



UNIQUE SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES

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CLIMB BIKE DIVE ECUADOR

TRIP DURATION: 15 days Quito to Quito

NEAREST INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT FOR JOINING TOUR: Quito, Ecuador

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- City of Quito - The second highest capital city in the world in a beautiful setting.
- Multi- Activity tour in Galapagos, diving/ snorkeling, mountain biking, hiking, kayaking
- Guided climb of Cotapaxi, the highest active volcano in the world.
- 2 Day mountain biking tour
- Guided climb of Picchincha

IS THIS ADVENTURE FOR ME? From depths of the Pacific Ocean to the heights of the Andes, this is the ultimate adventure tour. An adventure trip carefully designed to acclimatize you and give you the best chance to summit the challenging Cotapaxi. We will begin with hikes in and around Quito, then a 2 day mountain bike excursion to Quilotoa with altitudes ranging from 2900masl to 4000masl. We compliment this trip of a life time with a multi-adventure trip to the enchanted Galapagos Islands, with amazing diving and wildlife viewing. You will come away from this trip with a true sense of accomplishment. You need to be in very good shape and have some experience at altitude. Being able to dive is not essential as all the dive sites are excellent for snorkeling. This is a very active adventure trip! From the heights of the second largest volcanic crater in the world, to the depths of the enriched and unexplored waters of Galapagos, our carefully planned Adventure tour is a must for all lovers of outdoor adventure. Whether you are diving with harmless sharks, playful sea lions, or giant manta rays, or just enjoying the company of the Giant Galapagos Tortoise, our adventure-tour is guaranteed to leave you with memories that will last a life time. Keep on reading below and see if you think this trip is for you.

WELCOME TO THE SOUTHERN EXPOSURE TOURS EXPERIENCE

ITINERARY

DAY 1: QUITO: ARRIVAL DAY You are free to arrive and check in at any time. There will be a briefing that night and a chance for you to meet your traveling companions and ask questions. The information will be awaiting you at the reception regarding that nights briefing. If arriving late in the evening. Don't worry! You will be briefed in the morning and meet the group. **(It is advised you arrive 1 day early to help with acclimatization)**

DAYS 2 & 3: QUITO We begin our acclimatization with hikes with guided walks in and around Quito taking impressive views of the city and the volcano Picchincha. On day 3 we take short ride up the gondola and then a hike up Picchincha for our first test at altitude and the best view in town. **Highlight dinner.** (B, D)

DAYS 4 & 5: QUILOTOA Today we take a trip down the valley of volcanoes to Quilotoa .We will bike and hike at altitude and spend the night at a locally run hostel on the rim of the impressive Quilotoa volcanic lake. From Quilotoa we down hill mountain bike and then take private transport back along the valley of Volcanoes to Cotapaxi, where we will spend the night at the refuge before our accent that evening (B, L, D)

DAYS 6 & 7: COTAPAXI Before hand we will have a chance to try our hand at ice climbing and walking with our crampons, and getting use to our equipment and the thin air at 4200masl. That evening at midnight we begin the accent to

the summit with the objective of summiting around 6am with unobstructed 360 views of Ecuador and the surrounding volcanoes all the way back to the city of Quito. An unforgettable experience! We descend and return to Quito for the evening of day 7 and a well-earned rest. (B, L, D while on Cotapaxi)

DAYS 8/9/10/11/12/13: GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

DAY 8: SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND

The trip begins with an early morning transfer to the airport and a flight to San Cristobal Island, Galapagos. Here you will be met by our friendly staff and transferred to your hotel. After lunch we will make our way to the top of San Cristobal through the settlement of El Progreso, to La Soledad from where we will have panoramic views out over the Pacific towards Santa Cruz, Floreana and Santa Fe. After we jump on the bikes for an exhilarating down hill through the lush highlands of the island, through El Progreso down to the township of Puerto Barequizo. We will pay a visit to the Interpretation Center and learn the mysterious history of Galapagos, "The Enchanted Islands". Later we hit Mann Beach for a swim where we can observe playful Sea lions and Frigates birds, gliding on the thermals. That evening we will have a welcome dinner of some of the islands fresh fish and produce. (L, D)

