

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/>

Classic - 14 days Andes + 4 days Amazon + 4 days Coast - STANDARD

Guide price 3 439 USD per person (based on min. 2 people)

TRAVEL SCHEDULE

day 1 arrival in Quito + transfer to Otavalo
day 2 Acclimatization - indigenous market - Peguche
day 3 Journey around Lake Cuicocha and to Papallacta
day 4 Laguna de Baños and to Quito
day 5 (flight) to Amazon - day 1 Amazon
day 6 day 2 Amazon
Day 7 Day 3 Amazon
day 8 day 4 Amazon - (flight) to Quito
day 9 city tour and visit to the equator museum. To Mindo
day 10 the waterfalls of Mindo
day 11 hiking Yellow House Path and to Cotopaxi
day 12 excursion National Park Cotopaxi and to Baños
day 13 Baños free day - we suggest hiking to Luna Volcan
day 14 route of the waterfalls and to Riobamba
Day 15 Visit Chimborazo volcano and to Guamote
day 16 visit villages around Guamote and via Ingapirca to Cuenca
day 17 visit National Park Cajas
day 18 Cuenca city visit and transfer to Puerto Lopez
day 19 Machalilla National Park: Los Frailes
day 20 Machalilla National Park: Isla de la Plata
day 21 to Guayaquil and return flight



- all excursions with English speaking private guide
- all transfers with private cars!
- For info and support, you can always contact our EN-language staff member in Ecuador.

day 1

Arrival in Quito

Transfer from Quito to Otavalo in private car (SP-language driver)

You will be picked up by a Spanish-speaking driver at the hotel (or airport) and taken in a private car to the hotel in Otavalo. This drive through the Andes Mountains takes about 2 hours.

Posada del Quinde - standard room double with breakfast

This beautiful hotel is located in a quiet neighborhood within walking distance of downtown Otavalo and the famous Indian market. All rooms have a private bathroom. There are views of the large gardens or patio everywhere. The native staff is very helpful. There are also two suites: these are actually small apartments with a fully equipped kitchen, suitable for families or groups up to 6 people. Posada del Quinde is a good base for exploring Otavalo. More info and photos see www.posadaquinde.com

day 2

Acclimatisatie - we suggereren twee activiteiten die men op eigen krachten kan uitvoeren:

Otavalo - visit to the indigenous market (on your own)

This market in the Plaza de Ponchos is without a doubt the most famous indigenous market in Ecuador. You will find a huge selection of artesanate. The best day to visit this market is on Saturday. There are 4 markets going on simultaneously in different parts of the city. But the artesanate market now also goes on the other days of the week - it is much quieter then. This in turn has its advantages.

Hike to Peguche waterfall (on own)

The 18-meter-high Peguche waterfall is located 4 kilometers south of Otavalo in a beautiful natural park... The local population of Otavalo celebrates the solar festival of Inti Raymi there on June 21. During several days purification rituals are held here. But also during the rest of the year the park is worth a visit.

Posada del Quinde - standard room double with breakfast

day 3

Hiking around the crater lake of Cuicocha

Cuicocha is one of the most famous lakes in Ecuador. With a private car we drive to the entrance of the reserve Cotacachi-Cayapas, where we start a 5-hour hike that goes between 3100 and 3500 meters above sea level. Along the way we enjoy the biodiversity, the views of the picturesque Lake Cuicocha with its two islets and the view of the peaks Cotacachi, Imbabura and Cayambe.

Difficulty: moderate

Duration: approximately 7 hours

Included: English speaking local guide, private transport, meal or packed lunch

Required: good walking shoes, sun protection, mosquito repellent, fleece or pullover, water (min. 1 liter)

Recommended: camera, binoculars, rain jacket, reasonable physical condition also at altitude

Transfer from Otavalo to Papallacta in private car

You will be transferred from Otavalo to Papallacta. On this 3-hour drive through the Andes, just after Cayambe you pass a small equator monument and the pilgrimage site of El Quinche, known for its cathedral and typical Indian cemetery.

