



INTERCHANGE



ECUADOR

8 days away (6 nights in Ecuador) from £1615

Quito – Riobamba – Cuenca - Guayaquil

The two Andean cordilleras that run parallel and cross Ecuador from north to south, offer a most varied topography: volcanoes and snow capped mountains, green valleys with impressive Colonial cities such as Quito, quaint Indian villages, farmlands, haciendas, lakes and rivers of crystal blue waters.

The capital of Ecuador, Quito, brings the past to life in its museums, monasteries, the carved stone facades and golden altars of its many churches, as well as in the Archaeological Museum that displays centuries of pre-Columbian treasures. Enjoy scenic, Colonial and artistic Quito.

QUITO AND SURROUNDINGS

The capital of Ecuador has a setting that few cities can match. During the 13th century it was the prosperous center of the Kingdom of Quitus. It later became the northern capital of the Inca Empire. In the 16th and 17th centuries, Colonial architects built formidable temples, monasteries and mansions, creating an urban jewel designated by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage Site. Quito's artistic creativity awaits the visitor in cosmopolitan galleries and boutiques filled with contemporary paintings, sculptures and exquisite traditional crafts.

Daily Itinerary

Day 1 – London - Quito - Sunday, Tuesday, Friday

Depart Heathrow Terminal 2 on Iberia flight IB3161 at 07.25 hours, arrive Madrid at 10.45 hours, depart Madrid on IB6463 at 12.00 hours, arrive Quito at 17.10 hours.

Escorted transfer between airport and Hotel in Quito.

Baggage handling of two pieces of luggage per person at airport and at hotel is included.

3 nights in Hotel Dan Clarion

Day 2 – Quito and the Middle of the World - Monday, Wednesday, Saturday

A visit to downtown Quito to relish in this urban jewel and its treasures of art and architecture. Quito's colonial quarter, the largest and best preserved of South America, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The stroll starts at the Independence Plaza, flanked by the Cathedral, the Presidential Palace, the Municipal Building and the Archbishop's Palace. Visit the temple of La Compañía de Jesús and its awesome gilded interior. Continue on to the Monastery of San Francisco, one the of great religious buildings of the New World; its impressive façade and atrium that lead to its Baroque interior influenced by Moorish style, with the winged Virgin of Quito at its main altar.



Then continue to the Equatorial Monument, 25 Kms. (16 miles) North of Quito, which marks the exact Middle of the World, latitude 0°, where you can stand with a foot on each hemisphere. Visit the Ethnographic Museum inside the monument, which shows the different Native American groups living in Ecuador. Beside the monument there is a colonial-style town, complete with main square, church, post office, bullring, cafeterias, restaurants and many gift shops with postcards and souvenirs. You will get a certificate for having crossed the Equator.

Dress in layers (T-shirt, blouse, sweater, coat). Take a sweater even if the day is warm and sunny. Rain protection advised in the afternoon. This tour includes walking at an altitude of 2800 meters (9200 feet) and climbing stairs. Sun protection (SPF 40). Good walking shoes. Entrance fees are included.

Day 3 – Otavalo - Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday

The Otavalos are a people and culture indigenous to the Valley of Otavalo, in the Province of Imbabura in Northern Ecuador. In 1495 the Otavalo area was conquered by the Inca Empire and in turn conquered by the Spanish Conquistadors in 1535. The Otavalos are a very prosperous community of skilled textile weavers, who gather to sell their products at the market in the city of Otavalo as they have done for centuries, as regional markets have played an important role in Indian life, providing regular gathering places for trade and socializing. Today, increasing numbers of Otavalos have also been traveling



overseas to sell their handcrafts in Europe and North America. The Otavalos are proud of their cultural heritage, hard working people who have managed to overcome poverty without changing their way of life, their traditions or their dress, while at the same time taking advantage of technological advances.

This one-day semi-private excursion has been designed to provide guests with an overall view of the dramatic Andean scenery, with an earlier departure to arrive in time to appreciate the activity of the Otavalo Market and visit the town of Peguche for a stroll through the town to observe the weaving process.

This excursion goes north, to the land of the Otavalos and South America's most famous Indian fair along the Panamerican Highway through dramatic mountain scenery to the textile market of Otavalo, where guests will enjoy visiting the many stalls full of ponchos, scarves, blankets, wall hangings, woven belts (fajas), hats, handbags and much more. Here Otavaleños barter in silence, in marked contrast to the raucous noise of other markets; take your time to negotiate the best bargains. Then, proceed to Peguche, an Indian village very near Otavalo that is home to the artisans who do the weaving in their homes; guests can learn about their culture and everyday life. Lunch is at one of the charming country inns or haciendas of the area.

Dress in layers (T-shirt, blouse, sweater, coat). Take a sweater even if the day is warm and sunny and rain protection from February to May. This tour includes walking at an altitude of 2560 meters (8434 feet). Sun protection (SPF 40). Good walking shoes. Great Photo ops.

