

This is a sample trip!!! The order of travel, excursions, hotels, .... it can all be adjusted.

A different hotel? Look at the range of hotels per region or city: <https://explore-ecuador.com/the-mainland/hotels-in-ecuador/>

A different excursion? You can choose per region or city: <https://explore-ecuador.com/the-mainland/excursions-in-ecuador/>

## Southern Ecuador - 17 days - Standard

Guide price 4 087 USD per person (based on min. 2 people)

### TRAVEL SCHEDULE

day 1 arrival in Guayaquil - hotel transfer
day 2 Manglares Churute and/or Las 7 Cascadas - transfer Machala
day 3 transfer to Macara via Puyango - visit Bosque Petrificado
Day 4 - visit Jorupe Reserve
day 5 transfer to Zaruma - city tour
day 6 Buenaventura Reserve / visit to gold mine
day 7 transfer to Vilcabamba - El Palto Waterfall
day 8 Cerro Mandango hike
day 9 Podocarpus National Park (entrance Cajanuma) - transfer to Loja
day 10 visit to Saraguro + transfer to Zamora
day 11 visit to Podocarpus NP (Bombuscaro entrance)
day 12 transfer to Gualaquiza - kayak
day 13 Amazonia Tour
day 14 Transfer to Cuenca - city tour
day 15 Free day in Cuenca
day 16 Transfer to Guayaquil with visit to Cajas
day 17 Transfer to the airport

GOOGLE MAPS? CLICK ON THE MAP



• **On this trip you will be permanently accompanied by a professional English-speaking guide. The guide will meet you at the airport on day 1, where he or she will also say goodbye to you on the last day. The guide often has breakfast and dinner separately - in several places the guide sleeps in a different hotel from yours. But he accompanies all activities and transfers during the whole trip.**

- all transfers with private cars!
- For info and support you can always contact our EN-language employee in Ecuador.

### day 1

Arrival in Guayaquil

Transfer from Guayaquil Airport to Hotel in private car

You will be met at the airport and taken to the hotel (a journey of +/- 15 minutes).

Hotel Iguanazu - standard room double with breakfast and dinner

The elegant Iguanazú Hotel is located 6.5 km from Guayaquil Airport, in a quiet green area. This recently renovated Bed and Breakfast is run by a local family. All rooms have air conditioning, flat screen and bathroom. The hotel has a nice pool with a view of the city. You can enjoy good food here or arrange transport with the help of the hotel owners to go out for dinner in Guayaquil.

There are 6 standard rooms (up to 4 persons) and 2 deluxe rooms (2 persons).

For more info see [www.iguanazu.com](http://www.iguanazu.com)

### day 2

Transfer from Guayaquil to Machala in private vehicle (SP-speaking driver)

You will be picked up at the hotel and taken to Machala. This drive through the coastal area takes about 3 hours. You will pass the Manglares Churute National Park and the area of Las 7 Cascadas.

The Manglares Churute Reserve

This mangrove reserve - 50 km southeast of Guayaquil, in the hills of the Churute Mountains - is a refuge for many endangered bird species. You will also find the now rare coastal crocodile. The mangrove swamp covers 60% of the reserve and counts 7 mangrove species; the red mangrove, characterized by its large aerial roots, is the most common. Higher up in the area and in the adjacent hills you will find dry forests typical of this part of the coast, with trees such as guayacán, tagua, bobo and rosewood.

There is an enormous diversity of fish, mollusks and crustaceans: red crabs, conchas prietas, mussels and oysters. You can spot water birds such as herons, cormorants, ibises, and migratory birds such as curlews, plovers, etc. Striking are the bats, opossums, sloths and crab-eating raccoons. Larger and endangered animals are also found such as jaguars, ocelots, howler monkeys, peccaries, crocodiles and alligators.

