

ECUADOR - HIGHLIGHTS OF ECUADOR



TRIP CODE

ECTSHOE

DEPARTURE

Tuesdays

DURATION

11 Days

LOCATIONS

Quito, Galapagos, Coca, Amazon



INTRODUCTION

Choose this Tailor-Made itinerary or customise to create your own unique journey.
 Departs daily to suit your travel plans. Price based on Standard accommodation.
 Superior or Deluxe also available.

This snapshot tour of the wonderful country of Ecuador is a nature lover's dream. From the lively city of Quito, tour the "enchanted Islands" of the Galapagos on board a comfortable yacht, followed by an unforgettable trip to the Amazon jungle.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival transfer in Quito

On arrival, please make your way through to the Arrivals Hall where our representative will be waiting for you to transfer you to your hotel. He/she will be holding a sign with your name on it. Should you not be able to locate them, please refer to the front of your itinerary for emergency contact details of our representative office. Please note this service is with a driver only.




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DAY 1: Quito

Sitting at 2,850 metres above sea level high in the Andean foothills lies Quito, the capital of Ecuador. The city, a short distance from the Equator and with an amazing backdrop of snow-capped mountains, is known for its stunning colonial architecture and art-work. Founded in the 16th century on the ruins of an Inca city, Quito has one of the largest, least-altered and best-preserved historic centres in the Americas. It was declared a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 1978.




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DAY 2: Half Day Quito City Tour

This morning you will be collected from your hotel for your tour of Quito. Quito’s historic centre is one of the largest, least-altered and best preserved in the Americas. Founded in the 16th century on the ruins of an Inca city, it was declared a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 1978. Head towards the Old City and Centro Histórico, beginning with a walk along the Street of the Seven Crosses or García Moreno as it is officially known, one of the most emblematic streets in Quito. The street gets its name from the stone crosses that are found outside the seven religious buildings that line the route. These include the Chapel of San Lazaro, El Carmen Alto Monastery, La Compañía de Jesus Church, the 17th century El Sagrario, the Cathedral, La Concepcion (the first monastery in Quito, dating back to 1575) and Santa Barbara Church that was built in 1550 and restored after the earthquake of 1987. The walking tour starts from Plaza Independencia, now known as Plaza Grande, the main square in Quito, flanked by several important buildings. It takes in the Presidential Palace, also known as the Palace of Carondelet and the main Cathedral whose stone cross is still intact. The Cathedral is home to the ornate tomb of Mariscal Sucre, an important figure in Quito’s independence, a plaque that marks the site of President Gabriel Garcia Moreno’s death in 1875 and a famous painting of the Last Supper. The tour also visits La Compañía de Jesus Church, the most ornate church in Quito, capped by green and gold domes and dating back to 1605 when its construction began. Built in the baroque style, the outer façade is carved from volcanic stone and the interior is covered in gold leaf. It is here that former president Gabriel Garcia Moreno is buried. The tour continues to the San Francisco Plaza where the San Francisco Church and Monastery is located, an amazing building with impressive façade and atrium, baroque interior with Moorish influences and the winged Virgin of Quito as its main altar. Construction of the San Francisco Monastery began in 1534, the largest colonial building in the city. Although some of the building has been rebuilt as a result of earthquake damage, the chapel of Señor Jesús del Gran Poder features the original tiling. On completion of your tour, you will be taken to your hotel. Entrance fees are included. Please note this is a private tour.



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DAY 3: Transfer to the airport for onward destination

You will be collected from your hotel at the appropriate time and transferred to the airport for your onward flight.



DAY 3: Tuesday: San Cristobal Island

San Cristobal airport. Reception at airport. Transfer IN. Welcome on board Galaxy Cruise. Welcome drink and lunch.



DAY 3: Lobos Island


Panga Ride, swimming and snorkeling. Description of the place: this place is the habitat of seals, frigates, finches, marine iguanas, lava lizards, and the small endemic Galapagos snake. Here, we can swim and snorkeling in the same place. Leon Dormido: This is formed by two rocks of approximately 148m above sea level named thus by its similitude with a lion we will pass between both rocks but we will not disembark because it is not possible to do it.



