



Insiders Ecuador & the Galápagos Islands

June 10 – 23, 2023 (13 days)

Ecuador has a stunning biodiversity and variety of biomes, and on this adventure you'll explore several of them in depth. In the company of expert trip leader Cathy Ann Taylor, you'll first head to the Ecuadorean highlands where you'll visit the famous Otavalo Indian market (great handicrafts), enjoy cooking classes with local families, and explore the trails around Hacienda Zuleta, our historic accommodation for two nights. You'll then head to the Andean Highlands for day hikes in Cotopaxi National Park, with its luminous mountain landscapes. You'll then head to Quilotoa Lake and embark on a three-day trek among charming villages, friendly locals, and panoramic views of the mountains. Our grand finale is a splendid sojourn in the Galapagos Islands, visiting Santa Cruz and Isabela islands (including a wonderful day hike on Sierra Negra volcano) and staying at welcoming local hotels. Daily nature walks and

snorkeling excursions bring you close to some of the most fascinating creatures on earth—most of which have no fear of humans! Extend your adventure to yet another fascinating area of Ecuador—the Amazon rainforest, where you’ll paddle canoes on blackwater rivers, see four kinds of parrots at a clay lick, and search for the fascinating creatures that make the Amazon their home.

TRIP DETAILS

Moderate ▶ easy to moderate day hikes in Otavalo & Cotopaxi National Park; elevations up to 10,650 feet for 5 days; moderate trek around Lake Quilotoa; elevations up to 12,777 feet; 13 nights hotels, inns, lodges, and a tented camp.

ITINERARY

(You will need to leave the U.S. on June 9 in order to arrive in Quito on June 10.)

Day 1, June 10 ▶ Arrive in Quito

Arrive in Quito, Ecuador. You will be met by your trip leader for the transfer to our hotel. In the evening, we’ll gather for a welcome dinner at Pim’s Restaurante, with its magnificent panoramic views overlooking Quito. Overnight at Hotel Mama Cuchara, a former Spanish colonial house renovated into a boutique hotel.

D...Hotel Mama Cuchara

Note—We encourage you to arrive in Quito a day or so earlier (transfer is on your own). This gives you a chance to begin the trip well rested and allows you to do a bit of sightseeing that isn’t on the itinerary.





Day 2, June 11 ▶ Otavalo – Hacienda Cusín

We head to Otavalo and our first stop is at the food market. What better way to understand a culture than by learning about their food! We will explore the market and learn about the different crops that are produced in the surrounding farmlands that we'll be exploring over the next few days. From the food market, we head into the heart of this bustling city market—the Plaza de Ponchos, the largest Indian market famous for its craft work. Otavalo is mostly populated by Otavalo Indians, an industrious community dedicated to the manufacturing of textiles since pre-colonial times. This is the largest and most important Indian market of Ecuador, attracting buyers and sellers from all over the region. The indigenous people gather on the streets, turning the city into a large open market that offers domestic animals, food, textiles, handicrafts, and objects of everyday use. After exploring the market, we travel back in time to the small communities that surround this busy commercial town and whose farmers, ranchers, and craftspeople make the Otavalo market what it is.

First, we explore the community of Peguche and then continue along a path to a beautiful 50-foot waterfall that is also an Indigenous Ceremonial Site due to the purification baths held here a couple days prior to the Inti Raymi celebration. Our hike continues to the town of Agato where we will be hosted by an incredible family that preserves the tradition of weaving on a backstrap loom. Sadly, this art form is slowly dying, so be inspired and help us support the conservation of this art! The quality of the items

produced at the workshop is clearly superior to many of the machine-woven products you may find in the market and your purchase goes directly into the efforts of this community to revive this ancient art.

For lunch today, we'll meet husband and wife team Claudia and Patricio, of a Kichwa Otavalean family, who are dedicated to presenting experiences in ancestral gastronomy. This gastronomy "workshop" combines a variety of native flavors with the richness of natural products and their various preparation methods. In a traditional fireplace kitchen (tulpa), diverse culinary products are offered—including cooking techniques great for beginners to intermediate and advanced chefs. Claudia and her family will prepare their recipes, give demonstrative and interactive classes, and you'll end the workshop by enjoying the dishes you've made together.

