

Saint Pedro of Riobamba

City surrounded by the snow mountains: Chimborazo, Carihuayrazo, Tungurahua, Altar, Cubillines, and Sangay.

Re-built in 1799 after the earthquake of February 4 that destroyed the colonial city. It is geographically located in the center of Ecuador. It has an extension of 5,637 km2; it has 5 urban parishes and 11 rural ones. The average temperature is 13º C and its altitude is 2,754 meters above sea level. Riobambeños are identified by the value of the Puruha race, the endeavors of political emancipation and freedom, the brilliant chapters of its history, and its important personalities.



Basilica of Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, the monument of Cristo Rey and Chimborazo

Riobamba, city of the “firsts”

- Foundation of Santiago de Quito, August 15 of 1534, in the area of Liribamba, the ancient capital of the Kingdom of the Puruháes. It is the first city of “Real Audiencia de Quito”.
- On August 28th, 1534, the Act of Foundation of San Francisco de Quito was signed and the first mayors and aldermen were appointed.
- On August 29th, 1534, the Act the first sesion of the Cabildo, in these territories, was documented in presence of the autorithies of San Francisco de Quito.
- Construction of the first church in Real Audiencia de Quito, Balbanera.
- The Dominican Priest Fray Pedro Bedón was the first painter with whom the Quiteña School of Art was born in 1563.
- Felipe IV, King of Spain granted to Riobamba the first Coat of Arms and the title of “Very Noble and Very Loyal City”.
- Inmaculist Oath, December 8th, 1616 Riobamba pronounces in defense of the “Dogma of Faith of Immaculate Conception of Mary” 238 years before the Vatican.
- First Scientist and Geographer: Pedro Vicente Maldonado
- First Historian , Juan de Velasco, Jesuit Priest.
- P. José Orozco, first epic poet of the Colony.
- Holy Tuesday, the oldest procession in Ecuador.
- First Christmas novena and Ecuadorian carol.
- Indigenous dynasty from Duchicela family.
- Battle of Riobamba, April 21 of 1822, “the most of cavalry in the history of the independence”.
- First Constituent Congress, Birth of the Republic of Ecuador in 1830.
- First High School of the Republic, San Felipe, May 1836
- The first Ecuadorian Religious Institute on April 14, 1873, Santa Mariana de Jesus.
- Bellavista, the first residential neighborhood.
- Club Chimborazo, the first Social Club in the country.
- First Olympic stadium of Ecuador, 1926.
- First Olympics, March 1926.
- Radio station El Prado, The First Radio Station, June 1929; its pioneer was Carlos Cordovez Borja.
- Judith Nollivos León de Cordovez was the first amateur radio, telegraph operator and broadcaster in the country.
- First Agricultural, Livestock, Industrial and Commercial Fair, 1937.
- First bull-fighting arena
- The first protest led by women, 1976.
- Olmedo, the oldest football team in the country
- First national march against strikes, March 2006
- The First Citizen Inspection in protection of cultural heritage, 2012.
- Declaration of Intangible Cultural Heritage of “Pases del Niño” and the “Rodeo del Chagra”, 2016.



Custodia, XVIII Century

Museums of Riobamba

Religious Art Museum “La Concepción”

Created in 1980, it brings together a valuable collection that represents the most outstanding of Quito's School of Art. In 14 rooms are exhibited paintings, sculptures, goldmists and sculpted stone, dating from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries; in room 15, they show a permanent exhibition of photos of Señor del Buen Suceso, Patron of Riobamba, and the Holy Tuesday procession.

Service hours: Tuesdays to Saturdays from 09H00 to 12H30 and from 15H00 to 17H30.
Theme: Religious art.
Address: Argentinos & Larrea streets.
Contacts: 032 965 212.

City Museum

It is implemented in one of the most important buildings of the city, built in 1900 in neoclassical architecture. Space for exhibitions of temporary and permanent samples of photography, painting, sculpture and contemporary art.

Service hours: Monday to Friday from 08H00 to 12H30 and from 14H30 to 18H00.
Theme: Travelling exhibitions and contemporary art.
Address: Primera Constituyente & Espejo streets.
Contacts: 032 944 420.

Railway Station

The construction of the railroad route system began in 1873 during the government of Gabriel García Moreno and culminated in 1960; 13 presidents worked for the project of vital importance to national development, being General Eloy Alfaro who gave greater impetus to this work in his government.

It is considered as the “most difficult railroad in the world” for all the effort that demanded to unite the coast with the highlands in the middle of a difficult and wild geography; thousands of Jamaicans, resistant to physical labor and diseases, devoted years of hard work to complete the project.

