

## ECUADOR DETAILED ITINERARY

14 Nights/15 Days, September 12-26, 2020

### Trip Highlights:

- Straddle the equator in Quito
- Explore the Ruta de las Cascadas (Waterfall Route) in Baños
- Swing out at the top of the world Casa del Arbol
- Spend time at the Sumak Kawsay in Situ (SKIS), a field station and center for environmental education and research
- Visit the indigenous community of Yaku Runa
- Learn to make (and then get to eat) local foods
- Hike on Ecuador's highest volcano, Chimorazo
- Visit Omaere Ethnobiological Park
- See the whale migration at Puerto Lopez
- Explore the rich diversity of the land and waters of Isla de la Plata

### Itinerary Outline:

Day 01: Arrive Quito

Day 02: Transfer to Baños. Explore Baños

Day 03: Morning Activity Choice of a) Zip Lining (moderate active level) or b) vehicle/walking tour of 4+ waterfalls on the Ruta de Las Cascades (Waterfall Route); afternoon Casa del Arbol

Day 04: Visit the Hot Springs giving Baños its name. Transfer to Sumak visiting Mera Butterfly garden along the way.

Day 05: Environmental studies at SKIS – herpetology, cave survey, birdwatching, etc.

Day 06: Transfer to Puyo visiting caverns along the way.

Day 07: Visit indigenous community of Yaku Runa and Omaere Park.

Day 08: Transfer to Chimborazo, stopping to kayak/canoe the Puyo or Pastaza River

Day 09: Climb Chimborazo for a picnic. Visit a local Alpaca farm and community tourism project.

Day 10: Transfer to Puerto Lopez. Explore the city on your own.

Day 11: Explore Machalilla National Park, a diverse area for flora and fauna.

Day 12: Explore Isla de la Plata, including a whale watching tour, snorkeling, and time on the beach.

Day 13: Transfer to Quito.

Day 14: Ride the Teleferico (gondola) up the side of Pichincha Volcano for spectacular views. Explore Quito.

Day 15: Visit Mitad de Mundo (Latitude 00 0.000) and Transfer to Airport for flight home (must be booked to leave after 2 pm)

### Day-By-Day Program:

#### Day 01: Arrive Quito (meals on own)

Arrival Quito and be met at Airport with transfer to your hotel. Rest of the time is free to explore around the city or rest at your hotel to overcome your jetlag. Overnight hotel is walking distance to the City Museum and other points of interest.

#### Day 02: Quito to Baños (2-½ hours) B, L, snacks

After breakfast, board private transport to the adventure town of Baños. Explore the markets and nearby overlooks after you settle into our accommodations for the next 2 nights.

**Day 03: Baños** B, D

Morning activity choice of guided ziplining tour above waterfalls (moderate activity level), or guided van and walking tour to various waterfalls along the Ruta de Las Cascades (Waterfall Route) – (easy to moderate). Alternative: explore the town and overlooks on your own. Afternoon visit via open air bus (private Chiva) to Casa del Arbol and swing out at the top of the world.

**Day 04: Baños to Sumak (1 + 2 hours)** B, L, D

Before breakfast, pay a visit to the hot springs that give Baños its name. After breakfast and repacking for Sumak, we travel to Sumak with a stop along the way at the Butterfly museum in Mera. After settling into the main building at SKIS, join the scientific staff for an overview of the projects currently in progress. Optional night hike and/or relaxing around the fire.

**Day 05: Sumak Kasway in Situ** B, L, D

Morning Mindfulness and Spanish lesson, followed by several optional workshops and activities including birdwatching, herpetology seminar, coffee picking/sorting, and traditional food making. A visit to the clay spa or night light insect trapping can cap off your day in the Amazon.

**Day 06: Sumak to Puyo (1 hour + ½ hour)** B, L

After breakfast at SKIS, we will travel to Puyo in our private Chiva with a stop at some nearby caves (Las Cavernas) for lunch and exploration. We will continue travel on our Chiva, arriving to Puyo in the afternoon. Explore Puyo on your own or relax at the hotel.