Later, we explore a more rural area as we hike above these communities and learn about small-scale agriculture, an important part of life in the valley. We'll meet people that continue to farm their land and learn about the products we saw earlier in the market, especially grain crops like quinoa. The scenery is gorgeous and from this vantage point in the foothills of Imbabura, we can see all the places we hiked through this morning. If it's a clear day you can even see Cotacachi Volcano. At the end of the trail, our supporting vehicle will be waiting for us to transfer us to historic Hacienda Cusín, a restored Spanish colonial estate dating from 1602. (1-2 hours hiking, elevations between 8,500'-9,300', 1.75 hours driving) BLD...Hacienda Cusín



Day 3, June 12 ▶ Hacienda Zuleta – Condor Valley

We head toward another indigenous valley with an interesting story of a hacienda that became a community. After a quick transfer to the trailhead, we set off on our hike, witnessing what the son of a liberal reformer and a wealthy, land-owning mother did during his lifetime that no landowner in Ecuador had ever done before (and perhaps has never done since). We'll learn about the amazing and inspiring Plaza family and their work with the local community of Zuleta to help develop one of the best ecotourism destinations in the northern Andes of Ecuador. As a working farm, the home of an ex-president of Ecuador, Hacienda Zuleta is an important part of the history of the northern Andes of Ecuador. This agricultural area is famed for its traditional embroidery, dairy products, alpaca farming, and highland crops such as wheat, maize, potatoes, lentils, and quinoa. “Zuletenos” and “Zuletenas” are known to keep their culture and traditions intact—keep an eye out for the way the locals dress here and how different it is from traditional Otavalo clothing. (4-5 hours hiking, 8.6 miles, elevations from 9,500'-10,200')

It's one thing to discover a country's character through its food, it's another to learn to make and then enjoy some of its memorable dishes. The fragrant scents wafting from Carmita's kitchen are more than enough to lure travelers in and are just a prelude to the warmth to come. Carmita and her husband, Jose Maria, will welcome us into their home to discover some of the regional dishes of Zuleta. This is a “roll up your sleeves” experience—chopping, shucking, stirring—all in Carmita and Jose Maria's home kitchen. We'll then share a meal in their dining room while having the chance to meaningfully connect over food. Overnight at Hacienda Zuleta.

BLD...Hacienda Zuleta



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Day 4, June 13 ▶ Hacienda Zuleta

We awake in this beautiful historic hacienda and after a delicious breakfast, we can explore the organic garden, feed baby calves, count sheep, talk to the vaqueros, enjoy the embroidery museum, or relax in the garden. We'll then set off for a hike to the hacienda's condor reintroduction project, which is part of Zuleta's property. Along the way we'll enjoy incredible views of the Andes and a combination of archaeological sites and great wildlife, including many species of birds, wildflowers, and condors—Zuleta is one of the best locations in Ecuador to see the endangered Andean condor. (2 hours hiking) The remainder of the day is free to relax or explore the grounds of the hacienda. You can also rent a horse (at extra cost) to ride on the hacienda's many trails. Overnight at Hacienda Zuleta.

BLD...Hacienda Zuleta

**Day 5, June 14 ▶ Cotopaxi National Park**

We get an early start for our trip to Chilcabamba Lodge in Cotopaxi National Park, home to Ecuador's second highest peak. At 19,347 feet, Cotopaxi is also the most active volcano in the world. The park itself protects a wealth of wildlife including llamas, bears, wolves, pumas, and deer. Hiking right from the lodge (and with a picnic lunch midway), we descend from the grasslands to the humid Andean forest. Along the way we explore waterfalls, search for birds, and learn about local plants. We return to the lodge for dinner and overnight. (4-5 hours hiking, elevations around 11,400', 3.5 hours driving)

BLD...Chilcabamba Lodge

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Day 6, June 15 ▶ Cotopaxi National Park

This morning we visit the interpretation center to learn about the history of this spectacular volcano's major eruptions, as well as the local flora and fauna. We then visit Lake Limpiopungo and explore the surrounding area on foot. This seasonal lake is home to nesting Andean gulls, and hummingbirds usually accompany you along the trail. And on a clear day, there are also great views of Cotopaxi! If you feel like a longer walk, there are many options available where you will be able to enjoy spectacular views of the volcano and the surrounding Andean peaks. Return to the lodge for dinner and overnight.