The 7 waterfalls

These falls are located in the Cerro de Hayas Reserve, which has 600 hectares of natural forest. To visit this attraction, drive to Naranjal, an hour and a half south of Guayaquil. At kilometer 4 on the Naranjal-Machala road, walk for about 30 minutes until you reach the first waterfall. Afterwards, you will wade through small streams that emerge from the Minas River. Along the way you will see blue butterflies, giant ants and a diversity of birds.

## REEC Hotel (Machala) - standard room double with breakfast

The REEC hotel (part of the Oro Verde chain) of Machala is located in the city center and has 33 spacious rooms, all with bathroom and air conditioning. The modernly furnished hotel has a beautiful swimming pool and a restaurant with bar.

For more info see [reecmachala.com](http://reecmachala.com)

## day 3

### Transfer from Machala to Macara via Puyango in private vehicle (SP-speaking driver)

You will be picked up at the hotel and taken to Macara. This drive through the coastal area takes about 3.5 hours. You will pass Puyango where is the entrance to the Bosque Petrificado National Park.

### The Petrified Forest of Puyango

In this National Park of 2658 ha, lies the fossil deposit of a petrified forest. It is located in the middle basin of the Puyango River, between the provinces of El Oro and Loja. The sediments are divided into four geological formations (Zapotillo, Ciano, Anbin and Progreso) dating from the end of the Cretaceous period and are rich not only in trunks and fossilized leaves - which belonged to the typical flora of the Mesozoic - but also in fossils of invertebrates. The area is located between 360 and 500 meters above sea level. The main attraction of the Petrified Forest of Puyango are the petrified trees of the genus *Araucaria*, found in the canyons of Sábalo and Chirimoyos. The trees are about 100 million years old and may be the oldest petrified wood collection in the world; the largest specimen is 2 m in diameter and 15 m in length. There is also a small museum and information center.

## Urraca Lodge (Macara) - double cabin with 3 meals

This lodge is located in the 1860 hectare Jorupe Reserve not far from the town of Macara on the Peruvian border. The reserve is located between 200 and 2400 meters above sea level and consists mainly of tropical coastal forest. The Urraca Lodge has 6 beautiful double cabins. There is a restaurant with bar and laundry service.

Including overnight stay + 3 meals

For more info see [www.jocotoco.org/wb#/EN/UrracaLodgeJorupe](http://www.jocotoco.org/wb#/EN/UrracaLodgeJorupe)

## day 4

### The Jorupe Reserve

From here, the dry Tumbesian forests extend almost as far as Lima, Peru. The vegetation here is very diverse, with a large number of special habitats. These include arid scrub, deserts, deciduous tropical forest and premontane deciduous forest, the distribution of which is dependent on altitude, humidity and rainfall. Here you will find extensive forest remnants that are still in good condition. For this reason, Jorupe is home to a large number of endangered species.

Nearly 190 bird species have been recorded in Jorupe, including almost all endemics of the Tumbesian dry forests found in Ecuador. These endemics include 15 globally endangered species. Jorupe is also an excellent place to observe the King Vulture.

## Urraca Lodge (Macara) - double cabin with 3 meals

see above

## day 5

### Transfer from Macara to Piñas / Zaruma in private car (SP-speaking driver)

You will be picked up at the hotel and taken to Zaruma (or Piñas). This drive through the coastal area takes about 3.5 hours.

### The colonial city of Zaruma

Zaruma is one of the oldest cities in Ecuador, founded by the Spaniards in 1595. The town was always very important because of its rich gold supply. Today it is an important tourist center, but the mining industry still thrives. The colonial architecture, the narrow and steep streets together with the wonderful climate make Zaruma a fascinating place. Here you can walk through the colonial quarter or visit one of the many gold mines that are still in production. 30 minutes from Zaruma we find the Buenaventura reserve where more than 400 bird species live. In this reserve you can visit the beautiful hummingbird garden.

## El Jardin (Zaruma) - standard room double with breakfast

Hotel El Jardin is located in a quiet area of Zamora and has very spacious gardens with beautiful views. There are double and triple rooms with bathroom and there is a cafeteria.

