

INFORMATION ABOUT ECUADOR

Ecuador is a beautiful country divided into four different regions:

Sierra, Oriente, Costa and Galápagos, with in total 14 million citizens. The official name of this country is "República del Ecuador" and it is about 283,520 km² (including the Galápagos Islands). It is the country situated to the west side of South America and it is the smallest of the Andean countries. The country is called Ecuador because of it is situated around the Equator. The Equator runs just north of the capital Quito on an elevation of 2850 meters. The official language of the country is Spanish, but Quechua is spoken by a lot of natives. 90% of the inhabitants are Catholic, only a small minority is Christian. The national currency of Ecuador is the American Dollar.



* THE PEOPLE

Among more than 14 million citizens, those in the highland cities are a mixture of European and Indian descent. Most of the Indian people live in small mountain settlements or in the Amazon regions. Along the coast there is a mix of Indian, European and African people.

* LANGUAGE

Ecuador has two official languages: Spanish and Quechua, then native language of the Inca Empire. English is spoken in major tourist sites.

* GALAPAGOS



The Galápagos Islands (literally: turtle-islands) are located 970 km off the coast of Ecuador. Galápagos consists of 13 large islands, 6 smaller islands and over 40 islets. Together they cover 7,800 km². People only live on 5 of the islands. Because the Islands were never connected to the mainland and through the evolutionary process, climate, ocean currents and comparative lack of predatory enemies (including man) the Islands became one of the strangest and most compelling places on our planet. The organisms which survived are unique to

the world. All of the reptiles, 50% of the birds, 32% of the plants and 25% of the fish are only found on the Galápagos Islands. In 1959 Galápagos Islands became a National Park.

* ORIENTE

The Amazon jungle is located on the east of the country where its western border is the Andes Mountain Range and its eastern border is Peru in the south and Colombia in the north. The Amazon ecosystem, particularly its tropical rainforest, is considered to be one of the richest and most complex communities of plant and animal life in the world. The region is characterized by huge and diverse amounts of flora and fauna with extraordinary variations of their habitats and micro habitats.



* SIERRA



Ecuador is divided from north to south by the Andean Cordillera. These are the Andean mountains with many volcanoes and highland valleys. Ecuador has a number of high (volcanic) mountains, like the non-active Chimborazo (6267 meter) which is the highest mountain of Ecuador with a permanent icecap and the Cotopaxi (5897 meter), the highest active volcano in the world. Other high mountains are the Cayambe (5790 meter) and

the Antisana (5703 meter).

The rainy season in this area lasts from October to May, with an average annual temperature range of 11.5°C to 18°C. The daily variation, however, can be extreme with very hot days and quite cool nights.

* COSTA

On the Westside of the Andean mountain range you will find the coastal area. The average temperature on the coast is 22°C. On the coast you will find some hills with a maximum altitude of 800 meters. Stretched forests and plantations



head towards Peru and slowly turn into a desert which reaches far into Chili. The rainy season lasts from December to May while dry season lasts from June to December. Many products like bananas, coffee, cacao, rice, soybeans, sugar, cane, cotton, fruits and othertropical products are produced here for both domestic and export market.

*** SAFETY**

The country is quite safe, especially when you compare it to other South-American countries. Of course you should always watch your stuff and be careful wherever you go, because no matter how hard we try, we still always look like the ultimate tourists.

During the day you will be able to walk in Quito on your own without many problems. Make sure that in the nights you are always with somebody else and not on your own. We can recommend you to look in your Lonely Planet (or another guidebook) for the places in Quito that are known as places where people get robbed soon. Never go and get money from an ATM at night.

For example never go to the holy virgin Maria on your own (El Panecillo). Make sure you go there with a cab and that the cab will be waiting for you there while you look at it and make some nice pictures. Also, always pay a little more attention on your stuff in crowded trolley's and at bus stations. Take a cab whenever you want to move all your possessions to another place.

*** TO GET AROUND**

Quito has a very good public transportation system. There are many buses which can take you almost everywhere in town. For a bus ride in Quito you usually pay 25 cents (of course this also depends on the length of the bus ride). Besides normal buses there is also the Trolleybus or the Ecovia. Unlike the normal buses these buses have bus stops where you have to pay 25 cents to enter. You can only get out of the buses at these bus stops.



Quito also has many taxis that can take you everywhere you want to go. Make sure to always take a taxi with a red number on it, these are registered taxis. Always ask the driver to drive on the meter; it's a lot cheaper than a fixed price. If you do have

made an arranged price, try to arrange a price as low as possible. In the weekends and at night, the drivers can ask about 25 to 50 percent more.

*** CLIMATE AND CLOTHING**

Quito and the central highlands are on or near the equator. The altitude is between 7,000 and 10,000 ft. and the weather is surprisingly comfortable all year round. The driest months are from July to October when temperatures are in the 70's during the day, and the 50's when the sun goes down.

During the rest of the year, expect some kind of afternoon showers. On the coast the average temperature is 83°F, with the hot, rainy season from November to May and the dry season from June to December. Take cotton or tropical clothing with a shawl, sweater, or light jacket for cooler evenings and air conditioned restaurants. A sun hat and sun glasses are recommended.