Thermas de Papallacta - standard room double with breakfast (during week)

Thermas de Papallacta is a vast domain high in the mountains, on the edge of the Cayambe-Coca National Park. The domain has a hotel with thirty-two rooms, three of which have a jacuzzi. There are also two family bungalows and a few small houses. All this is scattered among the numerous volcanic hot water pools. In the morning you can enjoy an extensive breakfast and for dinner the freshly caught trout in the restaurant is highly recommended. You can also enjoy a drink in the Chacana bar in between bathing. Access to the baths is included in the price.

For more information see www.termaspapallacta.com

day 4

Hiking Tour - The Lakes of Baños (Papallacta)

This walking tour lasts about 3 hours and starts at the entrance of the thermal baths in Papallacta. By car we drive 15 minutes steeply up the mountain to the entrance of the National Park Cayambe-Coca at 3800 meters above sea level. From here we walk to the lakes of Baños. In clear weather you have a beautiful view of the Antisana volcano. Along the way we look out for the spectacled bear, the mountain deer, the mountain tapir, paramo wolves etc.

Included: local guide with limited knowledge of English, transportation by private car H/T from the entrance of the thermal baths.

Transfer from Papallacta to Quito in private car (SP language driver)

You will be picked up at the hotel and taken to Quito in a 2-hour drive by private car.

Hotel Antinea - junior suite with terrace double breakfast incl.

Hotel Antinea is located in the bustling Mariscal neighborhood. Here you are close to the Plaza Foch and the Avenida Amazonas, arteries of the capital. In the neighborhood you will find numerous restaurants, bars and terraces. You are within walking distance of two large parks and by cab you can reach the old town center in ten minutes. The hotel consists of two buildings that have been declared cultural heritage. There are 4 standard rooms, 3 junior suites and 1 deluxe suite and there are also some apartments all very stylishly decorated. In the bar you can enjoy a nice cocktail.

For more info see www.hotelantinea.com

day 5

Transfer from hotel to Quito airport in private car (SP-language driver)

You will be picked up at the hotel and taken to the airport

Flight from Quito to Lago Agrio

After a beautiful 40-minute flight over the peaks of the Andes, we land at the small airport of Lago Agrio.

Cuyabeno Lodge - 4D/3N standard room double

Cuyabeno Lodge is an excellent place to discover the wildlife of the Amazon. The lodge is located in the middle of the Cuyabeno National Park, one of the most biodiverse places in Ecuador. You can see a wide variety of birds, monkeys, insects, reptiles, mammals and plant species here. With some luck, you may also see the river dolphin swimming from the canoe you are using for your expedition. Cuyabeno Lodge has 7 cabins for 2 people, all with private bathrooms. There are also 3 superior rooms with beautiful views. There is a restaurant and electricity is provided by solar cells. Cuyabeno Lodge offers tours of several days.

For more info see www.cuyabenolodge.com

day 6

Cuyabeno Lodge - day 2

day 7

Cuyabeno Lodge - day 3

day 8

Cuyabeno Lodge - day 4

Flight from Lago Agrio to Quito

After a scenic 40-minute flight in which you climb steeply over the peaks of the Andes, you land at Quito airport.

Transfer from Quito airport to hotel in private car (SP-language driver)

You will be met at the airport and taken to the hotel.

Hotel Antinea - junior suite with terrace double breakfast incl.

day 9

Colonial Quito and the Equator Museum

First you visit the historic colonial center of Quito, its churches and squares, the modern city and the panoramic point of the Panecillo hill with the English-speaking guide. Then we drive to the monument at the equator Mitad del Mundo and the Intiñan museum, where several tests show that we are indeed on the equator line. Also fun for children!

Included: English speaking guide and transport in private car.

Not included: entrance to museums and meal en route.

Duration: 5 to 6 hours

Transfer from Quito to Mindo in private car

This ride with SP-language driver in private car takes about 2 hours.

Mindo Garden Lodge - double room with breakfast

A few kilometers outside Mindo, this eco-lodge is located in a private nature reserve of 300 hectares of cloud forest. The lodge is located on the banks of the Mindo River and consists of several small cottages. There is an excellent restaurant with bar. You can set up excursions of several days here. Bicycle tours and other sports activities are also among the possibilities. The most beautiful butterfly farm in Mindo is within walking distance. Mindo Gardens also has some beautiful self-guided hiking trails: you can make a beautiful hike in pristine cloud forest on your own.