BLD...Chilcabamba Lodge



Day 7, June 16 ▶ Sigchos – Insilivi

After breakfast we drive to the small, quiet town of Sigchos. Here we meet our local guide and begin our hike to Insilivi. We enter the Toachi River Canyon and spend much of the hike traversing the canyon and crossing the river. Along the way, we enjoy dramatic mountain scenery, cross farmlands with local people working their fields and livestock placidly grazing, and pass by their preserved traditional homes. On arrival in Insilivi, we will be greeted with a warm Andean welcome by our lodge hosts and have a chance to relax before a hearty and sumptuous dinner. Enjoy a drink on the beautiful terrace, cozy up with a book next to the fireplace in your room, or soak your tired muscles in the Jacuzzi before retiring for the evening. Overnight at Llu Llu Llama. (3-4 hours hiking, 6.7 miles, 1,466' ascent/1,632' descent, elevations between 8,400'-9,660', 3 hours driving)

BLD... Llu Llu Llama (Garden Cottage)

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Day 8, June 17 ▶ Toachi Canyon

After breakfast, a short drive brings us to the trailhead at Chugchilan, from where we set out for another hike traversing Toachi Canyon. We'll enjoy the fresh mountain air and sweeping vistas but at higher altitudes than yesterday's hike. Most hikes from the high Andes toward the Pacific are normally quite difficult with high altitudes and steep ascents, but our trek enjoys challenging but manageable valley crossings. Overnight at Mama Hilda. (4-6 hours hiking, 7.7 miles, 2,136' ascent/1,301' descent elevations between 8,660'-10,490')



Day 9, June 18 ▶ Quilotoa Crater – Quito

Today's trek brings us to the ultimate reward for our efforts—the breathtaking view over Quilotoa Crater, Ecuador's westernmost volcano. Be sure to fuel up with a good breakfast, as today's hike will take 5-7 hours and climb just over 3,200 feet! The views along our trek are simply gorgeous, with panoramas of the Andes along with charming villages and friendly locals. As we reach the Crater lip, we'll be astonished by its vastness and beauty. Quilotoa's Crater is nearly two miles wide and its lake is more than 800 feet deep! We will have plenty of time to enjoy the views before we head back to Quito. Dinner is on your own this evening. (5-7 hours hiking, 7.1 miles, 3,291' ascent/3,291' descent, elevations between 9,815'-12,777', 2.5 hours driving)

BL...Hotel Wyndham



Day 10, June 19 ▶ Galápagos Islands – Santa Cruz Island

Morning transfer to the airport for our flight to Baltra, the gateway to the Galápagos on Santa Cruz Island. We dive into our adventure as soon as we arrive! There's no better introduction to these magical islands than to get on the water as soon as possible. We enter the airport through a special VIP lounge where we can change clothes, put on some sunscreen, and get a cool drink before we transfer to the Itabaca Channel to explore its spectacular turquoise waters. We will have a chance to kayak, snorkel, and stand-up paddleboard (SUP), as well as encounter some of the most famous Galápagos wildlife such as blue-footed boobies, sea lions, brown pelicans, a variety of herons, and white-tipped reef sharks. We will glide through beautiful red mangrove forests and beside lava rock cliffs on water so clear we can see the marine life in the shallows. Our ocean sit-on-top kayaks come in doubles or singles, and life jackets are provided. A support boat will escort us throughout our water activities to ensure safety and to provide water, snacks, and towels between activities.

From the Itabaca Channel we head up to the Santa Cruz highlands to a private reserve that borders the national park, where we can see the famous giant tortoises roaming in the wild. Our tented camp is located here—perched high on a hillside overlooking the ocean, Magic Galapagos Tented Camp will be our home for the next two nights. The sounds of nature will serenade us in the evenings, and the Milky Way will be our night light. We'll be able to feast our eyes on the mountains and forests surrounding the Camp and enjoy the peace of having the entire hillside to ourselves, except for seasonal resident giant tortoises. Watching the colorful sunset from Magic's western perch is the perfect segue into evening. Dinners are sumptuous three-course affairs, prepared by expert chefs in an open-air kitchen in the main lodge. A

favorite post-dinner activity is a short walk to the reserve's natural lava tubes, for a nightcap in the one-of-a-kind "Lava Lounge!" It's the perfect spot to relax around the fire and share stories from the day's adventures.

BLD...Galapagos Magic Tented Camp



Day 11, June 20 ▶ Galápagos Islands – Tortuga Bay & Charles Darwin Station

This morning's walk through a deciduous forest brings us to one of the most beautiful beaches in the archipelago. We continue walking along the white sand beach until we reach Playa Mansa where we can enjoy a special kayaking ride around Tortuga Bay. (2 miles hiking) Later, we head to the Charles Darwin Research Station, the matrix of all the scientific research in the Galápagos Islands. It is from these headquarters where all the most sensitive conservation projects are being directed. The conservation and preservation of giant tortoises, marine iguanas, and others are some of the examples of the Center's work. We can walk along the core of the Research Center where we can find the corrals where the giant tortoises are being bred as well as the corrals where land iguanas are being studied. The Research Center offers a brand-new Interpretation Center with some of the most important samples of the Center Collection. Overnight at Ikala Galapagos Hotel in the town of Puerto Ayora.

