Last Updated: April 15, 2014

Full Ecuador - EF10HB

24 days: Quito to Quito

What's Included

Papallacta Hot Springs stay. Amazon Jungle homestay (2 nts). Amazon Jungle lodge stay with guided walks and wildlife-spotting (2 nts). Baños stay. Historic hacienda overnight stay. Otavalo visit. Quito to Galápagos return flights. Galápagos Islands stay (7 nts). Swimming and snorkelling with equipment.

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

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VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2013 - September 30th, 2013

Itinerary

Day 1 Arrive Quito

Arrive in Quito at any time. There are no planned activities, so check into our hotel and enjoy the city.

Located 2850m (9348 ft) above sea level, the Ecuadorian capital of Quito enjoys a wonderful spring-like climate, despite the fact that it is only 22 km (14 miles) south of the Equator. Nestled in a valley flanked by mountains, on a clear day several snow-capped volcanoes are visible from the city centre. Add to its beautiful location a rich history and well-preserved colonial district, and you begin to understand Quito’s appeal to thousands of tourists every year.

In 1978 UNESCO declared Quito a World Heritage site, and any new development in Quito's old town is now strictly controlled. Life in Quito tends to be peaceful, though the drivers are fond of using their car horns! There are approximately 2,000,000 inhabitants in the metropolitan area, but the pace is relaxed and the residents hospitable.

Quito is separated into two basic sections, the old and the new cities. The old city is full of historical buildings and churches. One of the more noteworthy is the Catedral de Quito, located on the Plaza de la Independencia. Built between 1550 and 1562, it was one of the first neoclassical works in Quito. La Compañía de Jésus Church is considered one of the most beautiful in the Americas. The decorations in the Compañía contain approximately one and one-half tons of gold, and construction of the church took 170 years (1605-1775).

The small, rounded hill dominating the old town is El Panecillo or 'the Little Bread Loaf,' a major Quito landmark. From here there are marvellous panoramic views of the entire city and surrounding volcanoes. You can easily take a trolley (streetcar) or a cab between the Old Town and New Town.

Quito’s large foreign population and steady stream of travellers have given it a varied and vibrant nightlife, and salsotecas and other dance clubs abound. For a real Ecuadorian experience though, be sure and drop by a peña if you can; these are great places for

meeting locals and dancing, as well as enjoying local cooking.

Day 2 Papallacta Hot Springs (B)

The morning is free explore Quito on your own. In the afternoon take a bus trip through the heights of the Andes en route to the Amazon. Stop for the night in Papallacta, and relax in the natural mineral hot pools.

The village of Papallacta sits 60 km (37 miles) southeast of Quito, over the Andes and on the outer rim of the Amazon Basin. This small village, surrounded by cloud forest on the road between the highlands and the Oriente, has arguably the best thermal springs in all of Ecuador. It is the perfect place to spend a relaxing evening soaking in the mineral hot springs, while enjoying the great natural beauty of the area.

Day 3-4 Amazon Homestay (2B, 1L, 2D)

This morning we descend into the Amazon jungle region. Notice the scenery change dramatically as we leave the mountains and enter the lush, tropical Amazon rainforest. Stay with a Quichua family and enjoy the hospitality of these wonderful people, and experience life in the jungle first-hand.

In the 16th century, Spanish conqueror Francisco de Orellana ventured from Quito into the eastern jungle, in search of El Dorado, a mythical stash of Inca gold hidden away in the jungle. While he didn't find gold, he did discover Ecuador's Rio Napo, which along with Peru’s Marañón, combines to create the mighty Amazon. He followed the Napo into the Amazon mainstream and travelled all the way through the dense jungle to the Atlantic Ocean on Brazil’s coast.

Consider the variety of mammals living in Ecuador's Amazon: armadillos, honey bears, sloth, 60 varieties of bats, tapirs, peccaries, jaguar, monkeys, manatees and much more. Birds are the richest group of Amazon vertebrates, at approximately 1000 species. Visitors will see hummingbirds, toucans, macaws and tanagers on land, and darters, herons and gulls on water. If fortunate, you may catch a glimpse of the prehistoric looking Hoatzin, with its brightly coloured feathers and sharp talons.

Over 500 species of trees per acre have been recorded in the jungles of the upper Amazon. If this doesn’t seem particularly astonishing, consider that this is ten times greater than either Europe or North America, and you will begin to appreciate the significance of the conservation of this area and others like it.

The rainforest is also the traditional home of many indigenous communities, whose traditional homelands and way of life are threatened by the encroachment of 20th century industries like mining, petroleum exploitation and large-scale cash-crop farming. Among the most representative are the Siona-Secoya, Cofan, Huaorani, Shuar, Ashuar and Quichua.

We spend four days of the Inland & Amazon itinerary in the Ecuadorian Amazon, near the Napo River. Our home for two of these days is with a Quichua family near the community of Cando, where we will learn their traditional beliefs and customs, their many practical uses for the jungle’s wealth of natural products. The family is friendly and over the years they have met countless visitors from around the globe. It is a great opportunity to make new friends, while experiencing a completely different way of doing things—one that may give you a different perspective on life.

Day 5-6 Jungle Lodge (2B, 2L, 2D)

Today travel to a jungle lodge located on the Napo River, one of the Amazon’s two major tributaries. We explore by foot and canoe to learn about the natural history of this area. There is also an option for an exhilarating whitewater rafting trip on the Napo! Please note that wildlife viewing in this part of the jungle is limited for a number of reasons, and that this is more a cultural learning experience. For a more in depth Amazon experience, we also offer the 7 day Sacha Lodge Amazon trip (see brochure for details).

Day 7-8 Baños

Return to the mountains on our journey to Baños, a small town nestled in the hills. Take advantage of the many outdoor options, or simply relax in the thermal waters.