In the Jungle, tropical temperatures average around 82°F. Rainfall is constant almost all year round, especially May through November. However, at this time, most of the rivers in the Jungle are navigable.

*** AIR SERVICE AND TAXES**

The International Airport in Quito is "MARISCAL SUCRE" (5 miles from the city) and in Guayaquil is "SIMON BOLIVAR" (3 miles from the city). Both airports are served by the most recognized International Airlines.

*** TRANSPORTATION**

The PANAMERICANA highway stretches from North to the South passing through Quito with branches to Guayaquil and other cities on the Coast and the Amazon Basin. There is a regular bus service, connecting the main cities and smaller towns.

*** ELECTRICITY**

110 volts, 60 AC

*** LOCAL TIME**

Eastern Standard: GMT-5 and no daylight saving time.

Galapagos Islands: GMT 6.

*** HEALTH**

If you need to visit a doctor in Quito we can recommend you Dr. Juan Carlos Paz. Besides Spanish he also speaks English. You have to pay \$25 for a visit. You can find him in the corner of the Patria and Reina Victoria, 5th floor.

SPANISH COURSES IN QUITO

Banana Spanish School

We are a group of professional Spanish teachers who have more than 15 years of experience teaching Spanish to foreigners of all levels of ability. Our extensive experience has provided us with the background and skills to understand the particular needs of foreign students learning Spanish as a foreign language.



We founded the Banana Spanish School with the goal of providing a quality learning experience and sharing our experiences and expertise not only in teaching Spanish but in helping students to understand the history, culture, environmental issues, and social realities of Ecuador and of Latin America.

Our school is located in a quiet, safe and easy-to access part of the tourist and shopping sector of Quito.

***STAFF**

All of our teachers have university degrees and several years of experience in teaching the Spanish language.

***SPANISH LESSONS**

In our School there are students of all ages and from all over the world, who are looking for to learn Spanish in a familiar atmosphere in Ecuador. There are people from all sectors e.g. lawyers, doctors, biologists, engineers, architects, pensioners, teachers, pupils, volunteers and tourists. All of them have the same goal: to gain as much as possible from their experience in Ecuador. They want to learn or improve their Spanish skills in little time and advance in communicating in Spanish: in their job, work experience, volunteer work or for their journeys in Ecuador or in Latin-America. Also a lot of our students get prepared in our school to achieve their **DELE** diploma of Spanish.

* WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

There are no limits to the ways you can find to enjoy your stay. A notice board in the school informs you about local events. It is also possible to investigate the city and its immediate surroundings with your teacher during course time, visit a market or a museum. Every week the school will organize a nice activity for her student. The activities are part of our educational system.



Activities which we organize are for example a visit to the markets in Sangolqui and Saquisilí, a visit to the crater of the Pichincha, to the old town, to museums in Quito, to a beer brewery, to a zoo or to a cemetery. We also organize barbecues in Park Metropolitano, sport mornings, cooking classes, a visit to MitadDelMundo (Equator) and every Monday there are free salsa lessons and a free cocktail available for all the students of our school.

Next to that, we offer trips to:

- Cotopaxi National Park and the Crater Lake Quilotoa
- The ecological reserve and cloud forest of Mindo
- Pasochoa Nature Reserve
- El Angel Nature Reserve and the Arrayanes forest
- Guagua Pichincha Volcano
- Otavalo's traditional markets, the Peguche waterfall and the alpine lakes of Cotacachi and Cuicocha.

All weekend activities are provided at a small additional cost to cover general expenses.

* HOUSING IN QUITO

Our students have the option of staying in a host family or in a hostel in Quito.

STAYING AT A HOST FAMILY

The institute has a number of well selected family groups. Students who stay in a family have the perfect opportunity to practice what they have learned within the institute. A student also learns about the typical Ecuadorian culture. A familiar and friendly atmosphere makes a stay with a family unforgettable. Most of our host families are situated in the north of Quito. Staying in a host family includes 3 meals per day, laundry service and a single room.

STAYING IN HOSTALS

You can also choose to stay in a lovely, clean hostel in the touristy center of Quito. Staying in the hostel means that you are right in the middle of the tourist center of Quito, with all the restaurants and internet cafés nearby. The hostel is a meeting place for all our students and while staying in the hostel you will meet lots of people from all over the world.

SPANISH COURSES IN PUERTO LOPEZ

Overview

Come and enjoy yourself at the beach in the reserve of the national park “Machalilla” - furthermore you can visit the “Isla de la Plata” which is also known as “mini Galapagos” - where one can observe “Piqueros” - (with blue and with red feet), as well as “Fragatas” - colonies.



Around the islands are wonderful possibilities for snorkeling and to observe other water species. From the middle of June until September there is a possibility to see whales.

SPANISH COURSES IN MINDO

The Bosque Protector Mindo-Nambillo is located just two hours from Quito. It is 19,200 acres big, ranging from sub-tropical moist forest to the steep walls of the Guagua Pichincha (about 4,000 m).