Day 4 – Chiva Express - Wednesday, Friday, Monday

A three-day trip along the Avenue of the Volcanoes from Quito to beautiful Cuenca in the south; among spectacular scenery aboard the CHIVA EXPRESS or by motorcoach, with many stops along the way for a close contact with the indigenous cultures, haciendas, plantations and a taste of the products of the land. The third day is dedicated to the cultural and natural experience of exploring the charms of Cuenca, with its cobblestone streets and flowering plazas.

The adventure starts in Quito with a bus ride to the Valley of Sangolquí, for a visit to its interesting market of colorful and fresh produce, and its main attraction: whole roasted pigs decorated with an apple in their mouth and red peppers in their ears –a delicacy! Continue to the Station of Tambillo, where the "Chiva Express", a colorful one coach train, like a bus on tracks, is ready to depart. A stop for a snack is made at a dairy hacienda with cows, horses and llamas. Then the Chiva advances to the Station of Machachi. Transfer back to the bus and its up and down the slopes of Cotopaxi volcano and the fertile Valley of Latacunga for a visit to a rose plantation and a taste of the products of the land. In the afternoon, continue by bus to Urbina, at the foot of imposing Chimborazo volcano, visit a Tagua workshop and warm up with a canelazo by the fireplace. Dinner and overnight at Riobamba.



1 night in Hacienda Abraspungo (or similar)

Day 5 – Chiva Express - Thursday, Saturday, Tuesday

After an early breakfast, transfer to the train station to board the "Chiva Express" a colorful one coach train, like a bus on tracks. You will leisurely enjoy the ever-changing scenery as the "Chiva Express" advances along the ancient tracks in an astonishing ride, twisting and turning over the Andes, along bridging ravines and river gorges. Stop at Guamote, an Indian town, for a short visit to an Educational Center for Adults' Development and Sustainability. Continue aboard the Chiva to Alausí, and prepare to go down the Devil's Nose switch backs, one of the most impressive feats of rail engineering in the world, and back to Alausí, where a snack is served. Continue south along the Andes by motorcar to Cuenca, visiting the Inca Ruins of Ingapirca to arrive at dusk, with a stop for lunch. Accommodations and all meals at the hotel in Cuenca



NOTE: There is currently a landslide affecting the rails between Guamote and Alausi, so temporarily there will be a portion of this route by motorcar.

1 night in Santa Lucía (or similar Oro Verde or Carvallo)

Day 6 – Chiva Express - Friday, Sunday, Wednesday

Today guests will enjoy a full day to discover, at a leisurely pace, the beauty and charm for which Cuenca has been recognized as a World Cultural Heritage Site. Its red tiled roofs, cobblestone streets, flowery plazas and museums make it very special. Lunch is served at a cozy restaurant. Late afternoon transfer to the airport to take the flight to Guayaquil. Air ticket Cuenca / Guayaquil is not included.



NOTE: Accommodation in Cuenca at hotels Oro Verde, Santa Lucía or Carvallo

Dress in layers (T-shirt, blouse, sweater, coat) and rain protection. Sun protection (SPF 40) even if the day is cloudy. Hat or cap. Good walking shoes.

Altitude: 2,550 meters (7,750 feet) to 3,000 meters (10,000 feet)

Average Temperature: Day 10° to 25° C / 50° to 77° F.

Night 6° to 10° C / 43° to 50° F.

1 night in Hampton Inn

Escorted transfer between the airport of Guayaquil and hotel. Baggage handling of two pieces of luggage per person at hotel and at airport is included.

Day 7 – Guayaquil - Friday, Sunday, Wednesday

Escorted transfer between main hotels and the airport of Guayaquil. Baggage handling of two pieces of luggage per person at hotel and at airport is included.

17.40 hours – Depart Quito on Iberia flight IB6464, arrive Madrid at 13.45 hours the next day.

Day 8 – Madrid – London, Saturday, Monday, Thursday

15.15 hours- Depart Madrid on flight IB3172 arriving Heathrow Terminal 2 at 16.35 hours.

NB. Flight times quoted are local. Programme details, flights and accommodation may be subject to change according to local conditions.

Prices include:

- Return economy class flights with Iberia (via Madrid) from Heathrow to Quito, Guayaquil to Heathrow
- UK Airport taxes (prices at time of going to print)
- Transfers on arrival and departure in Ecuador
- Hotel accommodation on bed and buffet breakfast basis
- Lunch on Days 2 - 6
- Dinner at hotel on Days 4 & 5
- Visits and excursions by air-conditioned coach with (with English speaking guide) as specified in the itinerary

Not included:

- Optional excursions
- Drinks with meals
- Gratuities
- Airport tax on departure from Guayaquil \$27.75 per person

Prices – per person :

All prices are quoted subject to availability at the time of booking.

Departure	Double/Twin
January, February, March	£1615
April	£1695
May	£1615
June	£1725
July	£1915
August	£1690
September, October	£1725
November	£1695
December (excl Xmas)	£1755

(Single room and child prices on request)

Booking

Contact us to reserve a place and then download our booking form and forward to us with your deposit.

Contact details

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