For more info see [hosteriaeljardinzaruma.com](http://hosteriaeljardinzaruma.com)

## day 6

### The Buenaventura Reserve

The reserve has a registry of over 330 bird species, of which 15 are globally endangered and 34 are local endemics. In the lower part of the reserve it is sunnier and drier. Grey-cheeked parakeets, the Great Flycatcher, the Long-billed Umbrella Bird and Gray-backed Buzzards live here. Higher up you will find the El Oro parakeet and the Tapaculo. This little bird has not been found anywhere else in the world. In 2010 the White Capuchin Monkey was reintroduced and three troops of the Black Howler Monkey live there. In the lower parts of the reserve, scientists have observed brightly colored poisonous frogs, as well as a new species of lizard and several Morpho butterflies. The flora of Buenaventura includes several endemic and endangered species. The trees of the Cloud Forest provide an ideal habitat for epiphytes, orchids, heliconias and giant trees.

### The gold of Zaruma and Portovelo

Zaruma, with its winding streets and beautiful wooden houses, is one of the most beautifully preserved towns in Ecuador. A large part of the population lives on the gold that is still often mined in the region in an artisan way. Because large parts of the town has been undercut by gold prospectors, there are regular subsidences that swallow entire houses. You can visit a small artisan gold mine in Zaruma or a large industrial gold mine in nearby Portovelo.

## El Jardin (Zaruma) - standard room double with breakfast

see above

## day 7

### Transfer from Piñas/Zaruma to Vilcabamba in private vehicle (SP-speaking driver)

You will be picked up at the hotel and taken to Vilcabamba. This drive through the coastal area takes about 3 hours.

### El Palto waterfall

It takes a few hours of hiking to get to this 30m high waterfall from Vilcabamba. It is best to drive to the entrance of the National Park by car and from there a path leads steeply up.

But the experience of swimming under the waterfall makes the effort worthwhile. You can also make this trip on horseback.

The views along the way over the valley are impressive.

## Izhcayluma (Vilcabamba) - cabin double with breakfast

In Izhcayluma you can enjoy the swimming pool and the flower-filled gardens, the shady hammocks and the beauty of the landscape. The panoramic restaurant offers a wide range of national and international dishes. You can go horseback riding and a yoga session after breakfast is included.

For more info see [www.izhcayluma.com](http://www.izhcayluma.com)

## day 8

### The Mandango Loop

The Mandango Trail, recommended for experienced hikers with sturdy shoes, takes about four hours. The breathtaking trail winds around two mountain peaks with spectacular views of the surrounding valleys. You should not be afraid of heights for this beautiful walk.

It is a 4 mile loop trail that is very windy at times.

### Izhcayluma (Vilcabamba) - cabin double with breakfast

see above

## day 9

### Podocarpus National Park (Cajanuma entrance)

Located in the provinces of Zamora Chinchipe and Loja, covering an area of 144,993 hectares between 1,500-3,000 meters above sea level, the temperature here varies widely depending on the altitude. We find different types of forests here: piedmont evergreen forest, lower montane evergreen forest, montane cloud forest, evergreen high

### Transfer from Vilcabamba to Loja in private vehicle (SP-speaking driver)

You will be picked up at the hotel and taken to Loja. This drive through the Andes Mountains takes about 40 minutes.

### La Casa de Manuel (Loja) - standard room double with breakfast

This small elegant boutique hotel - there are only 5 rooms - is owned by a Lojan family and is a bit hidden in the center of the city. The rooms are distinguished by a unique decoration and everywhere display artesan decorations by Ecuadorian craftsmen. The 4 standard rooms are furnished in neoclassical, baroque, classical and new-age style. The suite is decorated in a modern French style.