DAY 4: Wednesday: Española Island

Breakfast early in the morning. Our first visit: Bahia Gardner: wet landing, activities for this visit: short walking, swimming, snorkeling, and observation of seals colony. The sea lion is one of the animals in Galapagos which gets the total attention of the visitors in the Galapagos: they are curious and playful, but at times aggressive; they are nice and loving, but also lazy. In Gardner Bay, we are going to find many of them relaxing in the beach enjoying of the sun. Snorkeling in the area where we will be able to swim with them, besides you observe these fascinating animals, we will swim with the sea turtles, diversity of tropical fish, marine iguanas etc. We will return to the ship, to sail toward the following island. Lunch.



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DAY 4: Suarez Point


Dry landing, activities that were carried out in this place: walking; recommendable clothes: sports shoes, hat, cap, solar lotion. There is not color more amazing and outstanding in this tropical desert island that the blue-foot boobies; they have an impressive form to "greeting" and it is a real spectacle to see the ritualistic parade of the entourage. In several islands we can admire this bird due to that nests and feed are located in diverse places close to the coast. In this place we will be able to observe the Albatross with a weight from three to four kilograms and an importance of more than two meters, this creature of aristocratic aspect is one of the largest birds of the islands. Around twelve thousand couples have their nests in the Española Island (some few in the Silver Island near of main land Ecuador). This specie is considered endemic from this island during our walking we will be able to observe these fantastic birds, we will be part of the beautiful and only landscapes that offers this island. Important Note: Albatross will be not possible to see between January and March. Also we will observe colonies of marine iguanas, zayapas, mask boobies, finches, Española cucuves, and seagulls unique of the island. Our walking will be for lava rock path where we will be able to admire the hollow blowers. The vegetation of this island is of red mangrove. Delicious Snacks and fresh beverages expect for you.



DAY 5: Thursday: Floreana Island

Breakfast early in the morning. Our first visit will be Post Office (Mail Bay): Wet landing. Activities in this place: short walk, swimming, snorkeling, review of the mail. Description of the Place: it is situated to the north of Floreana Island. The Post Office Bay name is because of Capitan James Colnett installed an empty Ron barrel, to use it as post office for the whaling fleets that frequented for a long time the Galapagos Islands. You can send some postcards from here to your friends and relatives or interchange letter to deliver in their destiny. Return. Delicious snacks and beverages will be expecting for you and lunch.



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DAY 5: Punta Cormorant

Wet landing, snorkeling and short trekking. This point is located at west of Floreana Island and it is famous to has a dark green beach due to the great quantity of olivine crystals. You can see many marine invertebrates, as well as also sea lions, sea iguanas, the frigates and pelicans.



DAY 5: Devil's Crown


Activities in this place: panga ride and optional swimming. Panga ride around of a small island, this place was a satellite islet of the island Floreana. Here, we will find a group of rocks that seem to a crown, due to the constant erosion caused by the sea. It is one of the better places to do snorkeling (superficial diving) in the interior and around of the crown, excellent visibility to admire a great variety of fishes and sea animals.



DAY 6: Friday: Santa Fe & South Plazas Island

Santa Fe: Wet landing, activities for this day: hiking, swimming and snorkeling. Description of this place: With 24 Km2 and 60 meters of height above sea level, it is an almost central island that has a unique place of visit: an incredible bay with turquoise water protected by a natural barrier of rocks and from you can appreciate colonies of seals and hawks flying over. It is home of one of the two species of land iguanas that have the islands, their main food are the leaves and fruits of the large and thick cactus. Crabs, nocturnal herons, marine iguanas, cucuves and land doves are seen frequently. The Bay is excellent place to swim and to do snorkeling. Marine Tortoises, rays, sea lions and tropical fishes are an amazing attraction! Snacks and refreshing beverages expect for you on board. Lunch. Navigation toward South Plazas Island.



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DAY 6: South Plazas

South Plazas are two small islands, created by land uplift where land iguanas are known to be smaller; they nest during warm time. The hike goes along an extraordinary cliff where sea birds nest. Approximately, in this Island there are 1000 sea lions (*Zalophus wolfebaeki*) and they are located in south side of Plazas



DAY 7: Saturday: Santa Cruz Island

We take our breakfast very early in the morning. Our luggage and all your belongings should be list to check out in the ship.



