

Explore Ecuador
8 day 7 - nights
Quito, Middle of the World, Peguche, Cotacachi, Otavalo, Runa Tupari, Antisana, Papallacta,
Amazon
Eco-Tourism, Culture, Discovery

This program is fully customizable and may be operated for individuals, pods and groups

Ecuador is a small country, but offers a diversity of experiences, landscapes, incredible flora and fauna. There is something for everyone and, as the country is relatively small, transport is never long compared to its neighbors. The whole city of Quito seems to sway between the "cerros". On the left, clusters of small houses stand on the hillside. On the right, the same spectacle of small white and gray cubes placed on the dark green of the relief. Closer, in the foreground, is the swarm of colonial Quito, with its delicious maze of steep alleys that the locals descend, without dwelling too much on the pastel colors of the facades or the delicate balconies. In the north, the Otavalos are one of the indigenous peoples belonging to the Kichwa nationality and heirs to a history that began even before the invasion of present-day Ecuador by the Incas. In the south, discovering the protected and remote areas of the Amazon will certainly be an unforgettable adventure in your life. The Ecuadorian Amazon is relatively unknown but certainly the most authentic and unspoiled region on the whole continent.

Day 1: Quito

Upon arrival you'll be met by your guide and driven to your hotel about 90 minutes away.

Day 2: Quito (Middle of the World)

Submerge yourself into the heart of colonial Quito and experience the charm of Independence Square with its awe-inspiring Cathedral, Presidential Palace and Archbishop's Palace. Admire the church of La Compañía (1605); considered to be the finest example of baroque architecture in America, and the church and monastery of San Francisco (1535). Then, continue to Panecillo Hill an ideal location for a panoramic view of this historic capital. After, participate in an Artisan workshop on architectural restoration practices, and traditional crafts at Quito Workshop School, A mandatory stop at the monument marking the latitude 0° 00' 00". Visit to the Intiñan Solar Museum and discover the archeology and astronomy of the equatorial solar culture, watch the Korioli's centrifugal forces on a sink where the water falls straight down. check the time on the solar clock and balance an egg on the head of a nail! Also, learn some traditions of the Andean people in an authentic house from 1875, see animals of the Ecuadorian rain-forest, as well as an authentic shrunk head of the Shuar, Wuaorani and Kichwa tribes. Return to the hotel for overnightht [B]

Day 3: Quito, Peguche, Cotacachi, Otavalo

Today we head north, stopping at Cayembe for a traditional biscuit tasting. In Otavalo, a 40-minute drive from here, visit the Plaza de Ponchos (market) where indigenous and mestizo people from Otavalo and surrounding communities sell their handicrafts. You will find a wide range of weavings, jewelry, clothes, wood and stone carvings and painting. Rugs and shoulder bags are made of sheep wool. Two miles from Otavalo is Peguche with a 59-foot high waterfall located in a small park by the river "Jatun Yacu" or "Big Water", a sacred place for the Indians as they have a close relationship with nature. Lagoons, springs and waterfalls are considered places full of powers, where the natives carry out ritual baths of purification or pacts with the spirits of the place. Solstice celebrations take place at the falls around the 21st of June. Attend a workshop on local handicrafts and continue to your hotel for dinner and overnight. [B/D]

Day 4: Otavalo, Cotacachi, Runa Tupari

Continue to Cotacachi, an artisan city famous for its leather goods and handicrafts. Cotacachi residents are also well known for their "carne colorada" (filet of pork cooked in red achiote sauce), and "queso de hoja" (soft cheese wrapped in a plant leaf), This evening you'll stay at a family house, at Runa Tupari that, in the local Kichwa language, means "encounter with local people" and expresses the aim to facilitate cultural exchange between visitors and the inhabitants of the

region. Visitors will experience a close contact with nature and, above all other things, a truly intercultural living space. [B/D]

Day 5: Runa Tupari, Antisana, Papallacta

After sharing breakfast with other guests and house keepers, drive south towards Antisana Ecological Reserve. First, visit the Antisana volcano, the fourth highest volcano in Ecuador, at 18,714 ft, If you feel in a fit condition you may attempt one of the most challenging technical climbs in the Ecuadorian Andes. After, continue to Papallacta where you can experience the soothing thermal springs in unspoiled natural surroundings. The route leading to the hotel is the the same taken by the Spanish conquistador Francisco de Orellana in 1542 as he crossed the Andes mountain range upon discovering the Amazon and Amazon River. The hotel, at an altitude of 10,824 feet, is a place of peace and harmony. Experience the thermal pools anf enjoy a dinner composed of ingredients from the organic kitchen garden. [B/D]

