



Colors of Ecuador - 13 Days (#12893)

Note: Price printed on this PDF is valid until **29-12-2024** and is subject to change without notice due to Partner changes and currency fluctuations

Overview

Ecuador is the smallest country of all the Andean region. However, it is a multi-diverse country who has the best of the 4 worlds. Its visitors can live unforgettable moments and create great memories from the volcanoes in the Andes region, to observe endemic species in the jungle or see beautiful sunsets in the beaches or even go to a natural paradise while visiting the Galapagos Islands.

The biggest richness of the country is shared by its habitants welcoming, hospitable, proud of their natural treasures and their culture. They are impatient to show you all the magic of Ecuador, their people, landscapes, gastronomy and much more.

Trip Highlights

Quito – Amazon – Waterfall Route– Cuenca – Guayaquil

Detailed Itinerary



Day 01**DAY 1: Arrival in Ecuador**

Transfer Airport - Hotel.

Welcome to Ecuador !

Although it is the smallest of the Andean countries - half the size of France - Ecuador is a megadiverse country that has everything it takes to offer its travellers superb experiences, as varied as they are unforgettable, from the Andes to the Amazon, from the Pacific coast to the mythical Galapagos archipelago.

The country's greatest asset remains its people : welcoming, jovial, proud of their country's natural and cultural treasures, and eager to share their know-how, knowledge, traditions and gastronomy.

You will be met at the airport by your guide, who will welcome you to his country and accompany you to your hotel in the La Mariscal district.

You will land at the Mariscal Sucre International Airport, east of the capital.

There you will meet your guide who will welcome you to his country and accompany you to your hotel in the town of Otavalo, in the Lake region.

Hotel: Accommodation: IKALA

Meal: Dinner

Day 02**DAY 2: Historic Center of Quito**

Visit Historic Center of Quito

Alabado Museum

Middle of the World Museum

To fully appreciate the beauty of the historic center of Quito, the largest and best preserved in Latin America, there is nothing like walking it! During your walk through the pedestrian streets, you will admire the wonders of this UNESCO World Heritage Site, starting with the lively Plaza de la Independencia with its imposing Metropolitan Cathedral and then the impressive Church of La Compañía de Jesús, before reaching the place where the Church of San Francisco and its convent are located.

You will have lunch in a traditional restaurant, right in the Archbishop's Palace.



In the afternoon you will visit one of the most interesting museums in the country. The Casa del Alabado houses an impressive collection of pre-Columbian objects, true testimonies of the way of life of the different civilizations that have lived in the lands, now Ecuadorian.

Then you will head towards La Ronda, the oldest street in the city, home to many small local artisan shops. You will meet the locals who work with Wood and bronze.

You will also visit the National Museum. It houses one of the country's most important collections of Ecuadorian art, with magnificent pre-Hispanic and colonial works.

In the afternoon, you'll make your way to the Mitad del Mundo, on the equinoctial line, where you can test the veracity of the various properties attributed to the equator. Try balancing an egg on a clove and ask to have your photo taken with a foot in each hemisphere.

Hotel: IKALA

Meal: Breakfast

Day 03**DAY 3 | FREE DAY OR OTAVALO OPTION OR COTOPAXI OPTION**

Free day in Quito

Option full day Otavalo

Option full day Cotopaxi

Today, it's up to you! In the morning, a transfer will take you from your hotel to the rental agency to pick up your rental car and start your auto tour. You can choose between a free day in Quito to enjoy the city's attractions on your own, or the option of spending the day in Otavalo, the Andean region's famous craft market. If you're more in the mood for nature, opt for the Cotopaxi option and discover the national park.

Option day 3

Full day Otavalo

From Quito to Otavalo, you'll visit 6 different attractions.

You'll take the Pan American road north to the Quitsato, located in the canton of Cayambe, named after the snow-capped mountain there. This cultural site was built to measure the solstices and equinoxes in pre-Hispanic times, and is also considered the "other middle of the world", as the Equator line crosses this spot in the middle of the Cayambe mountain peak. Its inhabitants make their living from livestock, agriculture and the harvesting of roses for export.



