

Duration: 12 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.

Day 2 (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.

Day 3 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner) After breakfast we leave Quito and drive towards Cotopaxi volcano in the Andes. We will admire the great vegetation typical of the Andes region. We will visit a rose farm plantation where you can admire 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 a small bouquet as a present. After lunch we will continue our trip towards Baños. We will cross the town of Salcedo where we will have a traditional Salcedo Ice Cream and finally we will arrive to the city of Baños. This little nice town lies at the bottom of the active Tungurahua volcano. If lucky we will admire the volcano releasing ashes from the crater.

Day 4 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner) In the morning we will have an interesting and fun walk/hike through around Baños' waterfalls. This is a great experience to admire the fascinating landscape of the area. In the afternoon we will enjoy a relaxing massage. For the evening we will walk around Baños to get to know the city.

Day 5 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner) After breakfast we will drive back to Quito, but we will stop on our way in the town of Quisapincha. This town is famous for manufacturing leather goods (purses, jackets, vest, etc) at a very affordable price. On our way back to Quito we will have several stops to stretch, relax, take pictures and eat. Arrive to Quito early evening.

Day 6 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner) Today we will fly towards the coast (Manta). We will then drive for an hour to get to Bahia de Caraquez, which is a little city that lies on the shore of the Pacific Coast. We will check in the hotel at noon, and after lunch we will have the rest of the afternoon to get to know the city and interact with their inhabitants (watch the sunset from the boardwalk recommended).

Day 7 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner) Today we will visit the fragile mangrove ecosystem. We will paddle in boats and observe hundreds of birds in the mangroves. Also a visit to a typical shrimp farm in the estuary is included. We will learn about the process of growing shrimp and why not try some.



Highlands and Coast Program (Seniors)

Day 8 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner) After breakfast we will drive towards Montecristi, which is a little town along the coast, where the famous Panama hats are manufacture. We will have the opportunity to admire how the talented artist hand weave the hats from scratch and it comes out into a beautiful hat. In Montecristi we will visit the “Asamblea Constituyente” where the country last constitution was written. We will head to Manta for lunch which will be at the boardwalk in front of the Ocean (seafood of course) and finally we will catch the plane back to Quito in the early evening.

Day 9 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner) After breakfast we will start our trip towards San Pablo Lake. On our way we will stop at Calderon to observe the talented old ladies manufacture the “mazapan dolls” (bread dough figures). Of course we will have the opportunity to manufacture one. We will arrive to San Pablo lodge for lunch, and after checking in and recovering we will visit the village of Peguche, where they manufacture wind music instruments from the Andes.

Day 10 (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. We will have a typical highlands lunch. After lunch we will visit the town of Ibarra where we will admire its beautiful colonial downtown while enjoying a delicious helado de paila (typical ice cream from the area). Rest of the evening at the lodge in front of the lake.

Day 11 (includes breakfast, lunch and dinner) Drive back to Quito. Arrive at noon, and rest of afternoon to get ready for next day flight. Maybe last minute shopping or simply a walk through the parks in Quito. After dinner, we will have an overview of the whole trip with a presentation of all the pictures taken during the trip and each guest will receive a CD with the pictures as a remembrance gift.

Day 12 (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



Highlands and Coast Program (Seniors)

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