**Day 07: Puyo** B, L

After breakfast, we will visit the local indigenous community of Yaku Runa. Here we will experience a Guayusa and Chicha ceremony, the preparation of traditional food and drink, traditional dances, a traditional meal, and try a blow gun if you wish before returning to our hotel in Puyo. This afternoon, explore Omaere Ethnobotanical Park and learn about the culture/history of Waorani and Shuar people, medicinal plants, and more.

**Day 08: Puyo to Chimborazo (3 hours)** B, L, D, snacks

Today we travel to Chimborazo in our private transport. In the morning we will enjoy the Puyo or Pastaza River by boat. If time allows, we will stop in at the animal rescue center to view some of the big cats and other mammals in rehabilitation. Dinner upon arrival. Chimborazo is an inactive volcano that has the claim of being the highest point on Earth! (if you want to argue, just look it up in the context of the spinning of the Earth on its axis.....). Take the time to acclimate to the high altitude in preparation for exploring tomorrow.

**Day 09: Chimborazo** B, L, D

A great day to visit Chimborazo! We will use private transportation to drive up to Refuge 1 (4800 meters). Beautiful views and hopefully a view of the top of the volcano. This is a high elevation destination, so staying hydrated, well fed, and going slowly will help. You will also want to bundle up as the temperature and wind feels like late January! During a short hike on the mountain we will have the opportunity to see Vicuñas (similar to Alpacas), foxes, a number of bird species, and many interesting plants. We learn about the Paramo ecosystem, how organisms have adapted to this harsh environment, and we'll even get to see a stand of Polylepis trees, the highest altitude forests on earth! Back at the hotel, we'll learn more about Casa Condor's community tourism, and get a tour of their alpaca farm (with the opportunity to purchase their hand-made products).

**Day 10: Chimborazo to Puerto Lopez (7 Hours)** B, L, snacks

After breakfast, we will transfer to Puerto Lopez in our private bus. We will stop for lunch along the way, arriving at our hotel in the late afternoon. You are free to relax and explore Puerto Lopez on your own. Puerto Lopez is a

small fishing village that is the headquarters of the Machalilla National Park. There is much to explore in this ecologically diverse park.

**Day 11: Puerto Lopez** B, D

Explore the town on your own. You may want to get up early and watch the morning fish market in action, where fisherman, birds of all sorts, and the locals come together. Many of the wives will cook or prepare fresh for you. Or you may wish to sleep in and then explore the shops in this seaside village. After lunch, we will go into Machalilla National Park to hike and learn about life in the Agua Blanca (White Water) community that traces back to the Manteño civilisation (Los Monteños) - last pre-Columbian civilization in modern-day Ecuador.

**Day 12: Puerto Lopez** B, L

After breakfast, we will load up for our on water and island adventure. Isla de la Plata, or Silver Island, is known as the "poor man's Galapagos" because it has just as much to offer but is easier on the wallet! We will take a whale watching trip by boat to hopefully catch the migrating whales that use a section of the park for breeding. Then, we will have time to explore the island, snorkel among the diverse sea life, and see endangered seabirds such as the blue footed boobies, albatrosses, and frigates. Time to relax and explore on your own upon return to the hotel.

**Day 13: Puerto Lopez to Quito (9 hours)** B, L, D snacks

A brief time after breakfast for any last minute pictures or shopping in PL, then board our private bus to Quito. This is a long journey and we will stop along the way for lunch. Dinner upon arrival or on the road and then settle into our hotel.

**Day 14: Quito** B, D

After a leisurely breakfast, board our private transport and head to the Teleferico, a gondola that whisk us up the side of the Pichincha Volcano to lookout Cruz Loma. It is one of the highest aerial lifts in the world. Afterwards, you'll have lunch on your own and explore the artisanal markets, museums, parks, or churches in Quito. We will meet for a final dinner all together that evening.

**Day 15: Quito to Home** B, L

Pack your bags and check out of the hotel after Breakfast.

Private bus will take us to Mitad del mundo, where we can straddle the 2 hemispheres.

