

# THE BEST OF ECUADOR

## Galapagos Cruises

### ISLAND HOPPING PACKAGE

### SANTA CRUZ AND ISABELA ISLANDS

### DAILY PROGRAM 4 DAYS / 3 NIGHTS

The Galapagos Islands – Ecuador

Is for people who prefer to travel from island to island in an adventuresome spirit with the goal to visit as much as possible of the Galapagos enchanted Islands.

<a href="#">.</a>
<a href="#"><u>ITINERARY DAY BY DAY</u></a>
<a href="#">.</a>
<a href="#"><u>INFORMATION</u></a>
<a href="#">.</a>
<a href="#"><u>GALLERY</u></a>

#### **Day 1: Baltra– Puerto Ayora – Isabela Island**

Upon arrival at Baltra Airport, our guide will welcome you and transfer you to Puerto Ayora. Lunch in a local restaurant in town. After lunch, we will take a fast speed boat to Isabela, the largest island of the Archipelago composed of six volcanoes, five of which are active. A speed boat takes us to the southern part of the Archipelago. This trip takes about two and a half hours. Transfer to the hotel. In the afternoon, we will have time to walk to the Flamingo Lagoon on our own. Accommodation at the hotel in Isabela Island.  
-/L/-

#### **Day 2: Sierra Negra Volcano – Highland Farm – Tintorerias**

Our guide will meet us at the hotel and take us to one of the most beautiful volcanoes in

the world. The crater of this volcano called Sierra Negra is approximately 7 kilometers in diameter. This day we will have a trekking tour of two hours while enjoying the wonderful scenery unique in the world. Lunch in a local farm where we can also watch Isabela Giant Tortoises during the visit.

Back to Puerto Villamil town, we will visit Tintoreras Islets. Here a colony of white tip sharks can often be seen resting in a lava canal. Nearby hundreds of marine iguanas can be observed, as 'Las Tintoreras' is one of their main breeding sites. On the nearby sandy beaches, sea lions play and relax in the sun. Afterwards we will have the opportunity to snorkel. Return to the hotel and lodging. B/L/-

### **Day 3: The Tunnels of Cape Rosa – Wall of Tears – Orchilla Viewpoint – Breeding Center “Arnaldo Tupiza”**

Prepare yourself for one of the best days of your trip! After sailing for 45 minutes from Puerto Villamil, we will reach Cape Rosa on the western side of the island. This is one of the most beautiful places nature has bestowed upon humankind. Here we can walk over the connected lava tunnels situated in the blue sea waters. From the surface, we will very easily be able to see dozens of sea turtles, penguins and rays and we will also be able to do snorkeling and swimming alongside this rich marine fauna.

As we sail to and from Isabela, we hopefully see manta rays of different sizes that will make this trip different, and if it is the mating season, we will see them diving upside-down on the surface, waiting to have their pictures taken. In the afternoon, we will drive towards the “Wall of Tears”. This historical place was built by prisoners from Ecuador’s first jail. On the return, we will stop at the Orchilla Mirador. From its summit, you can see the entire coastal wetland system including Poza de los Diablos, Puerto Villamil, the beaches, the volcanoes and the islets to the south east of Isabela. It’s a great location for taking panoramic photos on clear days.

Then we will visit the Giant Tortoise Breeding Center where we will be able to observe tortoises of all ages and sizes. We will also learn about the reproduction and rearing of giant tortoises and see all the work that is being carried out to help recover the wild populations of these species. Return to the hotel and lodging. B/L/-

### **Day 4: Isabela Island – Baltra Airport**

We will have an early departure to take the speed boat back to Puerto Ayora. We will immediately take a bus across Santa Cruz Island to the Baltra Airport where we will check in for our flights to the Continent. Those who want can take an inter-island flight in a 5 to 9 capacity plane. The flight from Isabela to the Baltra airport is 30 minutes and connects to the flight to the continent (no flights on Sundays). This service is optional and is charged extra and should be reserved at least 48 hours in advance. B/-/-

B= Breakfast

L= Lunch

D= Dinner

The operator reserves the right to change the itinerary without previous notice due to weather, National Park regulations or greater force.

