Last Updated: October 21, 2013

The Ecuador Experience - REE

18 days: Quito to Quito

What's Included

2-night Amazon Jungle homestay, Excursion by train to the Devil's Nose, 2-night homestay at an indigenous community, Visit to Otavalo market.

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.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2013 - December 31st, 2013

Itinerary

Day 1 Quito

There are no activities planned today, so check into our hotel and enjoy the city.

Ecuador is the smallest of the Andean countries, and in many ways it is the easiest and most pleasant to travel in. Colonial Quito, considered one of the most beautiful cities in the Western Hemisphere, has an astonishing location more than a kilometre and a half above sea level and almost directly on the equator, nestled in the Andes beneath the sparkling snow cone of Pichincha Volcano. Our exploration takes us from the Amazon lowlands, where we experience life with a Quichua community, to the heights of the Andes near mighty Chimborazo Volcano. At the end of our journey we also visit the coast for a completely different feel.

Ecuador is a country of great diversity and beauty. There are approximately 1,200,000 inhabitants in an area of 283,520 square km (177200 miles), similar in size to New Zealand. The country consists of three main regions: the coastal lowlands, the Andean Highlands, and the Eastern Amazonian jungle, all of which we discover on this journey.

Remember that although near the Equator, the higher altitude on some parts of the trip make for cool evenings and you will need warm clothing. It’s best to layer clothes rather than bring a heavy parka so that you can take layers off.

When you arrive in Quito, you will likely feel the effects of the altitude. Symptoms include shortness of breath, headaches, general lethargy and a reduced appetite. This is no cause for alarm; it is simply your body’s way of coping with the altitude. It may take a little time to acclimatize, but before long you probably will not even notice it. Take it easy for the first day or two, and reduce alcohol and cigarette consumption to minimize the effects. Be sure to drink plenty of water and do not attempt too much in any given day.

Located 2850m (9348 ft) above sea level, Quito, the Ecuadorian capital, enjoys a wonderful spring-like climate, despite the fact that it is only 22 km (14 miles) south of the Equator. It is in a valley flanked by mountains, and on a clear day, several snow-capped volcanoes are visible. As well as its beautiful location, it is rich in history and much of the Colonial Old Town is well preserved.

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 interesting historical buildings and many churches. Some of the more interesting ones include 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 that dominates the old town is called El Panecillo or 'the Little Bread Loaf', and is a major Quito landmark. Marvellous panoramic views of the entire city, as well as views of the surrounding volcanoes stretch out at your feet. You can take a trolley (streetcar) or a cab to the Old Town from the New Town.

Quito has a large population of foreigners and is a popular destination for travellers, resulting in a varied and vibrant nightlife where 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 Tena

Today we travel by bus from Quito to the Amazon jungle region. Notice the scenery and climate change dramatically as we leave the mountains and enter the lush tropical rainforest. Optional activities include visiting an animal rescue centre, caving and white water rafting.

In the Ecuadorian jungle layers of exotic vegetation block the sky, and brown waters sweep beneath gargantuan foliage as hundreds of species of exotic birds and equally brilliant butterflies provide constant bursts of colour. Discover why this tropical rainforest is one of the richest and most complex ecosystems in the world.

Approximate Distance: 189km
Estimated Travel Time: 6 hours

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

Spend 2 nights at a homestay in the jungle. Take guided hikes to search for wildlife and learn about the natural environment.

Hike through the rainforest, plunge into waterfalls and learn the uses of tropical plants. Visit with a local shaman, experience local tradition, and learn about Quichua history and culture.

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.

Please note that you will be required to carry your own day-pack while hiking for up to 4 hours at a time.

Day 5-6 Baños

Baños means 'baths' and that is precisely what the town is famous for. Some thermal springs come from the base of Tungurahua Volcano; others have melt water running into them from the volcano’s glaciated flanks. The town is the perfect setting for outdoor

pursuits, including horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking and climbing and rafting in the surrounding mountains and on the River Patate.

Baños is one of the most popular and important 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. Baños means 'baths' and that is precisely what the town is famous for. Some are thermal springs from the base of Tungurahua Volcano, which means 'little hell' in Quichua. Other baths have melt water running into them from Tungurahua'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. There will also be options for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding.

Day 7 Alausí

Travel via Riobamba by bus to Alausí for free time to explore the town.

Sooner or later every traveller to Ecuador passes through Riobamba, as it lies at the centre of the country’s road network. It is the capital of Chimborazo Province and on clear days you can see all of the local Andean giants, Chimborazo, Carihuairazo, and Tunguragua.

Day 8 Guayaquil

In the morning we will board the train for Ecuador's most spectacular train journey. This is the famed Nariz del Diablo (Devil’s Nose) ride, which descends to the coast in a spectacular display of engineering around stunning mountain terrain. The railway winds its way around curves and tunnels over a distance of only 26 km (16 miles), but the drop in elevation is a significant, well over a thousand metres (3280 ft)! The train manages the descent through a series of switchbacks before returning to Alausí. After disembarking the train we will take a bus journey south to Guayaquil, the largest city in Ecuador with a population of approximately 2 million. Located at the mouth of the Guayas River, Guayaquil is also Ecuador's most important port.