Day 6: Papallacta, Amazon

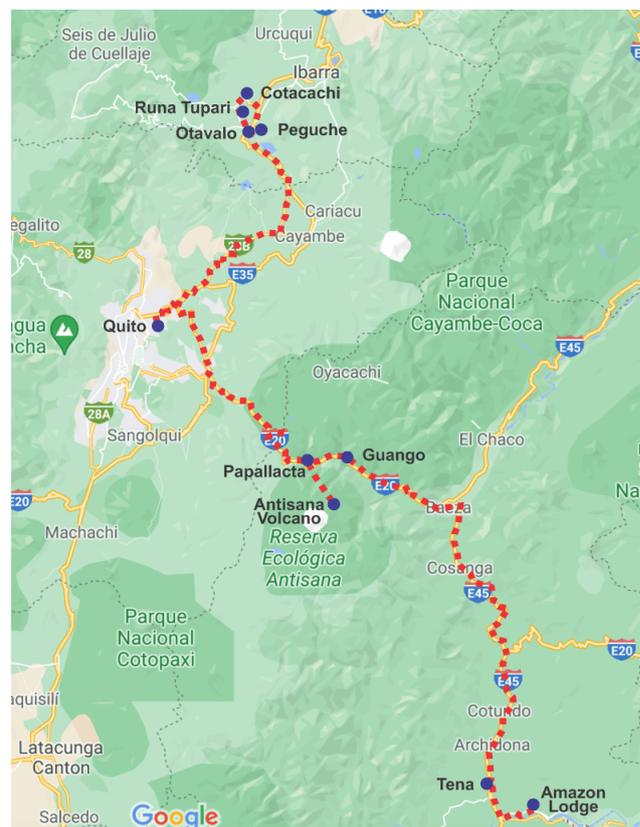
This morning visit to Guango Lodge, a magical place to spot hummingbirds, tanagers, and many other bird species. Relax and enjoy a delicious lunch at the lodge. In the afternoon, continue along a scenic stretch of road which towards the majestic Andes highlands and down into the "Oriente", or Amazon region. Along the way there are several opportunities to stop for photographs, overlooking lush green valleys and sparkling waterfalls. The journey leads to Punta Ahuano, a tiny port town on the north bank of the Napo River, where canoes await for a late afternoon, A 15-minute ride downstream to arrive at your lodge with time to get settled and enjoy the sunset from the swimming pool with a welcome cocktail. [B/L/D]

Day 7: Amazon (Cultural encounters and wonderful wildlife)

After breakfast we board a dugout canoe and navigate 20 minutes down the scenic Napo River. The destination is Cosano, where during a two-hour walk through primary rainforest we are going to lookout for tropical birds and interesting vegetation. Just across the river from the lodge is "AmaZOOnico", a rescue center for wounded and displaced tropical rainforest animals. Here we can see coatis, tapirs, and several species of monkey, snakes, and a variety of colourful birds, many of which wander around freely. Lunch and relaxation at the lodge. Mid-afternoon, we continue on to the village of Ahuano, where we learn about traditional Quichua culture. A local host shows us how to make chicha, a typical beverage (tasting optional!), and demonstrates the spiritual cleansing rituals still practiced today throughout the surrounding community. Finally, we participate in a blowgun target-shooting contest – but don't expect to beat the natives! Return to the lodge for dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 8: Amazon (Adventures on the river)

We begin the day with an early breakfast. Walking through primary and secondary forest trails, we observe distinct species of birds and insects as well as a great variety of trees and medicinal plants. The guides explain how such plants are used not only in medicine, but also in construction and other local activities. Along the trails, there are several opportunities to up the adventure factor, with hanging bridges and vines for swinging from tree to tree like Tarzan. We go on to experience the true adventure of explorers past, building and navigating a raft! On a small river island our guide shows us how to bind balsa logs together with rope to form a 'vessel', so those who wish can float down the Napo for about an hour, en route back to the lodge. The duration of this visit is around 4 hours. Lunch at the lodge, followed by "The Island": a one-hour



walk around a totally flat river island where we can spot a great variety of plants and insects. Later we visit the Mariposario (Butterfly House) where we witness the awesome life-cycles of butterflies. Dinner and overnight at the lodge. [B/L/D]