DAY 9: SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND

The day begins with a short boat ride in the Christine to Kicker Rock, observing along the way, the abundant marine life that Galapagos is renowned for. On the way we stop off at Isla de Lobos to observe nesting Frigate birds and Blue Footed Boobies, and swim/snorkel with playful young Sea lions. A real highlight of the trip! We then continue onto Kicker Rock, the remains of an underwater volcano rising vertically 150m out of the sea. A truly impressive sight! Here we can dive and snorkel keeping an eye out below for Sea Turtles, Manta Rays and maybe the odd harmless Galapagos shark, just to name a few. After we head to Cerro Brujo Beach, one of the most beautiful beaches in the islands and return to port late in the afternoon. **(B, L OPTIONAL DIVING, PLEASE ENQUIRE)**

DAY 10: FLOREANA AND ISABELA ISLANDS

This morning we depart San Cristobal Island to Floreana Island. Keep an eye out for dolphins and the magnificent albatross along the way. Here will be experience some of the snorkeling in the islands at Enderby Islet or Champions bay and Devils Crown. We depart Floreana to Isabela Island after a full day of snorkeling. **(B, L, D)**

DAY 11: ISABELA

A full day hiking takes us up Sierra Negra Volcano, one of the most active volcanoes in Galapagos, and with the second largest crater in the world. Here you can experience a birds eye view of this magical landscape. After taking in the incredible views from the volcano we visit the Breeding Center of the Giant Tortoise, the largest in Galapagos. That evening we can kick back at the bar on the beach and enjoy a nice cold beer or cocktail **(B, L)**

DAY 12: ISABELA

By pick up truck and on foot we make our way the wall of tears, built by convicts many years ago. Along the way we'll pop in and visit Pink flamingos, also stopping at the lookout and one of the many natural pools, short walking trails, beaches and mangrove swamps along the way. After lunch we jump in the kayaks, where you can observe up close, the only penguins found close to the equator. (B, L, D)

DAY 13: SANTA CRUZ

Today is an early morning departure to the Island of Santa Cruz. We will visit the highlands of Santa Cruz, observing The Galapagos Giant tortoise in natural surroundings, and the amazing lava tunnels, some over 1km long while taking in panoramic views of the islands. Later in the day we head to Tortuga Bay, a stunning beach with fine white sand to see marine iguanas or try you hand at some body boarding or surfing. (B, L, D)

DAY 14: SANTA CRUZ-QUITO

We bid farewell to the Enchanted Islands with some quick last minute souvenir shopping! We depart Santa Cruz Island and return to Quito and get transferred to the hotel. Our representative in Quito will be able to advise you and help with some of the many day tours available in and around Quito **(B, L, D)**

DAY 15: DEPARTURE DAY

Special note! S.E.T reserves the right to alter the itinerary due to weather conditions and or Galapagos Park regulation changes. Some times small changes need to be made last minute, in the best interests of the tour.

What the tour includes.... pretty much everything!

- Picchincha Volcano hike
- Cotapaxi Volcano climb
- S.E.T tour leader throughout
- Climbing guides and all equipment.
- 2 day Quilotoa mountain biking excursion
- Airfare Quito-Galapagos-Quito
- 7 day Galapagos multi-activity trip, with an **optional 2 dives**, sea kayaks, snorkeling, hiking and mountain biking
- All land transport during the itinerary.
- The cost of entry for all scheduled tours,
- A nice cold beer at the end of the tour

- All hotel accommodations* (on a twin share basis including continental breakfast).
- * Additional and or single accommodations can be arranged at the clients' request
- All meals as listed B, L, D

WHAT THE TOUR DOES NOT INCLUDE:

Your international flight to/from South America, transfers to/from those flights, international airport departure taxes, pre & post tour accommodation, visas, vaccinations, personal insurance, meals (except those listed), drinks, laundry, souvenirs, tips while on optional excursions and other items of a personal nature. Park entry fee to the Galapagos US\$100. Wetsuit hire US\$20. Optional diving.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS

Quito

Hotel Reina Isabel
Av. Amazonas N23-44 y Veintimilla
Quito, Ecuador
Tel: Int. Dialing Code + 593 2 2544454

Aero Puerto Mariscal Sucre, the international airport in Quito, is a 30-minute drive from the **New Town**, where our joining hotel is located. The easiest way to get there is via taxi. You can get an official taxi inside the airport, and pay set rate (approximately \$5 USD during the day, approximately \$6 USD at night). American dollars are now freely used in Ecuador, so you don't need to worry about changing money into a local currency. Please note that Day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned, so you may arrive at any time. Similarly the last day is a departure day during which no activities are planned. Your Tour Leader will contact you at the hotel on Day 1 and make sure you are settled comfortably. If you arrive late, s/he will leave you a message detailing what time and where you should meet the next morning. Your Tour Leader will organize a short meeting soon after arrival, during which you will meet other traveling companions and receive information about general and specific aspects of the trip.