Baños means 'baths' and there are several in and around the town. Some thermal springs come from the base of Tungurahua Volcano (‘little hell' in Quichua), others have melt water running into them from the volcano’s glaciated flanks. Locals swear that the baths are good for your health; it’s definitely worth rising early to watch the dawn creep over the mountains from a hot spring vantage point.

The town is the perfect setting for outdoor pursuits, including horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, climbing and rafting in the surrounding mountains and on the River Patate. Baños is one of the most popular tourist spots in the country and you will find many Ecuadorian families vacationing here. One look at this delightfully green mountain town and you will know why. Surprisingly, it is pleasant and unspoiled.

Days 9-10 Cuenca

Today we head south by private transfer along the “Avenue of Volcanoes", through Ecuador's central valley of mountains to the colonial town of Cuenca. This is a full day trip with spectacular views along the way. Explore the town, hike in Cajas National Park. Included is a visit to the nearby Inca ruins of Ingapirca, they are the largest and best preserved archaeological site in Ecuador.

Considered the most beautiful city in Ecuador, Cuenca has had an eventful history. Barely half a century before the arrival of the Spaniards, the powerful Inca Tupac Yupanqui was undertaking the difficult conquest of the local Cañari people, who struggled bravely to stem the expansion of the Inca Empire. After several years of bitter fighting, Tupac Yupanqui's forces prevailed.

The Inca began the construction of a major city whose splendour and importance was to rival that of the imperial capital of Cusco. Stories of sun temples covered with gold sheets and palaces built using the finest skill of Cuzqueño stonemasons abound. What happened to Tomebamba, as the city was called, is however, a complete mystery. By the time the Spanish chronicler Cieza de Léon passed through in 1547, Tomebamba lay in ruins, although well-stocked storehouses indicated how great it had recently been.

The Tomebamba River divides Cuenca in half, and south of the river lie fairly recent suburbs and the modern university. To the north is the heart of the colonial city. Although Cuenca has expanded to become Ecuador's third largest city with 165,000 inhabitants, it still retains a pleasantly provincial air and the old centre has churches dating from the 16th and 17th centuries. The earliest building is the original Cathedral, construction of which began in 1557, the year Cuenca was founded by the Spanish conquerors.

Explore the city’s sights including cobbled streets, red-tiled roofs, art galleries, flower markets, shady plazas and museums. The villagers in the surrounding areas are expert milliners, creating beautiful Panama hats (which should perhaps more accurately be called Ecuador hats). The ruins of Ingapirca lie approximately an hour and a half drive north of Cuenca, through some of Ecuador's most beautiful countryside. Although it is a major Inca site, not a lot is known about its history

Yet another nearby attraction is Area Nacional de Recreacion Cajas, a protected area of 28,000 ha, about 30 km (19 miles) northwest of the city of Cuenca. The terrain is quite stark, mostly above 4000m (13120 ft) in the páramo (grassy highlands), with many clear lakes and a great variety of bird life, beautiful scenery and good hiking possibilities.

Approximate Distance: 321km
Estimated Travel Time: 8 hours

Days 11-12 Cayambe

A short flight takes the group back to Quito, where we will take a private transfer to the village of Cayambe, where we stay in a 400-year-old hacienda nestled at the base of Cayambe Volcano. G Adventures discovered this hacienda years ago and it has become special part of all our trips in the area. If you are feeling energetic, you can travel to the base of the volcano's glacier and hike back down. Rent horses and head off into the hills, or explore the beautiful property surrounding the hacienda, including an indoor swimming pool.

The town of Cayambe is famous both for its dairy industry and the snow-capped, extinct volcano of the same name that dominates the town. Ecuador's third highest peak at 5790m/18991 ft, it is the highest point in the world through which the Equator directly passes — at about (4600m/15088 ft) on the south side.

Hacienda Guachalá, the estate where we stay has a long and dynamic history. Originally part of an Inca outpost, the farm became an encomienda given to a conquistador. In 1647, D. Francisco de Villacis bought the sheep farm and constructed a wool factory, exporting his product to Europe. A great grandson of Pope Alejandro VI (one of the Borjas), married Maria de Villacis in 1700, and the farm passed into the hands of the Borja Family until 1832, when it was sold once again. In 1892, the farm was bought by Josefina Bonifaz, who changed the wool factory to a dairy farm. Her son Neptali Bonifaz, who eventually became Ecuador's President, divided the inherited land between his sons.

Following land reform laws of the 1960s, part of the land was returned to indigenous families. Today only a small fraction of the original land, including the original house and factory buildings, remains in the hands of the Bonifaz family. Part of the family home was refurbished in the early 1990s and converted into a small hotel, the Hacienda Guachalá, where we enjoy the natural beauty of this highland area surrounded by the hacienda’s colourful history.

Days 13-14 Otavalo

Next we visit the beautiful area of Otavalo and its world famous handicrafts market. Villagers from the surrounding countryside come here every week to sell handmade goods as well as livestock, fruits and vegetables. On Day 14, return to Quito.

Otavalo is justly famous both for its friendly people and its Saturday market. The market dates back to pre-Inca times when jungle products were transported from the eastern lowlands and traded for highland goods. Today's market has two different functions: the

local market for buying and selling animals, food and other essentials, and the crafts market for the tourists and other interested people.

There are three main market plazas in town, with the overflow spilling out onto the streets linking them. The Plaza de Ponchos is where you will find most handicraft items. You will find colourful woollen goods such as ponchos, gloves, hats, blankets, scarves and sweaters, as well as fine tapestries and a variety of embroidered blouses and shirts, shawls, string bags, and rope sandals. This market gets underway at dawn and continues until early afternoon. Remember, bargaining is expected for every purchase! If you're good you should be able to get at least 20% off of the starting price. The food market sells produce and household goods for the locals, and there is an animal market beginning in the predawn hours on the outskirts of town. Although these are not designed for visitors, they are cultural experiences to see and are definitely worth a visit.