BLD...Ikala Galapagos Hotel



Day 12, June 21 ▶ Galápagos Islands – Isabela Island

Today we take an early morning speedboat to Isabela Island (2.5 hours). After checking into our hotel, our adventure begins with a tour of the Tintoreras, a group of small islands close to the town of Puerto Villamil. The islands are named after the white-tipped Tintoreras reef sharks that swim in these calm waters. On the Tintoreras we will see almost all the archipelago’s iconic wildlife: white-tipped reef sharks, sea lions, turtles, rays, penguins, pelicans, and blue footed boobies—the Galápagos in miniature! After walking on the island, we will have a chance to snorkel in the bay. Don’t be surprised if some of the penguins or sea lions jump in to play alongside you in the water!

Later, we bike the Wetlands Trail where we can see marine iguana colonies and several different types of mangrove trees (all four can be seen here) as well as enjoying the network of trails, beaches, and historic sites. At the end of the trail is the Wall of Tears, built in the late 1940s by World War II prisoners held at the US base on the islands. Our local guide will explain the importance of the Wall of Tears, giving us a glimpse into the lives of the island’s previous inhabitants. On this network of trails, we will catch some beautiful views of the village below and have the chance to see birds and maybe even some wild giant tortoises.

BLD...Isamar Hotel

Day 13, June 22 ▶ Galápagos Islands – Hiking on Isabela Island

Volcanic eruptions created the Galápagos Islands, and we'll have a chance to see this geologic process firsthand as we explore Isabela, one of the archipelago's youngest and most volcanically active islands. We have the whole day to explore the highlands, and we start by hiking up to the crater of the massive Sierra Negra volcano, and then onward to the rim of Volcan Chico. This fascinating walk usually begins with some morning fog and drizzle, which sometimes persists in the shadow of the volcano, adding to its mysterious character. Despite the drizzle, we may see Galápagos hawks, finches, flycatchers, and short eared owls along the way. When we reach the rim of Sierra Negra crater, the second largest in the world after Ngorongoro in Tanzania, we'll see the reward for our efforts. The crater is so large, and the views so expansive, photos can't do it justice, but bring your binoculars and camera anyway! Later, as we head toward Volcan Chico, we may get the feeling we're walking on Mars due to the alien landscape. And while the land appears to be utterly desolate, a closer look will reveal small lizards scurrying among the rocks. From the crater's rim, we enjoy more amazing views along with lava tubes and fumaroles. After Volcan Chico and its extreme landscape, we'll be able to relax in the shade of a lovely jaborcillo tree and enjoy our box lunch while taking in the spectacular and expansive views over the central and northern parts of Isabela. In the distance, we'll be able to see Fernandina, Pinzon, and Santa Cruz islands. We then head back down to complete our day of hiking and relax on the beaches of Puerto Villamil. In the evening, we gather for a festive farewell dinner. (10 miles hiking, 25-minute drive to trailhead)

BLD...Isamar Hotel

Day 14, June 23 ▶ Galápagos Islands – Depart

An early morning speedboat brings us back to Santa Cruz Island, and then we transfer by land to Baltra for homeward-bound flights via Quito (please book your flights after 8:30 p.m.). A dayroom is available at the Wyndham Hotel until 8:00 pm (the hotel will provide a shuttle to the airport).

B...Dayroom at Wyndham Hotel



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LAND COST

\$7,395 per person (6-7 members)
\$7,195 per person (8-9 members)
\$6,895 per person (10-14 members)

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations.

\$1300 single supplement

Airfare Quito – Galapagos – Quito \$610 (subject to change)

*Should you choose to pay with credit card there will be a service charge of 3%, the fee we incur from the bank.

Note—Prices listed are subject to change. We are occasionally faced with unavoidable cost increases due to fuel increases, costs of services or currency fluctuations that we cannot absorb. We will, however, do everything we can to keep prices the same as published.

LAND COST INCLUDES...

- Expert leadership
- Bilingual naturalist guide during the whole trip
- Galápagos Naturalist Guide for the Galápagos portion
- Accommodations in hotels, inns, and tented camp
- Meals as noted (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Private transportation for excursions and all activities
- Airport transfers
- Entrance fees to private reserves as noted
- Boat excursions with snorkeling on a sharing basis
- Speedboat transfers on a sharing basis
- Local taxes
- Kayak, SUP, and snorkeling equipment (masks, snorkels, and fins), and kayaks for use while in the Galápagos

LAND COST DOES NOT INCLUDE...

