



Ecuador Escapade Once In a Lifetime - 8 Days (#20166)

Note: Price printed on this PDF is valid until **06-09-2025** and is subject to change without notice due to Partner changes and currency fluctuations

Overview

Are you looking for a challenge? Ecuador is home to a treasure of unique climates with some of the planet's most biodiversity and spectacular geography. Witness the spectacular Avenue of Volcanoes while hiking and biking on the slopes of the Andes. Explore the waterfall canyons and raft along the Jatunyacu River whose waters flow into the mighty Amazon River. Trek the Cuicocha Crater Lake rim and spend an evening relaxing in the volcanic hot springs of Papallacta. Experience truly unique cultural encounters like spending an evening with an indigenous family in the Amazon, learning about their customs, food, knowledge, and lifestyle. For the one with an adventurous spirit, this expedition is certain to serve your appetite.

Departure on Saturdays.

Trip Highlights

Quito



Detailed Itinerary

Day 01

Day 01: Arrive Quito

Meet your trip leader and group at 18:00pm.

Welcome to Quito! The largest, best-preserved colonial city of America – declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978. The city is considered the Cultural Capital of South America and is located on the equator in a valley at the foothills of the Pichincha volcano. Depending on arrival time, you can spend your day exploring the old town of Quito and the surrounding area. GGTS can help you to organize a day trip (please request in advance). In the evening, one of our trip leaders will meet you at the hotel's lobby for a welcome briefing at 18:00 hours. At this time, we will discuss the details and questions you may have regarding the adventure. Our first day is an acclimation and information day.

Hotel: Sheraton Quito Hotel or similar.

Meal: No Meal

Day 02

Day 02: Trek to Cotopaxi National Park

After breakfast, we leave Quito driving southwards along the gorgeous Avenue of Volcanoes, getting the chance to see the colourful Andean fields. On our way, we will reach 12,000 feet. (3657 meters). After arriving at the Cotopaxi National Park, we will go hiking around Limpiopungo lagoon of the foothills of the Rumiñahui volcano. From here, we have the best views of Cotopaxi, the highest active volcano in the world. In the afternoon we continue our drive towards the Llanganates National Park, known as the sacred mountain, until we reach the town of Baños, located at the entrance of the Amazon. Here we can enjoy the best night life by drinking cocktails and dancing salsa.

Trekking Activity Level – Moderate, this adventure is at high elevation, make sure you drink a lot of water or coca tea (in case of altitude sickness). The trail is on dirt surrounded by bushes and grass.

Trekking Time: 3 hours

Trekking Distance: 4 miles (6.4 km)

Elevation Gain: 1200 feet (366 meters)

Minimum Elevation: 12700 feet (3870 meters)

Maximum Elevation: 13850 feet (4222 meters)

NOTE – In case the weather and physical conditions are good you may trek to the Basecamp and the maximum elevation would be 16000 feet. (488 meters).

What to wear today: Pants, t-shirt, fleece, hiking shoes, gloves, hat, buff, bring rain jacket and pants, water bottle, sun cream,



binoculars.

Hotel: Casa de Luis or similar.

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 03**Day 03: Biking in the cloud forest of Banos**

This morning, we will cross by mountain bike from the Llanganates National Park to the Pastaza River Canyon, enjoying the beauty of the special climate of the cloud forest. The road brings us through some Andean farms and a great canyon with many waterfalls, while descending into the jungle, we will have a breath-taking view of Baños, a town well known for its spectacular location right at the foothills of the Tungurahua volcano, which has been active since 1999. The volcano is the main attraction of this region. In the afternoon we will have some time to explore the town and go to The Swing of the End of the World, where the winner of the 2014 National Geographic photo contest took his photo.

Biking Activity Level – Moderate, mostly downhill, the first 45 minutes up hill and then afterwards just down. You will be riding on cobblestone and dirt roads for the first two hours, and 1 hour on asphalt.

Biking Time: 3 hours

Biking Distance: 20 miles (32.18 km)

Elevation Gain: 500 feet (152 meters)

Minimum Elevation while Biking: 5500 feet (1676 meters)

Maximum Elevation while Biking: 10450 feet (3185 meters)

NOTE – In case you want to avoid the uphill, there will always be the support of our transportation, and our driver will be happy to give you a ride till you decide to join the biking group.

What to wear today: Shorts, t-shirt, fleece, tennis shoes, buff, bring rain jacket and pants, water bottle, sun cream, mosquito repellent.

Hotel: Casa de Luis or similar.

Meal: Breakfast

Day 04**Day 04: Canyoning in Amazon**

This morning, we will hit the road of the waterfalls. The first stop will be at the Bride's Veil waterfall, where we will take the Tarabita (cable car) to get across the Pastaza River. Then we will hike down to the Pailon del Diablo waterfall, the second highest in Ecuador, later, we will go deeper into the jungle inside the Llanganates National Park. The name "Llanganates" comes from "beautiful mountain" in the local native language. Here, 600 years ago, the Incas hid their golden treasures. Many explorers have spent years looking for these treasures, some have even disappeared with no luck in this dense pristine jungle. During a hike through the tropical rain forest, we will climb through several waterfall canyons. Our local native guide will teach about the incredible flora and fauna that thrive in this unequalled habitat; we will spend the night at the Local Basic Jungle Lodge run by a kichwa indigenous family.

Hotel: Amazon Homestay.