One of the most evident features of the Otavaleños' cultural integrity is their traditional dress. This is not just put on especially for the tourists at the Saturday market, but is worn throughout their daily life.

Approximate Distance: 30km
Estimated Travel Time: 1 hour

Day 15 Quito (1B)

Enjoy a free day to explore Quito, option to visit Basilica or explore the old town. Enjoy your last evening in this energetic city.

Quito’s large foreign population and steady stream of travellers have given it a varied and vibrant nightlife, and salsotecas and other dance clubs abound. For a real Ecuadorian experience though, be sure and drop by a peña if you can; these are great places for meeting locals and dancing, as well as enjoying local cooking.

Day 16 Baltra / Santa Fe (B,L,D)

Early flight to Baltra, in the Galapagos Islands. Upon arrival meet our naturalist guide who will assist with the transfer to our boat, the g1. We visit North Seymour in the afternoon for a look at frigate birds, blue-footed boobies and sea lions. Seymour Island is probably the most exciting island photographically. Bird life abounds, and close to the trail you will find many nesting pairs and young chicks. Seymour is also home to the Galapagos’s largest colony of Magnificent Frigate Birds. Their mating ritual is an ostentatious display: males expand the red sack at the base of their throat and perch atop a bush with wings fully extended, flapping furiously. Interested females circle overhead, and if so inclined, may join the male on terra firma. Further along the trail we can observe a colony of sea lions.

The Galapagos Islands are located about 1000 km (620 miles) off the Pacific coast of South America. The archipelago is comprised of 13 major islands and scores of islets that served as a living laboratory for Charles Darwin, the renowned evolution theorist.

Long before Darwin arrived in the Galapagos, seafarers knew these isolated islands as home to some of the strangest and most wonderful wildlife imaginable, including birds that could swim but no longer fly, aquatic iguanas, dragon-like lizards left over from prehistoric times, and the giant Galapagos tortoises for which the islands were named.

Covering nearly 5000 square km (3100 square miles), the Galapagos Islands are now a National Park. The Galapagos National Park is the institution that controls the preservation of this environment, assisted by the Charles Darwin Research Station. Inaugurated in 1964 and based in Puerto Ayora on Santa Cruz Island, the Charles Darwin Research Station is the one place where visitors can easily see the famous Galapagos Tortoises, which may live up to two hundred years. This is also the training centre for naturalist guides who accompany all visitors landing at more than 40 approved sites on the islands, and members of the international scientific community often come to study at the station.

The National Park charges a visitor fee of $100 USD, payable on arrival, which funds Park maintenance and supervision in the Galapagos, as well as ecological study, conservation and infrastructure development in Ecuador's other National Parks. Entry fees and the funds they generate for the National Park System are among measures taken by the Ecuadorian government to protect its natural heritage.

Estimated Travel Time: 3 hours (By flight)

Day 17 San Cristobal (B,L,D)

Morning landing at Isla Lobos on San Cristóbal Island to see the sea lions and have a snorkelling excursion before visiting dramatic Kicker Rock. Continue to Cerro Brujo in the afternoon to observe the sea lions, marine iguanas and seabirds along the beach.

San Cristóbal is the easternmost island of the Galapagos and also one of the oldest. Its principal town is Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the capital of the Galapagos. On San Cristóbal we will visit the interpretation center,and we will have the chance to visit Ochoa

beach for some fantastic swimming and snorkeling possibilities. A short distance away and visible from shore is an island called Leon Dormido, or "Kicker Rock," which resembles a sleeping lion. It is quite striking and if conditions are right we may be able to sail through a narrow channel which splits Kicker Rock in half. We will then have the opportunity to visit the highlands of San Cristóbal, to see such things as impressive volcanic rock formations, various species of birds, and possibly even some giant land tortoises in the wild if you are lucky!

Day 18 Espanola (B,L,D)

We sail to Punta Suarez, on Española Island. This is the southernmost island in the Galapagos archipelago, and home to several wildlife species, including masked and blue-footed boobies. Optional hike to the top of a cliff for spectacular views and photos.

Punta Suarez on the western side of Española Island (also called Hood) is spectacular: gargantuan waves break on jagged cliffs and large bird colonies thickly populate the interior of the island; there is a distinct feel of desolate wilderness here. The Waved Albatross is seen here from April to December during its mating/nesting season. This bird leaves land between January and March each year to make its annual odyssey far out to sea. Amazingly, Española is the nesting site to virtually the entire world population of this species, with more than 12000 pairs residing here. Large numbers of Masked and Blue-footed Boobies are also found here, Red-billed Tropic Birds dash madly through the air, and both Marine Iguanas and sea lions are common. A huge blowhole, where the surf is forced through a natural rock formation spouting seawater 15 to 20 m (49 – 66 ft) into the air, adds to the island’s impression of untamed beauty.

Follow the trail through a rookery and learn the geological history of the island from our naturalist, including its dramatic volcanic features, climate, flora and fauna. Sail in the afternoon to Garner Bay, an excellent swimming and snorkelling site.

Day 19 Santa Cruz (B,L,D)

Sail to Puerto Ayora, on Santa Cruz Island. In the morning we visit the Charles Darwin Research Station to see and learn about giant tortoises and Darwin's famed studies and explorations. There is the option to do some shopping prior to setting sail.

Santa Cruz is the most populated island within the archipelago, and Puerto Ayora is its main town. The Charles Darwin Research Station is a 10 minute walk from the centre of the town. Here, an exhibition centre displays photos of recent volcanic eruptions, charts outlining geological formations and drawings of the evolutionary development of endemic species. A corral houses adult Galapagos Tortoises, and a nursery cares for young tortoises until they are about three years old, when their shells have hardened enough to resist attack from feral dogs.

You will have some time at leisure after the visit of the town

In the afternoon we may visit the highlands where you can view giant land tortoises in the wild.