For more info see www.mindogarden.com.ec

day 10

The waterfalls of Mindo

By car, after a 20-minute drive through the forest, we reach the entrance of the park. Here you cross a valley with a width of 530 meters with a cable car. Once across, there are trails that lead to seven different waterfalls. It is a beautiful walk with the opportunity to swim and with beautiful views. However, it can be quite busy on weekends.

Duration: 4 hours. Included: transport, English speaking guide and entrance.

Mindo Garden Lodge - double room with breakfast

day 11

Walking along the Yellow House path

This extensive private forest - 500 hectares in size - has well-maintained paths that lead you high into the forest and offer beautiful views of the valley. Along the path you will find butterflies, birds and beautiful flowers. And if you're lucky, you might see armadillos, porcupines, anteaters, and maybe even the Andean spectacled bear. The trail is a five minute walk from town but is a world apart. The walk takes about three hours.

Included: transport, entrance to Yellow House and English speaking guide

Transfer from Mindo to Cotopaxi in private car

This ride in private car with Spanish-speaking driver takes about 3 hours.

Cuello de Luna - standard room double with breakfast

This cozy hotel (with Swiss owners) is located near the Cotopaxi National Park, making it the perfect base for excursions to the volcano but also to the region of Zumbahua, Pujilí and Saquisilí, all known for their beautiful indigenous markets. The hotel has 24 cozy rooms, all equipped with a private bathroom and a fireplace. The hotel has its own restaurant. From the hotel you can also participate in various excursions, such as hiking, cycling, cultural excursions, etc.

For more information see www.cuellodeluna.com

day 12

The Cotopaxi volcano

The driver will pick you up at the hotel in the morning. The National Park is an hour's drive from Quito. On clear days you can admire the mountain from afar. After a short stop at the Mariscal Sucre information point, where you will receive some explanation about the region and the volcano, we continue to 4500 m altitude. From here we go to the refuge which is 365 meters higher. It is a very steep walk that takes us at least an hour due to the high altitude. Then we descend to the Limpiopungo Lake which lies at the foot of the volcano. This lake is fed by a volcanic glacier; you often see wild horses grazing and Andean foxes hunting. Then we return to the hotel by car.

Difficulty: light-moderate.

What to bring: sun and rain protection, water, sports footwear, camera and warm clothes.

Duration: 6 hours

Includes: English speaking guide, transport and lunch box

Transfer from Cotopaxi to Baños in private car

The Spanish-speaking driver will pick you up at the hotel and take you to the hotel in Baños. This drive through the mountains takes about 2 hours.

Isla de Baños - standard room double with breakfast

Hotel Isla de Baños is located in a quiet neighborhood on the outskirts of Baños and is surrounded by a beautiful tropical garden. There is a good Argentine restaurant (closed on Mondays and Tuesdays) and a nice spa. There are 26 rooms in total, both standard rooms and suites. The staff is very friendly and helpful. There is a laundry service and you can rent bikes. The price includes the use of the wooden "sauna tubs". The spa has a small extra cost.

For more info see www.isladebanios.com

day 13

The town of Baños

Due to its location at the foot of the active volcano Tungurahua and surrounded by natural and medicinal hot springs, Baños has quickly developed into an all-round tourist town with many restaurants, hotels and countless opportunities for relaxation. You can set up beautiful hiking, mountain biking, rock climbing, rafting and rainforest excursions in and around Baños, and then end an active day with a visit to the thermal baths. Don't forget to visit the beautiful church in the main square (a local pilgrimage site).

We suggest this activity that one can do on his own:

Hiking from Baños (1800 mts) to Luna Runtun (2350 mts) - under your own power.