DAY 7: Charles Darwin Station


Our last visit: Estación Charles Darwin: Charles Darwin Station is located in the Main Port of Santa Cruz Island, we will take our private bus that take us to the entrance of the center of breeding where we go to appreciate tortoises and land iguanas in captivity, this center is the main site of breeding of the islands. Animals that were in danger of extinction in the different islands are maintained in captivity and thanks at dedicated work of several institutions some species are saving, here was where the most famous tortoise "the Solitary George" the last survivor of the species of Pinta Island lived. Transfer Out.



DAY 7: Arrival transfer in Quito

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DAY 7: Free Day in Quito


Free time in Quito to explore this wonderful city on your own.



DAY 8: Transfer to the airport for onward destination

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DAY 8: Welcome to the Amazon


After a 30-minute flight to Puerto Francisco de Orellana “El Coca”, our representative will transfer you by private transportation to the city’s main dock at the Napo River. The next two hours will be on a motorized canoe heading down river on what will be the beginning of an unforgettable experience in the tropical rainforest, the Amazon. At the end of the motorized canoe ride, you will be dropped off at La Selva’s main dock and your first close encounter with the rainforest begins and the final leg of the trip to the lodge will be completed in a paddle canoe. The only thing you must take care of during this part of the trip is your carry-on and camera equipment, all other luggage will be transported by La Selva staff. The manager will be waiting to greet you with a refreshing juice, snacks, and a short briefing with general information about your stay at La Selva Lodge. This afternoon you will start with an introduction to the rainforest. One of our naturalist guides will give you some basic information about the tropical rain forest, Amazonia and the operation of La Selva Lodge. The idea is to begin the activities with some background information about the amazing place in which you have just arrived. There will be time for an exploration before dinner – You may undertake the Matapalo Trail: This trail was given the Spanish name of the famous Strangler fig (Ficus sp), one of many remarkable trees that you can find on this short walk. Mahogany trees over 400 years old can be seen and your guides will share their knowledge of the flora and fauna. Due to the time of day there is great natural light and the diurnal and nocturnal animals are beginning their daily transitional activities.



DAY 8: Depart from Quito to the lodge

After arrival at Quito International airport you will be met by our representative who will assist you in check in and assist you on your 30 minute flight to Coca. On arrival at Coca you will then board a motorized canoe which will take you two hours down the scenic Amazon toward La Selva's dock. please note on arrival at Coca your main luggage will be handled by staff and meet you at La Selva. If you wish to take any personal items please pack them into a small backpack for the canoe journey.

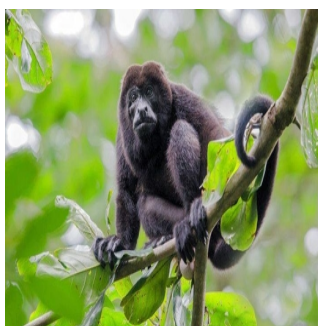


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DAY 9: Discover Amazon Trails

La Selva Lodge have a set of activities daily which are subject to change depending on the day, time of year and the guides decisions based on the group's interests and the organised operations. The excursions below are a good guide on what you can expect from day to day: In the morning you may visit the rainforest canopy tower. After a 20 minute walk you reach the tower, this amazing construction will allow you to climb 120 feet above the forest floor and enjoy some of the most amazing scenery. Your Naturalist and Native guides will help you spot colourful birds including toucans, tanagers and parrots and with luck, the famous howler monkeys or a sloth. On the way back from the tower there is the option of taking the Tucaneta Trail where your Native Guide can show you some of the medicinal plants still in use today and your Naturalist guide will provide you with interesting information on the ecology and natural history of the Amazon. In the afternoon you may undertake the Charapa Trail. This trail goes on for about an hour beginning at the lodge and ending by the edge of the lagoon. It is a great loop where different mammals, monkeys and birds can be seen that tend to come closer to the lagoon at this time of the day looking for food. It is also perfect for witnessing an Amazonian sunset from the water in the canoe. Early this evening before dinner, you may embark on a night Canoe Ride, with the help of a spotlight your guides will take you around the lagoon via canoe looking for nighttime wildlife. This is also a great opportunity for star gazing.



