



## Ecuador 360° Tour - 14 Days (#19314)

**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

### Trip Highlights

Quito - Otavalo - Cotopaxi - Papallacta - Arajuno - Baños - Riobamba - Cuenca - Guayaquil

### Detailed Itinerary

#### Day 01

#### DAY 01: ARRIVAL IN QUITO

After arriving at the airport, our helpful guide will meet you, plus he will serve as a translator, and assist with the private transfer to your hotel. Situated in a circle of Andean peaks, Quito is the world's second-highest capital, with arguably one of the finest settings in the world. Originally settled by the Quitu tribe in the first millennium, Quito was an important part of the Inca Empire, before being destroyed and re-founded by the Spanish conquistador Sebastián de Benalcázar in 1534. The colonial centre – declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1978 – is one of the largest and best-preserved in Latin America. It is home to excellent museums, churches, and art galleries. Overnight.

**Meal:** No Meal



**Day 02**
**DAY 02: HISTORICAL CENTER - THE MIDDLE OF THE WORLD  
 LATITUDE 0 0' 0"**

The middle of the world, latitude 0 0' 0": Early in the morning and right after breakfast, you and our local guide start the travel tour at the downtown area, well known as Quito Colonial. You start your journey along the "churches ? trail" by visiting first the cathedral. In the cathedral, you learn about its history and the guide explains the internal design of the cathedral such as the "mudejar ?s" influence on its first stage, the area with 3 longitudinal wings, and a small transversal wing behind the choir. After finishing the round in the cathedral, we have a short walk to the church La Compania along with the guide's expertise. The guide will enlighten you with history and fun facts of every place, in this case La Compania. Its decoration is based on muslin features and the altars are covered by gold leaf along with faces and birds carved. It is considered as an architectonic jewel in the American baroque style. It also has a religious value, because the rest of Saint Marianita of Jesus is located there, and according to some, she was the protector of the city. Afterwards, we visit San Francisco, which is famous for the Cantuña story. San Francisco is well known due to its legends and stories, which make the place culturally wealthy. At the San Francisco church, there is a local hand craft store called Tianguetz, where you can find a variety of items from the Ecuadorian culture. Here, you can buy postcards, books, Ecuadorian music, natural products, and even get a coffee with Humitas (which is sweet corn tamale) offered at the local Café Cantuña located at the Plaza San Francisco.

Around midday, you head to "Mitad Del Mundo", a monument at the equator line that passes through our country. You may choose to either visit the Ethnographic or the Inti Ñan Museums, both located near the monument. Along the way, we will stop for a traditional Ecuadorian lunch (optional and not included). After the tour, you will return to your hotel. Overnight.

**Meal:** Breakfast

**Day 03**
**DAY 03: OTAVALO - CUICOCHA LAKE**

This morning you leave to Otavalo, the famous artesian market town. There, we visit the textile market located at the "Plaza of Ponchos"; this is one of the most famous markets in South America. You can find all kinds of handcrafts, including tapestries made on the Spanish weaving loom as well as the indigenous blackstrap loom. Afterwards you enjoy some free time for bargaining and buying of the friendly Otavaleños. We also visit some craft workshops dedicated to the manufacture of Andean instruments such as crawlers, panpipes, flutes, recorders, among others. They also make string instruments like charango, mandolins, and guitars. These products are sold in stores and during the fair in town.

In the afternoon we continue to Cuicocha. This lagoon is located in the crater of an extinct volcano. Afterwards you will head back to your hotel. Overnight.



**Meal:** Breakfast

**Day 04**
**DAY 04: COTOPAXI**

After breakfast, we are ready for our trip to Cotopaxi, known as the highest active volcano in the world. We visit its National Park, which is located 59.54 km from Quito. Its lush endemic flora and fauna will allow us to see the representative species such as the Chuquiragua (also known as the flower of the mountaineer), wild horses, deer's, llamas and more. While we are there, you can explore Limpiopungo lagoon, located near the volcano Rumiñahui (149.96 meters), or hike to observe birds.

**Meal:** Breakfast

**Day 05**
**DAY 05: PAPALLACTA**

In the morning we continue towards Papallacta, but first you will visit Guango Lodge, a small tourist facility surrounded by 180 hectares of temperate forest with great mixed flocks of birds. Located at 2,700 metres, here you will do a little hike while you experience fantastic views and photo opportunities of the 15 species of Hummingbird that frequent the area. Where you have a unique and beautiful landscape and you can enjoy the hot springs. Papallacta has some pools with different temperatures for use. You have time to dive into the waters and enjoy optional spa treatments. This is really a place to spoil yourself.

