



PERUVIAN ANDES ADVENTURES

CHOPICALQUI CLIMB 6354m (20847 ft)

5 Days

Grade : TD / Difficult, long serious climbs



Approaching Summit Chopicalqui

Chopicalqui, at 6354m, is sometimes referred to as the "third peak of Huascarán".

It is a demanding peak to climb, with sections of steep and technical ice climbing.

Previous experience of climbing on steep hard ice is highly recommended, and a

high standard of fitness and strength is also necessary. Chopicalqui is **NOT** a suitable peak for beginner climbers.

From the summit climbers are rewarded with tremendous views of the surrounding peaks of Huascarán, Yanapaqcha, Chacaraju, Pisco and Huandoy, as well as Contrahierbas, Ulta, Hualcan and many others.

The route begins following a major glacier uphill, then steepens onto a broad ridge with route-finding skills needed to avoid crevasses and seracs. Higher up the ridge narrows and steepens, and while it is not highly technical it **is** exposed in some places.

Most of the climb is on snow slopes of 40 to 50 deg. but there is a section of about 200m with slopes of up to 65deg. with belayed climbing on snow and ice necessary some years.

Chopicalqui is suitable for climbers with good fundamental alpine climbing and glacier travel skills; some experience climbing steep ice with 2 x technical ice picks, rope work and cramponing on steep / frozen snow & hard ice, and with good belay techniques.

Porters carry all camping equipment to the Base Camp, but it is necessary to carry all equipment up to the High Camps on the mountain. Our porters carry tents, food & equipment, but you need to carry your own personal gear & climbing equipment and have a backpack large enough for this.

Alex from Switzerland who climbed Chopicalqui said: " We had a very good time with our climbing team – All of them did a very good job! Walter is an excellent mountaineering guide & also a very nice person

Kyoko from Japan who climbed Chopicalqui said: "I was really happy that we succeeded in the summit of Chopi. The guide Wilder was very friendly and helped us so much.... Wilder helped me when I felt very difficult to pass a large crevasse, & then I could pass it easily. Sunrise on the summit of Chopi was above my expectation – so nice! This trip will be my best memory. Thank you very much for everything."

Note 1: Acclimatisation *You do need to be very well acclimatised to the altitude to climb Chopicalqui. You are sleeping & climbing above 5500m and this is very demanding and tiring for the body. Without sufficient acclimatisation the chances of becoming ill on the mountain are high, or you may experience a complete loss of energy and be unable to continue with the climb.*

We always recommend that our Chopicalqui clients take a 4 day trek or a series of day hikes to higher altitudes as a minimum for acclimatisation, followed by another climb of 2 to 4 days on a 5000m peak for additional acclimatisation and strength before the demanding Chopicalqui climb.

If you are not already organising your own acclimatisation trek and preparation peak, we can give you suggestions and prices for a suitable program.

Note 2: The routes used and the conditions on all the peaks are changing year by year, and even from month to month. The descriptions we have given are general only, and the routes used, conditions on the mountain and description of routes may change considerably by the time we are climbing and we may encounter more difficult climbing than is indicated here. Conditions on all the mountains are changing rapidly due to global warming and rapid recession of glacial ice, and descriptions of routes that you may find in some guide books can be out dated within 12 months.

If at the time of your climbing expedition, information received from previous groups indicates unstable or difficult conditions, we may recommend an alternative climb.

Note 3: Your guide on Chopicalqui will be one of our experienced and professional UIAGM International Mountain Guides



Itinerary

Day 1: Huaraz to Llanganuco by Road. Hike to Chopicalqui Base Camp

Drive 3 hours from Huaraz down the broad Callejón de Huaylas valley to Yungay, then up to the Quebrada Llanganunco valley and past the famous twin lakes of Llanganuco. We begin the switchback ascent towards the road pass, then walk 45 minutes carrying all equipment to Base Camp (4430m).



Chopicalqui from Base Camp

Day 2: Carry Gear from Chopicalqui Base Camp to Morena Camp

This is a demanding day as we now have to carry all equipment - tents, food and kit - and climb through moraine boulders. We climb up the rocky ridge for an hour and then traverse the other side of the ridge and climb more steeply over large moraine rocks to Morena (Moraine) Camp (4820m).

5 to 6 hours.



Hiking to Morena Camp



Morena Camp

Day 3: Moraine Camp to High Camp

Today we set off on a steady climb up loose moraine rock for 1½ hours before reaching the glacier. We need to cross the first ½ hour on the ice early and quickly to avoid falling rocks. There follows some 3 to 4 hours of steady climbing on up to 30 deg. of crevassed snow slopes which we'll negotiate carefully to avoid the crevasses (sometimes we will cross the crevasses). There is a section of difficult rock fall 10m to 15m in length to negotiate and then eventually we reach High Camp, on snow, at 5380m.



High Camp Chopicalqui

Day 4: High Camp to Chopicalqui Summit. Down to High or Moraine Camp

Climb to the summit.

From high camp, we climb some steep slopes (45 to 50 deg.) for about one hour before we reach the south west ridge. There are crevasses and seracs to avoid. We follow this knife-edge ridge for 2 hours before coming to a 30 to 40 meters ice/snow wall (60 to 75 deg.) We climb this wall and make a long exposed traverse just at the foot of the false summit. There are 2 pitches of 55m each and one of 30m to climb to reach the false summit (it is usually a mixture of compact and soft snow 55 to 75 deg.)

Then it is another hour to the summit following the exposed south west ridge and depending on the year, there may be a big crevasse that separates the main summit from the false summit or a short section of very exposed climb to get to the summit, high at 6354m.

From the summit we descend back by climbing and abseiling to High Camp; if you are feeling strong, we can continue back down to Moraine Camp.

From 10 to 13 hours for the day.



Summit Ridge



Negotiating Crevasses near Summit



Descending by Rappel

Day 5: To the Road, then Vehicle back to Huaraz

Descend to Base Camp - 5 to 6 hours - then return to the road head and on to Huaraz in our private vehicle.

The ultimate decision about whether a route is safe to climb, or whether an alternative route must be found, or at worst that it is not safe to continue, will be made by the Peruvian Andes Adventures guide.

Climbing Hours:

Climbing times are estimated times and based on our average climbing groups from past experience. Some people may be much faster and others slower.

Trek Roads: Access roads to and from treks are generally dirt mountain roads (not paved) and in some places can be bumpy. Road travel times are slower than you may expect for the kms travelled.

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Happy – just climbed Chopicalqui