Here there are almost 500 species of birds including the Cock-of-the-rock which is bright red in color, building their nests in the dizzying vertical walls of jungle canyons. In Mindo it is very iconic for bird-watching and butterflies with toucans, parrots, owls, wild ducks, quetzals, blackbirds, hummingbirds, caciques and many other possibilities. It also has 2000 species of native plants in the area, including a flock of wild orchids.

Mindo is also a perfect area for adventure sports: Tubing or Racing, Canopy, Canyoning, Tarabita Mountain and many waterfalls.



DESCRIPTION OF THE PLACES TO VISIT IN ECUADOR

* QUITO

Quito, capital of Ecuador, located 13 Km in the South of the Equator, lies at an altitude of 2850 m (9200 ft.) above sea level. At night, the constellations of both hemispheres are clearly visible. This beautiful land surrounded by mountains, some of them covered by snow, is charming and hospitable. There are colonial treasures such as paintings, sculptures and woodcarvings that can mostly be found in churches in the Old Town.



The excellent workmanship of colonial artists combines the European Renaissance style with the style and feeling of the Indians. These

characteristics resulted in Quito being declared a Cultural Heritage Site by UNESCO, in 1978. In contrast, the modern districts reflect the image of progress, with skyscrapers, luxury hotels, cozy restaurants, lively casinos and nightclubs.

* **GUAYAQUIL**

In the 1600's Guayaquil, like all the coastal cities was required to have a high bell tower which was used to put the city on alert during the frequent pirate attacks, or to announce un expected tragedies that occurred as a result of fire, the sound of the bell, in those days, transformed itself into a true public mass media broadcast, particularly when the Dominican priests installed sun clock in their the cloisters of their convent which oriented the community to the clerical day.



- ***The Malecón 2000***

This is the being extensively remodelled for the 21's century. Heading north along the Malecon, with Guayas River to your right, you pass several monuments. One is to the UN, Know in Spanish as the ONU.

* **CUENCA**

Cuenca is one of Ecuador's charming colonial centers, rich in History and with a strong flavor of the colonial past. We'll visit the Tomebamba River, the old and new cathedral and other major places of interest.



“El Cajas” Lake Complex “The biggest Ecuadorian Lake complex”

“El Cajas”, a 288808 hectare recreation area which lies about 30 km. West of Cuenca, famous for its many beautiful lakes (over 230 lakes). During a short we’ll admire the spectacular Andean panoramas.



Gualaceo and Chordeleg - shopping



Not too far from Cuenca are these two charming traditional villages, which are centers of great interest for their wide variety of local handicrafts. Here we can shop for jewelry, ceramics, textiles, “Panamas hats”, etc.

Riobamba-Devil’s Nose by Train

Stay Overnight in Riobamba. From here we’ll take a thrilling train ride early morning. To the impressive mountain known as the Nariz del Diablo (The Devil’s Nose), a sheer wall of rock, to the branch railroad station of Sibambe and back to Alausi.



Chimborzo Volcano

**Masterpiece of volcanic creation. Its summit is the sun’s closet on earth.*



Drive south along the “Avenue of the Volcanoes”, viewing the spectacular and breathtaking highplains. We’ll continue towards Riobamba and then to the Chimborazo refuge lodge (4800 mts). Easy ascension to the Needles of Wymper (5250 mts.). Chimborazo volcano is the highest peak of the Ecuadorian Andes (6310 mts.).

* BAÑOS



Drive south along the “Avenue of the volcanoes” to Baños, which is considered the most charming town of Ecuador and its hot therapeutic springs are famous throughout the country. It is the gateway to the Amazon River basin, a land of orchids and waterfalls at the base of the Tungurahua volcano.

Optional bike and horse rides.

* OTAVALO

Otavalo is a small city only two hours north of Quito, on the Pan- American Highway. It's located at 2530meters above the sea level between the Imbabura volcano (4609 mts.) and the CotacachiVolcano (4939mts.),Otavalo has craft markets every day.



The Saturday market is the largest and most famous of Ecuador. Here you can find all the native handicrafts produced in the country. In the surrounding indigenous villages such as Peguche, Iluman, Agato and Narabuela, you can see weavers who give demonstrations as they weavepastries, sweaters or straw mats.

From Otavalo you can go on the tour to many lakes in the province. The largest is Lake San Pablo with many surroundings indigenous communities and boats for taking rides. Cuicocha Lake has deep waters and is just half an hour from Otavalo. Condors have been seen at the Mojanda Lakes. The famous Yahuarcocha Lake means Lake of blood. All of these are attractive tourist sport in the province. Visit the leather shops in the Cotacachi community or the carved wood-vendors in San Antonio de Ibarra.



ECUADOR PROGRAM (3 MONTHS)

* Spanish classes in Quito

First and second week

We start Spanish classes from 8:30am until 12:30pm

Itinerary

Monday

- Morning - Spanish lessons
- Afternoon - Visit the fruit and vegetable Market
- Evening - Welcome Cocktail

Tuesday

- Morning - Spanish lessons
- Afternoon - Salsa lessons

Wednesday

- Morning - Spanish lessons
- Afternoon - Visit the Banco Central Museum

Thursday

- Morning - Spanish lessons
- Afternoon - Walk to Historic Centre

Friday

- Morning - Spanish lessons
- Afternoon - Ecuadorian cooking class

Saturday

A fun way to see the Cotopaxi volcano is going up by jeep and going down by mountain bike. Our company offers a tour where you will be taken to 4500 meters and from there you can walk up to the mountain hut at 4800 meters. From the parking lot at 4500 meters you will go down by bike (and on the "flat" part you will be going up sometimes). We provide a bike and clothing (helmet, knee and elbow protectors and gloves). The weather at the Cotopaxi is pretty unpredictable.