Day 20 Santa Cruz / Edén (B,L,D)

Santa Cruz is the second largest in the island group, and has the largest population, with Puerto Ayora as its main town. It also boasts the most varied of the islands’ vegetation zones: coastal, transition, scalesia, miconia and pampa. The Charles Darwin Research Station is a 10 minute walk from the centre of the town. Here, an exhibition centre displays photos of recent volcanic eruptions, charts outlining geological formations and drawings of the evolutionary development of endemic species. A corral houses adult Galapagos Tortoises, and a nursery cares for young tortoises until they are about three years old, when their shells have hardened enough to resist attack from feral dogs.

In the morning we will visit Cerro Dragón, on the west coast of Santa Cruz Island. Here we will see land iguanas as well as a salt water lagoon frequented by flamingos and other species of birds.

Day 21 Santiago (B,L,D)

Morning excursion to Playa Espumilla, one of the most idyllic beaches in the Galapagos islands, with thick mangroves along with flamingo and sea turtle nesting sites. Continue to Buccaneer Cove to witness the towering cliff wall rock formations.

Santiago Island has seen it's share of human activity from whalers and pirates over the years, and despite the introduction of goats to the island many years ago, the wildlife of Santiago has flourished otherwise and provides outstanding viewing opportunities. The island boasts marine iguanas, sea lions, fur seals, land and sea turtles among others, which provide great wildlife viewing both on land and in the water.

Day 22 Bartolome / Chinese Hat (B,L,D)

Arrive at Bartolomé Island early and disembark for a short hike. Listen as our naturalist outlines the geological history of Bartolomé, explaining its dramatic features, including the unusual splatter cones. We may see the rare Galapagos penguin, of which only 800 pairs exist!

Bartolomé Island (also called Bartholomew) has 2 main areas of interest. A hike to the summit of the island provides a clearer perspective of the islands' not-too-distant volcanic origins, and the panoramic view is one of the best among the islands. From here are visible the double-sided beach of Bartolomé directly below, the volcanic tower rising out of the water next to it, and Santiago in the distance. After the summit hike, stop at the beach to relax in semi-tropical tranquility. There is great snorkelling among the submerged volcanic rock and around the base of the tower. A short hike to the beach on the opposite side is worth the minimal effort. It is not unusual to see sharks in these shallow waters, and marine turtles nest here from January through March. In the afternoon the boat arrives to a small little island off the southern tip of Santiago called Chinese Hat, for it's unique shape. Here it is often possible to see Galapagos penguins and the marine life is fantastic for snorkelling. There is also a large sea lion colony here as well as many marine iguanas that can be seen on our guided walk amongst the volcanic scenery, with good views to the cone of the island's volcano.

In the afternoon the boat arrives to a small little island off the southern tip of Santiago called Chinese Hat, for it's unique shape. Here it is often possible to see Galapagos penguins and the marine life is fantastic for snorkelling. There is also a large sea lion colony here as well as many marine iguanas that can be seen on our guided walk amongst the volcanic scenery, with good views to the cone of the island's volcano.

Day 23 Mosquero / Baltra / Quito (B)

Morning excursion to Mosquera Island to stroll on the beach and see the vast sea lion colonies.

We then sail to Baltra Island to transfer to the airport for our flight to Quito. Transfer to our hotel and spend the rest of the day at leisure. Enjoy one last night in historic Quito.

Day 24 Depart Quito

Note: For a shorter 20 day version of this trip please refer to the trip Highlights of Ecuador (EF06PA).

What's Included

Papallacta Hot Springs stay. Amazon Jungle homestay (2 nts). Amazon Jungle lodge stay with guided walks and wildlife-spotting (2 nts). Baños stay. Historic hacienda overnight stay. Otavalo visit. Quito to Galápagos return flights. Galápagos Islands stay (7 nts). Swimming and snorkelling with equipment.

Highlights

Cruise and swim the Galápagos Islands by yacht for eight days, soak in hot springs, feel like a local on a Quichua homestay, encounter wildlife in the Amazon, shop at the Otavalo Market, overnight in a charming and historic hacienda

Dossier Disclaimer

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Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

Important Notes

1. The Full Ecuador tour is actually a combination of our Inland and Amazon and Voyage Galapagos 10-day Original Class programs. This means that some passengers may be departing on Day 16, while others may be joining on that day.

2. G Adventures requires your passport number and date of birth before your departure. Please make sure you give this information to your travel agent at the time of booking.

3. Once you have confirmed your booking please give us your international flight details and advise us if you have any important issues such as allergies, special diets, etc.

4. The Ecuadorian government currently levies a Galapagos Islands Park entry fee of $100 USD per person. This is payable at the airport upon arrival in the park. It is not included in the cost of the tour, and must be paid in CASH. This fee funds Park maintenance and supervision in Galapagos, as well as ecological study, conservation and infrastructure development in Ecuador's other National Parks. Entry fees and the funds they generate for the National Park System are among measures taken by the Ecuadorian government to protect its natural heritage.

5. The Galapagos National Park authorities have implemented a system of Transit Control Cards at a fee of $10 USD per person. This card is to be purchased in CASH at a counter in the Quito airport before boarding the flight to the Galapagos. Please retain this card along with your passport as you will be required to present this upon arrival to the Galapagos Islands. Please note that this applies to all tourists entering the Galapagos Islands and is a supplement to the existing entry fee to the National Park and is not controlled by tour operators or travel agencies. It is the first of a number of initiatives to track, control and maintain the sustainable tourism targets set out by the Galapagos National Park and the Ecuadorian government in an attempt to preserve the fragile environment of the archipelago.

6. Please note that the rooming on our Galapagos yachts is done on a first-come, first-serve basis, and we are not able to guarantee the specific cabin you will receive on board. The cabins are comfortable and clean, all with private bathrooms. Due to the specific location of the cabins on board, the window sizes vary as well as the noise at times when the boat is navigating, given the proximity of the cabin to the engine room. Our friendly and competent crew will ensure a smooth and comfortable journey for the duration of your tour.