ITINERARY:

All itineraries are given as a guideline only as our tour leaders may need to adjust the travel plan as the tour progresses due to changes in transport schedules or unforeseen circumstances. The tour leader will also try to be in the best place for local holidays and festivals, etc. We endeavor to incorporate any permanent changes into these dossiers as they happen. Therefore, we ask that you consider downloading the very latest dossier for your tour from our website just before traveling (as stated above, at www.southernexposuretours.com).

WHAT TO TAKE

You will be on the go a great deal, so our advice is to pack as lightly as possible. Most people automatically assume that the weather is hot in South America, but because of the higher altitude in the Andes, the temperature can feel quite cold, especially at night. We recommend the use of a duffel bag or backpack; whichever is easiest for you to carry. A good size daypack is also essential.

Documents:

- *Airline tickets (with photocopies)
- *Travel insurance (with photocopies)
- *Passport (with photocopies)
- *USD cash and some traveler's cheques (see personal spending money)
- *Credit card (see spending money)
- *Debit card (see spending money)
- *Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required

General Items & Clothing

- Insect Repellent
- Small towel and swim wear
- 1 pair hiking pants/track pants,
- 2 pairs of long trousers, 1 pair of shorts
- Sport sandals, Good Hiking boots
- Windproof/waterproof jacket, Fleece top
- 4 shirts/t-shirts
- Sun block, Sunglasses, Sun hat, Water bottle
- Watch or alarm clock, Flashlight
- Camera, Binoculars
- First-aid kit**

****First aid kit** should contain lip salve, Aspirin, Band Aids, anti-histamine, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, re-hydration powder and extra prescription drugs you may be taking. Ibuprofen

Recommended for the Cotapaxi climb:

- Thermal underwear

- Good gortex jacket
- Sleeping bag-really warm
- Wool hat, mitts or gloves
- Strong plastic bags to help keep gear dry
- Warm fleece
- All equipment is provided but if you have personal gear, feel free to bring it. Make sure all of the above is of excellent quality, as it will get very cold on certain sections of the trip

REMEMBER that although near the Equator, the higher altitude on some parts of the trip make for cool evenings and you will need a warm sweater or pullover. It's best to layer clothes rather than bring a heavy parka so that you can take layers off. Galapagos is hot, and your cold gear can be stored in Quito while on the islands

TRIP PREPARATION

Please contact your physician or travel clinic for the most up-to-date health requirements. Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. **PLEASE REMEMBER IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE THE CORRECT TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION.**

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES LIST

All prices are per person in US dollar amounts. Prices are subject to change, and can fluctuate in relation to the high/low season and the number of people on a specific excursion. Not all excursions listed here may be available due to season or weather conditions. As generally not a lot of time is spent in start/end cities, you may want to arrange to arrive early/stay longer in order to allow sufficient time to participate in optional activities there.

Quito:

City tour \$12 - \$20

Otavalo

Tour to surrounding Indigenous villages and lake Cuicocha \$50PP

SPENDING MONEY

We recommend US\$30 per day to cover the cost of meals, snacks, drinks, some souvenirs, laundry, tips etc. It is necessary to bring your spending money in US\$ only. This should be in the form of SOME travelers' cheques and MOSTLY cash (small denominations are advisable for every day use). In recent years the currencies throughout South America have been more stable and there is no longer a black market. Credit cards are widely accepted. The best credit cards to take is Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Diners and can be used in most places for cash advances and are often the best way to carry your money although we do not recommend that you rely on this as your ONLY means of bringing funds in case authorization is denied due to poor computer connections or other problems, which is quite common! Cash in local currency can usually be drawn on these in the bigger cities although often there is a high commission charge (up to 8 %) when using them for other transactions. You should take an amount of US\$ travelers cheques and an amount of US\$ cash. It should be remembered that all US\$ cash bills should be in good condition and that torn and dirty notes are not always accepted. Cash is easier to exchange but you should only carry amounts you feel comfortable with. Make sure you record your traveler's cheques numbers and to cross them off when used. Please note all cash and travelers should be in small denominations of US\$ only - no other currency is widely accepted for exchange.