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# ISLAND HOPPING PACKAGE SANTA CRUZ & ISABELA ISLANDS DAILY PROGRAM 5 DAYS / 4 NIGHTS

The Galapagos Islands – Ecuador

Is for people who prefer to travel from island to island in an adventuresome spirit with the goal to visit as much as possible of the Galapagos enchanted Islands.

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-/L/-

## Day 2: Sierra Negra Volcano – Highland Farm – Tintoreras

Our guide will meet us at the hotel and take us to one of the most beautiful volcanoes in the world. The crater of this volcano called Sierra Negra is approximately 7 kilometers in diameter. This day we will have a trekking tour of two hours while enjoying the wonderful scenery unique in the world. Lunch in a local farm where we can also watch Isabela Giant Tortoises during the visit.

Back to Puerto Villamil town, we will visit Tintoreras Islets. Here a colony of white tip sharks can often be seen resting in a lava canal. Nearby hundreds of marine iguanas can be observed, as 'Las Tintoreras' is one of their main breeding sites. On the nearby

sandy beaches, sea lions play and relax in the sun. Afterwards we will have the opportunity to snorkel. Return to the hotel and lodging. B/L/-

### **Day 3: The Tunnels of Cape Rosa – Wall of Tears – Orchilla Viewpoint – Breeding Center “Arnaldo Tupiza”**

Prepare yourself for one of the best days of your trip! After sailing for 45 minutes from Puerto Villamil, we will reach Cape Rosa on the western side of the island. This is one of the most beautiful places nature has bestowed upon humankind. Here we can walk over the connected lava tunnels situated in the blue sea waters. From the surface, we will very easily be able to see dozens of sea turtles, penguins and rays and we will also be able to do snorkeling and swimming alongside this rich marine fauna.

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Then we will visit the Giant Tortoise Breeding Center where we will be able to observe tortoises of all ages and sizes. We will also learn about the reproduction and rearing of giant tortoises and see all the work that is being carried out to help recover the wild populations of these species. Return to the hotel and lodging. B/L/-

### **Day 4: Isabela Island – Baltra Airport**

We will have an early departure to take the speed boat back to Puerto Ayora. We will immediately take a bus across Santa Cruz Island to the Baltra Airport where we will check in for our flights to the Continent. Those who want can take an inter-island flight in a 5 to 9 capacity plane. The flight from Isabela to the Baltra airport is 30 minutes and connects to the flight to the continent (no flights on Sundays). This service is optional and is charged extra and should be reserved at least 48 hours in advance. B/-/-

B= Breakfast

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D= Dinner

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# ISLAND HOPPING PACKAGE SAN CRISTOBAL, SANTA CRUZ & ISABELA ISLANDS DAILY PROGRAM 8 DAYS / 7 NIGHTS

The Galapagos Islands – Ecuador

Is for people who prefer to travel from island to island in an adventuresome spirit with the goal to visit as much as possible of the Galapagos enchanted Islands.

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## Day 1: San Cristobal Island – Highlands

Upon arrival at San Cristobal Airport our local guide will receive you and begin the excursion towards the highlands of the island where we will have the opportunity to visit the Center where the giant Galapagos turtles are raised. Afterwards, we will enjoy a lunch at a nearby farm. We will then continue our excursion to the Junco Lake, the only fresh water lake, where we will observe seabirds. Just a few minutes away from this place, we will stop at a viewpoint to enjoy a beautiful view of the Puerto Baquerizo Moreno Bay. Return to the hotel and lodging. **-L/-**

## Day 2: San Cristobal – Leon Dormido – Puerto Grande or Manglecito

We will snorkel with a herd of sea lions and then continue to the famous Leon Dormido (Kicker Rock) where we can observe the high-flying booby birds and frigate birds. We will spend the best time diving, snorkeling and swimming with rays, seals, iguanas, multicolored fish, and many more. Afterwards we will go to Puerto Grande and its beautiful white sand beach to enjoy a well-deserved rest and a box lunch. **B/BL**