7. Please note that this trip is a combination of multiple G Adventures tours. As such, the staff and/or particular vehicles operating your tour may change between tour segments. You may also expect some group members to join or leave the tour, between tour segments.

Group Leader Description

Your G Adventures group trip is accompanied by one of our group leaders. The aim of the group leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting- we think it's the best of both worlds. For your Galapagos voyage we have a highly experienced shipboard staff and crew, including a local naturalist guide in the Galapagos (certified by the Galapagos National Park).

Group Size Notes

Max 16, avg 10.

Meals Included

14 breakfasts, 10 lunches, 11 dinners.

Meals

Eating is a big part of traveling. Travelling with G Adventures you experience the vast array of wonderful food that is available out in the world. Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility, though generally food is cheap. Our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Your CEO will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. On our Galapagos yachts, food is

included, plentiful and made of fresh local ingredients. The above information applies to G Adventures group trips. For all trips please refer to the meals included and budget information for included meals and meal budgets.

Meal Budget

Allow USD285-375 for meals not included. Drinks and tips while on the yacht are extra. You must pay a USD10 Tourist Transit Card fee at the Quito airport and a USD100 (cash) Galápagos park entry fee immediately upon arrival to the islands (subject to increase).

Transport

Public bus, plane, pickup truck, motorized canoe, motorized tourist superior class yacht, Zodiac.

Local Flights

All local flights are included in the cost of your tour unless otherwise noted. It is important that we have your passport information at the time of booking in order to process these tickets. Internal flight tickets are issued locally and will be given to you prior to the flight departure.

Solo Travellers

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Accommodation

Hotels (10 nts), jungle lodge (2 nts), simple village cabañas (2 nts, multi-share), historic mountain hacienda (2 nts), motorized yacht (7 nts, twin-share cabin).

My Own Room

If you have booked the "My Own Room" option for this tour, you will receive your own single room for all night stops, with the following exceptions: Nights 3-4: Amazon Homestay, Nights 15-23: Quito/Galapagos Cruise.

Joining Hotel

Hotel Hilton Colon
Avenida Amazonas N19-14 y Avenida Patria
Quito, Ecuador
Tel: (593-2) 2560-666

Joining Instructions

The Quito International Airport is approximately an hour outside of the city centre where your joining hotel is located.The easiest way to get there is via taxi (approximately $30-40 USD). Immediately after the customs and immigration area, as you head to the exits, you will find a taxi stand. We strongly recommend you pay for the car at set rates from the taxi stand and therefore won't need to worry about sorting out a ride outside the airport facilities, where the situation tends to get more chaotic with many drivers vying for few clients. The taxis outside the airport area do not belong to the Taxi Airport Union and may charge higher fares.

If you have paid in advance for an arrival transfer, a G Adventures representative will be at the airport to meet you. If for any reason you are not met at the airport, please call our local support line at 09 9506000. If you are unable to make contact for whatever reason, please make your way to the joining point hotel via taxi.

Please note that Day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned for that day so you can arrive at any time. Similarly the last day is a departure day during which no activities have been planned.

Your CEO will organize a short meeting soon after arrival, during which you will meet other tour participants and receive information about general and specific aspects of the trip. Your CEO will contact you at the hotel on Day 1 and make sure you are settled comfortably. If you arrive late, s/he will leave you a message detailing what time and where you should meet the next morning.

Excess luggage can be stored free of charge at the joining hotel during your tour if desired.

Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your leader, please refer to our emergency contact details. If you have pre-booked an airport transfer and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

AIRPORT TRANSFER
If you have purchased an arrival through G Adventures or if an arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour, please note that:

Your arrival transfer has been arranged based on flight information provided to us. If you are advised of a flight schedule change within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, we will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer however we cannot guarantee this. If your arrival transfer does not arrive within 30 minutes after you have exited the arrivals area please take a taxi to your start point hotel.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS
G Adventures Office Quito, Ecuador
During office hours (Weekdays 9am-6pm Local Time)
From outside Ecuador: +593 2250 6610
From within Ecuador: 022 506 610

After hours Emergency number
From outside Ecuador: +593 999 506 000
From within Ecuador: 0999 506 000

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100
Calls from UK: 0844 272 0000
Calls from Germany: 01805 70 90 30 00
Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618
Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307
Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

What to Take

Most people automatically assume that the weather is hot in South America, but because of the higher altitude in the Andes, the temperature can feel quite cold, especially at night.We recommend the use of a duffel bag or backpack, whichever is easiest for you to carry. A good size daypack is also essential.

Please note that Galapagos is a protected National Park so your luggage will be checked before arrival and departure to and from the islands. Don’t bring with you any food, seeds or other organic material that could affect the delicate ecosystem of the islands.

LUGGAGE ALLOWANCE ON THE BOAT: Please note that the amount of luggage you can bring on the boat is LIMITED due to small cabin size. You can leave unnecessary items in your joining hotel storage room. On arrival day, our customer support will provide each passenger with a standard-sized duffel bag to give you an indication of how much you should pack for the Galapagos (please also bring a separate day pack for each person).
Our designated bags are about 50L in capacity, allowing you to carry some 12-15 kg of luggage. They measure 72x30x26 cm and provide you with ample storage space for the duration of the cruise. The personal luggage allowance is therefore 1 special bag

(provided by us) and 1 day pack (your own).

Checklist

- Passport (with photocopies)
- Travel insurance (with photocopies)
- Airline tickets (with photocopies)
- USD cash
- Credit or debit card (see personal spending money)
- G Adventures vouchers and dossier
- Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required
- Camera and film, reading/writing material, binoculars, cover for backpacks
- Fleece top
- Windproof/waterproof jacket
- Small towel and swim wear
- 4 shirts/t-shirts
- Sun hat
- 1 pair of shorts
- 2 pairs of long trousers
- 1 pair hiking pants/track pants
- Hiking boots/ sturdy walking shoes
- Sport sandals
- Sun block
- Sunglasses
- Toiletries (biodegradable shampoo, conditioner and hand lotion)
- Watch or alarm clock
- Water bottle
- Flashlight
- First-aid kit (should contain lip salve, Aspirin, Band Aids, anti-histamine, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, re-hydration powder, extra prescription drugs you may be taking.)

Laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

Visas

All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). Contact your local embassy, or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE THE CORRECT TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION.

Detailed Trip Notes

G Adventures ADVENTURER YACHT
Our Galapagos boat, the g1, is an air-conditioned motor vessel with a capacity of 16 passengers. Spacious cabins feature a large view window, upper and lower berths, and private bathroom facilities. Recently refurbished, it offers a clean and casual setting with all the necessary comforts. It is staffed by 8 crew members, including a certified naturalist guide. Your total comfort is ensured by our helpful, cheerful staff who will attend to your every need. Additional vessel features include cozy bar, a small library and dining room. All meals are provided and are served aboard the vessel. You may purchase alcoholic beverages, water and soft drinks on the boat. In addition you are allowed to bring your own non-alcoholic beverages with you if you have any personal preferences.

PLEASE NOTE:
At times, when the g1 is being serviced, we will use another boat of equivalent standard and size.

LIFE ON BOARD
The daily schedule consists of a shore excursion immediately following breakfast, lunch aboard and perhaps a siesta before the afternoon shore excursion. In the evening after dinner, your naturalist guide will brief you on the islands to be visited the following day. You are ferried from the yacht to shore via small boats called pangas. Landings are either “dry” or “wet”, where you might have to wade ashore in shallow water. Your naturalist guide will accompany you during all excursions.

ACCOMMODATION
This is a G Adventures Classic tour, all accommodation will be Tourist Class and of a Standard service level.

CLIMATE
Located on the Equator, the Galapagos climate is tempered by the Humboldt Current, so you do not experience extreme heat. The warmest weather is December to June, when temperatures range from 22-33°C (72-90 °F), and the water temperature is in the mid 20s (mid 70s °F). From July to November, the temperatures are cooler and range from 18-24°C (60s -75°F). The average water temperature rarely reaches 21°C (70°F).

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Money Exchange

Credit cards and debit cards are very useful for cash advances. Visa cards are the most widely accepted cards. While ATMs are widely available some may not accept all international credit or debit cards. You may need to try at more than one machine if the first does not accept your card. You should also check with your bank before leaving to ensure that your card works internationally. You should be aware that to purchase products or services on a credit card a fee of 5%-10% usually applies. Do not rely on credit or debit cards as your only source of money. A combination of US dollar cash and cards is best. Always take more rather than less, as you don't want to spoil the trip by constantly feeling short of funds. Please bring USD banknotes in denominations smaller than 100, as they can be hard to exchange in Ecuador. 100 dollar bills of certain series (e.g. CB B2) can be especially hard to cash! CURRENCY EXCHANGE TIP: Please be advised that slightly torn notes, notes that have been heavily marked or are faded may be difficult to exchange. It is best to bring notes in fairly good condition, in denominations lower than 100USD (or equivalent). As currency exchange rates can fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: www.xe.com

Emergency Fund

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD $200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

Departure Tax

USD $40.80

Many airline tickets already include this departure tax as part of the paid fare. Please check your ticket and ask at the airline counter when checking in for your flight.

Tipping

It is customary in Latin America to tip service providers such as waiters, at approximately 10%, depending on the service. Tipping is an expected - though not compulsory - component of your tour program and an expression of satisfaction with the persons who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers we use. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Recommendations for tipping drivers and local guides would range from $5-10 USD per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture.

Onboard the Galapagos yacht, tipping the Naturalist guide and boat crew is customary. There will be two envelopes presented at the end of the voyage, one for the guide and one for crew members. The recommended amount is $12-15 USD per day from each traveller ($5 USD for the guide and $7-10 USD for the crew members). This is only a suggestion as we understand that tipping is a personal choice.

Optional Activities

All prices are per person(unless stated otherwise), and are subject to change as services are provided by third party operators. Please note that many optional activities will need to be paid in cash.

Baños:
Horseback riding $25
Whitewater rafting $30

Cuenca:
City tour $25
Cajas National Park $25 -$50 + Park entrance fee $10
Ingapirca ruins $30

Quito:
CITY TOUR OF QUITO
We visit the new and old town of Quito, including the Palace of Congress, Presidential Palace, Independence Square and the Churches of San Francisco, La Compania and La Catedral. After this we go to the Panecillo (a lookout point in the old town), which affords the best view of Quito, then return to the hotel. This trip takes about 3.5 - 4 hours and can depart everyday at anytime.
- Entrance fees for the churches and Panecillo are not included in the price and is about $4USD p/p.
- Price: $24 USD P/P, minimum 2 persons.

CITY TOUR AND THE EQUATOR LINE
After the city tour we go to the Equator line located 45 minutes away from Quito to visit the world monument and shops. Here we also visit the Inti Ñan local museum where you can see different experiments to prove that you are at the Centre of the Earth. This trip takes about 5 hours and can depart everyday at anytime.
Optional visit to The Pululahua crater 10 minutes away from the monument.
- Entrances fees for City Tour (Churches): total approx $4USD
- Equator line USD5 Museums Entrance fee: Total approx $9USD
- Price: $32USD P/P, minimum 2 persons.