Sighald Müller was the author of the definitive route and construction was carried out by company “The Guayaquil and Quito Railway Company” whose president was Mr. Archer Harman.

Thanks to the privileged location of Riobamba, the railway had its golden age of the city as a center of operations between Quito and Guayaquil.

Address: Av. Daniel León Borja & Carabobo streets.
Contacts: 032944-420.



Capital of Ecuador’s railroad

Tren del Hielo I

Route: Riobamba— Urbina— La Moya— Riobamba.
Departure: Saturdays, sundays and holidays
Service hours:08H00 to 14H30
Discount: Children / older / handicapped

The adventure begins in Riobamba; enjoying the scenic beauty of the snowmountains: Chimborazo, Carihuayrazo, Tungurahua and The Altar, the moorland is an attraction that complements the majesty of the area.

Services

- Train ride.
- Bilingual tour guide.
- Snack in the “Café del Tren” of Urbina.
- Ice Cream with ice of Chimborazo mountain.
- Canelazo and guidance by indigenous women of the Peasant Jatari Community.
- Visit to the The Moya community.
- Lunch at Urkukunapak Wasi.



Community Tourism

Palacio Real - Calpi Parish
Community “Palacio Real” is located at 15 km from Riobamba - San Juan road; the economic activity of its inhabitants is based on the integral breeding and sustainable use of Andean camelids (llamas and alpacas).

Services: Restaurant, “Museo Cultural de la Llama”, interpretive trails, spinning mill and craft store.
Contacts: 03 262 0500 - 0997005944

La Moya - Calpi Parish

Located at 22 kilometers from Riobamba. Its inhabitants kept intact the traditions, customs, beliefs, legends and the relationship of men with mountains.

Services: “Museo de la Montaña Urkukunapak Nan”. Accommodation, food and crafts.
Contacts: 0998752686

Pucará Tambo - Cacha Parish

Site of historical and cultural interest by the existence of ancestral architecture and community traditions, and spaces dedicated to sacred ceremonies of the indigenous people. Visitors can observe and participate in activities aimed at the integral development, revaluation of the indigenous identity and ancestral wisdom, which have strengthened the 23 communities of this parish.

Services: Lodging, food, Ethnographic Museum, Ancestral ceremonies center and interpretive trails.
Contacts: 03 303 0501 - 09985758802



Chimborazo at 6.263 meters

Chimborazo Protected Area

It is a protected area for vicuñas, the only place in Ecuador with the presence of these camelids. It has great extensions of moorland; the wettest in the east and the driest moor in the western part, called “El Arenal”. This protected area is ideal for adventure sports such as: mountain climbing, mountain biking, rock climbing and hiking.

Attractives

Chimborazo snow-capped

It is the highest mountain of Ecuador and the highest in the world as measured from the center of the earth; its summit is the closest point to the sun and the furthest point to the center of the Earth. With an altitude of 6,263 m. History tells us that the last eruption of this volcano was more than 10,000 years.

Templo Machay

Sacred cave located on the southern flank of the Whymper summit at an altitude of 4,700 masl. ; it was the place of worship and tribute from the Puruháes to their God “Taia Chimborazo”.

Whymper Needles

Rock formation located at an altitude of 5,300 m., in the south-west flank of the Veintimilla summit. Ideal site for acclimatization of andinistas.

La Chorrera
Spectacular rock formation located in the vicinity of Chimborazo, its walls have a length of 1.4 Km and a height of up to 100 m.; it is one of the best places to practice rock climbing and rappelling.

Polylepsis Forest

It is located in the northeastern part of the Reserva de Producción de Fauna de Chimborazo, at kilometer 29 of the road Riobamba - Guaranda. Its main attractions are: the native forest of the “tree” (Yagual) with 217 trees and the natural viewpoint of the reserve.

Access

From the kilometer 45 of the Riobamba - Guaranda road, to the center of tourist services “El Arenal”, 8 kilometers further on up to the first shelter “Carrel” (4850 masl), from where the hike starts to the refuge “Whymper (5050 m.)

Services:

- Interpretation center.
- Crafts Center.
- Alimentation.
- Lodging.
- Local guides.
- Cavalcades.

Service hours:

Mondays to Sundays: 08h00 - 16h00.

Chimborazo Protected Area

(03) 2 302 7358.
Refuge contacts: 0979084401.



Neptuno’s water fountain

Sucre Park

The former name for this public space was "Plaza de Santo Domingo", due to the existing closeness to the Dominican convent.