## Day 3: San Cristobal Island – Santa Cruz Island – Charles Darwin Station – Tortuga Bay Beach

We will have an early morning trip to Santa Cruz Island, one of the most important islands in the Archipelago (because this is where most of the hotels and tourist accommodations are located). After arrival, we will visit the important Charles Darwin Research Station where we can observe one of the largest Galapagos tortoises and land iguanas breeding centers. The local guide will give us a detailed explanation on the islands evolution. We will have lunch in the village. In the afternoon, we will take a long but easy walk to one of the most beautiful white sand beaches of the islands, Tortuga Bay Beach. Return to the hotel and lodging. **B/L/-**

#### **Day 4: Santa Cruz Island – Highlands – Garrapatero Beach**

We will take a hike to the highlands of the island and visit the Primicias Ranch where we will be bushwalking and looking for giant Galapagos tortoises. After a walk, we will visit the lava tunnels and have lunch in a typical restaurant. We will continue down to Garrapatero Beach — one of the most beautiful white sand beaches. The sea here is turquoise and calm. You can go snorkel and watch flamingos or other sea birds. Return to the hotel and lodging. **B/L/-**

#### **Day 5: Santa Cruz Island – Bay Tour – Isabela Island**

In the morning, we will take a tour around the bay. We will visit Punta Estrada, the Germans' Beach, Channels of Love and the Grietas. During this trip, you will be able to observe seabirds and sea lions and you can surface dive. Lunch in Puerto Ayora. In the afternoon, a speed boat will take us to Isabela Island, one of the most beautiful islands in the Archipelago.

After a cruise of 2 ½ hours we will reach this corner of paradise where a local transfer will take us to the hotel and lodging. **B/L/-**

#### **Day 6: Sierra Negra Volcano – Campo Duro Farm – Tintoreras**

Our guide will meet you at the hotel and take you to one of the most beautiful volcanoes in the world, Sierra Negra. Its crater is approximately 7 kilometers wide. We will take a 4h trekking tour to enjoy this wonderful and unique scenery.

Lunch in a local farm called Campo Duro where we will also watch Isabela Giant Tortoises. Back to Puerto Villamil town, we will visit Tintoreras Islets. Herds of white tip sharks can often be seen here, resting around the lava canals. You can also observe hundreds of marine iguanas, as “Las Tintoreras” are one of their main breeding sites. On the nearby sandy beaches, sea lions play and relax in the sun. Afterwards we will have an opportunity to snorkel. Return to the hotel and lodging. **B/L**

#### **Day 7: The Tunnels of Cape Rosa- Wall of Tears – Orchilla Viewpoint – Breeding Center “Arnaldo Tupiza” – Flamingo lagoon**

Prepare yourself for one of the best days of this trip! After sailing for 45 minutes from Puerto Villamil, we will reach Cape Rosa on the western side of the island. This is one of the most beautiful and amazing places nature has bestowed upon humankind. Here we can walk over the connected lava tunnels surrounded by the crystal sea waters. From the surface, you will be able to see dozens of sea turtles, penguins and rays. You can also snorkel or simply swim along this rich marine fauna as we sail to and from Isabela, we might be able to see manta rays of different sizes, a truly unique

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experience. And if it is their mating season, we will watch them floating upside-down on the surface, waiting to have their pictures taken. In the afternoon, we will drive towards the “Wall of Tears”. This historical place was built by the prisoners of the Ecuador’s first jail. On our way, back we will stop at the Orchilla viewpoint. From the top, you can see the entire coastal wetland system including Poza de los Diablos, Puerto Villamil, the beaches, the volcanoes and the islets to the south east of Isabela. It is a great location for panoramic photos on clear days.

We will visit the Giant Tortoise Breeding Center where you will be able to observe tortoises of all ages and sizes. We will also learn about the breeding and farming of giant tortoises and see all the work that is being done to help recover the wild populations of these species. Then, we will take a walk around the flamingo lagoon. Return to the hotel and lodging. **BL/-**

### **Day 8: Isabela Island- Santa Cruz Island- Baltra- Quito / Guayaquil**

We are going to depart early to take a speed boat back to Puerto Ayora. After getting there we will take a bus to the Baltra Airport where we will check-in for our flights back to the Continent. You can also take an inter-island flight in a plane with a capacity of 5 to 9 passengers. The flight from Isabela to the Baltra Airport takes 30 minutes and connects to the flight to the continent (no flights on Sundays). This service is optional; it is charged extra and should be booked at least 48 hours in advance. **B/-/-**