COTOPAXI NATIONAL PARK
A spectacular 2-hour drive in private transport takes us to Cotopaxi Volcano, 5897m, the highest active volcano in the world. We visit a museum in the park and hike around a lagoon at the bottom of the volcano to learn about the flora and fauna found at this altitude. We then continue by car up the volcano to the parking lot, at over 4500m. Then we walk approximately 1.5hrs to the refuge at 4800m, and after a short break, continue to the glacier (if the weather holds out). We head back to the Pan-American highway to have lunch somewhere near Latacunga, or buy a box lunch on the way to have more time in the park. Return to Quito in the afternoon.
The full-day trip has departures every morning at 8AM.
- Entrance fee to the National Park: $2USD p/p.
- Price: $55USD P/P, minimum 2 persons (private services)

SAQUISILI MARKET AND COTOPAXI NATIONAL PARK
Saquisili is another important market close to Quito, located in the south of Quito. A wonderful scenic drive of approximately 3 hours gives you the opportunity for great views of the volcanoes. Here, the local natives bring their products from over the highlands to sell, such as handicrafts from Salasaca, Otavalo and Chimborazo. You will also find an animal market.
This is an intensive day and leaves at 6AM every Thursday.
- Entrance fee to the National Park: $2 USD p/p.
- Price: $90USD P/P, minimum 2 persons.

COTOPAXI BIKING
Your biking adventure begins as we drive south to the Coattail National Park along the Pan-American Highway. Within two hours we reach the trailhead (4600 m) at the base of the Cotopaxi Volcano. After donning our biking gear and catching our breath in the thin, high-altitude air, we begin our downward descent. Get ready for high-speed adventure and hang on tight, as the dirt road will take you on a wild ride. The road will whisk you past silvery smooth Limpiopungo Lake and eventually through a pine forest, until you reach the park's guard station, where you can see a corralled Llama herd. Our 4-wheel-drive vehicles will drive you to Inca ruins (tolas), where a box lunch will be served. After a snack we return to Quito by jeep, bikes loaded on top.
Departures daily at 7AM. We ride approximately 50 kilometres on bike (5 - 6 hours) and 4 hours in the jeep.
Included: box lunch, 21-speed mountain bikes, all transportation and veteran bilingual guides.
- Entrance fee to the National Park: $2USD p/p.
- Price: $50USD P/P (pool services)

BELLAVISTA CLOUD FOREST
To see the cloud forest and to experience the changes in the temperature and vegetation, you have to go to Bellavista cloud forest.

Bellavista cloud forest reserve is located at 0,00,46 latitude in northwestern Ecuador, on the edge of Choco which is among the most diverse places in the word.Things to do:
a)Birds here are always active, from the joy of watching hummingbirds on your private balcony, to exploring in search of elusive forest species, 320 species of birds have been recorded in the Tandayapa valley.
b) Hikes through primary and secondary forest.
c) Naturalist guides and specialist birding guides available (extra cost)
This trip is a full day and starts at 7AM.
- Entrance fee to the reserve $15USD p/p
- Price: $50USD P/P, minimum 2 persons.

PAPALLACTA HOT SPRINGS
Two hours drive to the east are the Termas de Papallacta. They are located on the Cinnamon trail, (65km from Quito) which is the same route that Francisco de Orellana took in 1542 when he crossed the Andean mountain range in search of spices and gold, and discovered the Amazon River. We take a short cut, passing by the church of Guapulo and have a wonderful ride in the paramo (tundra). The highest point reached is 4150m; we descend to a spectacular setting at 3300m. Things to do:
a) Hot springs (different temperatures) big and small ones, while enjoying views of the Antisana volcano 5750m. Entrance $5USD.
b) Trekking up the river
c) Horseback rides
d) Relax in the new spa recently inaugurated (ask for details in the hotel).
Lunch at the restaurant offers typical dishes such as trout. Return to Quito in the afternoon.
This full-day trip departs daily at 8AM. Entry to the pool costs USD 6 per person
- Price: $50USD P/P, minimum 2 persons.

ARCHEOLOGICAL TRIP IN QUITO
Start with an amazing panoramic view of the old town of Quito and learn about the pre-colombian and pre-inca ethnic groups that live around the region. Enjoy the “Rumipamba” archeological and ecological park and visit the necropolis of “La Florida in situ Museum”. Finally, go down to the equatorial valley and visit the “Rumicucho” ruins, considered one of the biggest archeological sites of the area. This trip takes about 5 hours and can depart from Wednesday to Sunday. Entrance fees are not included and total approx $2.50 P/P. Price $32 USD P/P minimum 2 persons (private services)

QUITO CUISINE TRIP
A different way to learn about Quito's traditions and culture. Drive to a local food market, where your will see many varieties of fruits, vegetables and flowers grown in Ecuador. After this, head south to the old part of the city, where you can visit historical monuments and buildings, and also see the manufacturing site of Quito`s traditional sweets. The tour finishes at one of the most traditional ice cream parlours in Quito. This trip takes about 5 hours and departs every day at anytime! Entrance fees and shopping in the market are not included and total approx $12 P/P. Price $32 USD P/P minimum 2 persons (private services)

1 DAY RAFTING TOUR -2 rivers in 1 day.
The Ríos Toachi and Blanco are fantastic introduction to the rivers of Ecuador. Flowing off the coastal side of the Andes they have some of the longest navigable sections of whitewater in the country. Combine this with the sights and sounds of the forest environment we pass through and you are guaranteed a day to remember.
We travel west down from Quito for about 3 hours through beautiful cloud forest to the bank of the river.
Rafting time approx 3 to 3.5 hrs. (NB. From March to May we usually run the upper Blanco river – 43km, approx. 4 hrs).
River Grading: III - IV (Depending on the time of year).
Includes: Professional guides, top of the line rafting equipment, lunch, transport to and from Quito.
-Departures: Daily with a minimum of 4 people
-Price: $ 75 USD P/P.