Day 9: Amazon, Quito, USA

After breakfast at the lodge we should prepare ourselves in order to undertake our 4-hour trip to Quito Airport to board your flight back to the USA. [B]

[B] = Breakfast | [B/D] = Breakfast and Dinner | [B/L/D] = Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner
Your Tour includes:

Your Tour includes:

- Round-trip airfare Miami/Quito
- Arrival and departure transfers
- 7 nights' accommodation:
 - Quito 2 nights
 - Cotacachi 2 nights
 - Papallacta 1 night
 - Amazon 2 nights
- Meals:
 - Breakfast daily
 - 2 lunches
 - 3 dinners
- Tour of Quito
- Visit Middle of the World
- Peguche waterfall
- Cotacachi leather goods
- Otavalo market
- Kichwa experience
- Artisan Volcano

- Amazon jungle experience
- Canoe ride for entering and leaving the hotel
- River transport in activities
- Activities led by native guides
- Rubber boots in excursions
- Transportation by A/C vehicle
- English-speaking guide
- Entrance fees where required
- All local taxes

Tour does not include:

- Airfare taxes and fees
- Early check-in or late checkout at hotels
- Expenses of personal nature
- Travel insurance
- Optional tours
- Any services not included in the tour
- Tips to restaurants, guides and drivers

Hotels in your Tour:

City	Hotel name	Tripadvisor
Superior Tourist Class		
Quito	Casa Gardenia Hotel	4.5
Otavalo	Las Palmeras Inn	5
Catacachi	Runa Tapari Guesthouse	5
Papallacta	Termas de Papallacta Spa & Resort	4.5
Amazon	La Casa del Suizo	4.5
First Class		
Quito	Mama Cuchara Hotel	4.5
Otavalo	Hotel Otavalo	5
Catacachi	Runa Tapari Guesthouse	5
Papallacta	Termas de Papallacta Spa & Resort	4.5
Amazon	La Casa del Suizo	4.5

Hotels will be confirmed at time of booking

Tour Prices:

No, in Party	2-3 guests	4-5 guests	6-7 guests
Superior Tourist Class			
Double	\$2,815	\$2,369	\$2,175
Single	\$3,435	\$2,989	\$2,795
First Class			
Double	\$2,955	\$2,509	\$2,295
Single	\$3,779	\$3,335	\$3,119

Rates are minimum per person sharing a room and may change without notice.

Rates may change depending on the date of travel.

These programs can be customized for individuals and for groups

Changes to this program may be requested by phone (1855-55-TOURS) or using the web FIT Quote Request

- **Airfare**

We also be glad to add the necessary airfare from your gateway so you take advantage of our special discounted leisure fares

- **Program**

You may add or remove;

- Trip days
- Cities and sites
- Meals

- **Other options**

- The program was designed with private services, however, we may substitute shared sightseeing where available
- If you prefer deluxe services we may operate this program including private driver, private guide and concierge service.

- **Quotation**

Once we have designed the program the way you want we'll give you a quote within 2 business days.

Prices are minimum for low season. Please call for other periods

Tour Code: EC03UIO21PU

Options:

- Lunches and dinners can be arranged for individuals, families and groups at top restaurants or any restaurant requested by you.
- We can revise the itinerary to spend more time and provide more depth in those areas that you are interested on.
- Any other changes to the itinerary will be accommodated depending on the facilities available in the area.
- Car can be upgraded upon request

Group Quotations

- If you wish to use these programs for your group or as the basis for a customized journey please either call us (1-855-55-TOURS or use the web Group Quote Request.
- In either case our specialists will work with to refine all the details and they will get you a quote with 2 business days. Quotes may be obtained for the air and land portions of just for the land journey.
- Booking both air and land with us will represent savings for you because of our buying power and longtime relationship with the airlines.

We will also may have the choice between regular fares and special leisure fares not available to the public.