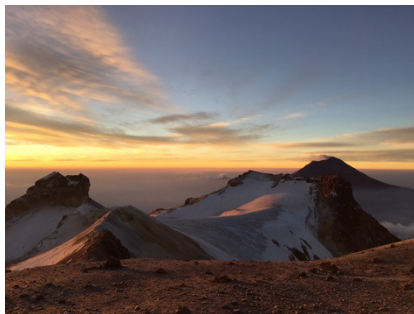


Mexican Volcanoes Expedition

© 2021 International Mountain Guides

Thanks for your interest in our Mexico climbing programs. We have conducted these trips since 1976 and they have always been a favorite. It would be difficult to find a guide service with more experience climbing in Mexico. This trip only requires you to break away from work for one week. You can sharpen or acquire new skills while enjoying some Mexican sunshine and seeing another area of the world. All put together, this makes for a great climbing vacation.



A beautiful sunrise in Mexico.

We sincerely feel that this is one of the best run Mexico Volcanoes programs available. Experience, leadership and relationships make the difference in our programs.

This information should answer many of your initial questions and also guide you through the next stages of preparing for the climb. The material is quite self-explanatory, but should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at any time.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Our Mexico program was completely revamped when Popocatepetl became active years ago and the trip is now better than ever. After the awakening of Popocatepetl, IMG set our sights on another nearby volcano: Ixtaccihuatl (17,338').

Orizaba (18,491') will be climbed via the Jamapa Glacier. In addition to the climbs, two nights are spent in Mexico City and one in the old Spanish colonial city of Puebla. We'll spend the night after climbing Orizaba with friends in the country town of Tlachichuca.

Each of the climbs involves several thousand vertical feet of snow and glacier climbing. This nine-day trip to Mexico is great as a first high-altitude experience. Basic climbing experience, such as a climb of Mt. Rainier, would be excellent training for the trip. Each team member needs to be familiar with ice axe arrest, basic cramponing and rope team travel. Each climber also needs to be in excellent physical condition; climbing to altitudes approaching 19,000 feet is never easy.

A top IMG Senior Guide will be leading the program. Check out the [Guide's Page](#) on our web site. We are proud to say that while in Mexico, IMG works with the Reyes family for all travel arrangements. Our relationship with the Reyes family adds immeasurably to the success and enjoyment of the climb.

-- Phil Ershler, Program Director

Mexico: Just The Facts

Ixtaccihual: 17,338'

Set Your GPS:

19° 11' N • 98° 38' W

First Boot-Prints on Top:

Although James de Salis's 1889 summit ascent was the first on record, archaeological evidence indicates that the mountain was previously climbed by Aztec and earlier cultures.

The Neighborhood:

Ixta is an extinct volcano, the third highest mountain in Mexico behind Pico de Orizaba and Popocatepetl, an active volcano about 10 miles away.

The Legend:

The name Ixtaccihual is Náhuatl (Aztec) for "White Woman," which comes from an ancient legend in which Ixta and Popo were once lovers that were turned into mountains after displeasing the gods. Ixta was turned into a mountain without life, and Popo was given eternal life, a curse of the highest magnitude in that forever he must gaze upon the extinct form of his beloved Ixta. His anguish is to blame for the rumblings of the earth.

Freud Would Be Pleased:

In keeping with the legend, many locals recognize that the mountain's prominent features resemble the features of a woman sleeping on her back, particularly when seen from the west. There are mountain features which correspond to the hair, head, ear, neck, breast, belly, knees and feet, and when discussing the mountain, these anatomical terms are commonly used in reference to key landmarks and climbing routes.

Pico de Orizaba: 18,491'

Set Your GPS:

19° 01' N • 97° 16' W

First Boot-Prints on Top:

1848 F. Maynard and G. Reynolds

Sizing Up:

Pico de Orizaba, a dormant volcano, is the highest peak in Mexico, and the third highest in North America, behind Denali and Mount Logan.

Good Neighborhood with a View:

From high on the mountain, the Gulf of Mexico is visible to the east and Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl, Mexico's second and third highest mountains, visible to the west.