We have the evening to explore the city's highlights including Bolivar Park, the Old South Market and Barrio de las Penas. Also take some time to stroll along the Malecon 2000, a 2.5 kilometre boardwalk along the Guayas River dotted with shopping, restaurants, galleries and museums. We will have the opportunity to take an optional boat ride down the Guayas River.

Day 9-12 Puerto Lopez / Machalilla National Park

Our home for the next couple of days will be the beach town of Puerto Lopez. Some optional activities include a trip to Isla de la Plata (also known as the Poor Man’s Galapagos), hiking in Machalilla National Park, a visit to an archaeological site, diving, and snorkeling. Or just hit the hammock and chill!

Machalilla National Park, Ecuador’s only coastal National Park, contains the country’s only coral formations just off the mainland, and covers over 40 000 hectares of tropical dry forest and cloud forest, as well as 20 000 hectares of Pacific Ocean. Weather is hot and sunny from December to June, with daily rainstorms. July to November tend to be cooler months, with more cloud cover. Other optional activities in the area include day trips to Isla de La Plata, with colonies of nesting Blue-footed Boobies and a number of other sea birds. Visitors usually come to view migrating whales (June to October) and dolphins around the island. Scuba diving, snorkeling and horseback riding are also popular activities in the area.

On the night of day 12 board a night bus bound for Quito.

Approximate Distance: 390km
Estimated Travel Time: 10 hours

Day 13 Quito

Free day in Quito for an optional city tour, ride the cable car up the nearby volcano or relax in one of the city's many cafes and restaurants.

Day 14-15 San Clemente (1B,2L,2D)

Travel by bus to the Indigenous community of San Clemente. Optional hikes to see and learn about the medicinal plants or trek up the Imbabura Mountain. Interact with the locals and learn about their traditional ways of life. Optional cultural evening and show with typical food.

Day 16 Otavalo (1B)

Transfer to Otavalo by public bus. Optional activities include a visit to Peguche waterfall, Cotacachi leather market or hike around Cuicocha Lake.

Day 17 Otavalo / Quito

Today we explore the largest handicrafts market in South America before returning to Quito. Villagers from the surrounding countryside come here every week to sell handmade goods as well as livestock, fruits and vegetables.

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 obvious signs 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. Return to Quito for our farewell evening.

Day 18 Quito

Depart at any time.

What's Included

2-night Amazon Jungle homestay, Excursion by train to the Devil's Nose, 2-night homestay at an indigenous community, Visit to Otavalo market.

Highlights

Feeling like a local at an Amazon homestay, relaxing on Ecuador's beaches, witnessing Andean scenery, riding by train to the Devil's Nose, learning from the locals at an indigenous community, shopping the Otavalo market.

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

Please note this tour travels to Banos. The Tungurahua volcano in the area around Banos is constantly active. G Adventures have operated countless tours to the Banos area over the years without incident. However, we are obligated to point out that travel to the area is at your own risk, to exercise caution when travelling in the area. Further, we urge you to check your insurance coverage with your insurance provider prior to travel to the Banos area.

Group Leader Description

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our group leaders, a G Adventures representative, or an expedition team. 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.

Group Size Notes

Max 16, avg 10.

Meals Included

4 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 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 truck trips in Africa, aboard the expedition ship Explorer or our Galapagos yachts, while trekking in remote regions etc. food is included, plentiful and made of fresh local ingredients. The above information applies to G Adventures group trips. For Independent trips please check the itinerary for details of meals included. For all trips please refer to the meals included and budget information for included meals and meal budgets.

Meal Budget

Allow USD305-400 for meals not included.

Transport

Public bus, truck, motorized canoe, train.

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

Simple hotels (12 nts), Amazon community stay (2 nts), overnight bus (1 nt), indigenous community homestay (2 nts, multi-share).

My Own Room

Please note that if you have booked the "My Own Room" option for this tour, you will receive your own single room for all night stops

Joining Hotel

La Cartuja Hotel
Leonidas Plaza 170 y 18 de Septiembre
Quito
Ecuador

Phone: +593 2 252 3721 / +593 2 252 3577 / +593 2 252 3662

For passengers on the November 7th, 2013 departure your start hotel is:

Hotel Quito
Av. Gonzalez Suarez N 27 142
Quito
Ecuador
(593 2) 2 544600 or (593 2) 543631

Joining Instructions

The Quito International Airport is approximately one hour outside of the city centre where your joining hotel is located. There are a number of routes the driver may take depending on time of day and traffic, however, the route often seems long and indirect. The easiest and cheapest way to get there is by organizing a taxi at the desk within the airport (approximately $30 USD). Private transfers generally cost more as the cars will need to drive from Quito, to the airport, and return. 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.