TIPPING

Many restaurants charge 22% for service and tax. Also, there are several times during the trip where there is the opportunity to tip the local guides or drivers. You may do this individually, or your Tour Leader may offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Also at the end of each trip, if you felt your S.E.T Tour Leader did an outstanding job, a tip is always appreciated but never expected.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY/FITNESS:

AN VERY GOOD LEVEL OF FITNESS IS REQUIERED FOR THIS TOUR. WE WILL REACH AN ALTITUDE OF 5900M AND THE COTAPAXI CLIMB IS VERY STRENUIOUS.ALTHOUGH WE GRADUALLY GO UP IN ALTITUDE, EXPERIENCE AT ALTITUDE IS RECOMMENDED .WE WILL ALSO BE MOUNTAIN BIKING, HIGH ALTITUDE HIKING, SEA KAYAKING, AND DIVING .DIVERS MUST BE CERTIFIED.

FOOD

Eating out is one of the highlights of any tour to Latin America; therefore you are free to choose which type of restaurant to eat in, in order to give you flexibility in the type of cuisine you prefer. When in remote areas where there are no restaurants we do include meals. Meals are included on the Jungle excursion on this tour as well as a continental breakfast when applicable. Professional cooks prepare these. At other times you can make your own arrangements with the advice/recommendations from our Tour Leader. You can eat as a group, with friends or with the locals. Since it's all about you, you can cater for your own tastes around your budget. Generally the food in this region is not spicy and western style breakfasts are readily available. There are plenty of international restaurants throughout this tour. Most meals come with either rice or potatoes (or both) but often lack a variety of other vegetables. Italian, Chinese and even Indian foods are available in many areas. Chilean wines (considered one of the best in South America), local beers and soft drinks are obtainable everywhere.

WEATHER

this tour covers 2 climatic zones: the mountain region (Los Andes). In the Andes (Quito, Baños, Cuenca) November to April is the wet season with temperatures being on average 18°C. Don't be put off by the term rainy season, as this

generally only means sporadic downpours a couple of times a day, mostly at night. Of course, there are times, when this is not the case but it is fairly rare for continual rain to persist. The rest of the year is the dry season with temperatures at around 20°-25°C during the day. In the altitude the nights can become very cool, sometimes below zero. In Galapagos the temperature varies from 15° to 25° from June to October and from Nov to May, 15° to 35° with less wind and clearer skies and more humid. June through to November is considered the better time to climb

SECURITY:

Like anywhere in the world, you can be in the wrong place at the wrong time. However, traveling with a Latin American expert increases passenger safety greatly because our guides know the good and bad places in each city and can warn our clients about the local tricks. In recent years Ecuador has become a much safer country but care should be exercised while walking around the cities of Quito and Cuenca in particular as there are still some groups of very good thieves operating. However, these people hardly ever use violence but rely on diversionary tactics. We suggest clients always use the hotel safes wherever possible and obtain a good money belt before leaving home. Security of our passengers is our tour leaders' number one concern. They provide all necessary information during the pre-departure meeting.

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS AT BEGINNING OR END OF A TOUR:

If your flight connections are a little tight, don't worry, as we are fairly flexible and can usually assist you in joining the group a few hours or even a late. Therefore, if your plans don't exactly match our itinerary, contact us for advice on the best method and place to join the group. Please note that your joining/departure city will have interesting sights to see so if you have the time it is nice to allow a day or two extra in these cities and this will also allow you time to relax before your tour begins.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Please contact 0800 874 748 or 03 528 1330 in NEW ZEALAND.SOUTH AMERICA 00593 91651543.Should you need to contact S.E.T during an emergency situation. Emails are checked daily and a list of contact numbers and itinerary will be left with the joining hotel and given to all tour participants on day1. info@southernexposuretours.co.nz
sil@motuekaunitedtravel.co.nz

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