International airfare to Quito, Ecuador; roundtrip flights Quito/Galápagos (approximately \$590); Galápagos National Park entrance fee (\$100/\$50 per child under 12); tourist transfer card (US \$20 per person); meals not noted on the itinerary; individual transfers for early arrivals or late departures; trip insurance (we urge you purchase the optional trip insurance offered by Cattara, which includes trip cancellation insurance); optional tipping to leader, naturalist guide and staff; excess baggage charges; airport taxes (if any); cost of medical immunizations; and items of a personal nature (sodas, alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

TRIP PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation25% of land cost
120 days prior to departure25% of land cost
90 days prior to departure.....Balance

CANCELLATION FEE SCHEDULE

From time of reservation until
90 days before departure.....25% of land cost
89-60 days prior to departure.....50% of land cost
59 days or fewer prior to departure.....100% of land cost

EXPERT LEADERSHIP

Expert leadership is the key to every successful trip. Cattara attracts knowledgeable and gifted leaders who are passionate about guiding trips and truly enjoy sharing the experience with others. They understand the cultures and traditions they work in and are a fountain of information. In addition to making sure everything runs smoothly and safely, Cattara guides enhance your experience by being educators, companions, and the best of friends.

TRIP LEADER



Cathy Ann Taylor, a high altitude trekking & cultural guide for the last 33 years will be leading his trip. Cathy Ann has trekked all over Nepal, Tibet, India and Bhutan, with well over 200 trips in the Himalayas (she still considers the Himalayas her “second home”)! She has also hiked extensively in the European Alps (Tour du Mont Blanc—six times, Tour of Monte Rosa, The Haute Route, Gran Paradiso, Scotland—three times, the Dolomites—two times), and the Georgian Caucasus—four times, South America (18 trips in Peru, 5 in Patagonia), Morocco —three times, Uganda & Rwanda—five times, and John Muir Trail —one time. A devout hiker and mountain biker, she leaves no trail undiscovered, and her passion for the mountains, caring nature, and boundless energy are renowned. Her experience, knowledge, positive attitude (she can find the good in anything!), and her wonderful rapport with the local staff will enhance your experience. With the help of caring and like-minded individuals she has been able to manage the sponsorship of nineteen remote village children, all of whom are in boarding school in Nepal or in universities in India, Nepal, and the United States. She consistently gets rave reviews from members of her groups and has quite a following. Cathy Ann is active in the Breast Cancer Prevention Partners and has participated in sixteen expeditions, including Mount McKinley, Mount Cho Oyu, Mount Fuji, Mount Shasta, and Mount Rainier, which helped increase awareness of breast cancer. Cat’s special trekking program, Sacred Treks, benefits Breast Cancer Prevention Partners (formerly the Breast Cancer Fund). Past trips include Bhutan, Mont Blanc, Peru, Everest, Ladakh, Mustang, Georgian Caucasus, Sikkim, Dolomites, Cordillera Blanca, and Annapurna Sanctuary treks (she has raised **\$1.5M** to date!). Cathy Ann has also been active in the American Himalayan Foundation and has helped raised \$30,000 for

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their STOP Girl Trafficking project. She has also raised over \$15,000 for Lama Pasang's Himalayan Children's Care Home which houses 87 children from Mustang. She has also reached the summit of Ama Dablam (22,500') in Nepal and Argentina's Aconcagua (22,834'), the highest peak in South America. Cathy Ann is also involved in fundraising for the National MS Society and has raised over \$48,000 for the organization. Cathy Ann received an honorable mention in *Hooked on the Outdoors* magazine's Outdoor Person of the Year Awards, and also received a letter of recognition for her fundraising and environmental work from Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi.

PHYSICAL EXPECTATIONS

Although this trip is rated moderate, we recommend you be in good physical shape and capable of hiking up to seven hours a day. Our trek in the mountains on Days 6-8 is moderate and at elevations around 10,000 feet or more, and you may feel the effects of high altitude. While in the Galápagos, we enjoy 2-3 excursions a day, walking on trails to observe the unique wildlife and snorkeling among sea turtles and tropical fish. The hikes in the islands are relatively easy, but they are on rocky trails under the equatorial sun. Our daily schedule of activities is also very busy—we have activities all day long, so it can be tiring.