HORSEBACK RIDING
Transport from Quito to the Green Horse Ranch, inside the National Reserve Pululahua, about 25 miles north from Quito. Quiet sure footed mountain horses will take us through the stunning landscape of this ancient volcanic crater, the biggest one on the whole American continent and one of only two inhabited craters in the world. With its constantly changing sceneries and bio-diversity it's a great day.
Guided day tours are available for all standards of riders - and if you've never ridden before what better place to start than in the Andes .
- Minimum 2 person
- USD75 USD P/P

NOTE: These prices are based on 2 clients but if you are a single traveller we can accommodate your trips as well. If there are more than 2 clients booking, the prices may be less than those quoted above.

Health

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that quite often we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

Please note your Adventure travels to high altitude. This is medically defined as anything over 8,000 feet (2,440 meters). Most people can travel to 8,000 feet with minimal effects. However,everyone reacts to altitude differently and altitude sickness can on set with some people irrespective of fitness and age. For details on how to best prepare and what to do in the unlikely event you are effected on your Adventure, please consult your physician.

Safety and Security

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/

Trip Specific Safety

Please take care when wandering around on your own in Quito, as some areas can be dangerous and pick-pockets are daring.

Medical Form

Our small group adventures bring together people of all ages. It is very important you are aware that, as a minimum, an average level of fitness and mobility' is required to undertake our easiest programs. Travellers must be able to walk without the aid of another person, climb 3-4 flights of stairs, step on and off small boats, and carry their own luggage at a minimum. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition are required to complete a short medical questionnaire, which must be signed by their physician. This is to ensure that travellers have the necessary fitness and mobility to comfortably complete their chosen trip. While our CEOs work hard to ensure that all our travellers are catered for equally, it is not their responsibility to help individuals who cannot complete the day's activities unaided. Please refer to the physical ratings in this Trip Details document for more information.

A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation

Through our commitment to responsible tourism we have developed the Planeterra Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities around the world through support of international charities, local organizations and community projects in the places that we visit on our tours. G Adventures matches all individual donations and pays all administration costs, which means that 100% of each donation is doubled and goes directly to support our projects. For more information about Planeterra and the projects we support, or to make a donation, please visit www.planeterra.org

Planeterra Dollar-A-Day Program
Our Dollar-A-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to help us give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar per day for the duration of their tour. 100% of these proceeds will go directly to support our Planeterra projects.

To participate in this program please indicate at the time of booking that you would like to participate in G Adventures' Dollar-A-Day program, either by clicking the check box online, or by advising your G Adventures specialist or travel agent. (Note: Donation will be charged in the currency of your booking)

Associated Planeterra Project

Through Planeterra, G Adventures supports the Galapagos Conservancy.

The Galapagos Conservancy (GC) is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to promoting conservation, education and scientific research in and on behalf of the Galapagos Islands. GC raises funds from individuals and institutions to support projects in the Galapagos. They also conduct seminars, briefings and other public education and advocacy efforts to inform the general public about conservation issues and the work being undertaken in Galapagos by the Charles Darwin Research Station and the Galapagos National Park Service.

All donations to this project through Planeterra directly support the Marine Turtle project at Quinta Playa in the Galapagos Islands. Implemented by the Charles Darwin Research Station, this is an ecological project monitoring one of the green sea turtles' most important nesting sites in the Galapagos Islands.

The overall goal is to evaluate the green turtle colony in Quinta Playa through systematic monitoring of nesting parameters, hatchling recruitment, basking behaviour and nesting habitat quality.

Main Objectives of this project are:

• Estimate the size of the green turtle nesting colony in Quinta Playa
• Study the effects of human activities such as tourism, fishing and garbage on the green turtle population
• Promote the conservation of green turtles
• Share results with Galapagos National Park in order to protect and conserve sea turtles

On this tour you may have the opportunity to visit the following Planeterra project:

CANDO COMMUNITY SCHOOL - Amazon
Over 10 years ago, one of our CEOs met a local Ecuadorian jungle guide by the name of Delfin Pauchi. Delfin invited this CEO and G Adventures group to his home in the Amazon where he and his family gave them the opportunity to experience their way of life, and the natural wonders of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Since this was such a positive experience for both Delfin's family and the travellers, we developed a working relationship and over the years many G Adventures groups have experienced life with Delfin, his wife Estela, and their six children. With suggestions and training from a Peace Corps Volunteer and continued visits and support from G Adventures groups, Delfin and Estela developed “Cabañas Pimpilala” and are now able to offer memorable homestays for our travellers.

When G Adventures first started visiting the Cando Community, there was no school for the children. They had to travel at least 45 minutes by car to get to school, and since there are not a lot of cars in the community many children had to walk several hours to get to school.

With the help of G Adventures and members of the community, a school was built in the Cando Community and Delfin's wife, Estela, became the very first teacher. Today, twenty children between the ages of 6 and 11 attend this school and Estela now receives payment from the Ecuadorian government for her teaching wages.

How You Can Help:
When G Adventures groups visit the school, our CEOs often suggest bringing items such as rice, canned tuna, beans, oatmeal, fruit etc which are used to provide the children with mid-morning meals.

Also, each year we work with Delfin, Estela, and the local Parents Association to identify the needs of the school. In the past we have helped with donations of school supplies for the children, teaching materials for Estela, children’s clothes, kitchen utensils and have covered the cost of construction materials which will be used to build a kitchen and eating area for the children. With help from travellers' donations we continue to support this school with an annual donation through the Planeterra Foundation. G Adventures pays all administration costs so that 100% of each donation goes to the projects we support.

For more information about these projects and/or to make a donation please visit our website at www.planeterra.org or contact us at info@planeterra.org

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at customerservice@gadventures.com and we will send it on to you.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at www.gadventures.com/newsletter_signup

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for Planeterra's monthly news to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

Travel Forum - The Watering Hole

Be sure to stop by The Watering Hole, our adventure travel forum. If you're interested in meeting others booked on your upcoming trip, check out the Departure Lounge section of our forum and introduce yourself. Otherwise, just drop in at anytime to share some travel tips, ask questions, meet other travellers and quench your thirst for travel. Our forum is located at wateringhole.gadventures.com.