To get to know its gastronomy, you'll have a cup of Ecuadorian coffee or chocolate with some biscuits (biscochos); a type of baked bread with an incomparable flavour, whose production process you can see for yourself.

The next site to visit is Otavalo. It's located in the province of Imbabura, known as the Province of Lakes, and from here you'll have a view of Lake San Pablo, with the hill of Imbabura in the background.

You will start the day with the Otavalo market, one of the most important in South America. You can haggle for fabrics, ponchos, leather goods, handmade jewellery... The perfect place to buy souvenirs!

In the afternoon, you will discover the Cuicocha Lake, inside a volcanic crater in the Cotacachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve. A short walk will take you to various viewpoints on the lake and its two islets.

Option day 3

Full day Cotopaxi

In the morning, you will take "the Avenue of the Volcanoes" to reach the Cotopaxi National Park where one of the highest active volcanoes in the world rises.

You will first visit the Interpretation Centre to learn more about the park and its volcano, then stop for a walk around Lake Limpiopungo.

You can take a short walk from the parking lot at an altitude of 4,600 m to the first refuge of José Rivas, a little more than 200 m higher. From there you can enjoy an exceptional view of the surrounding nature.

Hotel: Cuello de Luna

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 04

DAY 4 | EXIT TO THE EDGE OF THE AMAZON

Papallacta Hot springs

Casa del Suizo route

This day presenting a total change of landscape is the perfect example to show the great diversity of the country.

Before leaving the Andes, you will take a break to benefit from the many virtues of the thermal waters of the town of Papallacta.

Then you will leave the Sierra mountains to reach the exuberant vegetation and the wide rivers of the East, on the edge of the Amazon.



In the afternoon you will arrive at the town of Ahuano and take a motorized canoe to reach the lodge. This first trip will be an opportunity to enjoy the panorama and observe the gold searchers in the distance.

In the afternoon, aboard a safe boat, you will go out in search of alligators. Your guide will attract you with some meat so that you can observe up to fifteen individuals, huge adults and babies of a few weeks.

You will have the rest of the afternoon to rest from the trip, spend some time by the river, take a dip in the pool or even have a cocktail on the terrace overlooking the forest.

Hotel: CASA DEL SUIZO

Meal: Breakfast, lunch and Dinner

Day 05
DAY 5 | EXCURSION EN TROPICALE FOREST

The lodge organize the activities.

Your local guide, an expert in jungle and medicinal plants, will suggest activities adapted to your group and the climate so that you can feel the jungle, bathe in its rivers, walk the trails and reserves of the primary forest, discover the animals, meet the locals, their way of life, gastronomy, crafts, and customs...

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Hotel: CASA DEL SUIZO

Meal: Breakfast, lunch and Dinner

Day 06
DAY 6 | HANDICRAFT WITH TAGUA, DISTILLERIE ET CASCADE PAILÓN DEL DIABLO

Handicraft with Tagua

Elaboration of local alcohol

Waterfall « Pailón del Diablo

During the morning you will stop near the town of Puyo to visit a balsa wood craft workshop and discover the uses of tagua, also known as "vegetable ivory".



You can try your luck in the sugar cane mill to squeeze the sugar cane and extract the necessary juice to make a local alcohol. Then you will take the "Route of the waterfalls", lined with magnificent landscapes, which leads to the town of Baños, at the foot of the Tungurahua volcano.

After lunch, you will take a path that leads to the impressive waterfall "Pailón del Diablo", then you will pass through the town of Baños and stop there to taste the traditional sweets that Ecuadorians love.

Finally, you'll reach the town of Riobamba, with its pretty parks and churches, always with superb views of the surrounding mountains. Riobamba is the combination of the Spanish word for river (río) and the Kichwa word for valley (bamba), which perfectly illustrates the region's topography and rich mix of cultures. The Chimborazo region has one of the highest concentrations of indigenous population in the country.

Hotel: CASA REAL

Meal: Breakfast

Day 07
DAY 7 | INGAPIRCA RUINS AND PANAMA HAT FACTORY

Ingapirca Ruins

Panama Hat Factory

After passing through the Church of Balbanera, the first Catholic church built in the country during colonization, you will discover the best-preserved archaeological site in Ecuador: Ingapirca.