- ✓ **B=** Breakfast
- ✓ **L=** Lunch
- ✓ **D=** Dinner



## ANDES

### HACIENDAS PACKAGES

#### HISTORY & HARMONY PACKAGE – 3 DAYS / 2 NIGHTS



#### **DAY 1: Chagras Riding & Working Skills**

Departing to the south of Quito, we will travel for about one hour until we descend into the valley of Machachi, a green territory mainly covered by dairy farms, that we will arrive at one of the centennial Hacienda where we will experience the spirit of the Andean Haciendas and their daily works. Visit the grounds and get suited for horseback riding along old cobblestone roads and trails leading to a great viewpoint of La Viudita which overlooks the entire valley. Along the way, there will be plentiful breathtaking scenes and great photo opportunities. Return to the Hacienda house and freshen up to enjoy a typical lunch hosted by the Hacienda owner.

After lunch, get ready for an exciting demonstration by the Chagras, on their riding and working skills. After that, we will spend a nice time in a cozy Andean house. Dinner will be hosted by owners and a recovering night in the countryside will give you time to take in all you have experienced today. (-/L/D)

#### **DAY 2: Horseback riding Excursion**

After a great breakfast, we will start our day, on the flank of the Cotopaxi National Park, in a close-by Hacienda. We all get suited with riding chaps, ponchos, and hats so we will be ready for a lovely two hours horseback excursion, in this case on the extensive Andean meadows covered by natural pasture on the foothills of Rumiñahui volcano. Open country with superb panoramic scenes and opportunities to see various birds and plants.

Return to the Hacienda house to enjoy a nutritious lunch, the Andean way.

In the afternoon, you have time to explore the place or take a rest, followed by a home-cooked dinner and overnight in our selected hacienda. (B/L/D)

### **DAY 3: Local Market.**

Today we will devote our day to a great cultural connection with the local daily life. After a good breakfast, we depart by car to the city of Latacunga where we will visit a local market loaded with color, faces, and a great variety of local fruits and vegetables. This is a fantastic experience to learn about local ways, products and customs. After a pleasant walk in the market, we depart to a nearby village where we will learn about the interesting crafting skills of locals. Naïve ceramics and colorful paintings are typical here so we will visit workshops where these colorful pieces are made and will have the unique chance to buy from the actual makers.

After this visit, we depart north in order to reach one Centennial Hacienda, a three hundred-year-old state mansion converted on hotel and restaurant where we will have our lunch. The grounds of the hacienda are loaded on history and traditions so a visit is almost mandatory. After knowing this historical mansion, we depart back to Quito to stop in another old charming property. Here we will drink a traditional cup of coffee and home baked bread, from there; we do our last drive to reach your hotel in the city of Quito. (B/L/- )

# ADVENTURE TRAIN PACKAGE

## Four days – Three nights programs



### **DAY 1: Andean Train, Zip Lines & Horseback riding**

Today we will have an exciting experience with the Andean train, departing from the south of Quito, into the valley and village of Machachi. The newly restored Andean Train operates from Thursday to Sunday. On other days, we will do this trip by car.

In case we will do not have the train, our journey will continue driving to reach a Hacienda on the high course of Pita River, once there we will be suited with harnesses and helmets, for an exciting experience on the zip lines. (-/L/D)

After this experience, we will travel to a Hacienda in the Cotopaxi National Park for a good Andean lunch. In the afternoon, we will have a light horseback riding excursion on the open meadows of Rumiñahui volcano. It is also a great opportunity to take great pictures and watch some birds and flora of the region.

### **DAY 2: Local Market, Latacunga & “The Route of the Waterfalls”**

After breakfast, we start our drive south and over the western flank of Cotopaxi volcano, on the way to the city of Latacunga where we shall stop to visit the local market loaded on color, people, and exotic fruits and vegetables.

Following this market experience, we will drive south to reach the village of Baños where we shall enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. The village itself shows quite nice things to see and visit. In the afternoon, we will drive along the Pastaza River Canyon, known as “The Route of the Waterfalls”.