Sunday

- Day - Visit the middle of the World (Mitad Del Mundo)

Monday

- Morning - Spanish lessons
- Afternoon - Visit to the Guayasamin Museum



Tuesday

- Morning - Spanish lessons
- Afternoon - Salsa lessons

Wednesday

- Morning - Spanish lessons
- Afternoon - Visit to the Botanic Garden

Thursday

- Morning - Spanish lessons
- Evening - Visit the street La Ronda

Friday

- Morning - Spanish lessons
- Afternoon - The Pichincha Teleférico 4000 meters

Saturday

- Day - Papallacta

At this hot springs resort you will experience the notable, restorative effects of the crystalline thermal waters (Sulphate alkaline ferrous). Submerge yourself in the warm water and take advantage of its curative properties in rheumatic, arthritic, digestive and respiratory processes.

Sunday

- Morning - Sport activities

*** Spanish classes in Mindo**

Third week

Monday

- Morning - Breakfast
- Trip to Bambú lodge in Pto. Quito (2 hrs)
- Spanish lessons
- Lunch - Lunch and excursion
- Evening - Dinner

Tuesday

- Morning - Breakfast
- Spanish lessons
- Lunch - Lunch
- Excursion
- Evening - Dinner



Wednesday

- Morning
 - Breakfast
 - Spanish lessons
- Lunch
 - Lunch
 - Excursion
- Evening
 - Dinner

Thursday

- Morning
 - Breakfast
 - Spanish lessons
- Lunch
 - Lunch
 - Excursion
- Evening
 - Dinner

Friday

- Morning
 - Breakfast
 - Spanish lesson
- Lunch
 - Lunch
- Evening
 - Return to Quito

Saturday

- Day
 - Andean Forest (Pasochoa)

Sunday

- Day
 - Visit Middle of the World (MitadDelMundo)

*** Spanish classes on the coast of Puerto Lopez**

Fourth week

Monday

- Morning
 - Breakfast
 - Spanish lessons
- Lunch
 - Lunch
 - Excursion
- Afternoon
 - Puerto Lopez beach
- Evening
 - Dinner

Tuesday

- Morning
 - Breakfast
 - Spanish lessons
- Lunch
 - Lunch
 - Excursion
- Afternoon
 - Hiking excursion to the national park of Machalilla to the community "Agua Blanca"
- Evening
 - Dinner



Wednesday

- Morning
 - Breakfast
 - Spanish lessons
- Lunch
 - Lunch
 - Excursion
- Afternoon
 - Visit to "Los Frailes" beach in the national park Plachalilla
- Evening
 - Dinner

Thursday

- Morning
 - Breakfast
 - Boat ride to the "Isla de la Plata", hiking around the island fantastic landscapes, possibility to observe six kind of birds similar to the ones in Galapagos
- Evening
 - Dinner

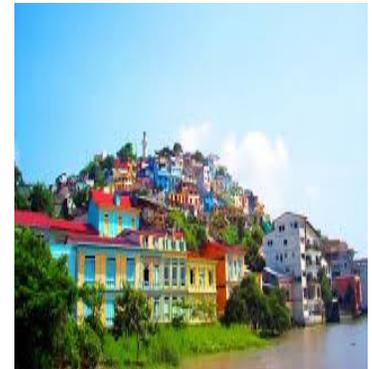


Friday

- Morning
 - Breakfast
 - Spanish lessons
- Lunch
 - Lunch
- Afternoon
 - Visit to the Museum Salango, Puerto Iopez beach
- Evening
 - Dinner

Saturday

- Morning
 - Breakfast
 - Visit to Salinas, or Isla de la Plata
- Lunch
 - Lunch
- Evening
 - Dinner



Sunday

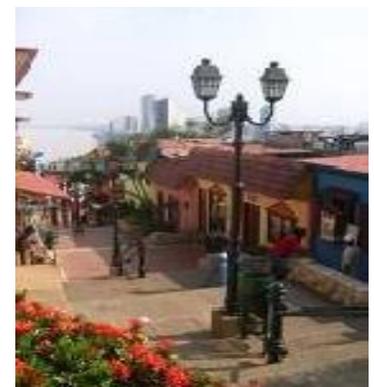
- Morning
 - Breakfast
 - Trip to Guayaquil
- Lunch
 - Lunch
 - Visit Malecón - las Peñas
- Evening
 - Dinner

