balance of **US$3,970 or US$5,300** with the Illimani Add-On is payable 90 days prior to the trip departure date.

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**Cancellation and 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.*

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**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.

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**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 specialised 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 complete an online booking form at https://www.adventureconsultants.com/expeditions/south-america/bolivia-alpine-mountaineering/book-now and forward along with your deposit for the trip.

If you require more information, please contact us at:

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