This place, originally used as an observatory by the Cañaris, later conquered by the Incas in the 15th century, still preserves, among other things, the ruins of a temple and the residence of virgins dedicated to ritual sacrifice. You will also discover a hut, the traditional houses of the time.

Then you will continue your trip to Cuenca and visit a factory of the famous toquilla straw hats, the panamas. You will learn about the process of making the straw hat and have the opportunity to buy one as a souvenir!

Hotel: CASA MERCED

Meal: Breakfast

Day 08
DAY 8 | DISCOVERY OF THE COLONIAL CITY OF CUENCA AND PUMAPUNGO PARK


Cuenca Historic Center
 Aborigin Cultures Museum

This day will be dedicated to the magnificent colonial city of Cuenca. Its historic center, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, is full of magnificent churches and monuments that the Spanish built incorporating the remains of the Cañari and Inca cultures.

Cuenca is the country's 3rd-largest city, after Quito, with a bohemian ambience, fine cuisine and churches and architecture in its historic center, a World Heritage Site. Cuenca is remarkably well-preserved, and its cobbled streets lined with houses with flower-filled balconies are a delight to stroll along.

After stopping off for a curious tasting in the flower market square, you'll see that the town's inhabitants are keeping craft traditions alive by continuing to work with ceramics, silver and, of course, weaving the straw hat known the world over as the Panama hat.

In the afternoon, you'll immerse yourself in the various pre-Columbian cultures represented in the Museum of Aboriginal Cultures. You'll learn more about the different cultures that have populated the territory over the last 15,000 years.

Hotel: CASA MERCED

Meal: Breakfast

Day 09

DAY 9 | DEPARTURE FOR GUAYAQUIL CITY

National Park El Cajas (Panoramic)
 Breakfast in a hacienda
 Visit Guayaquil

Leaving the Andean region, you will have a breathtaking view of El Cajas National Park and its unique landscapes, which you will traverse to reach the coastal plain where banana plantations and rice fields abound. You will make several photo stops at different viewpoints to fully enjoy one of the most beautiful panoramas in the country, especially in the wide expanses of the Andean paramo.

Finally, you will arrive in Guayaquil, the largest city in the country, nicknamed "the Pearl of the Pacific", and end the day with the discovery of the Guayaquil historical park dedicated to the colonial history, architecture, and fauna of the region.

With the country's largest port, Guayaquil is Ecuador's main commercial city. Destroyed several times by pirate attacks in past centuries, the city is a model of reconstruction and development, as demonstrated by the riverfront Malecón with



its promenade dotted with gardens and historic monuments.

Finally, take a stroll along the Malecón 2000 and sunbathe with the iguanas at Parc Seminario before returning to your hotel.

Hotel: GRAND HOTEL GUAYAQUIL

Meal: Breakfast

Day 10

DAY 10 | ARRIVAL ON THE ISLAND OF SANTA CRUZ

Transfer out Hotel – Airport

Boarding formalities and flight to the Galapagos Islands

Boarding the Coral II

In the morning, a private transfer will be organized to Guayaquil airport for your flight to the Galapagos. You should then have your luggage inspected in the Galapagos Biosafety Agency (GBA.) To prevent the unintentional introduction of invasive species that threaten the islands' biodiversity. This same action will be repeated on the docks before any transport between the different islands of the archipelago. Before landing, the aircraft cabin will be fumigated with a WHO-approved product, to eliminate any organisms that may have passed through despite previous inspections.

The Galapagos archipelago offers a wide range of experiences to make the most of this unforgettable region. The varied panoramas range from heavenly beaches to green mountains and impressive volcanic landscapes. The fauna of the islands is incredibly rich, whether on land, in the ocean or in the air : turtles, iguanas, sea lions, stingrays, sharks, penguins, blue-footed boobies and red-footed boobies, all of which you can observe at close quarters!

You'll be picked up at the airport by your guides. A short bus ride and you're aboard the M/V Coral Yacht.