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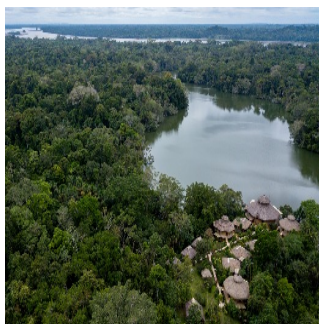
DAY 10: Discover Amazon Trails

La Selva Lodge have a set of activities daily which are subject to change depending on the day, time of year and the guides decisions based on the group's interests and the organised operations. The excursions below are a good guide on what you can expect from day to day: This morning you will set off to see the spectacular Parrot Clay Lick and Mandi Wasi. You will make your way back to the Napo River and take a motorized canoe ride to the clay licks, one of the most fascinating displays of the wild world. Hundreds of parrots and parakeets gather here to eat the mineral rich soil, an important part of their diet. Binoculars are essential to really capture the moment. After the clay licks, we will take you to experience our Cultural Activity. An Amazonian Kichua woman will welcome you at their community center to share their life of the Kichua's in the Amazon. This is special because it is part of the Amazon you do not find on the maps and provides the special and unique opportunity to really get to learn more about the people of the Amazon. This afternoon you can enjoy the Coto Trail. It is a fantastic walk that takes off from the lodge to the edge of the Garzacocha Lagoon. In the afternoon the light from the sun will come from behind most of the time, making this walk an amazing experience and the perfect opportunity to enjoy the beauty of this amazing forest. Groups of black-mantled tamarin monkeys can be spotted on this walk and some of our groups have even seen tapirs too. Your Naturalist Guide is going to explain about all the different creatures that can be found, and our Native Guide will show you some of the medical plants that they have been using for thousands of years. A canoe ride back to the lodge makes a great ending for this activity. During any free time you have, in-between activities you can use our kayaks, swim in the lagoon, have a massage or just relax in your room.



DAY 11: Departure Day

In accordance with your briefing the night before, you will have an early wake up call, breakfast and departure from the lodge. The lodge staff will assist you with your checked luggage and the motorized canoe ride will head upstream back to Coca, where our representatives will take you to the airport to help you with your checked luggage and boarding passes.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Hotels
Inclusions	Private airport transfers Internal flights as part of this itinerary Accommodation with breakfast daily Sightseeing with local English speaking guides as detailed in itinerary Other meals where stated EXCLUSIONS: International flights Visa and reciprocity fees (if applicable) Travel insurance Beverages Personal expenses Gratuities for tour guides and drivers Any items not mentioned as included
Difficulty Rating	1 (easy)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request, contact us for more details.
Notes	All entrance fees are subject to change without prior notice. This is a Tailor-Made itinerary which can be customised to create your own unique journey. Contact us to discuss your travel plans.
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability.

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SUSTAINABILITY

Being environmentally accountable is a crucial part of our organisation. Chimu is currently striving towards using less paper, taking several initiatives to do so and tracking our progress along the way. Our goal: A paperless organisation. For this reason, all information given to you will be sent electronically. We encourage those who choose to travel with us to support our aspirations and actions and ask that you reconsider printing out documentation. To view these documents, you can download them to your iPad or portable computer before and during your trip.

Chimu is passionate and dedicated to sustainability measures and understands the crucial part sustainability plays within the tourism industry.

We use local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprint. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate

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knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting. Our guides are all highly qualified (most with university degrees) or equip with many years of experience and are paid above the standard wage. Whether it be our knowledgeable local guides, locally produced meals or the transport on tour, we do not use imported goods when local products are available. We aim to minimise our impact on the environment and give as much back as possible to the communities we work in.

While visiting the many national parks, heritage sites, museums and landmarks our travellers are encouraged to explore remain culturally aware and sensitive. We further encourage you to buy appropriate souvenirs and discourage the buying of anything wrongfully made or taken from the environment i.e. shells and endangered species products. Information on how you can be environmentally conscious, and travel responsibly will be made available in our Travellers Guides and provided during your travels by guides and staff.

For more information on our sustainability policies, including how we are striving towards being a paperless organisation, click [HERE](#)

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