We recommend you get out on your local trails at least once a week. Wear your boots and daypack and pick some trails with hills so you can strengthen your leg muscles and build up your stamina. We believe other important pre-requisites are a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

You will need a passport, valid for at least six months beyond the date of completion of the trip. No visas are required for U.S. citizens for this trip. Upon entering Ecuador you will be given a Tourist Card; keep it with your passport as you'll need it when you leave the country. Note—it's a good idea to make a photocopy of the photo page of your passport and carry it separately from your passport. If your passport is lost or stolen, a photocopy will help the local consulate speed up authorization for replacement. Extra passport photos can also be helpful to have just in case.

AIR TRAVEL

Airfare is not included in the land cost of the trip. For air reservations, please contact the airlines directly, either by phone or via the Internet. Plan your arrival in Quito by 3:00 p.m. on Day 1. Many travelers elect to use their "frequent flyer" miles when traveling, but please check with us before purchasing or obtaining your tickets. We need to verify your arrival and departure schedule and ensure we have enough participants to operate the trip. Note—Names on air tickets and passports must match! The Galapagos flight will be issued 60 days before of the trip.

MEDICAL MATTERS

No vaccinations are currently required to enter Ecuador, but usual immunizations for typhoid, tetanus, hepatitis A, and polio are recommended. These regulations and recommendations change frequently, so please check with your local health department or the CDC for more information (www.cdc.gov).

Please advise us of any pre-existing medical conditions that may affect your health on the trip (recent injuries or surgeries, chronic illnesses, etc.). We recommend you bring your own personal first-aid kit, pain killers, and allergy medicines if you are prone to allergic reactions (especially epipens if you are allergic to bee stings). Moleskin or Second Skin for blisters is also recommended, as well as Band-Aids and antibiotic ointment. Consult your doctor about bringing other medications, such as antibiotics like Cipro. The trip leader will also carry a basic kit for emergencies, but will not have any prescription medications.

MONEY MATTERS

Ecuador uses the US dollar as its currency. You should bring enough money for any souvenirs you may buy, plus a few items like aperitifs, extra beverages, and the like (most of your meals are included in the cost of the trip). Depending on how much of a shopper you are, \$600-\$800 should be plenty for incidentals, souvenirs, and gratuities to the trip leader and naturalist guides. At least US \$550 USD per guest is recommended for the trip leader, \$100 per guest for the mainland local guide, and \$40 - \$50 per guest for the Galapagos naturalist guide. You can present your gratuities to your guides & leader individually. We suggest you withdraw money from an ATM in Quito before the trip begins.

WEATHER & CLIMATE

June and July in Ecuador is a wonderful time to travel. The weather is generally sunny and dry—allowing great views of the mountains and volcanoes. Average temperatures in Quito are around 65°F, but it can be chillier at higher altitudes, with some rain possible in the afternoons. In the Galápagos Islands, expect a humid subtropical climate—the average high is 79 degrees, with a low of 70. It's still the dry season, so there should not be much rain, if any. You'll need to bring a variety of clothing to accommodate these wide ranges of temperature.

WHILE ON THE TRIP

Our accommodations throughout are in a variety of inns, hotels, and lodges, including a historic hacienda.

FOOD & WATER SAFETY

Water provided by your guides is safe to drink. When traveling within Ecuador, the local tap water is generally potable. However, at hotels or on your own, we recommend using bottled water, readily available for purchase.

INCIDENTALS

Laundry: You will not really have time to have your laundry done during the trip, but you can hand wash a few items and hang them to dry in your room.

Electricity: Ecuador uses 110/120 volt, 60 cycle electricity as in the US. Plugs are usually Type A (two prong flat type) or Type B (like Type A but with a prong for grounding).

Time Zones: Ecuador is three hours ahead of California. Note: The Galápagos Islands are one hour behind; i.e. if it's 6:00 pm in Quito, it's 5:00 pm in the Galápagos.

Communications: While we discourage the use of cell phones on our trip, we can't deny the fact that you may want to be in touch with your friends or family. Please be sensitive to the needs of others and use them in the privacy of your room. The international dialing code for Ecuador is 593. Contact your cell phone service about international coverage. Wi-Fi is very limited while in the Galápagos Islands. The hotels and lodges in Ecuador have internet access.



Amazon Rainforest Extension – La Selva Lodge

Make the most of your adventure in Ecuador with this wonderful extension to La Selva Lodge, set in the Amazon rainforest on the border of Yasuni National Park. Explore the most diverse ecosystem in the world; paddle canoes along flooded forests; search for monkeys, sloths, and countless species of birds in the company of a naturalist and native guides; and learn about the plants used by locals as food and medicine. Accommodations are at La Selva Lodge, an ideal place

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from which to explore the diversity of the rainforest, with comfortable suites featuring a living area, private balcony, and en suite bathroom. Spa services are also available. This extension can be taken either before or after your Ecuador adventure.