At the end of Avenida Maldonado, a path leads up into the mountains. After one or two hours of walking you reach the back of the most beautiful hotel of Baños: Luna Runtun. Here is a cafeteria with a beautiful view of the city and the surrounding mountains. You can eat or drink something cheap there. Slightly higher than the cafeteria, follow the fork to the right and descend back to Baños via el Mirador de la Virgen. Duration: 3 to 4 hours. Optional: English speaking guide

Isla de Baños - standard room double with breakfast

day 14

The route of the waterfalls by car

Today the guide will let you discover several beautiful places in and around Baños by car. You will be able to visit the beautiful waterfall El Pailon del Diablo, cross the Pastaza with a cable car and visit la Casa Del Arbol, where the famous swing is located.

Including: transport, English speaking guide, snack and entrance to the visits

Duration: 7 hours

Transfer from Baños to Riobamba in private car

This 2-hour drive through the Andes will take you to Riobamba. You will drive with a Spanish-speaking driver past the active volcano Tungurahua.

Santa Isabella Boutique Hotel - standard room double with breakfast buffet

This small boutique hotel, located in the center of Riobamba has about 25 standard rooms and suites, all decorated in colonial style. Be sure to visit the hotel's restaurant. Both Ecuadorian and international cuisine is served here. There is a bar in the basement with a large selection of national and international beers. There is also a wellness area with sauna and jacuzzi.

For more info see mansionsantaisabella.com

day 15

Visit to the Chimborazo volcano (private)

A guide will take you to the National Park. The white peak of Chimborazo (6310 meters) is the center of the nature reserve of the same name. The chances of encountering vicuñas (a relative of the llama) there are high. There is a first mountain hut at 4800 meters from where you can start walking to the second hut which is located at 5000 meters. You can optionally combine this beautiful day trip with a spectacular descent by mountain bike (20 USD pp - min. 2 pers). Includes: guide (English spoken); transportation; warm jacket; packed lunch; entrance to National Park.

Duration: 5 hours without the bike - 7 hours with the bike

Transfer from Riobamba to Guamote in private car (SP language driver)

You will be picked up by a local driver at the hotel and taken to Guamote in a private car.

Duration: 1 hour

Inti Sisa - standard room double with breakfast

Guamote is a small mountain village, known for its indigenous people and traditions. As part of an integral development project, Inti Sisa offers 23 beautiful guest rooms here. All rooms have a private bathroom. In addition, you can eat in the guesthouse. The project offers support to the local inhabitants of Guamote. On Thursday morning you step out of the door and end up at the most beautiful indigenous market in Ecuador. The project is run by a few Flemish volunteers.

For more info see www.intisisa.com

day 16

Visit to the indigenous villages around Guamote - private excursion

Today we take a closer look at how the indigenous people live here in this region. After visiting the center of Inti Sisa in Guamote, we head into the mountains. We visit an indigenous school where the children explain how they are taught here. We visit a local weaver who makes ponchos out of alpaca wool and end at an indigenous family who tells about their life in the village. Along the way, you'll get info on the history of the area and the local culture. Those who wish can then return to Guamote on foot (1.5 hours).

Duration: 4 hours.

Included: English speaking guide; snack and drink.

Transfer from Guamote to Cuenca with visit to Ingapirca on the way (SP-language driver)

From Guamote you will drive in a private car to Cuenca. On the way you will visit the most famous Inca ruins from Ecuador.

Duration: 5.5 hours (3.5 hours driving and 2 hours visit to Ingapirca)

Excluding the entrance to the ruins to be paid on the spot: 6 USD.

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

day 17

Visit to Cajas National Park - private excursion

The Cajas National Park has about 200 lakes and lies between 3200 and 4600 meters above sea level. We leave Cuenca in the morning and first visit the lower areas of the National Park, called Llaviucu, which are at about 3200 meters above sea level. We hike here for about an hour and a half before moving on to the higher ground.

There, one of the most beautiful and largest lakes in the park, called La Toreadora, rises. On the shores of this lake grows the Polylepis or paper tree. We hike here for about two hours and a half and then head back towards civilization for lunch in a restaurant that offers typical dishes of the region.

Difficulty: light - moderate.

Bring with you: protection from the sun and rain, camera, water, warm clothes and sturdy walking shoes.

Duration: +/- 7 hours

Includes: English speaking guide, transportation and meals

Posada del Angel - standard room double with breakfast

day 18

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.

