



# Chimborazo

Protected Area

# Chimborazo Protected Area

Visit our Taita Chimborazo, the closest point to the sun.

The Chimborazo Protected Area is a part of the National System of Protected Areas; here are two contiguous snow-capped mountains, Chimborazo at 6.263 masl, the highest in the world measured from the middle of the Earth and Carihuayrazo at 5.020 masl.

It is the only place in Ecuador where vicuñas are observed; also this place has a large moorland extension, the most humid to the East; and the driest moor in the western part, known as El Arenal.



## Flora

This Protected Area shows a sporadic presence of herbaceous species, shrubs and remnants trees.

It has 8 ecosystems, hosting more than 1.500 species of plants, with 60% endemism as: árbol de papel, pumamaqui, quishuar, chuquirahua, romerillo among others.

The dry moorlands such as Chimborazo's Arenal can be considered as Puna, a moor that varies between semi-desert and desert. It is the only comparable with the Puna of Perú, Bolivia and the Northern of Argentina.

## Fauna

The natural area of Chimborazo stands out for its birdlife, with several species of hummingbirds such as the endemic Estrella del Chimborazo, which nests at more than 5.000 masl, as well as falcons and curiquirenes. There are also species such as: rabbits, wolves, deers, camelids among other wild animals.

This area was created for the reintroduction of vicuñas and the conservation of the moor in this area, with ecological conditions similar to Andes Southern Puna are ideal for the adaptation of this camelid. The last population census in 2018 recorded 6.800 vicuñas in Ecuador.



# Attractions

It is the main attraction of this Protected Area, the last eruptive period of this snowcapped mountain was in the preceding millennium. Chimborazo is the closest point to the sun and the stars, with 6.384 km measured from the center of the Earth.

It is the highest mountain in Ecuador, with large glaciers and unique landscapes; its natural history has awakened the interest of great travelers and expeditionaries such as: Alexander Humboldt, Edward Whymper, Hans Meyer and Nicolás Martínez. It is also an Apu, a sacred mountain for the Andean inhabitants, the mythical ancestor that can be admired from the city.

## Machay Temple Chimborazo snowcapped mountain

It is a sacred cave of volcanic material, located on the Southern flank of Whymper peak, at an altitude of 4.700 masl; a place of Puruhá nation worship and tribute to their god Chimborazo. Currently, the inhabitants of the area came to ask for favors and worship Taita Chimborazo.

## **The Solitary Tree**

This tree of Quishuar specie is the tree of life, it represents the three parallel worlds of Andean cosmovision. This tree is located at the top of Totorillas valley, in the dry moorland surrounded by sand dunes and volcanic ash.

## **La Chorrera**

It is a spectacular rock formation located at the foothills of Chimborazo, due to its walls condition, this place is the best for rock climbing in the country. In this canyon there are more than 100 routes equipped for sport and classic climbing for all levels, its walls have a length of 2 km and a height from 20 m to 100 m.

In the Southeast part of the canyon there is a beautiful waterfall that originates Chorrera river.

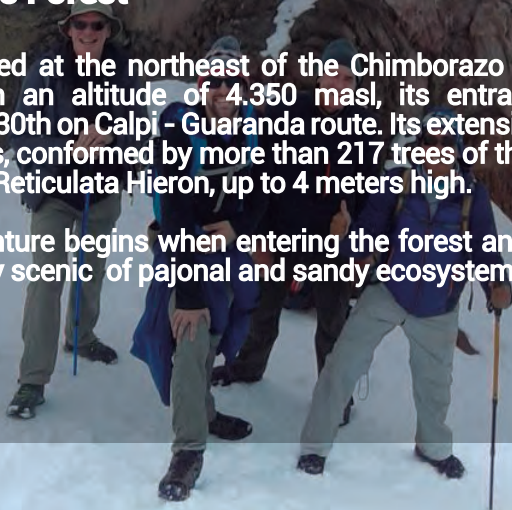
## Whymper's Needles

It is a rock formation located on the southwest flank of Veintimilla summit, at an altitude of 5.283 masl, named in Edward Whymper's, first conqueror of Chimborazo, along with the legendary Italian alpine guide Jean Antuan Carrel, ascended for the first time in January 1880 to the summit of the snowy peak. This route is ideal for acclimatization.

## Polylepis Forest

It is located at the northeast of the Chimborazo Protected Area, with an altitude of 4.350 masl, its entrance is at kilometer 30th on Calpi - Guaranda route. Its extension covers 4 hectares, conformed by more than 217 trees of the species *Polylepis Reticulata* Hieron, up to 4 meters high.