There is also a shuttle available with the bus company Aeroservicios. Aeroservicios charges 8 USD to board a bus which will take you from the new airport to the old airport. The buses are new, comfortable, and often include wifi. From the old airport, a taxi to get to your hotel would generally cost $5 USD depending on the distance and location.

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 99506000. 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 other then your welcome meeting in the evening, so you can arrive at any time. Similarly the last day is a departure day during which no activities have been planned.

A G Adventures Representative 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. A welcome note will be left for you in the hotel so you have all the necessary information regarding the meeting time and your transfer times back to the airport the next day. 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, especiallyat 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.

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
- Thermal underwear
- Sport sandals
- Sun block
- Insect repellent
- Sunglasses
- Toiletries (biodegradable shampoo, conditioner, hand lotion)
- Watch or alarm clock

- Water bottle
- Flashlight
- Moneybelt
- 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.

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

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. 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.

Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline $20-25 USD per person, per week can be used.

Optional Activities

Quito: (all activities have 2 person minimum.)

City Tour $24 - Entrance fees not included.
City Tour & Equator Line $32 - Entrance fees not included.

Pre-Colombian Pryamids $28 - Entrance fee $2
Otavalo Market $45 - full day tour
Saquisili Market & Cotopaxi $90 - Entrance fee to NP $2 p/p
Cotopaxi National Park $55 - Entrance fee to NP $2 p/p
Cotapaxi Biking Tour $50 - Entrance fee to NP $2 p/p
Bellavista Cloud Forest $50 - Entrances fee to the reserve $15
Papallacta Hot Springs $50 - entrance to the thermal waters $10usd
Archeological Trip in Quito $32 - Wed to Sun - Entrance fees not included
Quito Cuisine Trip $32 - Entrance fees not included

Baños:
Bike rental $5
Horse riding $5 - $20
White water rafting $25 - $50
Chimborazo mountain refuge hike $65

San Pablo:
Tour of San Pablo community and woman’s weaving cooperative $25
Entrance fee to park $10
Mountain biking $35

Puerto Lopez:
Isla de La Plata tour $30
Horseback riding $20
Visit to reforestation project $25
Diving (2 dives) $150
Snorkelling $25
Machalilla National Park $15

All prices are per person in US dollar amounts (unless stated otherwise), and are subject to change as services are provided by third party operators.

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 and Culture Shock 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/

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.
Please note that all passengers traveling to Antarctica are required to fill out this questionnaire.

The medical questionnaire can be found online at:

www.gadventures.com/medical-form.

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

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

Salesiano Street Children Project
In the last five years the Salesiano Street Children Project has opened its doors to approximately 870 children each year who were either living in the streets or were at immediate risk of being abandoned to the streets by their families. In Ecuador, there are more than 1 million children and adolescents who are economically active, working in the informal sector for more than 40 hours a week. It is not easy to determine the exact number of children living in the streets, but the highest concentrations are in urban areas.

With various centers set up across the country, the Salesiano Street Children Project provides programs and shelter for children working on the streets of Ecuador. Children are provided with valuable programs including medical and family outreach programs, psychological support, schooling, cultural programs, technical workshops in mechanics, carpentry, auto repair, electricity and agricultural skills as well as sports on Sundays.

The Planeterra Foundation supports Salesiano's reference center, located in La Marin near the main bus terminal which is in one of the poorest sectors of Quito. This center is run by Ivan Troya, an educator who has dedicated his life to helping children in need. Through this center, Ivan and other volunteers provide programs for 50+ children on a daily basis. Parents are able to take part in their family outreach program, while children are provided with a safe environment where they can enjoy a warm meal, receive educational and psychological support, participate in music and cultural workshops and have time to play foosball and other board games. Ivan understands that each child has a unique background and individual needs and he sees the reference center as one of the only places where these children can take a break from working on the streets and spend some time just being children.

It is possible to visit this project as an optional activity on most tours that pass through Quito. To arrange a visit please speak to your G Adventures CEO.

How You Can Help
For those travellers who have the opportunity to visit La Marin Reference Center we encourage you to bring food items that can be purchased locally. Items needed include milk, bread, eggs, tuna, sugar, coffee, hot chocolate, rice, oil, oatmeal, fruit, vegetables, jam etc. This will help provide children with a nutritious meal when visiting the center.

However, if you would like to make a lasting difference, your donation through the Planeterra Foundation will support the development of a performing arts program for the children of La Marin. The goal of this program is to teach children dance, music and performance skills that they can use to present at various festivals in and around Quito. The estimated cost of this program is $6000 USD annually to develop and maintain the music program which will benefit the 50+ children who attend the center. Funds donated will provide wages for a music instructor, the purchase of uniforms, an amplifier, sound equipment, guitars, microphones, etc.

For more information about this project and/or to make a donation please visit our website: 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/newsletters/

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.