After Lunch you will be heading to Hakuna Matata in Napo Province, this private hacienda has approximately 150 ha is the perfect place to enjoy to the fullest a never-ending series of activities, which this area lends itself to more than any other. When you arrive at Hakuna Matata, the staff will help you carrying your luggage. They will also provide a complementary welcome drink and dinner in the famous Pangaea Restaurant.

**Meal:** Breakfast, lunch and Dinner

**Day 06**
**DAY 06: EXPLORING THE AMAZON**

After an early wake up you leave the Lodge with your guide at 5.30 am to enjoy a day filled with adventures and experiences. You drive to the calm and small Arajuno River which is a branch of the huge Napo River, where you board your canoe. The Arajuno River winds its way through the forest,



passing high shores abundantly covered with vegetation. While watching birds you will realize how calm and little sailed the river is. The magnificence of birds will stun you – you will discover egrets, red-rumped cacique, tangaras, and more species.

After landing with your canoe you have a short walk to the salt lick which attracts birds. It is recommended to bring binoculars to better observe the landing of the birds on the trees and afterward their way to the salt lick. There are a lot of parrots and parakeets, mostly the dusky-headed parakeet. You might be lucky and also see free-living monkeys, but don't wonder about their noises that might fright away the birds. In case of rain, your guide will decide how to change the program and might switch around some points of the program.

Once bird watching is over, your guide will take you to the next stop, the Santa Bárbara indigenous community with 23 families totalling up to 120 inhabitants. The head of the community welcomes you and you discover different traditions and customs including the production of "Chicha", a traditional drink which can be tasted once it is finished. You will surely be hungry, for this reason, it is exciting for you to be part of a jungle buffet together with the community. There will be carachama and catfish, both from the catfish family, smallmouth, a fish from the salmon family, roasted chontacuro which is a specialty in the region, yucca, ripe plantain, heart of palm salad, guayusa leaf tea (known for its abilities to limit hunger), fruits, and cocoa. All of these are freshly picked or caught and prepared for you on the spot. Enjoy this once-in-a-lifetime experience! In case you don't feel full yet, the guide will bring some sandwiches and fruit, for that time and even for earlier in the morning. Strengthened by this healthy and organic food, you have the opportunity to learn about the culture of the community, the typical dances are performed by children, and you will also test your skills with the blowgun and the spear. During a short walk, you can see the Ceibo which is the giant tree of the jungle with its impressive roots, then you have the opportunity to buy some crafts made by the community. The income from sales are always directed to the common box of the community that is used to buy parts for canoes, feathers, fabrics, or other objects.

After a short farewell from the community chief, you head to the large 2,500-hectare Jatun Sacha Reserve, this incredible protected area consists of tropical forest in which you will once again discover flora and fauna, such as bamboo, walking palm trees that move up to 10 centimetres per year and Pambil that has taken this day in the form of a 2-meter long blowgun. After 1 hour and 30 minutes by canoe you return by car to head towards the small town of Misahualli where you enjoy a typical lunch, then take a short walk on the beach to be greeted by several capuchin monkeys. Around 15:00 you will be back at the Lodge to enjoy and relax by the pool, in a hammock with a cocktail or continue exploring the area. In the evening another three-course meal is waiting for you in a special jungle atmosphere.

**Meal:** Breakfast, lunch and Dinner

## Day 07

## DAY 07: CHOCOLATE TOUR





After breakfast, we go to visit the Rescue Centre Wild Animals called “AmaZOOnico”, which is situated just outside of Tena. Here we see animals in captivity and the whole rehab process. We reach the town of Puyo, famous for its handicrafts made of balsa wood, parrots, macaws, and toucans. After the visit to the AmaZOOnico, you will come back to the hotel to have lunch.

After lunch you will be part of a Chocolate tour. You will learn to produce an authentic chocolate from the bean to the bar. It has traditionally been held that the point of origin for the domestication of cocoa was found in Mesoamerica between Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras, where its use is attested around 2,000 years before Christ. However, recent studies show that at least one variety of Theobroma Cacao has its point of origin in the Upper Amazon (Ecuador) and has been used in the region for more than 5,000 years. On this tour you will start all the process with this Theobroma Cacao variety, you will open, smell and try the pure fruit that comes from the cocoa beans and then after all the process you will end up with the brown gold. Then you will be back at the Lodge to enjoy and relax by the pool, in a hammock with a cocktail or continue exploring the area by walking or horse riding. In the evening another three-course meal will be waiting for you in a special jungle atmosphere. Overnight.