* X

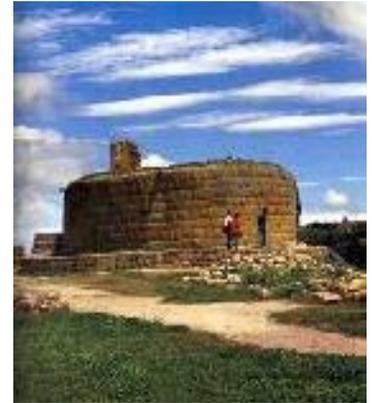
Fifth week

Monday

- Morning
 - Breakfast
- Lunch
 - Lunch



	- Trip to Cuenca- visit “El Cajas” National Park	
Evening	- Dinner	
<i>Tuesday</i>		
Morning	- Breakfast	
Lunch	- Lunch	
	- Visit Gualaceo and Chordeleg villages of handicrafts	
Evening	- Dinner	
<i>Wednesday</i>		
Morning	- Breakfast	
Lunch	- Lunch	
	- City tour in Cuenca	
Afternoon	- Free	
<i>Thursday</i>		
Morning	- Breakfast	
Lunch	- Lunch	
	- Visit the Ingapirca Ruins (Inca ruins)	
Afternoon	- Trip to Alausi	
Evening	- Dinner	
<i>Friday</i>		
Morning	- Breakfast	
Lunch	- Lunch	
	- Trip on the Train and visit the Devil’s Nose (LA NARIZ DEL DIABLO)	
Afternoon	- Trip to Riobamba	
Evening	- Dinner	
<i>Saturday</i>		
Morning	- Breakfast	
Lunch	- Lunch	
	- Climb to the “Aguas de Wymper” 5250m - Chimborazo	
Evening	- Dinner	
<i>Sunday</i>		
Morning	- Breakfast	
Lunch	- Lunch	
	- Trip to Baños	
Afternoon	- Free	
Evening	- Dinner	



Sixth week

Monday

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Morning | - Breakfast
- Visit the Hot Springs |
| Lunch | - Lunch
- Visit the Zoo |
| Afternoon | - Free |
| Evening | - Dinner |

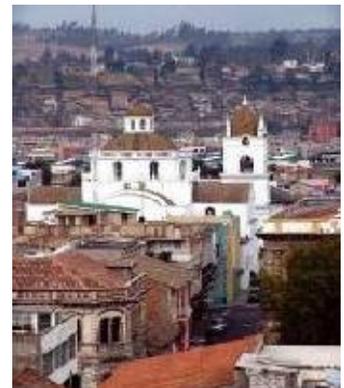


Tuesday

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Morning | - Breakfast
- Visit the "El Pailón del Diablo" waterfall |
| Lunch | - Lunch |
| Afternoon | - Trekking 3 Hours |
| Evening | - Dinner |

Wednesday

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Morning | - Breakfast
- Horseback Riding 4 h. |
| Lunch | - Lunch |
| Afternoon | - Trip to Latacunga |
| Evening | - Dinner |

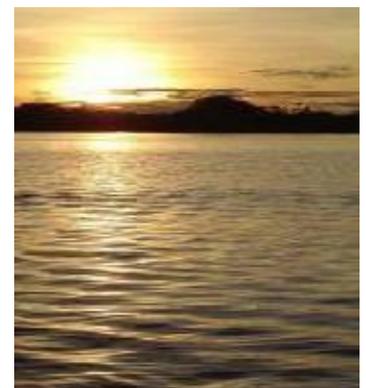


Thursday

- | | |
|---------|---------------------------|
| Morning | - Breakfast |
| Lunch | - Visit the Quilotoa Lake |
| Evening | - Dinner |

Friday

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Morning | - Breakfast
- Trekking from Quilotoa to Chugchilan |
| Lunch | - Lunch
- Trip to Quito |
| Evening | - Dinner |



Saturday

- | | |
|---------|-------------|
| Morning | - Breakfast |
| Day | - Free day |
| Evening | - Dinner |

Sunday

- | | |
|---------|---------------------|
| Morning | - Breakfast |
| Lunch | - Lunch |
| | - Trip to LagoAgrio |
| Evening | - Dinner |

CUYABENO RESERVE

Seventh week

It is the rainforest of unique beauty. It contains an incredible diversity of species of plants and animals, beyond comparison elsewhere in the world. You will be amazed as you walk through virgin jungle, where around 400 species of plants have been identified in one hectare alone. Magnificently colored birds, of which there are 500 species, fly overhead.

Monkeys, sloth's, anteaters, armadillos, tapirs, jaguars, manatees and freshwater dolphins are just some of the mammals that live here, along with a great variety of reptiles such as snakes, caiman and the great anaconda and numerous fish, including Paiche (Arapaima), measuring over 3 meters in length and the famous piranha.



Monday

Lago Agrio - El Puente -Drive from Lago Agrio to el Puente. Canoe trip down onCuyabenoriver to our camp place .Exciting night walk.

Tuesday

Cuyabenoriver - After Breakfast, trek into the primary rain forest learning about medicinalplants biological flora and fauna. After lunch, journey downstream to relax and enjoy thesurrounding nature.

Wednesday

Cuyabeno river - After breakfast we paddle by traditional dug-out canoe on the Caimancocha(Laguna del Caiman) where we will enjoy the nature uniqueness, lunch, hike in the primary forest including lessons in the use of plants for survival. Before we go back to our camp, we'll have a relaxing time to swim and enjoy the sunset on the magnificent Laguna Grande.