DATES and PRICES:

Orizaba and Ixtaccihuatl:

November 6-14, 2021

Landcost: \$3,300 US



Ixta and the Mexican countryside (Dusting Balderach)

Costs Included:

- Guide fees
- Double accommodations in hotels
- Shared accommodations in huts
- Group transportation
- Group equipment including stoves and fuel, ropes, cooking gear, group first aid kit, technical climbing equipment, radios, etc...
- Meals while climbing except for lunches/snacks

Cost Does Not Include:

- International airfare including airport taxes
- Hotel transfers
- Meals while not climbing
- Personal clothing and equipment on the trip gear list
- Lunch/snack foods
- **REQUIRED Insurance:** IMG requires that all international trip participants purchase [Travel Insurance](#) that includes coverage for medical evacuation, repatriation and medical expenses for the duration of their IMG program. Trip Cancellation Insurance is strongly recommended. Trekking and mountaineering programs are true "adventure travel."
- Guide gratuities

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

It has been said that these volcanoes are an ideal training ground for climbers who would like to get into high altitude mountaineering. The routes on these peaks are not particularly difficult technically but are very worthwhile ascents.

Both climbs involve extended cramponing on moderately steep slopes with hard snow conditions. Approximately 3,000 - 4,000 vertical feet of snow can be expected on each peak. Crevasse problems will be minor. The terrain on Ixta or Orizaba can be compared to the climbing on Mt. Rainier above 10,000 feet.

CONDITIONING

You cannot over train for high altitude climbing. Concentrate on your heart, legs and lungs. Climb or hike at any opportunity. You will enjoy the trip more if you are properly prepared. An aerobic program of running, bicycling, or stair climbing, plus a conditioning program for the thigh muscles, is strongly recommended. You owe it to your team mates to be in excellent condition for the trip.

CLIMBING SKILLS

Prior knowledge of ice axe arrest, cramponing and rope team travel are **REQUIRED**. Everyone needs to be familiar with these basic climbing skills.



The approach to Ixta (Dustin Balderach)

WEATHER

There is no way to predict what the exact weather will be like during our ascents. Temperatures should be comparable to those experienced on Mt. Rainier during the summer climbing season. Precipitation is usually minimal.

In Mexico City and the surrounding countryside, temperatures will range from a balmy 60 - 80° F in the day to cool evenings requiring a sweater or light jacket.

FOOD

You will be responsible for your own restaurant meals and any bottled drinks. There are a variety of good restaurants within a short distance of the hotels we use. We'll try to sample a few of them.

We'll take care of breakfasts and dinners while climbing, this includes hot drinks. This means that you need only to worry about your climbing lunches and snack foods. Figure on food/snacks for four lunches. Candy, cheese, nuts, crackers and powdered drink mixes are items that people typically bring. You can always purchase some extras like fruit in Mexico. Bottled water is available everywhere. The bottom line is to bring snacks that you like to eat, not necessarily things that you think are good for you. IMG guides have shared some of their favorite mountain food [here](#).

PASSPORT AND TOURIST CARD

The procedure for entering Mexico is very simple. You **MUST** have a tourist card (obtainable from the airlines) and a passport. Upon arrival, you will be asked to show both your tourist card and passport so be sure to have both handy upon your arrival in Mexico. We also suggest you bring an extra copy of the front pages of your passport in case of loss, along with a couple of extra passport photos.

PACKING AND TRAVELING SUGGESTIONS

Most of us will pack our gear in two duffel bags. We put our climbing pack in one of these bags. Most airlines limit checked luggage to two pieces each weighing no more than 50 lbs. Use zip ties to close the bags or purchase TSA approved locks. TSA approved locks really are a good idea; they are nice for your peace of mind and help to prevent pilfering. In addition to these two bags, we like to use a small backpack as our carry-on luggage. You then have this small backpack available for day hikes, shopping, etc.

We also would suggest that you purchase one of the many light money belts that are available or get one of the pouches that you can hang around your neck and place inside your shirt. This is a little safer way to carry your money and travel documents.

Get to the airport early and make sure your luggage gets checked through to the correct destination. Also, make sure that your flight connections aren't too tight. Lost luggage is a pain. Try to keep the number of connections to a minimum when you are making travel plans and use the same airline as much as possible.

Leave expensive jewelry and watches at home. We would like everyone to have a wrist watch with an alarm along. They are quite handy. It's convenient to have a pen with you for filling in travel forms.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

While it's always nice to have a doctor as a participant on our trips, we cannot guarantee one's presence and you should be aware of this. We do ask that you carefully fill out the Medical Information form that is part of the sign-up packet which you completed as part of the registration procedure. We need to be informed of any allergies you may have, medications you are currently taking and any medical conditions which could possibly affect your ability to safely participate on a climbing expedition.