The adventure begins when entering the forest and observe the beauty scenic of pajonal and sandy ecosystem.

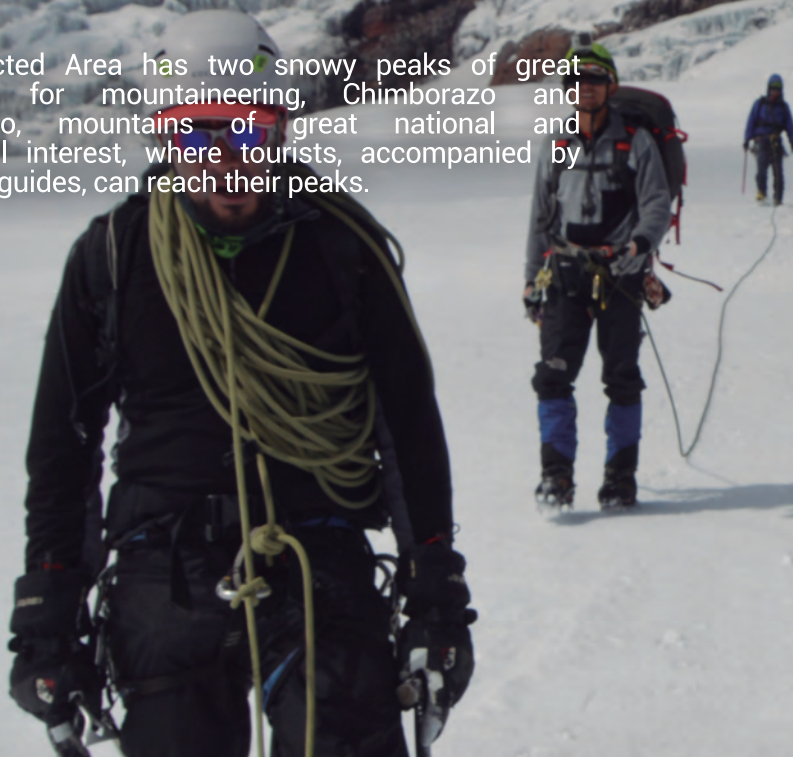


# Activities

At Chimborazo you can practice hiking, climbing, rock climbing, camping, mountain biking by established routes, also you can do community life, photography, flora and fauna observation.

## Climbing

This Protected Area has two snowy peaks of great importance for mountaineering, Chimborazo and Carihuayrazo, mountains of great national and international interest, where tourists, accompanied by specialized guides, can reach their peaks.





## Mountain biking

From Carrel refuge at 4.845 masl, the descent begins along a biking route with a medium level of difficulty, the distance is 37.5 km to Riobamba city.

During this route you can observe vicuñas and other species of fauna in their natural habitat.

## Trekking

Several routes can be done on Chimborazo, some more demanding than others, enjoying wonderful scenarios offered by moorlands through trekking routes, as: Whymper's Needles, Machay Temple, Polylepis Forest and La Chorrera canyon; following pre-Inca trails such as Camino Real, Yungas and republican roads as Trago Nan.



## Services

The Tourist Services Center El Arenal in the Chimborazo Protected Area offers: Interpretation and information center, first aid, hygienic services, handicrafts sale, naturalist guides and cafeteria.

Carrel, the first refuge, is located at an altitude of 4.850 masl, at 8 km from the Tourist Services Center along a carriage route, here are offered: food, accommodation, first aid, high mountain guides and equipment rental services.

The second refuge, Whympner is located at 5.042 masl, it is reached by a path that runs 1.5 km and offers food, accommodation and first aid services.

Attention schedule:

Monday to Sunday: **08h00 - 16h00**

Reservations: **0979084401 / (03) 2965 820**

Mail: **refugioschimborazo@gmail.com**

Chimborazo Protected Area: **(03) 302-7358**

# Tourism Operators

## **Julio Verne Travel**

Brasil and Primera Constituyente streets  
info@julioverne-travel.com

(03)2963436 / 0994167350

## **Andean Adventures**

Condorazo among Reina Pacha and Monterrey streets  
andeanadventures@gmail.com /

(03)2965820 / 0979084401

## **Ecuador Eco Aventure**

Viena and Varsovia streets  
salazartours@gmail.com

(03)2924202 / 0998311282

## **Expediciones Andinas**

Kilometer 3rd on Riobamba - Guano road.  
Las Abras zone  
sales@expediciones-andinas.com