Return to our route to a Centennial Hacienda close to Baños for our check-in and enjoy our dinner. Overnight.(B/L/D)

### **DAY 3: Nature hike**

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After a nutritious Andean breakfast, we depart on our morning nature hike into a cloud forest loaded with exotic plants and colorful birds. Return to Hacienda house for lunch and get ready to depart back to Quito by an alternative way, a scenic backcountry drive until the valley of Latacunga and on to another Hacienda in the foothills of Cotopaxi Volcano. Check-in and home-hosted dinner. After dinner, enjoy the cozy fireplace. Overnight.(B/L/D)

#### **DAY 4: Valley of Machachi**

After breakfast, we start our drive north to the Inter-Andean valleys. A backcountry drive will take us to the foothills of the snow-capped Illinizas across extensive farmlands, reaching the valley of Machachi. A great hacienda lunch will be served in the Hacienda.

Afternoon, take a light visit to the hacienda grounds and get ready to continue for our last drive back to Quito.

# ARTS CRAFTS TRADITIONS PACKAGE

## Four days – Three nights programs



### **DAY 1: Traditional Cuisine & Otavalo Market**

Departing from Quito north along the Pan-American Highway, we will go to the small village of Calderon to learn about the tradition of bread dough figures by visiting a workshop.

We continue north to the valley of Guayllabamba and to the south part of the valley of Cayambe where the Equator line meets the highway. We have an optional visit where we will meet representatives of this independent project.

From here we continue to the village of Cayambe, to search for a local delicacy, the famous “bizcochos” biscuits made by locals. Try this local snack along with fresh cheese.

We continue our trip to Imbabura, the “Lakes Province” and we will make a great photo stop at Miralago viewpoint. A few minutes further, we will reach a close by Hacienda, to check in and enjoy a fantastic lunch of the well-known cuisine of this property. In the afternoon, we will depart to visit Otavalo and its market, which is famous for its variety of goods and great shopping.

After the market, we will return to the Hacienda, so we can enjoy the gardens and surroundings, and have a delicious dinner. Overnight. (-/L/D)

### **DAY 2: Weavers, yagchas & Afro Ecuadorian Village**

Today we will take advantage of the diversity of the region, so after a good breakfast, we depart north along the side of San Pablo Lake to reach the weavers’ community of

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Peguche where almost every house has looms. We will visit a local workshop and will learn about their techniques as well as an Andean wind musical instrument workshop.

We will continue north along several villages such as Iluman, known for the felt hat making and the local healers or “yagchas” to reach San Antonio de Ibarra, a village devoted to perhaps the best woodcarving work in Ecuador. There you can visit a workshop by a local artist. Only a few minutes north, we will reach a Hacienda, a former Jesuit property converted into a comfortable resort. Check-in and lunch. In the afternoon, we will head north for an unexpected community-the Afro Ecuadorian village of Santa Catalina de Salinas, where we will learn about the history and traditions. On the way back, we stop at the city of Ibarra to try the local handmade fruit ice cream.

Upon arrival, some time to relax and enjoy a nice dinner as well as good sleep. (B/L/D)

### **DAY 3: Andean Condor Rescue Center**

After breakfast, we depart along the old cobblestoned road south to another colonial Hacienda. As we arrive, we shall check in and get ready for a twenty-minute walk in the Hacienda’s grounds across green pasture fields to their Andean Condor Rescue Center where we will have superb chances for great photos of these majestic birds as well as to learn about their ordeal to survive on this part of the Andes.

Return to Hacienda house and enjoy some time to visit this unique house followed by a great dinner and a comforting night’s rest. (B/L/D)

### **DAY 4: Roses Plantation & Valley of Cayambe**

After a good breakfast, we will depart following the same old route south to reach the Valley of Cayambe, considered to be the roses capital of Ecuador, where we will visit an important roses plantation to learn more about this industry which has become the prettiest export of the country.

After this visit, we continue to a traditional restaurant, where we will enjoy a nice lunch. In the afternoon, return to Quito. (B/L/-)

# NORTH ADVENTURE PACKAGE

## Four days—Three nights programs



### **DAY 1: Quitsato & Horseback Riding**

Departing from Quito north on the Pan-American Highway we will cross the dry valley of Guayllabamba and from there we shall reach the fertile valley of Cayambe; our first stop will be where the road crosses the Equator and will visit the site of Quitsato, an independent project which proposes an innovative view of the Equator. From this point, we shall continue on to the province of Imbabura to reach a Hacienda located in the surroundings of San Pablo Lake. After checking in, we visit a neighboring rose plantation and learn about this booming industry. Return to Hacienda for lunch.