For more info see [lacasademmanuel.wixsite.com/lacasademmanuel](http://lacasademmanuel.wixsite.com/lacasademmanuel)

## day 10

### Saraguro visit to indigenous village

This Quichua Indian town with 7,500 inhabitants is located along the Panamericana, about a two-hour drive north of Loja. The town is especially interesting for its Native American artesanate (especially silverware). On Sunday we visit the very lively market of Saraguro and then we head into the mountains towards the Gera community. Here we get an explanation about the daily life of the farmers and residents. We cook together with a family and make a local dish with products from the area that we may have harvested ourselves. After this delicious meal we return to Loja. Difficulty: easy.

What to bring: sun and rain protection, camera, water and comfortable shoes.

Duration: +/- 9 hours

Includes: English speaking guide, transport and lunch

Exclusive: Community Contribution (10 USD)

### Transfer from Loja to Zamora in private vehicle (SP-speaking driver)

You will be picked up at the hotel and taken to Zamora. This scenic drive through the Andes Mountains takes about 1 hour.

### Copalinga Lodge - double cabin with 3 meals

Slightly off Zamora, at 1000 meters above sea level and not far from the entrance to the Podocarpus National Park, the Copalinga Lodge (owned by the Jocotoco Nature Conservation Foundation) is located in the middle of the subtropical forest, protected by the 109 hectare reserve of the same name. Here you can enjoy the song of the birds, the dripping of rain on the leaves, the powerful sound of the Bombuscaro River, the flight of the hummingbirds chasing each other, the spectacle of the tanagers, the silent flight of beautiful butterflies, or the powerful aroma of the orchid *Maxillaria splendens*, among others. There is wifi in the common areas, there is a panoramic dining room and a laundry service and there are hiking trails of different levels of difficulty.

Including overnight stay + 3 meals

For more info see [www.jocotoco.org/wb#/EN/CopalingaLodge](http://www.jocotoco.org/wb#/EN/CopalingaLodge)

## day 11

### Podocarpus National Park (entrance Bombuscaro)

Zamora is known as the city of waterfalls and orchids. It was founded on October 6, 1549 by Hernando de Barahona, and since the 17th century, due to its geographical position, it has been one of the most important settlements in the south of the Amazon. However, it is not until the 20th century that the city experienced accelerated demographic growth. Today Zamora is an important administrative, economic and financial center. Two rivers flow through Zamora, the Zamora and the Bombuscaro. At 6 km from the city there is an entrance to the Podocarpus National Park, called Bombuscaro, a beautiful place where you can enjoy the dense cloud forest. You can take beautiful walks here or visit one of the many waterfalls. The best known is La Poderosa.

### Copalinga Lodge - double cabin with 3 meals

see above

## day 12

### Transfer from Zamora to Gualaquiza in private vehicle (SP-speaking driver)

You will be picked up at the hotel and taken to Gualaquiza. This drive through the coastal area takes about an hour and a half.

### Full Day Rafting-Kayamás

After a brief explanation of safety, we begin the descent from Nueva Tarqui to the Kayamás Bridge. We cross the area (with waterfall) of the Shuar Indians.

Includes: safety equipment, snack, transportation, certified guides, and opportunity for photography and GoPro video.

### Río Vida Ecolodge - standard double room with breakfast

The Río Vida Ecolodge is located on the banks of the Cuyes River in Nueva Tarqui 15 minutes from the city of Gualaquiza and 6 km from the major road that crosses the Amazon from North to South. This small hotel has 8 rooms of different sizes. You can rent kayaks, hiking trails have been set out and you can explore the nearby Runahurco reserve or the El Quimi National Park.

For more info see [riovidalodge.com](http://riovidalodge.com)

### day 13

#### Day trip in the Amazon forest

Today we visit the Bosque Medicinal, the Runahurco Reserve or the National Park El Quimi with a local guide. Depending on your interests, the guide focuses on the community life of the Shuar Indians living in the forest or on the flora and fauna of the area.

Included: local Spanish-speaking guide, transportation and lunch

#### Río Vida Ecolodge - standard double room with breakfast

see above

### day 14

#### Transfer from Gualaquiza to Cuenca in private car (SP-speaking driver)

You will be picked up at the hotel and taken to Cuenca. This drive through the Andes Mountains takes about 3 hours.