After Lunch, we will transfer to the Airport for flights home. (Schedule your return flight for after 2 pm)

**Base Cost:**

\$1600 for double occupancy in hotels. (For single occupancy options, you must contact Beth Wiegandt.) Please see following for a list of what is included and exclusions in this price. \$800 deposit is due ASAP to reserve your space and no later than May 20, of which \$300 is non-refundable at any time and \$500 is refundable until July 2. Your \$800 balance is due no later than August 6. All deposits and payments count toward your total fee. NOTE: \$300 of your initial deposit is nonrefundable, and \$500 is only refundable until July 2. NO REFUNDS AFTER July 2. (Trip insurance is strongly recommended.)

**Ecuador Amazon to Coast details; included in \$ fee:**

- Beth Wiegandt is your general trip organizer and liaison who will accompany you once you arrive in Quito on September 12 and through departures on September 26.
- Scientist and ecotourism guide from SKIS, Alex Bentley, accompanying the group for the entire trip. Alex has spent time in all of our sites and has a wealth of knowledge of the culture, flora, and fauna of Ecuador. He is enthusiastic to share this knowledge with us.
- Transfers from Quito Airport to Hotel.

## **"Ecuador: Amazon to the Coast" ~ September 12-26, 2020: Detailed Itinerary**

- Hotel Accommodations double occupancy with private bath in each city nearby to points of interest/shopping for exploration. Exception being SKIS where there are dorm accommodations in the Jungle.
- Luggage storage during our time at SKIS – luggage will await us in Puyo. Duffle bags will be provided for your necessary belongings while at SKIS.
- English Speaking City Guides and driver for tours in Ecuador.
- Luggage handling for all transfers.
- All entrance fees and activity fees for listed sites/group activities on itinerary.
- All meals as listed in daily itinerary (14 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 8 dinners).
- Prior to your trip, Beth Wiegandt will provide guidance and tips for what is required for international travel to Ecuador.

### **NOT Included in your fee (exclusions):**

- Flight to and from Quito (arrive September 12; depart AFTER 2:00 pm on September 26).
- Meals not stated on the itinerary.
- Alcohol purchases with meals/other.
- Additional snacks or incidentals
- Gratuity for drivers, and guides. (suggested total tips is 6-12% of trip cost)
- Personal purchases.

### **Your Assumption of Risk and Responsibilities:**

- You must submit a completed, "Participant Authorization and Assumption of Risk Form" that states you have read this list, and are aware of the risks.
- If Camp Bethel cancels this trip, your deposit and Trip Fees will be fully refunded.
- You are responsible for all other costs not included in your Trip Fee (exclusions), and you are responsible for insuring against any other unforeseen cancellations, incidents, accidents, illness, or costs.
- You are responsible for securing travel insurance. Considerations: airline ticket cancellation refund; trip cancellation refund; airfare; baggage loss; accidents; emergency evacuation and rescue; plane crash; bus crash; theft/robbery; natural disasters; landslide; flooding; avalanche; political disturbance in the country; warfare; and other incidental travel costs.
- You are responsible for your personal health insurance during this trip. You should consider insuring for "worse-case-scenarios" of illness or injury, and you should know how your insurance would provide care in case of illness or injury while away from the United States. Considerations: injury; insect bites; rock fall; thunderstorm/lightning; "Traveler's Sickness;" individual health problem; illness or injury that requires an emergency service such as helicopter rescue and other means of transportation.
- It is your responsibility to have all proper immunizations and vaccinations, and to be physically and mentally ready prior to and during the trip. This includes consulting your physician, having a proper check up, and securing necessary medication.
- U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE BUREAU of CONSULAR AFFAIRS information for Ecuador is posted at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Ecuador.html>
- Trip Leader Beth Wiegandt will work with our guides in Ecuador to minimize risks throughout the trip.

Questions: Contact Beth Wiegandt at [YourOutdoorClassroom@gmail.com](mailto:YourOutdoorClassroom@gmail.com) or 540-556-2594