Thursday

Cuyabenoriver- In the morning, walk to the TarapuySiona Community, our naturalistguide will explain about the culture and traditions of the native people. Afterwards, we will go back to our camp. During the night, we will do a canoe trip in search of caimans (alligators).

Friday

El Puente-LagoAgrio –Early in the morning bird watching. After breakfast a journey up the Cuyabenoriverto El Puente is going to be done. Drive to LagoAgrio. Dinner

Saturday

Breakfast
Trip to Quito
Dinner

Domingo

Breakfast
Free day
Dinner



Eight week

THE TOACHI AND BLANCO RIVERS

These rivers are a fantastic introduction to the rivers of Ecuador with some of the longest navigable sections of white water in the country. Combine this with the sights and sounds of the forest environment we pass through and you are guaranteed a trip to remember.

Monday

Breakfast
Trip to Blanco River
RAFTING class III+
Dinner

Tuesday

Breakfast



Toachi river- RAFTING class III+

Trip to Quito

Dinner

Wednesday

Breakfast

Trip to Otavalo

Lunch

Visit to Cotacachi (leather market) – Cuicocha lake

Dinner

Thursday

Breakfast

Visit Peguche waterfall - San Pablo lake

Visit to Agato to see the handicrafts

Dinner

Friday

Breakfast

Visit the Chachimbiro Hot springs (aguastermales)

Visit to Yaguarcocha – San Antonio

Dinner

Saturday

Breakfast

Visit the “Plaza del Poncho” Market in Otavalo

Lunch

Trip to Quito

Dinner

Sunday

Breakfast

Trip to the place of the **Voluntary Project**



4 WEEKS IN THE VOLUNTARY PROJECT

VOLUNTARY PROJECT: CENIT



Besides Spanish classes Dagui's also offers its students participation in voluntary projects. Before working in a voluntary project it is necessary to speak a little Spanish.

Many people take Spanish lessons before starting a project. Of course the time necessary learning Spanish is different for each student, but

a minimum of 4 weeks should be taken into account if you don't speak Spanish.

Tailor made packages

For students who come to Ecuador to learn Spanish and work in a voluntary project, there are many different options. The student can choose the number of weeks he or she wants to take Spanish and work in a voluntary project (minimum of 2 weeks). We can make a special program for each student. Students usually take 4 weeks of Spanish classes, but if a student has studied Spanish before, 1 or 2 weeks can be sufficient. It's also possible to only take Spanish lessons or just work in a voluntary project.

CENIT stands for Center for the Working Girl (in Spanish)

This non-profit organization was founded in 1991 by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. CENIT uses educational-vocational programs to help working girls and their families overcome grinding poverty and improve the quality of their lives.

CENIT helps young children up to young adults to have a live outside the streets, without abuse, incest and drugs by getting them back to school again.

CENIT offers you different voluntary programs to help make the lives of these children better.

CENIT offers the following types of voluntary projects:

1. Early Childhood Intervention

A volunteer in this program works with 10-20 children who are 2-5 years old. Volunteers directly assist the classroom teacher, collaborating in planning and performing activities, helping children during snack and meal times, and participating in parent outreach work as well. Volunteers must be willing to work with very small children. A volunteer works from Monday to Friday from 9:00 am – 3:30pm.

2. Primary Workshop School

Volunteers can assist directly in the classroom in primary school teaching or develop special activities (a theatre project, art classes, a hygiene education project, etc.) Volunteers need to be outgoing and willing to work with children who have suffered severe neglect/abuse. A volunteer works from Monday to Friday from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm.



3. Drop-In Tutoring Center

Volunteers serve as tutors for primary school age children. Academic work tends to be very basic. Volunteers also organize recreational activities for children who have

finished their work. Volunteers can work in the morning and/or afternoon sessions. Volunteers need great patience for this work. A volunteer works from Monday to Friday from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm & 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm.

4. Outreach (working with street children)



Volunteers prepare academic, artistic and social activities for street and working children. Volunteers (in groups of 3-4) go out to five working sectors to carry out activities. This program aims to establish positive mentoring relationships with these neglected children, to encourage them to return to school and to assist them with immediate problems. Street outreach also provides an important opportunity for

CENIT to extend itself to the immediate and outer communities in southern Quito. Volunteers should be willing to get down and dirty working with children out of doors. A volunteer works from Monday to Friday from 9:30 am – 12:30 pm and planning sessions.

5. Production Workshop

Volunteers assist in the production of CENIT's handmade cards (sold to help finance the programs). Volunteers may learn our handmade process, supervise and assist working children and/or help in the marketing of the finished products.

Volunteers work from Monday to Friday from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. (marketing is flexibly scheduled).

6. Vocational High School

Volunteers can assist directly in the classroom in basic high school teaching, sewing, carpentry or develop social activities (a sexuality education course, a theatre or athletic project, a hygiene education campaign, etc.). Volunteers need to be out-going and willing to work with young adults ages 12 to 18. Volunteers work from Monday to Friday from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm & 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm.