After a short rest, we will have the option of a light horseback ride in this scenic countryside. Return to the hacienda for dinner and a good and cozy fireplace. Overnight. (-/L/D)

### **DAY 2: Imbabura Volcano & Handicrafts Workshop**

After a good breakfast, we start our half-day hike towards the eastern flank of Imbabura volcano across fertile farmlands on old cobblestoned roads and different trails to reach the pass of the valley of Angochahua at 10,000 feet (ca. 3 km) above sea level. Box lunch will be enjoyed along the way. After this, we will descend into the valley to reach the community of Zuleta, well known for its hand embroidery. Visit a local workshop and learn about this crafting tradition.

From there, we drive the last part of our excursion to the city of Ibarra to the Hacienda to check-in. After a good rest and freshen up, enjoy your dinner. Overnight. (B/L/D)

### **DAY 3: Train & Afro Ecuadorian Village**

After breakfast, we drive to the local train station to take a ride on this newly restored railway down the village of Santa Catalina de Salinas, a totally unexpected surprise.

The train ride itself follows the canyon of the Ambi River, crossing on high bridges and tunnels, providing a very dramatic scene. After one and a half hours, we reach the Afro-Ecuadorian community of Santa Catalina de Salinas, where we will learn about the history and traditions of these people. We will enjoy our lunch at a community restaurant. After lunch, we return to Ibarra along a very panoramic drive. A short visit to the old art of the city will show us a lovely colonial-looking town with ample plazas and cobblestoned streets bursting with commercial activity and some historical places.

We will continue to Hacienda overnight. (B/L/D)

### **DAY 4: Cuicocha Crater Lake**

After a good breakfast, we depart south through the village of Cotacachi to the Cuicocha Crater Lake for a great nature five-hour hike following the trail that circles this lake. A good variety of native plants and birds can be seen on this hike, which reaches the Andean tree line to bring you into the open grasslands of the paramo. Of course, all along, the magnificent scenery of the nearby mountains and valleys will show you the beauty of the Andes in its great splendor. Box lunch will be provided and enjoyed along the way.

After this nice hike, we will drive back to Cotacachi for a short stop in this village, known for its great leather craft with superb bargains on these goods. In the afternoon, drive back to Quito. (B/L/-)



# SOFT NORTH ADVENTURE PACKAGE

## Four days – Three nights program



### **DAY 1 Quitsato & Imbabura**

Departing from Quito to the north on the Pan-American highway we will cross the dry valley of Guayllabamba and from there we shall reach the fertile valley of Cayambe. Our first stop will be where the road crosses the Equator and we will visit the site of Quitsato, an independent project which proposes an innovative view of the Equator. From this point, we shall continue on to the province of Imbabura to reach a colonial Hacienda, located on the surroundings of San Pablo Lake. After checking in we will visit a neighboring rose plantation and learn about this blooming industry. Return to Hacienda for lunch. After a short rest we will have the option of a light horseback ride on this scenic countryside. Return to hacienda for dinner and a good and cozy fireplace. Overnight stay. (-/L/D)

### **DAY 2 Imbabura volcano & Community of Zuleta**

After a good breakfast, we start our half-day hike towards the eastern flank of Imbabura volcano across fertile farmlands on old cobblestoned roads and different trails to reach the pass of the valley of Angochahua at 10,000 feet above sea level. Box lunch will be provided along the way. After the pass, we descend into the valley to reach the community of Zuleta, well known for its hand embroidery. Visit a local workshop and learn about this crafting tradition.

Afterwards, we will continue to a nearby Hacienda overnight. (B/L/D)

### **DAY 3 Project of Condor Huasi**

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Today we will have the opportunity to see the biggest living bird on Earth. The Andean Condor. Condor Huasi project has been created to accomplish the conditional reintroduction of captive Andean condors of Ecuador into the wild. It also includes an educational goal of conserving the páramo (high-altitude grasslands) and this is led by the communities living in the area. The Condor Huasi is located in the property of Hacienda Zuleta, parish of Angochagua, county of Ibarra, province of Imbabura.

