



Northern Highlands and Amazon Program

Duration: 11 days

Itinerary

Day 1 (includes lunch and dinner)

Arrival in Quito. Pick up from airport and transfer to hotel. Depending on arrival time, lunch and free afternoon to rest. After dinner briefing about the program by our tour leader. For people arriving early in the morning, we can organize a visit to museums, parks, or simply a sight tour around the city. Early dinner and rest to recover from the long trip.

Day 2 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner)

After breakfast we leave Quito and drive towards San Pablo Lake (2 hours). On our way we will stop at Calderón, which is a small town outside Quito where the famous “mazapan dolls” (bread dough) are manufactured. We will learn how they are produced and watch the talented old ladies manufacture one mazapan doll for us!! We will continue our trip towards San Pablo Lake. We will admire the beautiful views of the Andes, snow capped mountains with the indigenous working and harvesting their land. San Pablo Lake will be our headquarters for visiting Otavalo, Cotacachi and the surrounding lakes. We will have a typical lunch which includes potato tortillas, pork, avocado, peanut sauce and boiled corn. Check in at a very cozy hotel at the Lake shore. In the afternoon we will visit the town of Ibarra where we will enjoy “helado de paila” (typical ice cream) and tour around the city (very nice little parks and plazas around the town). We will return to the hotel for dinner.

Day 3 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner)

After breakfast we will visit Otavalo, the most famous indigenous market. We will experience a mix of exotic colors, sounds and smells. Hundreds of local artists offer their products in this market. We can learn about the process of manufacturing the handicrafts, while we have a conversation with the indigenous. Lunch in Otavalo and then we will head towards Peguche Village, where we will learn how to manufacture traditional wind music instruments. We will also witness a typical dance presented by local artist. Dinner and return to the hotel.

Day 4 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner)

Ecuador is known worldwide by the excellent quality of its roses, that is why after breakfast we will visit a rose farm plantation. Fascinate yourself with all the rose varieties you can imagine and get to know the process from the time they are grown until they arrive to a flower store in the USA or Europe. Each of us will receive roses as a present. After a delicious lunch we will visit Cotacachi,



which is the most famous town in Ecuador for leather products made by local indigenous people. Rest of the afternoon to rest at the Lake shore and prepare for departure next day.

Day 5 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner)

After breakfast we leave Lake San Pablo and drive to the Amazon. On our way we will cross two mountain chains and will drive through seven different climate floors. Depending on weather we will see some volcanoes and will try food specialties on the way. We will have several stops which include a visit to an Environmental Communication Centre in the entrance to the Amazon Region, where we will be lecture about most important facts for the Amazon conservation. Arrival at Huasquila Amazon Lodge (accessible) around 5:00 pm, welcome cocktail and briefing.

Day 6 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner)

After breakfast we will have a quick walk into an amazon secondary rainforest path to observe natural medicinal plants native from the Amazon. For this activity we will use an off road wheelchair which depending on the weather conditions may allow us to do the walk. In case we are not able to take the walk we will have a presentation of this medicinal plants at the lodge restaurant by our native indigenous guide. After lunch we will visit an animal rescue center with local animals that have been recovered from illegal animal trade. If we are lucky maybe we will be able to take a picture of a monkey jumping around. Return to the lodge for dinner.

Day 7 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner)

In the morning we will travel to the Anzu river (1,5 hour drive), where we will take a raft in a very calm river (class II). We will start our adventure of going down the river admiring the Amazon nature on each side of the river. During the trip we can stop at several points of interest to take pictures and relax in the river. Even though the river is very calm, of course we will cruise down the river with several kayakers at all time for safety reasons. We will finish our journey around 3:00 pm and start our way back to the lodge. Dinner and rest of the evening for chatting at the lodge (play games, cards, etc) enjoying a delicious tropical juice or wine.

Day 8 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner)

Today we will visit a typical indigenous community called Rukullacta. There we will learn about the way the indigenous from this area keep their traditions and at the same time have adapted to 21st century costumes. We will also see some typical dances performed by an indigenous group and for the ones who are more adventure a shaman (indigenous doctor) will be ready to perform a limpieza (cleanning of the body and the soul). After lunch we will visit the town



of Tena (capital for the Napo province). At evening we will return to Huasquila Lodge.

Day 9 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner)

After breakfast we will drive back towards Quito. On the way we will make a 2 hour stop for lunch at one of Ecuador's hot spot for birdwatching (hummingbirds). The views of the landscape from this area are simply magnificent. We will arrive at Quito late afternoon for dinner.

Day 10 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner)

Visit to Quito's Colonial Center, declared World Culture Heritage by UNESCO. Visit the churches and squares and get to know their history and most interesting facts. Then we will visit the Middle of the World monument, which is located on the Equator and where you can actually move between the southern and northern hemispheres in one second. We will visit the Inti-Nam museum where we will observe some experiments that prove we are in the Middle of the World. After dinner we will give you a final overview of the trip with a presentation of all the pictures we have taken during the excursions. We will give every guest a CD with the pictures as a remembrance gift.

Day 11 (includes all meals before flight)

Departure

The price includes:

- All tours and activities specified in program
- Accommodations specified in program
- All entrance fees during tours and activities specified in program
- All meals specified in program
- Transportation specified in program

The price doesn't include:

- International airfares and airport taxes
- Any expenses not specified in program (personal expenses, alcoholic beverages, souvenirs, laundry, etc)
- Equipment rental or supply (if necessary)
- Personal insurance
- Any medical expenses