After lunch, your guide will take you to visit the giant tortoise reserve inland from Santa Cruz Island. Here you'll have the chance to meet some real wild giant tortoises. During the walk, it's also possible to observe species of finch hiding in the flora.

Hotel: CORAL II

Meal: Breakfast, lunch and Dinner

Day 11

DAY 11 | OFF THE SANTIAGO COAST



Dragon Hill

Bartolome Hill

When you arrive at the dock, you'll have fun spotting the black marine iguanas on the volcanic rocks. They're taking a heat bath ! After a short stroll along the prickly pear cactus, Dragon Hill appears in the distance. You'll pass a shallow lake where flamingos frequently come to feed with wading birds. The landscape then changes inland: drier and wooded, iguanas nest here.

In the afternoon, you'll head for Bartolomé Island, the most famous in the archipelago thanks to the breathtaking view of Pinnacle Rock and Santiago Island from its summit. You can reach this superb viewpoint by climbing up the boardwalk.

Diving in this area should enable you to encounter Galapagos penguins, white-tip sharks and playful sea lions.

Hotel: CORAL II

Meal: Breakfast, lunch and Dinner

Day 12

DAY 12 | OFF THE SANTIAGO COAST

Rabida Island

Buccaneer Cove

Espumilla Beach

This morning you'll visit Rabida Island. This spectacular island with its red sandy beach is home to sea lions, mockingbirds, finches, endemic Galapagos doves and vermilion flycatchers. The walk will also take you through a forest of Palo Santo and cactus, a characteristic Galapagos landscape.

Time will be set aside for diving, with the opportunity to watch sea lions sweep through the water, along with the ever-present turtles.

Buccaneer Cove, the "pirate cove". Indeed, it was a particularly popular bay for pirates to stock up on food, mainly turtles, and water. Today, sea lions and fur seals call it home. Erosion has sculpted the shores into the shape of an elephant.

Espumilla beach is a white sandy beach, where "scum" is particularly prevalent, hence its name. Behind the beach, mangroves and a small palo santo forest lead to saltwater lagoons that are home to pink flamingos. The high dunes are home to a nesting site for sea turtles. A good place to snorkel and see stingrays.

Hotel: CORAL II

Meal: Breakfast, lunch and Dinner



Day 13**DAY 13 | RETURN TO THE CONTINENT**

Black Turtle Cove

Flight to the Continent

Black Turtle Cove is on the north shore of Santa Cruz Island, accessible only by sea. You'll find four species of mangroves. It's a veritable sanctuary for turtles, which can easily be seen swimming and poking their heads above the surface of the calm waters. White-tip reef sharks and rays can be seen below the boat, as well as seabirds, pelicans, herons and egrets feeding in the cove.

The crew will then drop you off at Baltra airport, where you will get your national connection to the mainland.

Meal: Breakfast

Inclusions

- Lodgings as mentioned
- Transportation in a private vehicle with a english speaking guide for the first and second day.
- Rental car from day 3 to day
- Meals mentioned
- Assistance throughout the trip.

Exclusions

- International Flight
- Luggage carrying and tips
- Drinks and meals not listed as included above
- Galapagos National Park entrance fee (226 AUD / person)
- Galapagos return flight
- Transit control card entrance to Galapagos (45 AUD / person)
- Entrance fees to listed sites and museums
- Insurance, extras and anything not specifically mentioned as included in the program.

Note



**These rates may vary until having a confirmed reservation.

The accommodation included in our program as stated in the program* :

For 4-star hotels and up

Ikala standard rooms replaced by Ikala suite rooms

Casa del Suizo: Superior category

Casa Real : Superior category

Casa Merced standard rooms replaced by Casa Merced Deluxe Queen

Grand Hotel Guayaquil: ø superior category

Coral Standard Plus replaced by Coral Junior Suite

* Subject to availability, equivalent establishments will be proposed if necessary. Hotel categories according to local standards

Program Touring / Guide

Private touring

Departure Period

01 Feb, 2024 to 31 Dec, 2024

3 Star

AUD 7,988 P P twin share

AVAILABLE

4 Star

AUD 10,061 P P twin share

AVAILABLE