Back to the hacienda for lunch. Free afternoon to walk and discover the surroundings of the hacienda with our guide.

Dinner and accommodation at Hacienda. (B/L/D)

#### **DAY 4 Otavalo Market & Traditional Cuisine**

Today, our main interests will be gastronomy and an Indian marketplace full of handicrafts. Early in the morning, we will visit Otavalo a famous Indian market where vendors proudly offer a stunning variety of weaving – such as the famous ponchos – among other textiles like roofs, mittens, and scarfs.

The market is often compared to a rainbow due to the colors the textile exhibits. Our guide will take us across the market to get our supplies for lunch. Back to the Hacienda where our hosts will wait for us for a cooking lesson and later, a delicious Andean typical meal.

## **FOLKLORE & ADVENTURE PACKAGE**

### **Five days – Four nights program**



#### **DAY 1 Horseback Riding & Chagras**

Departing to the south for about one hour from Quito, we descend into the valley of Machachi, a green territory mainly covered by dairy farms until a detour to access a Hacienda, which is a great way to get introduced to the spirit of the Andean Haciendas and their daily works. Visit the grounds and get suited for an approximately two hours horseback ride along old cobblestone roads and trails leading to a great viewpoint of La Viudita which overlooks the entire valley. Along the way, we can appreciate panoramic views of the Andes. Return to the Hacienda house and freshen up to enjoy a typical lunch hosted by the Hacienda's owner.

After lunch, get ready for an exciting demonstration by the Chagras, on their riding and working skills.

## **DAY 2 Local Market in Latacunga & Avenue of the Volcanoes**

After a good breakfast we depart south again along the Pan-American highway to reach the City of Latacunga and make a short visit to a nearby Hacienda, a unique colonial property built on the remains of an Inca facility from there we continue to visit one of the rose plantations that one can find in the region.

After this visit, we continue south to the city of Latacunga and visit a local market with colorful scenes of local people and varied fruits and vegetables. From here and only a few minutes away we will enjoy a home-hosted lunch at an artisan's home where we will learn about their fascinating craft and work.

After lunch we will continue south along the "Avenue of the Volcanoes" on our way to another colonial Hacienda.

Enjoy a typical Andean hacienda dinner and a restful night's sleep. (B/L/D)

## **DAY 3 Baños, Route of the Waterfalls & Pastaza River Canyon**

Today after a good breakfast we will explore the region of Baños, a well-known and picturesque village that is located on the base of Tungurahua volcano.

Visit the village and enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. Later we can take an exciting drive down along the Pastaza River Canyon also called the "Route of the Waterfalls".

After this varied scenery, we drive back to the Hacienda for dinner and overnight. (B/L/D)

## **DAY 4 Chimborazo & Ceramic workshop**

After breakfast we depart back to the heart of the Andean mountains to circle the base of Mount Chimborazo, the highest in the Ecuadorian Andes (6310 maslmeters / 20702

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feet) with spectacular views and a good opportunity to see vicuñas, grazing free on these extensive gravel plains.

A picnic lunch will be catered by the Hacienda. Afterward, we will return to the north towards the province of Cotopaxi, with a stop at a local naive ceramic workshop. Our trip will continue to a centennial hacienda, with a three hundred year mansion converted into a hotel some years ago.

Enjoy the grounds of this magnificent state house along with a nice dinner. Overnight.  
(B/L/D)

### **DAY 5 Horseback Riding Excursion**

After breakfast, we depart to Cotopaxi National Park to reach the Hacienda which has been dedicated to raising cattle for milk and meat production. Upon our arrival we will get suited with riding chaps, ponchos and good hats. We will have a great horseback riding excursion on the extensive meadows of Rumiñahui (A mountain of the Andes of Ecuador).

Return to the Hacienda for lunch.

After lunch, we will start our journey back to Quito with a stop at another old Hacienda that is almost absorbed by the growing city. Here we will have a traditional cup of coffee and home baked bread, from here; we will do our last drive to reach your hotel in downtown Quito. (B/L/-)

(B/L/-)

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