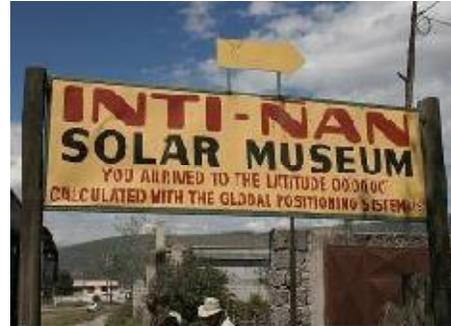
7. Medical Clinic

Volunteers help out in our weekly medical clinic keeping records, recording new patients (taking height, weight, blood pressure and temperature) and can observe physician patient interactions in some cases. It is a great idea for people interested in primary health care in developing countries. Volunteers work Thursdays from

1:30 pm – 5:00 pm. During your work at CENIT you will stay in a hostel or family in Quito and lunch is included in all the different projects.

VOLUNTARY PROJECT: MUSEO INTIÑAN

Museo Intiñan is literally located on the middle of the world on the Equator. Just north of Quito runs the Equator in the valley of Lulumbamba. People always thought the 'yellow line' a few hundred meters further than the museum was the real middle of the world. So around that yellow line a tourist place was built where you can walk around, see shows, eat in one of the many little restaurants and enjoy the nature. Around 50 years ago, people



decided to do new calculations and the real middle of the world appeared to be some 150 meters further away, around which they built a museum: el museo Intiñan. For the tourist attraction Ecuador decided to keep the former Middle of the World.

Volunteers working in this project have a variety of things to do. For example:

- Guide visitors through the museum in your native language, in English or even in Spanish;
- Help and learn how to build 'cabañas'; these are small houses which will be built with typical material of that region in Ecuador. When the cabañas are finished, they will be your accommodation during the time working as a volunteer;
- Recuperate the ecological part around the museum; this project is called: 'Ecotourism 2000'. It consists mainly of planting native plants and fruits which only exist in that area.
- Set up the futuristic part of the museum, where in the future will be shows, like folkloric dances, a restaurant will be built, an area for the people to sit, the futuristic solar clock and many more;
- All the rest of the work considering the development and improvement of the museum Intiñan.

Of course, to be able to do all this, the volunteer will first be taught about every single detail in the museum. He or she will learn a lot of things about the plantation in that certain area, the history of the middle of the world, the scientific aspect of being at the middle of the world, how to put an egg on a nail, the history of the

Ecuadorian culture, how the indigenous people live and used to live, the totem forest, the shrunken heads of the Shuar tribe, the solar clock, the animals in the area and many other things. Volunteers will work five days a week, starting from Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. The busiest time for the museum is usually in the weekends, so if he or she wants to help them out in that time, what they will appreciate, two weekdays can be changed for a Saturday and a Sunday.



VOLUNTARY PROJECT: CAUSAG LLACTA

CausagLlacta can be found in central east Ecuador, 510 meters above sea level where the temperatures range from 14°C to 37°C, with relative humidity around 85% and an annual rainfall of 2000 to 4000 mm. The community's land is alluvial sediments located on the Napo River so that the soil is very productive, and especially suitable for 'yucca' production, as well as banana, cacao, coffee, citrus fruit, wild fruits and 'chonta'.

Part of the area is primary rainforest which the community uses for hunting. Being only a small area, the community needs to buy neighbouring land and then develop it with a reforestation program.

The Quechua people live in this rural community at CausagLlacta - 'Alive Village'.

CausagLlacta is a unique voluntary program, unlike most volunteer projects, because the volunteer plays an integral role within the community. The volunteer experiences a unique culture, unlike any western cultures. In return, the villagers



learn about the foreign mentality and the way of life, however it is only to learn the differences between the cultures. Volunteers will get a weekly plan from which they can choose a project, therefore creating their own daily schedule in conjunction with the volunteer coordinator. Usually the schedule is working in the morning helping the community, teaching at primary schools and specific projects and personal interests in the afternoon. Personal interests usually include participation in community life, trekking in the jungle, playing with the children, swimming and soft rafting (tubing) in

the Napo River, or whatever the volunteer wants to do. Volunteers can be fully involved with teaching the children in the community.

The community has no modern facilities such as electricity, radio or telephone communications. No malaria has been reported in this area. Rainwater is used for drinking and cooking, while a 'shower' is taken in the rivers which border the community's land and elementary toilets are used. To get to and from the local town there are six buses each day.

VOLUNTARY PROJECTS: DON JUAN

The Don Juan Ecological Reserve is actually a family farm in the province of Manabi, near the coastal town of Jama, 30 minutes south of the Equator line on the Pacific Ocean. The Hacienda consists of 3500 acres of some of which constitutes the last remaining stretch of dry forest on the North Coast of Ecuador. 1000 acres of this has been transformed into the Tito Santos Dry Forest Biological Reserve. The reserve includes tropical dry, semi-deciduous, and some humid forest. The dry forest region of Ecuador is considered to be the most endangered of the already vastly reduced forest on the coast. The river Don Juan crosses the hacienda before entering the Pacific Ocean via the long stretches of deserted beaches, which still remain unexploited.