(03)2364278 / 0999733646

## **Infinityecuador**

Ayacucho and Pichincha streets  
infinityecuadorsa@yahoo.com

(03)2947494 / 0995900149

## **Chimborazo Tours**

París y Roma  
info@chimborazotours.com

(03) 2924494 / 0983930103

## **Biking Spirit**

Ilapo 2 and Tixán streets. La Primavera citadel  
info@bikingspirit.com / www.bikingspirit.com

(03)2612263 / 0994156348

## **Probici**

Primera Constituyente and Larrea streets  
probici@ecnet.ec / www.provici.com

(03)2941880 / 0998238129

## **Puruha Razurku**

Canónigo Ramos and Saint Amand Montrud avenues  
corporacion@cordtuch.org.ec

(03)2606774 / 0985309966

## **Circulo Tours**

Veloz and Brasil streets  
nelson.ecu@gmail.com

(03)2947337 / 0998624090

## **Payani Tour Operadora**

España y 10 de Agosto streets  
payanitouroperadora@gmail.com

**0984079389**

# Chimborazo Map

## Refuges route - Cóndor Cocha lagoon

**Level of difficulty:** Difficult.

**Activities:** Hiking and photography.

**Points of interest:** Pyramid, Inti Huaytana, Cóndor Cocha lagoon.

**Route Description:** The starting point is the Tourist Services Center El Arenal from where the adventure begins traveling for 7 km through a ballast road, which takes approximately 15 minutes with a speed of 40km/h to reach Carrel refuge. This route can also be done by walking for around 2 hours. From there, an ascension of 45 minutes along a 1.5 km path to Whympner refuge, reaching 5.042 masl. From this point move along 500 meters more to reach the lagoon at 5.100 masl.

# The closest point to the SUN

In february 2016 the scientific expedition that was part of the Third French Geodetic Mission, determined that Chimborazo is the highest mountain in the world and the closest point to the sun, measured from the center of the Earth.

## **Machay Temple route**

**Level of difficulty:** Difficult.

**Activities:** Hiking at mid and high mountains, camping and photography.

**Points of interest:** Whymper's Needles, Solitary Tree and La Chorrera canyon.

**Route description:** The starting point is Carrel refuge, from where you start by walking approximately 4 hours on a path that leads to a natural cave of geological formation at 4.700 masl.

## Riobamba - CPA access:

From the Interprovincial Terminal, you can take the road to Calpi through the Panamerican Highway in the route Riobamba - Guaranda E49, traveling 41 kilometers to El Arenal Tourist Services Center; from there, you will travel 8 kilometers through a second order road to Carrel first refuge at 4.845 masl.

<b>Frequency of buses to Chimborazo Protected Area from the Interprovincial Terminal. Riobamba - Guaranda</b>	
<b>Cooperatives</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Atenas	09h15 - 12h15 - 19h00
Flota Bolívar	05h00 - 06h15 - 08h30 11h00 - 13h10 - 14h00 15h00 - 17h00
10 de Noviembre	07h30 - 10h30 16h00 - 20h00

## What to do in case of emergency?

1. Inform your relatives and park rangers at checkpoints, the place to visit and the activity you are going to do.
2. If you find yourself lost, stop. Take a deep breath and remain calm.
3. Stay warm and dry. Hypothermia is a very serious risk.
4. If you take refuge in the field, locate objects of bright or glossy color, so that rescuers can see them from far.
5. Cell phones do not work in Protected Areas.
6. Make noise to ask for help.
7. Determine a survival plan and stay safe.

# Polylepis Forest route

**Level of difficulty:** Moderate.









**Activities:** Hiking, camping and photography.

**Points of interest:** La Chorrera canyon and Chimborazo snowcapped mountain.

**Route description:** The starting point is El Arenal Tourist Services Center, advancing 1 kilometer towards Riobamba; entering 5 kilometers through a third order road until reaching the attraction at 4.350 masl.

This tour can be done by car to the parking area, and then taking the path.

## LEGEND

-  Chimborazo's route
-  Third order route
-  Refuges route - Cóndor Cocha lagoon
-  Machay Temple route
-  Inti Huaytana route - Whymper's Needles
-  Polylepis Forest route
-  Cycling route
-  Community Tourism Route





RIOBAMBA



---

### Tourist Information

**Address:** Daniel León Borja avenue and  
Brasil street

**Phone:** (03)2-947-389  
Tourism Office

**Address:** La Prensa and Daniel León  
Borja avenues.

**Phone:** (03)2-944-447  
Interprovincial Bus Station



Reserva de Producción de Fauna

**Chimborazo**

**Address:** Kilometer 45th on Riobamba -  
Guaranda road

**Phone:** (03)3-027-358

**Alcaldía de Riobamba**

Administración 2019 - 2023



/ Riobamba