#### City Tour Cuenca (Half Day) - Private Excursion

With an English speaking guide we visit the most beautiful places in the city. We walk through the San Sebastian district and visit the most beautiful squares, streets and small churches. We make a stop at the Museum of Modern Art and then continue to a workshop where the famous Panama hats are made. We visit the panorama point of Turi where we have a beautiful view over the city and then return to the hotel. The guide is happy to adapt the visit to your interests and preferences.

Duration: +/- 4 hours

Includes: English speaking guide and transport

Exclusive: entrance to museums.

#### Posada del Angel - standard room double with breakfast

Posada del Angel is located right in the colonial center of Cuenca. The building is built in colonial style and was built about 120 years ago, by order of a local priest. The building has since been thoroughly restored. Today the hotel is run by a local family and has 22 rooms. There is a small restaurant, but you can also go into town for the many cozy restaurants in the city.

For more info see [hostalposadadelangel.wordpress.com](http://hostalposadadelangel.wordpress.com)

### day 15

#### Cuenca - Visit the colonial city under your own strenght

Cuenca resembles Spain in the 17th century. The cobbled streets, the flower-filled squares, the old houses with balconies, wooden shutters and latticework... Everything breathes the atmosphere of colonial times. But Cuenca is also a culturally high-quality city with some beautiful museums. In the green area you have the ruins of Inga Pirca, the National Park Cajas, the villages Chordeleg, Gualaceo, Sigsig and Baños, ...

#### Posada del Angel - standard room double with breakfast

see above

### day 16

#### Transfer from Cuenca to Guayaquil in private car with visit to Cajas National Park (English speaking guide/driver)

During this beautiful day trip you will first visit the National Park Cajas for two hours. Then you gradually descend from the Andes Mountains to the coastal plain. In the evening you arrive in Guayaquil.

Duration: +/- 6 hours (4 hours driving and 2 hours visiting the National Park)

Not included: lunch en route

#### Hotel Iguanazu - standard room double with breakfast and dinner

see above

### day 17

#### Transfer from hotel to Guayaquil airport in private vehicle

You will be transferred from the hotel to the airport (approximately 15 minutes drive).

#### Return flight from Guayaquil

**Totaalprijs van dit reisvoorstel per persoon**

**4.087 USD**

## Opmerkingen

- \* Vermelde prijzen zijn in Amerikaanse dollars en gelden uitsluitend bij betaling in USD, rechtstreeks bij ons kantoor in Quito - Ecuador. Overschrijvingskosten zijn ten laste van de klant.
- \* Alle transfers gebeuren met privé-wagen en spaanstalige chauffeur tenzij anders vermeld
- \* Vermelde uitstappen en excursies zijn voorbeelden uit een breder aanbod. Kijk op onze website voor meer keuze.
- \* Dit reisvoorstel is gebaseerd op 2-persoons standaardkamers, tenzij anders vermeld. Toeslagen voor 1-persoonskamers of luxe kamers zijn op aanvraag.
- \* Dit reisvoorstel is vrijblijvend, afhankelijk van de reisperiode en onder voorbehoud van beschikbaarheid.
- \* In het definitieve reisprogramma dient rekening gehouden te worden met bepaalde vaste dagen van activiteiten, zoals inheemse markten, vertrekdata van cruises en vluchten, etc. Wij doen al het mogelijke om vermelde activiteiten optimaal in het programma in te voegen.

## Inbegrepen

- \* Alle hotelovernachtingen met ontbijt, transfers, binnenlandse vluchten en excursies zoals vermeld in het programma.
- \* Middagmaal en avondmaal conform het programma indien vermeld.

## Niet inbegrepen

- \* Drankjes, fooien en uitgaven van persoonlijke aard.
- \* **De internationale vluchten van en naar Ecuador.**
- \* Reis - of annuleringsverzekering.

Quito, 22/03/2022

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