The reserve protects and conserves a variety of forest and coastal habitats to preserve the animal and plant life for future generations. The reserve tries to bring back the forest as close as it was 20 years back and help the community with education and health to preserve the last stretch of dry forest on the North Ecuadorian Coast and its fauna. Right now the Don Juan is implementing a reforestation program where they are aiming to replant 100 acres with a variety of native trees. Don Juan is also developing an organic garden, with a variety of tropical fruits.



Volunteers in Don Juan will help the reserve with reforestation, seed collecting, trail maintenance, horse care, health, education and economic development. While staying in Don Juan, you will sleep in an old hacienda on the coast which is 120 years old. This house had a shared room and

bathroom and basic facilities. All meals are provided. The beach is about 10 minutes away from Don Juan and it is great for horse riding. Don Juan keeps horses for tourists, but you can also go and ride on them.

VOLUNTARY PROJECT: **BELLAVISTA – CLOUDFOREST** **A NATURAL SANCTUARY**

Deep in the heart of the cloud forest, where clouds and trees blend in a tapestry of mystery and magic, discover a protected reserve with an overwhelming profusion of life. It's a place for adventure, relaxation and deep contact with nature, home to hundreds of species of plants, birds and other animals immerse you in this natural sanctuary in the company of those who have dedicated their lives to conserve this unique place.

OUR MISSION

To create a space for active cloud forest conservation, and to offer educational recreation and a place for contemplation for visitors of all ages from all over the world.

WHAT IS A CLOUD FOREST?

Cloud forest, correctly termed pre-montane/subtropical rain forest, cloak the steep slopes of Andes from about 900 meters to about 2500 meters. They are forests of high biodiversity, with a profusion of little studied wildlife and plants. Bellavista is at the southern edge of the **Choco/Andean** rain forest-among a small



handful of internationally recognized **Hotspots of Biodiversity**-that stretches from southwestern Colombia to northwestern Ecuador. And equally important, Bellavista is part of the Mindo Area of International Importance for birds, the first area so designated in South America, by Bird Life International in 1997. The New York Botanical Gardens wrote that the diversity of epiphytes ("air plants" that grow on other plants) is higher in the cloud forests of Ecuador, Colombia and Peru than anywhere else on the planet.

THE RESERVE

Conservation and ecotourism are buzzwords with a meaning. You as a visitor help directly in a viable effort to preserve and learn from the forest. Bellavista started in 1991 as a partially deforested farm of 55 hectares, which was purchased by a British-Colombian couple, Richard and Gloria. It has grown through further purchases, and additions by like-minded people, to become a reserve of 700 hectares in the buffer zone of the **Mindo-Nambillo Protected Forest**. Areas of disturbed forest have regenerated. 10 KM of trails lead through primary and secondary forest and hidden waterfalls. Moreover, Bellavista is one of the first 13 officially certified **ecotourism projects** in Ecuador.



At an elevation of 1650 to 2350 meters, with plunging valleys and tall trees festooned with orchids and bromeliads, Bellavista is a perfect place to discover the beauty of cloud forest. The elevation is too high for malaria to survive, and there are not hidden dangers in the forest. Restricted range birds such as the Plate-billed Mountain Toucan, The Toucan Barbet, and the rare Tanager-Finch live here.

LODGING

Live a truly original, comfortable lodging experience in our Geodesic Dome, the Trailhead House, the Bamboo House or the House in the Woods. In addition, we offer the research Station/Hostel or camping for the budget-minded.

Naturalmente hablamos español, however English is also spoken, on parle français und man spricht sogar auch deutsch.

GOALS FOR THE FUTURE AND RESEARCH OPTIONS

- To truly fulfill the ideals of ecotourism: low impact on the land, forest preservation, visitor education, employment of local people, scientific research, etc.
- To expand the educational efforts of Bellavista- educating youth (self-guided trail, mini study programs, etc.).
- To work with national and international foundations for further forest preservation in northwestern Ecuador.

- To grow as a destination that provides a truly special travel and learning experience.
- To offer opportunities for scientific research through our “Research Station” facility.
- To offer internships to students in ecotourism, resource management, biology, etc.
- To offer volunteer options for people who wish to help with trail creation, visitormanagement, or research projects.

SPECIAL PRICE PER PERSON

2- 3 P

USD 4700

4-6 P

USD 4250

7 AND MORE

USD 4000

INCLUDES:

- 1 month Spanish lessons (4 hours per day) from Monday to Friday 3 people with one teacher
- Accommodation in Quito with Ecuadorian family for 2 weeks
- Accommodation in lodges and hostels with tourist class during the trip and Spanish lesson in different places (Pto. Quito, Mindo, Puerto Lopez.)
- Meals during the 3 months program (breakfast, lunch, dinner)
- All the excursions to the jungle, Cuenca, devil’s nose, rafting, etc.
- Public transportation between the cities
- Bilingual Guide
- Entry fees to the national park or museums
- Voluntary work for 1 month
- GOODBYE PARTY

NOT INCLUDE:

- Additional beverages
- Personal expenses

- Other expenses not mentioned in the “INCLUDES”-list
- Travel insurance
- Tips

**ITINERARY MAY CHANGE DUE TO REASONS
BEYOND OUR CONTROL!!!**