When signing the contract for the provision of drinking water for Riobamba, ponds and water fountains were acquired for squares and parks of the city with the construction company “The J. L. Mott” of New York, for this park the sculpture of the “God Neptune”.

In Riobamba in June 28 of 1913 the service of potable water was inaugurated.

Fairs took place on this site until the municipality began with the construction of the park on August 16 th 1919, trades were transferred to other sites in the city

The name of the park is subsequently determined in honor of the Mariscal Antonio Jose de Sucre, artificer of the Battle of Riobamba.

Address: Primera Constituyente & Larrea streets.

Maldonado School

Built in the second decade of the 20th century, it is one of the largest architectural works in the city.

It was built in the physical space where the former convent of Santo Domingo, was placed and where the First Constituent Congress met to give birth to the Republic of Ecuador in 1830.

Address: Primera Constituyente & España streets.

Post Office Building

At the beginning of the twentieth century agricultural, commercial and industrial activities in Riobamba reached a stage of splendor. In 1923 the Chimborazo Bank’s Society put the italian architects brothers Natale and Luca Storm in charge of the design and construction of their building. Currently, the Post Office of Ecuador occupies this building which has become one of the most prominent and representative of the city.

Address: 10 de Agosto & Eugenio Espejo streets.

Maldonado Park

Located in front of the Cathedral, is the main square of the city. The construction of the city had as main point this site from which streets, squares and blocks (process of resettlement and relocation of Riobamba, 1799) were outlined. It is surrounded by heritage buildings where the ecclesiastical administration, City Council and government are located.

The Italian architects Russo and Storm delivered the building in 1917. To the sides of this park, there are four swimming pools and in the center stands the statue of Pedro Vicente Maldonado that was opened in 1927 and was developed by Carlos Alberto Mayer. Maldonado, illustrious riobambeño, is considered as the first and only wife of the Royal Audience of Quito and Ecuador.

Address: Primera Constituyente & Eugenio Espejo streets..



Chapel of Sacrillegio, San Felipe High School

Churches

The great temples built in Riobamba are houses where God dwells and are monuments to human intelligence that lifted them out. Solid structures of inner and outer beauty. It was built between the 19th and 20th centuries; its designers were architects who were exercising priesthood while the faithful Catholics supported with their resources and materials for the works.

Catedral Church

On the Maldonado Park or Plaza Mayor stands the temple of greater importance to the city, its facade is a historical relic, built with the stones of the former Riobamba, destroyed in 1797. In its stones baroque-mestizo passages of the old and new testament can be identified. It is composed of three levels: the socket, the moldings and the three towers, the center emphasizes the Patron Saint of the city San Pedro. Next to the Cathedral is the Chapel of Santa Barbara.

Address: Eugenio Espejo & Veloz streets.

Basilica Church

Unique in its style in the country. As a result of the consecration of the Republic to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the idea of building a National Basilica on the initiative of the P. Manuel José Proaño was born. Undertaken the task, Riobamba began to lead from the Chibunga river stones for the foundations as well as other places close to the city. The economic contributions showed the generosity of Catholics for the

better of this great company. The H. Ramon Lecanda made plans considering as a model the Basilica of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. On August 15 of 1883, with all solemnity, the first stone was placed. Over time, with the efforts and sacrifices of Riobamba and the Jesuits, Basilica was opened on 9 June 1915. In 1930 the monument to Christ the King was inaugurated, erected in commemoration of the centennial of the Republic.

Address: Veloz & Juan de Velasco streets.

Inmaculada Concepción Church

The small church which was built at the beginning of the 19th century, was replaced by a new project that began in 1889 in charge of the Abbess of the monastery the Mother Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament Ormazza and administrator of the goods of the convent Don Rafael Cisneros. The drawings were design by Fr José Lecanda S.J.

The first wall was built on February 20 of 1890; the work was completed in the second decade of the 20th century. On its main altar stands the effigy of “Señor del Buen Suceso”, Patron of Riobamba.

Address: Orozco & Cristóbal Colón streets.

San Antonio Church

The site chosen for this church and its convent is one of the most prominent of Riobamba. It is one of the higher parts of the city, and it is located in front of the park 21 de Abril, historical place from which we recall libertarian facts of 1822.

The construction of this church begins in 1935, and Franciscan Priest P. Toribio López, directed the work. The author of the drawings was the Architect Aulestia. The construction concluded in 1958 and in 1964 the bell tower was placed.