Transfer from Cuenca to Puerto Lopez in private car (SP language driver)

This scenic drive takes you from Cuenca with a local driver through the highest peaks of the Andes to sea level. You pass all types of climate and vegetation on the way. You leave in the morning from the paramo vegetation and eucalyptus trees (around 4000 meters above sea level) to reach the beach in the afternoon between banana plantations, kapok trees and sugar cane plantations.

Duration: 7 hours

Not included: meal on the way

Mandala lodge- standard cabin double with breakfast (high season)

Hosteria Mandala is located on the beach of Puerto Lopez, a few minutes walk from the village. This very nice hotel, run by a Swiss-Italian couple has standard cabins, superior cabins and family cabins (with refrigerator). The Mariposa cabin also has a kitchenette. The hotel is located on the edge of Machalilla National Park and you can make beautiful excursions in the area. The hotel breathes the tropical atmosphere of the Ecuadorian coast.

For more information see www.hosteriamandala.info

day 19

The beaches of Los Frailes and Agua Blanca

Today you will visit Ecuador's most beautiful beach. You can get to the beach by car or by bike. Los Frailes is about three kilometers away from Puerto Lopez. At the beginning of the hike you will first get some explanation about the area. The hike then leads you to La Tortuguita, a beach with black sand, a lookout with a view over the coast to finally reach a beach with beautiful white sand. Here you can stay for a while before we leave for Agua Blanca. Agua Blanca is an archaeological site in the middle of a nature reserve. Here you can immerse yourself in a lake that has medicinal properties due to its volcanic origin. Then we return to the hotel. Difficulty rate: light.

Duration: approximately 6 hours. Included: English speaking guide, transportation, entrance to the archaeological site and lunch. Bring with you: protection from the sun and rain, sport shoes and swimming gear.

Mandala lodge- standard cabin double with breakfast (high season)

day 20

La Plata Island or small Galapagos

During this excursion you will visit this beautiful island, also called little Galapagos. It is located 25 km (about 1.5 hours by boat) off the coast of Puerto Lopez. You will find, in addition to frigate birds and tropicbirds, blue-footed, masked and red-footed boobies and even some Galapagos albatrosses. The island can only be visited with a guide from the park and you may not deviate from the official paths. You take a 2 hour and a half hike there with the nature guide. Then you return to the boat where you can spot turtles. Then you can snorkel in the bay for an hour among sea turtles and colorful fish. On the way to the island you can spot humpback whales between June and September, which use the area in large numbers as a nursery. Level of difficulty: light. Duration: 7 hours approximately. Included: English speaking guide, transportation, lunch box and snorkel gear. Excluded: entrance to National Park 1 USD pp. Bring: windbreaker for the boat, sneakers, water bottle, sun protection, swimming gear and camera.

Mandala lodge- standard cabin double met ontbijt (hoogseizoen)

day 21

Transfer from Puerto Lopez to Guayaquil airport in private car (SP language driver)

You will be transferred from the hotel in Puerto Lopez to the airport in Guayaquil (drive of +/- 4 hours).

Return flight from Guayaquil

Total price of this travel proposal per person

3.439 USD

Notes

- * Prices quoted are in US Dollars and apply only when paying in USD directly to our Quito - Ecuador office. Transfer costs are borne by the customer.
- * All transfers are done with a private car and Spanish-speaking driver unless otherwise stated
- * Listed trips and excursions are examples from a wider range. Check out our website for more choice.
- * This travel proposal is based on 2-person standard rooms, unless stated otherwise. Supplements for single or deluxe rooms are available on request.
- * This travel proposal is non-binding, depending on the travel period and subject to availability.
- * The final travel program must take into account certain fixed days of activities, such as native markets, departure dates of cruises and flights, etc. We do everything possible to optimally insert mentioned activities into the program.

Included

- * All hotel stays with breakfast, transfers, domestic flights and excursions as mentioned in the program.
- * Lunch and dinner in accordance with the program if stated.

Not included

- * Drinks, tips and expenses of a personal nature.
- * **International flights to and from Ecuador.**
- * Travel or cancellation insurance.

Quito, 14/03/2022

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