Day 1 ► Quito – La Selva Lodge

Transfer to the airport and meet a representative of La Selva Lodge in the national departure area. After a short briefing, you'll take a 30-minute commercial flight to Puerto Francisco de Orellana "El Coca," after which you'll be transferred to the city's main dock on the Napo River. Here you'll board a motorized canoe that will bring you downriver on what will be the beginning of an unforgettable experience in the tropical rainforest, the Amazon. At the end of the river journey, you will be dropped off at La Selva's main dock. Your first close encounter with the rainforest begins and the final leg of the trip to the lodge will be completed in a paddle canoe. The manager will be waiting to greet you with a refreshing juice, snacks, and a short briefing with general information about your stay at La Selva. Later in the afternoon, enjoy a short introduction to the rainforest, followed by a walk through a mahogany forest. At this time of day there is great natural light and the diurnal and nocturnal animals are beginning their daily transitional activities. Dinner and overnight at La Selva Lodge.

D...La Selva Lodge



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Days 2-3 ▶ La Selva Lodge

The next two days are chock-full of activities, accompanied by a naturalist guide and native guides who will interpret and explain what you're seeing. Each day you'll get an early morning wake-up call, followed by breakfast, then you're off to explore your amazing surroundings. Close by is an observation tower that allows you to climb 120 feet above the forest. From here, you can spot the colorful birds of the Amazon and maybe even certain primates. On the way back from the tower there is the option of taking the Tucaneta Trail where your native guide can show you some of the medicinal plants still in use today. There is also the option of a one-hour hike to the beautiful lagoon of Mandi Cocha, where different species of birds and even giant otters can be seen. Another trail leaves right from the lodge to the edge of the lagoon—a loop hike that allows sightings of mammals, monkeys, and birds that come close to the lagoon to feed. At the Garzacochoa Lagoon, you may see monkeys, birds, and sometimes families of squirrel and capuchin monkeys looking for food. The tremendous calls of the howler monkeys can be heard in the afternoon and the smallest monkey in the world, the pigmy marmoset, can be seen here too. Plenty of birds like the hoatzin, toucans, or macaws can also be seen flying overhead. A canoe ride at sunset is a wonderful opportunity to search for nocturnal wildlife and gaze at the stars in the night sky. On one day, you'll enjoy a night walk, too—bring your flashlight!

Other activities at La Selva include a visit to the parrot clay lick by canoe. This is one of the most fascinating displays in the world—hundreds of dazzling parrots and parakeets gather here to eat the mineral-rich soil, an important part of their diet. Be sure to bring your binoculars—they are essential to really capture the moment! After visiting the clay lick, an Amazonian Kichua woman will welcome you at their community center to share their life in the Amazon. You won't find this part of the Amazon on any maps, and your visit is a special and unique opportunity to really get to learn more about the people of the Amazon. Each day, you'll return to the lodge for lunch and a rest, then venture out again in the late afternoon.

BLD each day...La Selva Lodge

Day 4 ▶ La Selva Lodge – Depart Early breakfast and departure from the lodge by motorized canoe back to Coca. Transfer to the airport for the flight to Quito (scheduled arrival at 12:30 pm—subject to change).



EXTENSION LAND COST...

\$1195 per person (2-14 members)

Airfare Quito - Coca - Quito \$325 per person (subject to change)

*Should you choose to pay with credit card there will be a service charge of 3.5%, the fee we incur from the bank.

Note—Prices listed are subject to change. We are occasionally faced with unavoidable cost increases due to fuel increases, costs of services or currency fluctuations that we cannot absorb. We will, however, do everything we can to keep prices the same as published.

EXTENSION LAND COST INCLUDES...

- Services of bilingual naturalist guide and local guide
- Accommodations at La Selva Lodge
- Meals as noted (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner) including Welcome Drink and water, coffee, and tea at all meals
- Canoe transportation for excursions and all activities
- Airport transfers

EXTENSION LAND COST DOES NOT INCLUDE...

Roundtrip flight Quito/Coca/Quito (approx. \$317—subject to change); local taxes; alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks; tips to naturalist and local guides; trip insurance (we urge you purchase the optional trip insurance offered by Cattara, which includes trip cancellation insurance); optional tipping to leader, naturalist guides and staff; excess baggage charges; airport taxes (if any); cost of medical immunizations; and items of a personal nature (sodas, alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

TRIP PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation25% of land cost
120 days prior to departure25% of land cost
90 days prior to departure.....Balance

CANCELLATION FEE SCHEDULE

From time of reservation
until 90 days prior to departure25% of land cost
89-60 days prior to departure.....50% of land cost
59 days or fewer prior to departure.....100% of land cost

WHAT TO BRING: CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT LIST

Packing Notes

It's best to go as light as possible and take only the essentials. Excess baggage can be a burden, not only to you but to support personnel.