In addition to the first aid items listed on the equipment list, there are a few additional required medications. These should be discussed with your personal physician and will require a prescription. We want everyone to bring a course of the prescription antibiotic azithromycin. Along with azithromycin, you will want to obtain high altitude emergency drugs including Acetazolamide, Dexamethasone and Nifedipine.

You should also bring some Imodium for treatment of traveler's diarrhea. Please consider all of these medications as part of your REQUIRED equipment list. Any medication should be used only if necessary and use should be discussed thoroughly with your physician and with your guide before you take the medication.

Water purification is also very important. An efficient and effective method is the use of iodine crystals. These are available commercially at mountaineering stores as a product called 'Polar Pure'. Iodine tablets, such as 'Potable Agua' are also available and work well. Filters, such as the ones made by MSR, are also good. Either can be used or both can be used in combination. Bottled water is also readily available.

There are some immunizations that you should consider. Your local health department is the best source of information. They are cheap insurance. Start preparations now so that these vaccinations can be spaced out. We strongly suggest receiving the Hepatitis A vaccination and a tetanus vaccination. Most people like to be current with these vaccinations regardless of whether they are traveling or not.

We also recommend that each participant brings a small bottle of hand disinfectant such as Purell. Anything that we can do to stay healthy is worthwhile.

Health issues will be discussed during the expedition and we encourage you to contact us if you have any questions before or during the trip.

“I was very impressed with how everything was so well organized. It seemed like every little detail was covered. IMG is way better than the others. Way better! You guys are the best in the business...”

—Jim P.

For more comments from IMG climbers, please see our website at: mountainguides.com/comments.shtml



High-camp on Ixta (Austin Shannon)



Pico de Orizaba (Dallas Glass)



Summit of Ixta (Greg Vernovage)

IMMUNIZATIONS

No immunizations are currently required to enter Mexico. We do recommend that you consider the following:

- Tetanus/Diphtheria:** There is no natural immunity to the tetanus toxin and since it is found throughout the world, immunization is a universal recommendation regardless of age. A combined tetanus/ diphtheria booster is available, good for ten years.
- Hepatitis Vaccine:** New vaccines are available for both hepatitis A and B.

INSURANCE AND TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

We invest in insurance coverage for commercial liability and medical and disability insurance for our employees while participating on our programs. We cannot insure you for your personal needs, but we do expect you to be as fiscally responsible as we are. We require that you insure yourself against potentially expensive difficulties that may arise. First, Trip Cancellation Insurance may provide financial relief should you be forced to withdraw from the program before it even happens. Next, make sure you have adequate Travel Insurance for coverage should you have a problem during the trip. Medical care and evacuation in remote locations can be expensive. For more information, please see our page on [cancellation, rescue/repatriation insurance](#) or contact the IMG Office.

International Mountain Guides has worked closely with various travel agents throughout the years and are happy to make recommendations to our customers based on their needs once confirmed on a program. Flights to Mexico City are easily booked from almost any area of the United States. Because of this, the group meets at the Maria Cristina Hotel in Mexico City. Try to arrive in Mexico City as early as possible on Saturday afternoon. Remember, you are responsible for making all of your own flight arrangements.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Your extra city clothes can be left at the hotel in a duffel bag. Keep your clothing tasteful but casual. Shorts for men are typically frowned upon in town.

Cash is usually easier to exchange. Since we aren't carrying very large amounts, most people prefer cash to traveler's checks. Carrying an assortment of smaller bills is usually helpful. Credit cards are accepted by larger Mexican businesses in the cities but are useless in small towns. Pesos can be purchased at the airport and in the hotel. Plan to take approximately \$500.

After clearing customs and immigration at the Mexico City airport, simply hail one of the government run airport taxis to the hotel. The rate is set and there is no haggling over the price. Look for their window at the airport.

We meet at the Maria Cristina Hotel in Mexico City. The address is Rio Lerma #31 and the telephone number is: 5 566 9688. It is centrally located near the Zona Rosa in Mexico City. The people at the front desk of the hotel will have your names on a list. You will be paired with another member to share a double room. We will meet the group in the lobby on Saturday evening at 7:00 p.m. We'll then go out to dinner together and discuss the week's program. Your IMG leader will contact you later that evening if you arrive late and are unable to make the dinner meeting.