**Meal:** Breakfast, lunch and Dinner

## Day 08

### DAY 08: BAÑOS AND ITS BEAUTIFUL WATERFALLS

After breakfast, you will start the tour to the waterfalls as this charming town is the refuge for more than 60 waterfalls. Among the most visited you have: Inés María, Pailón Devil, Manto de la Novia, Hair of the Virgin, San Jorge, San Pedro, Chamana, Machay Agoyán, Phantom, El Placer, San Francisco, Cashaurco, Heart, etc. You can visit the waterfalls using different means of transport and also can meet them walking down the ecological and magical trails bridges and pendants. After that you will head up to the hotel to enjoy the rest of the evening and night.

**Meal:** Breakfast

## Day 09

### DAY 09: CHIMBORAZO

Today you spend the day exploring the beautiful landscapes of the area. In the Chimborazo province around Abraspungo, there are many trails perfect for hiking and expeditions through various ecosystems such as paramos, lakes, mountains and Andean forests. Chimborazo, (6,310 meters/20,697 feet above sea level) is Ecuador’s highest mountain. Its name comes from Quechua: Chimborazo, razo, rasu = snow and chimbo probably from chimbana = to cross, since three snow covered passes surround the mountain. Lush endemic flora and fauna of the area can be observed, including one of the most



representative species: the Chuquiragua (also known as the mountaineer's flower). You will also see lama ?s and several birds. Furthermore, you experience the unique environment of the Andean paramo. Over there you will have a Box Lunch that will help you with the altitude and the coldness and on the evening you will arrive to Riobamba City a panoramic city tour and then going to your hacienda to spend the night.

**Meal:** Breakfast and Lunch

**Day 10**
**DAY 10: INTISISA - INGAPIRCA**

On this day, first, you will visit Guamote. This is a little mountain village in central Ecuador, about an hour south of Riobamba. The majority of the village is indigenous, and Kichwa is still one of the main languages spoken by its inhabitants. Here tradition still plays an important role in the everyday life of its inhabitants who are proud of their heritage. One of those traditions is the Market people being dressed in colourful and traditional clothes. The first part of the market is meant for large animals. Here you will see sheep, cows, bulls, and pigs. The second part of the market is dedicated to the selling of small animals such as chicken, guinea pigs, rabbits, and little pigs. It is fun to see the people arguing and comparing their animals to each other in order to agree on a price. After this visit, you will continue on the Pan-American Highway and you will visit Ingapirca. These ruins are the most

important architectural legacy of the Incas in Ecuador, dating back to the 15th century they are a significant part of Ecuador's pre-hispanic legacy. They are located in the province of Cañar, about an hour and 45 minutes from Cuenca.

You will be taken on a guided tour of the ruins, which is believed to be both a religious and administrative centre, as well as a fortress. The vast archaeological complex includes a roofless fortification, courtyards, terraces, temples, houses, and a ?castle ? possibly the Temple of the Sun. A museum is now open at the site, with both archaeological and ethnographic displays. There are also exhibitions of ceramics and jewellery. Finally, you will be leaving Ingapirca heading toward the historical city of Cuenca where you will spend the night.

**Meal:** Breakfast

**Day 11**
**DAY 11: CUENCA**

The City Tour begins at the Plaza de San Sebastián, which forms the western border of the colonial city of Cuenca. Then we visit the museum of modern arts, which has many contemporary works of arts. Later on, we walk through the historic downtown area to visit the San Francisco market, the flower market, the house of culture, Abdon Calderon Park, and the cathedral. Then we will go to the New Cathedral, which is the largest in the country. We continue the tour to the hat factory



Homero Ortega to observe the entire process of making Panama hats, originated in Ecuador, which is undoubtedly the most important in our country. Later visit the “canyon” with its colonial style townhouses situated along the river Tomebamba houses. Then drive up to the hill of Turi to admire the city and on our last stop enjoys a discover the flavours of the famous "Tortillas de Trigo" wheat.

Upon completion of the City Tour you will drive to the hotel where you will be staying for the night and enjoy and the guide will suggest some traditional dishes that you can enjoy at Cuenca.