Always bring all irreplaceable items, such as camera, medications, important documentation, and trekking boots in your carry-on luggage.

Luggage

- Duffel bag, large enough to hold your hiking and city clothes. It should have a full-length zipper (for easy access), and be sturdy. Wheeled duffels are OK to bring, but hard-shelled suitcases are not advisable (they are difficult to load compactly in the vans).
- Daypack with a capacity of about 2,800-3,200 cubic inches, with a good padded waist belt. It can double as your carry-on bag.*
- Spare roll-up duffel (optional). This is essential if you wish to bring home those great souvenirs! It should be lockable.

Clothing Notes

You should be prepared for a variety of weather conditions (see paragraph above on Weather & Climate). Synthetic fabrics (such as polypropylene, capilene, or wool) are the best choices. They provide the best insulation, are light in weight, wick away perspiration, and dry quickly if wet. (Cotton garments are not good in cold or wet mountain conditions.)

We haven't included quantities for each item listed. Use your own judgment, based on the expected weather conditions, your personal needs, and the overall weight restrictions for your luggage. Note: It is acceptable to wear clean hiking pants and a shirt to dinner every evening; in the Galápagos and Amazon, we can be much less formal!

Underwear

- Regular underwear. Synthetics are easier to wash and dry.
- Thermal underwear (lightweight), top and bottom. Optional—if you tend to get chilled at higher elevations.

Socks

- Casual socks (synthetic for easy washing and drying) that are suitable for your walking (not hiking) shoes.
- Light-weight hiking socks (synthetic or wool/synthetic).

Shirts

- Long-sleeved, synthetic or wool shirt.
- Short-sleeved synthetic T-shirts.
- Shirts for non-hiking activities.

Pants

- Full-length synthetic hiking pants or synthetic sweatpants.
- Hiking shorts, cotton or synthetic.
- Casual pants or skirts for non-hiking activities.

Outerwear

- Medium-weight jacket of synthetic fabric, such as fleece or thinsulate.
- Rain/wind parka (must fit over bulky clothing).
- Rain/wind pants, preferably with full-length side zipper (must fit over your other pants).
- Light-weight gloves (wool or fleece).
- Waterproof daypack cover.

Head Gear

- Sun hat with wide brim, preferably with a chin strap to keep it from blowing off, or baseball cap.
- Fleece or wool hat.

- Bandana. A generally useful item—it will keep your neck from getting sunburned and can double as a hand towel in the field.

Footwear

Please break new boots in well before the trip.

- Medium-weight hiking boots with padded ankle, good arch support, and lug sole for traction. Your hiking boots must be waterproofed and well broken in.
- Comfortable walking shoes to wear while in towns.
- Sandals or flip-flops for showers.

Other Items

- Swimsuit—1 or 2. We will have several snorkeling excursions.
- Wetsuit—2 mil.
- Water bottles, 1 or 1.5 quart capacity. Make sure they are leak-proof. Bring 2 and mark them with your name or initials as several people may have the same bottle.
- Hiking poles—highly recommended. These are essential to relieve the impact on your knees during long downhills; they are also useful on uphills. Practice with them before the trip.
- Toiletry kit—soap, toothbrush, etc.
- Purell hand sanitizer for quick hand washing and hygiene (a must!).
- Toilet paper and a Ziploc bag (for stops along the trail).
- Personal medical kit, including blister protection.
- Ace bandage or brace if you're prone to sore knees or ankles.
- Sunglasses (100% UVA/UVB protected).
- Spare pair of prescription glasses, prescription sunglasses, or contact lenses.
- Sunscreen lotion and lipstick of SPF 25 or higher.
- Small padlocks or combination locks for your duffels.
- Heavyweight plastic garbage bag to help keep the contents of your daypack dry during hikes.
- Headlamp with spare batteries.

Optional Travel Accessories

- Camera and plenty of memory cards, extra batteries.
- Repair kit with needle, thread, and safety pins.
- Pair of compact binoculars.
- Swiss Army-type pocketknife.
- Powdered electrolyte mixes for your water.
- Your favorite trail snacks or supplements, especially if you have dietary restrictions.
- Reading and writing material.
- Sit-upon pad for trailside stops.
- Biodegradable laundry detergent (for hand-washing clothes).
- Dry bag (for storing your items while kayaking).



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