We will return to Mexico City on the following Saturday. Most people make their flight arrangements to depart Mexico City on Sunday morning. We will have rooms reserved for everyone at the Hotel Maria Christina for that final Saturday night.

Mexican Volcanoes (ORIZABA and IXTACCIHUATL) Expedition Itinerary

- Day 01** Arrive in Mexico City and meet the group at the Hotel Maria Christina on Rio Lerma #31. Group meeting in the lobby of the hotel at 7:00 p.m. Dinner at a local restaurant.
- Day 02** Morning departure. Drive out in private vehicles to Ixta. We'll hike near Cortez Pass and spend the evening in the town of Amecameca.
- Day 03** Back up to Cortez Pass, do a carry of water/gear to our high camp and spend the night at the hut on the Pass.
- Day 04** Up to high camp, pack, prep for the summit climb and get to bed early.
- Day 05** Summit day on Ixta and back to camp to head straight for the city of Puebla. It's a long but rewarding day.
- Day 06** Leave Puebla for Tlachichuca. From here we will be transported by local jeep drivers to the Piedre Grande hut at the base of Orizaba. The night is spent in the hut.
- Day 07** Summit day on Orizaba and return to the hut. The jeeps will meet us in the late afternoon and take us down to Tlachichuca. We will have dinner and stay with our friends, the Reyes family, in Tlachichuca that evening.
- Day 08** We will return to Mexico City, arriving about mid-day. The afternoon is free, and we will spend a final night in town celebrating our success.
- Day 09** Depart Mexico City for flight home. You can arrange your flights to depart at any time on Sunday. Most of us leave early that morning.

“Phil runs a well thought out and organized program. It's a great way to see the Mexican Volcanoes. I highly recommend it...”

—Trent

For more comments from IMG climbers, please see our website at: mountainguides.com/comments.shtml

Mexican Volcanoes Required Equipment List

Required Gear
Internal frame mountaineering backpack (minimum 60L)
2 duffel bags
Small carry-on/travel bag
Ice Axe (60-70 cm)
Crampons
Adjustable ski poles
Climbing Harness
Climbing Helmet
1 locking and 1 non-locking carabiner
Sleeping bag rated between 10F and 20F
Inflatable sleeping pad
Double climbing boots
Gaiters
Light hiking shoes or boots
2 sets of wool hiking socks
2 sets of wool mountaineering socks
Light hiking shirt
Light hiking shorts and pants
2 Pairs of synthetic underwear
2 sports bras
Synthetic base layer for legs (long underwear)
Soft-shell climbing pants
Waterproof Gore-Tex pants with full-length leg zippers
2 Synthetic upper body base layers
1 or 2 medium weight insulating layers
Soft-shell jacket
Medium weight insulated parka
Waterproof Gore-Tex jacket
Wool/fleece beanie hat that fits under your helmet
Light weight gloves
Medium weight gloves
Heavy weight gloves/mitts
2 Buffs
Glacier glasses
Goggles
Sunscreen and lip balm (at least 30 spf)
2 wide-mouth 1L Nalgene water bottles
2 water bottle insulating covers
Plastic cup, bowl and spoon (lightweight and durable)
Headlamp with extra batteries
Camera (keep it light, and bring spare batteries)
Toiletries: Toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hand sanitizer, Dr. Bronner's
Personal first aid kit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High altitude and travel medications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Acetazolamide (8 tablets @ 125mg) ○ Dexamethasone (4 tablets @ 4mg) ○ Nifedipine (2 tablets @ 30mg) ○ Azithromycin • Aspirin • Antacids • Imodium • Moleskin or second skin for blisters • One roll of athletic tape <p>Consult with your doctor to acquire medications and to complete Form 5 in the application package.</p>
3 Large plastic compactor bags (we will use these to line our backpacks and duffels to protect our gear from precipitation.)
Pocket knife
Alarm wrist watch
Casual clothes: There is down-time in between climbs. Make sure to bring some comfortable clothes for hanging out and going out to dinner. Leave the black tie/dress at home, but classier attire is appropriate at some of the restaurants where we will be dining.