

ECUADOR DETAILED ITINERARY

14 Nights/15 Days, September 22 – October 6, 2023

Trip Highlights:

- See the whale migration at Puerto Lopez
- Explore the rich diversity of the land and waters of Isla de la Plata
- Vanilla farms, coffee farms, llama farms!
- Explore the Ruta de las Cascadas (Waterfall Route) in Banos
- Swing out at the top of the world Casa del Arbol
- Learn about current research and conservation projects at the Sumak Kawsay in Situ (SKIS), a center for environmental education and research
- Visit the indigenous community of Guayusa Runa
- Learn about and tour coastal, jungle and highland ecosystems with their distinct flora and fauna
- Bathe in natural hot springs and heated mud baths
- Learn to make (and then get to eat) local foods
- Visit and explore 3 volcanos
- Visit Omaere Ethnobiological Park, Botanical Gardens, and National Parks
- UNESCO World Heritage site: Historic District in Quito
- Straddle the hemispheres in Quito

Itinerary Outline:

Day 1: Arrive Guayaquil and transfer to Puerto Lopez

Day 2: Machalilla National Park and the fish market of Puerto Lopez

Day 3: Explore the waters and beaches of Isla de la Plata including a whale watching tour

Day 4: Travel to Chimborazo Volcano

Day 5: Explore highland ecosystem and llama farming

Day 6: Travel to and explore Banos. Waterfall sightseeing and dinner at a popular waterfall

Day 7: Swing out over the world at Tungurahua volcano. Range of activity options from ziplining to exploring Banos

Day 8: Travel to Mera and explore the river trails. Visit the Waska Community and vanilla farm and the Butterfly Museum

Day 9: Travel to SKIS, a research facility in the Amazon Jungle. Many available workshops exploring the varied life in and around the facility.

Day 10: Learn to cook (and then eat) traditional food, learn about the current research, newly identified species, and stop at the river swimming hole.

Day 11: Travel to Puyo. Explore the riverfront and tour the Ethnobotanical Park, including a medicinal plants tour.

Day 12: Learn indigenous games, be transported on the river in a traditional canoe, participate in ceremonies and dances with the Guayusa Runa community.

Day 13: Visit the Biopark and riverfront district in Tena on our way to Quito. Stop for dinner and relaxation at the hot springs in Papallaca.

Day 14: Ride up the side of Pichincha volcano, explore the National Botanical Garden and the artisan market in Quito

Day 15: Explore the Historic District and the Basilica Cathedral with possible stops for a chocolate workshop and the Natural History Museum (depending on your return flight). Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

Day-By-Day Program:

Day 1: Arrive Guayaquil. Airport pick up and travel to Puerto Lopez (3 hours). Arrive at hotel around 12:30/1:00 am (+1). Arrival at airport before 9 pm.

Hosteria Mandala.

Day 2: Arrive early morning at hotel (see day 1). Morning to relax and explore the town, beach, fish market. Lunch on your own. Afternoon tour Machalilla National Park, coastal forest and look out points. Beach Dinner.

Hosteria Mandala - B,D

Day 3: Boat to Isla de la Plata for a whale watching tour, then spend time on the island where an island tour, bird tour and snorkeling are available as you choose, or just enjoy the island and beach on your own. Island lunch. Return to hotel for relaxation and exploring town. Dinner on your own.

Hosteria Mandala – B,L

Day 4: Early morning departure: travel to Chimborazo (9 hours). Stops along the way for Lunch and points of interest. Arrive at hotel for relaxation/exploration time before dinner.

Chimborazo Lodge – B,L,D

Day 5: Visit high altitude ecosystem, alpaca farm and workshop. Lunch with indigenous community in the high country. Return to hotel to explore/relax

Chimborazo Lodge – B,L,D

Day 6: Travel to Banos (2 hours). Relax/explore Banos. Lunch on your own. Afternoon open bus tour of waterfall alley. Short hike to Pialon del Diablo with dinner at the falls. Walk back to bus and return to hotel for the evening. (headlamp/flashlight and trekking poles recommended for this trek of appx 1 KM each way on paved or gravel surface and stairs). Optional: choose to skip the hike and return early to the hotel for dinner.

El Pedron Hotel – B,D

Day 7: Chiva (open-sided) bus up to the mountain. Tour Casa del Arbol with a short hike around the base of Tungurahua volcano. Return to hotel. Afternoon choice of activities: relax and explore Banos on your own, bike ride, hike, zipline as you wish. Reconvene with the group for dinner.