Address: Argentinos & Juan Lavalle streets.

La Merced Church

In 1871 the construction of this church started during times of President, Dr. Gabriel García Moreno. The aim was to take care of all this space to the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts. In 1879 the school was closed due to economic hardship and on November 07 1891 the Salesian Fathers assume the pastoral and educational responsibility, being the founder the Salesian Priest Antonio Fusarini.

On May 7 of 1896, by public deed, the ecclesiastical authority assigned the school and the old church to the Salesian Congregation. On October 21 of 1896, Salesians were expelled from the country, with the exception of Priest. Antonio Fusarini. The religious returned on October 28 of 1897.

In the middle of the year 1900, father Fusarini undertook the project to rebuild the Church of La Merced and entrusted the direction of the work to Father Adolfo García. Devotees of Virgen de las Mercedes contributed with donations, various materials and handouts. In 1906 the temple was finished.

Address: Espejo & Guayaquil streets.

Gastronomy

Fritadas con Guagua Mama: Address: Ayacucho & García Moreno streets.

Ceviche de chochos: Address: Orozco & Loja (Villamaría) / Veloz & Pichincha (Coliseum).

Helados de paila: Address: Espejo & 10 de Agosto streets.

Helados de San Francisco: Address: Primera Constituyente & Velasco streets.

Colaciones: Address: Primera Constituyente & Magdalena Dávalos streets.

La Vienesita (traditional bakery): Address: Larrea between Guayaquil & 10 de Agosto streets.

La Ibérica (Traditional Sausage): Address: Av. Daniel León Borja & Brasil streets.

Hornado Riobambeño (baked pork meat)
Riobamba is known for its delicious, tender and juicy baked pork meat called hornado with its crispy skin, served with hominy or potatoes. It is a dish in which you cannot miss the sour sauce (Chariuchu), own and unique recipe from Riobamba, prepared with *chica de jora* (maiz beverage).

Local markets from Riobamba

“La Candamine” Market. Address: Carabobo & Esmeraldas streets; Mondays to Sundays from 8H00 to 14H00.

“San Alfonso” Market. Address: 5 de Junio & Argentinos streets; Wednesdays and Sundays from 8H00 to 14H00
“San Francisco” Market. Address: Primera Constituyente & Velasco streets; Wednesday and Saturdays from 8H00 to 14H00

Mercado La Merced. Address: Colón & Guayaquil; Mondays to Sundays from 8H00 to 14H00.

Volcano El Altar

Route Inguisay - Las Puertas - El Altar

Level of difficulty: Moderate to high
Activities: Trekking in medium and high mountain biking, climbing, camping, photography, fishing, wildlife observation.
Travel time: 5 hours of travel to the gates of El Altar and at least 4 hours to get to it's lagoons.

Natural Resources Partners: Volcano El Altar, lakes Plateada, Verde, Azul, Mandur, Pintada y Estrellada, natural viewpoint of the lagoons, waterfalls, forest remnant of Polylepsis forest, Padguazo river, flora and fauna of moorland.

Description of the route:

The starting point of the route is the Inguisay community in the property of Zoila Martínez Association, located in Quimiag parish of Riobamba canton. Up to this point one can access by vehicle and from there it stars a trek upwards from 3.300 to a 4450 masl. The trail opened in a first stretch until the remnabt of Padguazo Grande Forest , records 4km, and the path is adequately signposted. In this place of high scenic beauty, it is possible to accomplish: camping, sport fishing, photography; observation of flora and fauna species such as rabbits, wolves, deer and birds and some traces of pumas.

Accessibility information

Continue the walk in the middle of a landscape of scrubland and almohailas to ascend and walk in a straight line about 7.5 km to the Natural Viewpoint of the Lagoons, site to take a second rest and go towards a group of lagoons, Plateada, Verde, Azul, Mandur and Pintada, interconnected through waterfalls and creeks. These are at an altitude ranging between 3028 to 5260 masl.

There is an access to Cubijes and Quimiag parishes through first order route Riobamba - Penipe. Then up the head the road you will lead to a place called Bocatoma, in which you start a walking tour of 9.8 kilometers to laguna Mandur.

Equipment recommendations:

It is recommended the use of warm clothes, a raincoat, rubber boots, sunscreen, camping equipment, enough food for easy cooking and energizing, flashlights, if possible GPS and mountain equipment if needed.

Recommendations

It is necessary to have a specialized or local guide.

Association of tourist services “El Altar ASTAGUIA”

Contacts: 0999035805 / 0983241406
astagua@outlook.ec