



UNIQUE SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES

www.southernexposuretours.co.nz

PROJECT ECUADOR

TRIP DURATION: 12 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
- **Otavalo** - Famous market town full of color and atmosphere
- **Jungle Excursion**-3 day Amazon adventure
- **Baños** - A health resort with hot thermal pools and many activities on option e.g.: horse riding, cycling, walking
- **PROJECT WORK WITH LOCAL ECUADORIAN CHARITY ORGANISATIONS**

IS THIS ADVENTURE FOR ME?

An interesting and busy itinerary offering culture, scenery, adventure and project community work. **We have incorporated 3 days community work with Ecuador's needy and local charity organizations, so you can come away from your time in Ecuador feeling like you have made a difference and helped those who need it the most**

The itinerary can be as active as you make it, with plenty of options to do as much or as little as you please. A couple of long travel days that some passengers may find tiring. The accommodation is generally simple and comfortable. A great way to see Ecuador's incredible contrasts and diverse cultures.

WELCOME TO THE SOUTHERN EXPOSURE TOURS EXPERIENCE

ITINERARY

DAY 1 QUITO, ARRIVAL DAY. You are free to arrive and check in at any time. That night there will be a briefing and a chance for you to meet your traveling companions and ask questions. All the information will be awaiting you at the reception regarding that night's briefing. If arriving late in the evening. Don't worry! You will be briefed in the morning and meet the group. **Welcome highlight dinner**

DAY 2, 3 & 4 QUITO, PROJECT WORK For the next 3 days we will be involved with Ecuador's local charity organizations, working with the many Ecuadorians who need help. This can range from working with children to the elderly, to educational programs. **(A MORE DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT WORK WILL BE AVAILABLE CLOSER TO THE TIME OF THE TOUR DEPARTURE)** S.E.T will make a donation to a selected charity or charities at the end of the 3 days. (B)

DAY 5, 6 & 7 TENA, AMAZON JUNGLE EXCURSION Today we descend from the Andes into the upper reaches of the Amazon basin, to our jungle lodge. From here we are able to visit a local wildlife sanctuary, observe birdlife with optional early morning nature walks and relax in this pristine environment while enjoying spectacular views. (B, L, D)

DAY 8 & 9 BAÑOS From Tena we take a bus to the town of Baños situated under the volcano "Tungaruhua". From Baños we are able to enjoy a variety of activities such as mountain biking, horse riding, and day trekking in the surrounding hillsides. After a day on the bike or in the saddle, what better way to relax than with a nice soak in one of the many thermal baths in Baños or a massage? **Highlight dinner** (B, D)

DAY 10 & 11 OTAVALO & QUITO Quite a long days travel, takes us back to Quito and then onto the famous market town of Otavalo. A beautiful area of Ecuador renowned for Indigenous markets, handicrafts and produce. A market dating back to Inca times, there is plenty to do and buy as all the villages from the surrounding areas, converge to sell there handmade crafts, goods and fabrics. After our day at the markets, we return to Quito for night 11. **Highlight dinner** (B, D)

DAY 12 DEPARTURE DAY Hasta luego y gracias amigos. Thanks and we'll see you again soon (B) **Connect to Galapagos Multi Activity Tour or Peru extension**

KEY:(B)BREAKFAST, (L)UNCH,(D)INNER. S.E.T RESERVES THE RIGHT TO RUN THE TRIP IN REVERSE

What does the tour price include..... pretty much everything!

- Bilingual guides.
- S.E.T Tour leader
- All land transport during the itinerary.
- Otavalo markets
- Mountain biking in Baños
- Full massage in Baños
- The cost of entry for all scheduled tours,
- 3 Day Jungle Excursion
- All hotel accommodations* (on a twin share basis including continental breakfast).
- Additional accommodation can be arranged at the clients' request
- 3 highlight dinners and 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.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS

Quito

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

Aeropuerto Mariscal Sucre, the international airport in Quito, is a 20-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 travelers 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
- 4 shirts/t-shirts, Fleece top
- Windproof/waterproof jacket
- Sport sandals, Hiking boots / good walking shoes
- 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.

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 a heavy parka.

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. Some of the below activities are included in the tour price.

Quito:

City tour \$12 - \$20

Mountain biking \$25 - \$45

Climbing Cotapaxi Volcano (overnight) \$190 - \$320

Banos:

Bike rental \$5

Horseback riding \$15 - \$20, Whitewater rafting \$25 - \$55

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 travelers cheques numbers and to cross them off when used. Please note all cash and travelers cheques should be in small denominations of US\$ only - no other currency is widely accepted for exchange.

TIPPING

Many restaurants charge 22% for service and IVA 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:

Adventure tours are designed for the relatively fit and healthy, with moderately hard walking through the rainforest on the Jungle excursion (but you can stay in the canoe if you wish). The altitude might have its affect and make you short of breath but we don't travel to any really high areas on this tour. We suggest that if you are worried about any of the above

you should consult your doctor and possibly obtain some altitude sickness tablets prior to leaving home. Please be aware that we are NOT allowed to administer first aid or drugs to clients for legal reasons so please be fully prepared with your own medical kit.

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 Amazon Basin (rainforest) and the mountain region (Los Andes). In the Andes (Quito, Baños,) 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 the Amazon area, November to April is the wetter season with frequent heavy rainfalls, humid with temperatures of around 25° to 30° C. From May to October is a little dryer with mostly clear skies and less humidity but very hot (30° to 45° C).

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 day 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(within NZ) or 0064 3 528 1330. ECUADOR 00593 9 165 1543

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
The information supplied in this dossier is subject to change. It is an indication only and cannot be viewed as a contractual obligation on the part of the company. For the most up to date and current dossier, visit www.southernexposuretours.co.nz