



Day 1: Fly to Ecuador

Arrive in Quito: Touch down in Quito, the capital of Ecuador. Depending on your arrival time, you may have free time to explore the city on your own.

Dinner: If arriving before 8pm, you'll join your group for dinner.

Day 2: Quito

Sightseeing tour of Quito: Carved into a narrow plateau high above the Andean valleys, Ecuador's capital is overshadowed by soaring peaks and the looming Pichincha Volcano. On your sightseeing tour, explore the well-preserved colonial quarter of Quito, where wrought-iron balconies and majestic stone pillars grace its 300-year-old plazas, churches, and palaces. The area was declared a World Heritage Site by the United Nations in 1978. Stroll amid the shady palm trees and colorful gardens of Independence Plaza, admire the stunning Government Palace, and visit the charming Santo Domingo Monastery.

Equatorial Line: Stand exactly on the equator, the namesake of Ecuador. At the Intinan Museum, a guide will conduct several experiments to demonstrate what happens at the midpoint of the planet. If you've ever wanted to stand in both hemispheres at once, this is your chance.

Dinner: Get to know your group over dinner.

Day 3: Quito | Baltra Island | Isabela Island

Travel to the Galápagos Islands: Fly from Quito to Baltra Island, arriving in the ecological paradise of the Galápagos Islands. In 1959, the archipelago was declared a national park in order to protect its unique flora and fauna, including giant tortoises (from which the islands took their name), iguanas, penguins, cormorants, and Darwin's 13 species of finches.

Lunch: Enjoy dinner with your group on Baltra Island.

Travel to Isabela Island: Head to Isabela Island, the largest island of the Galápagos and home to the charming and peaceful Puerto Villamil fishing village.

Dinner: Gather with your group to reflect on today's activities over dinner.

Day 4: Isabela Island

Isabela Island activities: Feel the magic of the Galápagos as you participate in activities on Isabela Island. Explore the formation of its landmass over one million years ago in a merger of six shield volcanoes—all of which are still active today—on a volcano walk. Visit a pink flamingo habitat and later, see penguins, sea lions, iguanas, and whitetip reef sharks as you snorkel in the Pacific Ocean.

Lunch: Take a break from the day's activities for lunch with your group.

Dinner: Over dinner with your group, fuel up for the following day.

Day 5: Isabela Island | Santa Cruz Island

Early morning activity: Enjoy an early morning activity on Isabela Island before making the transfer to Santa Cruz Island.

Charles Darwin Research Station: Operated by the Charles Darwin Foundation, the research station is home to a team of more than 100 scientists, educators, volunteers, research students, and support staff from all over the world. Observe how they conduct scientific research and promote environmental education.

Lunch: Stop for lunch with your group before your afternoon activities.

Puerto Ayora: See sea lions, finches, crabs, and iguanas as you explore Puerto Ayora, the southern shore of Santa Cruz Island and most populous town of the Galápagos Islands.

Santa Cruz Highlands: Stop in the highlands of Santa Cruz. Observe the unique and diverse vegetation zones of the area and visit the Twin Craters. The area is also excellent for observing wild tortoises, some of which have been known to live longer than 150 years.

Dinner: Get a taste for Santa Cruz Island over dinner with your group.

Day 6: Santa Cruz Island | San Cristóbal Island

Journey by boat to San Cristóbal Island: San Cristóbal Island is one of the most dramatic lunar-like landscapes in the archipelago. Here you'll enjoy a hike up Tijeretas Hill, visit the San Cristobal Interpretation Center, go snorkeling, and explore La Loberia—a piece of coast famously named for the large number of sea lions resting on the rocks and sand of its shoreline.

Lunch: Enjoy lunch with your group on San Cristóbal Island.

Dinner: Tonight, join your group for a delicious meal.

Day 7: San Cristóbal | Quito

Morning activities in San Cristóbal: Choose between a walk to Punta Carola, where you'll discover frigate birds, Galápagos sea lions, and blue-footed boobies, or a shopping excursion.

Fly to Quito: Travel to the San Cristóbal airport and board your flight for Quito, where you'll spend the night.

Dinner: Relax over dinner with your group in Quito.

Day 8: Quito

Visit Mindo Cloud Forest: Nestled on the slopes of the Pichincha Volcano near the southern edge of the Choco-Andean Corridor, Mindo is home to more than 300 different species of tropical birds and nearly 400 types of orchids. Keep an eye out for Chestnut-Mandibled Toucans or Club-Winged Manakins, which flourish in the lush forest's moist, cool conditions.

Lunch: Get your head (briefly) out of the clouds during a break for lunch.

Dinner: Experience Quito's local cuisine with your group.

Depart for home: Travel to the airport and check in for your return flight home.

Day 9: Arrive home

☛ 3-DAY PROGRAM EXTENSION

Day 9: Quito | Riobamba

Travel to Riobamba: Travel through the beautiful mountains surrounding Riobamba, which was the birthplace of Ecuador's first constitution in 1830. Visit an Andean village and explore open-air markets where indigenous artisans display their wares. Find vibrantly embroidered textiles, glazed pottery, and handcrafted leather goods.

Dinner: Gather with your group to reflect about today's activities over dinner.

Days 10-11: Riobamba | Palacio Real | Quito

Primary school visit: As you travel from Riobamba to the community of Palacio Real, participate in a cultural immersion activity such as a meeting local children at a local primary school.

Cultural activity: Learn about the culture of indigenous groups in Palacio Real, all of which have unique customs and sense of community—both in their spiritual outlooks as well as daily life.

Lunch: Enjoy lunch with your group on each day.

Dinner: Bond with your group over dinner on each day.

Depart for home: Travel to the airport and check in for your return flight.