**Meal:** Breakfast

**Day 12**
**DAY 12:**

After Breakfast, we will continue our journey from the Andes to the Ecuadorian coast with stop at the breath-taking Cajas National Park. This is a natural and protected Reserve surrounded by pristine lagoons and gorgeous landscapes. We take a small hike to enjoy the Reserve’s unique flora and fauna. We also visit “Toreadora” Lagoon, which is the largest one in the Reserve and enjoy a Box-lunch at a charming natural location within the Reserve. On our way to Guayaquil, we will note the sudden change of vegetation at the Coast and enjoy the sightseeing of many Banana Plantations and Coastal vegetation. Actually you will enter in one Hacienda, over there we will do agro tourism and enjoy a traditional food from the Pacific Coast of Ecuador.

Finally on the late evening you will arrive to Ecuador’s largest City-Port, Guayaquil. You have check-in at your hotel where you will stay overnight.

**Meal:** Breakfast and Lunch

**Day 13**
**DAY 13: GUAYAQUIL**

After breakfast, the local guide will be waiting for you to start the Guayaquil City Tour. We start the tour with the main tourist attractions: Guayaquil’s harbour, the main trade business part of the city, the Centennial Park (which has a monument in memory of the heroes of Guayaquil’s independence), Plaza de la Administration, the buildings of the city hall and the governance, the watch’s Morisca Towel, Sucre’s monument, and Bolivar’s Park where there is a statue of Simon Bolivar the main liberator of South America. This park is also known as the Iguanas park due to the presence of iguanas hanging from the green leaps of the trees. One side of the park is Neo-gothic. Later we go to the Chrystal Palace, Plaza de la Integration, Plaza de las Banderas and Plaza Olmedo, which are next to each other on the south side of the city and through the marvellous Malecon 2000.



Up north is Cerro Santa Ana, which has the oldest neighbourhood in the city of Guayaquil called Las Peñas. It has been successfully renewed and built in wooden constructions painted on shiny colours, where some art galleries are operating for the public. The tour also includes the visit to the Malecon Del Salado. At the end of the Guayaquil tour, we will go to a restaurant located at the Malecon in order to Experience an unforgettable dinner along with some traditional music such as the Pasillos, which derive from the Vienna Waltz developed by Europeans in the Andean region of the Gran Colombia in the XVIII century- all this while you enjoy the view of the city during the evening.

**Meal:** Breakfast

**Day 14****DAY 14: GUAYAQUIL - TRANSFER OUT**

After enjoying a wonderful breakfast, depending the time you will be taken to the Airport for your International connection.

**Meal:** Breakfast

## Inclusions

Accommodation in double rooms

Indicated Meals

B= Breakfast / L = Lunch / D = Dinner

Transportation

Bilingual naturalist guide

Scheduled Visits

## Exclusions

International airfares

Optional activities

Other meals, drinks, tips and other personal expenses or services not specified on the program

Personal equipment

Travel insurance

Gratuities

Voluntary tips for guides or drivers

Travel and medical insurance





Any items not mentioned as included

## Note

### Hotels Used

#### Quito

Luxury: Illa Experience Hotel or similar

First Class: Patio Andaluz or similar

Tourist Superior: Ikala UIO (Suite) or similar

#### Otavalo

Luxury: La Mirage or similar

First Class: Hacienda Pinsaqui or similar

Tourist Superior: Hacienda Chorlavi or similar

#### Cotopaxi

Luxury: Hosteria San Agustín del Callo or similar

First Class: Hosteria Los Mortiños or similar

Tourist Superior: Hosteria La Cienega or similar

#### Papallacta

Luxury: Termas de Papallacta

First Class: Termas de Papallacta

Tourist Superior: Termas de Papallacta

#### Arajuno

Luxury: Hakuna Matata Lodge

First Class: Hakuna Matata Lodge

Tourist Superior: Hakuna Matata Lodge

#### Baños

Luxury: Hotel Luna Volcan or similar

First Class: Samari SPA or similar

Tourist Superior: Sangay or similar

#### Riobamba

Luxury: Abraspungo or similar

First Class: Abraspungo or similar



Tourist Superior: Mansiòn Santa Isabel or similar

Cuenca

Luxury: Mansiòn Alcazar or similar

First Class: Cruz del Vado or similar

Tourist Superior: Los Balcones or simila

Guayaquil

Luxury: Hotel del Parque or similar

First Class: Wyndham GYE or similar

Tourist Superior: Unipark GYE or similar

## Program Touring / Guide

Private touring

## Periodic Departure

**23 Apr, 2024 to 31 Dec, 2024**

Tourist Superior

AUD 6,926 P P twin share

AUD 8,262 P P single

AVAILABLE

First Class

AUD 8,114 P P twin share

AUD 10,441 P P single

AVAILABLE

Luxury Class

AUD 10,691 P P twin share

AUD 14,608 P P single

AVAILABLE