Meal: Breakfast, lunch and Dinner

Day 05

Day 05: Rafting and relaxing in the Hot Springs

We greet the day by preparing our gear to paddle the wild waves of the Jatunyacu River, located just a 5-minute drive from the homestead. The beauty of this river will inspire you and reveal the magic of the Amazon rain forest, after a very important safety briefing from our rafting guides, we will start our class III rafting expedition down the Jatunyacu River, well known for its clear waters and awesome rapids. We will have a lot of fun playing some games and also exploring one of the canyons. The end of the journey offers us a stop for a picnic, prepared by our guides, we conclude our day with a drive back up to the Andes to a spot called Papallacta, where we will stay the night and recharge in the volcanic hot springs high during the cool Andes.

Hotel: Termas Papallacta

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 06

Day 06: Otavalo Market

In the morning, we will visit Otavalo Market, Otavalo Indigenous people wearing the traditional blue ponchos, white trousers, and long braided hair. Learn all about their daily activities, typical food, and native language. Explore their famous handicraft market, with its wonderful textiles, alpaca throws and rugs, knitted clothing native paintings, ceramics, jewellery, tapestries, and more at bargain prices.

Hands-on cultural experience – Sustainable Sacha WarmiKuna women project.

For lunch, we will head to Pijal, a small village located in the heart of the Andes to visit one of the sustainable projects called



Sacha WarmiKuna (women from the mountain). This is one fantastic effort developed by the local women with the main purpose of supporting their families and encouraging the position of the women in the local society, providing them an alternative side work besides housekeeping, as a new option for an in-come. Once at the project, you will experience an unforgettable cultural encounter, immersing yourself in the true spirit of the South American woman and their skills for textiles and a deep culinary knowledge coming from the past generations. You will be part of the preparation of “Aji”, a local spicy salsa that is part of their identity, you will also share precious time with them and a tasty traditional lunch in which local women have used the fresh products harvested the same day from the surrounding organic fields. Later we will learn more about the weaving process of their textiles. Don’t miss the amazing opportunity to have the chance to give back, by buying handmade scarfs here.

Hotel: Las Palmeras Inn

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 07

Day 07: Cuicocha Crater Lake Trek

Today after a very healthy breakfast we have a very short drive to the Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve, the main attraction here is the Cuicocha Crater Lake. Our adventure will take us on a trek around this still active volcano, your guide will present many beautiful flowers to you along the trail, at the end of our hike, we will take a boat ride to the centre of the crater to observe the activity of this volcano, witness bubbles coming up from the centre of the caldera.

Hiking Activity Level – moderate, this adventure will be on a very nice trail around Cuicocha Crater lake by a Cloud Forest, in the early morning will be possible to have great views of the snowed capped Cayambe volcano the trail can be a bit muddy so make sure you wear your hiking shoes.

Hiking Time: 4.5 hours

Hiking Distance: 9.3 miles (4.82 km)

Elevation Gain: 1300 feet (45.72 meters)

Minimum Elevation while hiking: 10400 feet (3169.92 meters) Maximum Elevation: 1550 feet (472.4 meters)

What to wear today: Pants, t-shirt, fleece, hiking shoes, gloves, hat, buff, bring rain jacket and pants, water bottle, sun cream, binoculars.

Hotel: Sheraton or similar

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 08

Day 08: Departure



International departures, end of services. Take with you memories and photos and leave a piece of your heart, as you will want to return to Ecuador soon to experience more of this enchanted land. We wish you a “buen viaje”!

Meal: Breakfast

Inclusions

Activities: 3 hours hiking in Cotopaxi National Park in the Andes, 3 hours biking in the Llanganates National Park, 4 hours white-water rafting on Jatunyacu River in the Amazon rainforest, 3 hours canyoning at Pimpilala waterfalls, bird watching and hiking exploration in the cloud forest, soaking in Papallacta hot springs, 5 hours trekking the loop of Cuicocha Crater Lake, share time with local indigenous people in the Amazon, making chocolate, salsa lesson.

Accommodation based in double occupancy: 5* hotel in Quito, 3 star hotel in Baños, home stay in the Amazon, 4 star Spa Resort in Papallacta, Colonial Hacienda in Imbabura.

Transportation: Private and comfortable land transportation.

Meals: 7 breakfast, 5 lunch, 1 dinner.

Trekking or Hiking: Black Diamond trekking sticks

Biking: Trek X Caliber MTB (hydraulic disc brakes, front Rock Shock suspension), Bontrager helmets, full finger gloves.

Canyoning: rubber boots, ropes, harnesses.

Rafting: Aire and NRS 7-people- rafts, NRS life jackets, NRS paddles, splash jackets.

Trip Leader: Certified expert English-speaking adventure trip leader and local guides.

Exclusions

International flights.

Airport transfers.

Travel insurance (suggested).

Meals not described in the itinerary – estimated budget AUD 276.

Tips for guides, drivers and hotels. – estimated budget AUD 345

Note

Departure on Saturday.

Please note that the prices are starting from and that upon sending a new request with specific date we will send the applicable rate and availability.



Program Touring / Guide

Small group tour

Periodic Departure

22 Nov, 2024 to 31 Dec, 2025

2-3 pax

AUD 4,311 P P twin share

AUD 5,275 P P single

ON REQUEST

4-5 pax

AUD 3,794 P P twin share

AUD 4,758 P P single

ON REQUEST

6 plus

AUD 3,230 P P twin share

AUD 4,194 P P single

ON REQUEST