El Pedron Hotel – B,L,D

Day 8: Travel to Mera (1 hour). Tour Mira Mara for the spectacular views and swings. Relax and explore the hotel grounds and river access trails with lunch on your own at the hotel, or vendors along the river. Afternoon Waska Community orientation and workshop, nature trail exploration and a trip to the butterfly museum. Dinner is a poolside grill out at the hotel. After dinner, pack overnight bag (provided) for our upcoming stay at SKIS.

Eco Arazza Hotel – B,D

Day 9: Store personal luggage and load personal overnight bag for travel to Sumak research facility (SKIS)., where we will stay the next 2 nights. Travel of about 2 hours includes a 1 hour drive and an appx 1/2KM trek over uneven ground. Introduction to SKIS workshop. See below for additional activity options.

Sumak Kawsay In Situ – B,L,D

Day 9 and 10 activities: While at SKIS, accommodations are group housing, with shared bathrooms and shower facilities. All meals are provided for our stay and a wide variety of activities/workshops are planned for you to choose. Relaxing and enjoying the center is also an option any time. Activities include: Spanish lessons, morning yoga, early morning birding, wildlife hikes, night hikes, genetics and venomous snakes workshop, culinary workshop, Regional conservation efforts, visit our clay spa and swimming hole are all possibilities.

Sumak Kawsay In Situ – B,L,D

"Ecuador: Amazon to the Coast" ~ September 22 – October 6, 2023: Detailed Itinerary

Day 11: Travel to Puyo (1-1/2 hours) with a stop at a sweets market along the way. Arrive at the hotel for relaxation/explore the riverfront. Lunch on your own. Afternoon tour Omaere Ethnobotanical Park where we learn about indigenous cultures and partake in a medicinal plant workshop. Return to the hotel to relax before dinner.
El Jardin – B,D

Day 12: Visit with the Guayusa Runa Community. Learn indigenous games, be transported by canoe along the river, visit a vanilla farm co-op and have lunch. Your evening is your choice: Stay overnight with the Guayusa Runa for dinner and the dawn Guayusa ceremony OR return to the hotel for relaxation/exploration and dinner on your own.
El Jardin – B,L. OR Guayusa Runa Community – B,L,D

Day 13: Choose to join Guayusa Runa community for their dawn ceremony if you wish (5:00 am departure from hotel) or remain at the hotel for a more leisurely morning. Travel as a group to Tena (2 hours). Explore the riverfront district, Biopark and wildlife observation decks. Lunch on your own. Travel to Papallacta (3 hours). Stop at hot springs for a dip opportunity and dinner before arriving at our hotel in Quito.
Lodging in Quito's Historic Center– B,D

Day 14: Take a morning gondola ride up the side of Pichincha volcano. Spend the day exploring the Botanical Garden and the Artisan Market or relax at the hotel with lunch on your own. Reconvene at the hotel for our last dinner together.
Lodging in Quito's Historic Center – B,D

Day 15: Pack for departure prior to breakfast. Explore historic Downtown and the Basilica Cathedral with lunch on your own. For those with early afternoon departures, leave for the airport. Those with later flights will be able to explore the Natural History Museum and a possible Artisan chocolate workshop prior to departing for the airport.
– B

Base Cost:

\$3250 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 and no later than July 15 to reserve your space, of which \$300 is non-refundable **at any time** and the remaining \$500 is non-refundable after July 22. Your balance is due no later than August 20. All deposits and payments count toward your total fee. NOTE: \$300 of your initial deposit is non-refundable at any time, and the remaining \$500 is non-refundable after July 22. NO REFUNDS AFTER JULY 22. (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 Guayaquil on September 22 and through departures from Quito on October 6.
- 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 to and from the airports in Ecuador.
- Hotel Accommodations double occupancy with private en suite 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.
- Travel tips and travel binder highlighting this trip.
- English Speaking City Guides and driver for tours in Ecuador.
- Luggage handling for all transfers.
- Private, comfortable transport for our group.

- All entrance fees and activity fees for listed sites/group activities on itinerary.
- All meals as listed in daily itinerary (14 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 11/12 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 Guayaquil (arrive September 22 between 2 pm and 9 pm)
- Departing flight from Quito (after 2:00 pm October 6)
- Meals not specifically stated on the itinerary.
- Alcohol purchases with meals/other.
- Additional snacks, drinks, or incidentals
- Gratuity for drivers, and guides.
- Personal purchases.
- Trip Insurance and Medical Insurance for out of country (both highly recommended).

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.
- When offered, activity choices are presented to appeal to a wide range of activity levels. Guides will ensure that descriptions are accurate, but you are responsible for choosing activities that match your physical capabilities while on the trip.
- 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 or 540-556-2594