

## **Adventures Incorporated Itinerary**

### **Monday: - Quito, Ecuador**

Depart to Quito, the capital of Ecuador. Upon arrival, transfer from the airport to the hotel.

Quito is located at 2.800 meters above sea level and fits snugly in an elongated valley on the foothills of the Pichincha Volcano. Because of the magnificent blend of Spanish, Flemish, Moorish and pre-Columbian architecture, its churches, monasteries, narrow streets, rock and adobe buildings and Spanish patios, it has been declared by Unesco "Patrimony of Mankind" and is known as the "Convent of America".

Overnight at Patio Andaluz hotel or similar.

### **Tuesday: Enjoy the life of the Ecuador's Amazon (BLD)**

Today you will be picked up from your hotel at 7:00 am. After a short drive (1.5 hours) you will take a dip in the volcanically heated mineral waters of Termas de Papallacta resort & Spa. After a soak it's time to continue toward the Amazonia. You'll notice the dramatic temperature and vegetation changes as we descend further into the steamy Amazon basin through Quichua villages and tropical rainforest to a lodge overlooking the majestic Napo River. It'll take no effort at all to settle in and wind down in the comfortably appointed bungalows built using traditional architecture in harmony with the surrounding rainforest. In the afternoon a jungle walking is waiting for you. Overnight at Cotococha Lodge. (BLD)

### **Wednesday: Deep in the Amazonia (BLD)**

You'll start today's experiences by boarding a motorized canoe, the preferred mode of transport to navigate the extensive waterways of the Napo river and its tributaries. We motor down myriad channels until we reach the Arajuno River. Here you'll explore the Animal Rescue Center "AmazOOnico" which is dedicated to the rescue of wild animals. You'll see a great variety of species including toucans, parrots, monkeys, jaguars and capybaras. After a morning of discovery we'll prepare you a scrumptious picnic-style lunch by the river. We take time to swim in the refreshing river waters or simply relax in the peaceful surroundings.

On the way back to the lodge we make a short stop in one of the many local indigenous

communities along the Napo river. One of the native Quichua families will offer you an insight to their daily lives demonstrating contemporary and traditional activities like gold panning, pottery techniques, the making of the typical drink "chicha" made from yuca, and blowpipe hunting. After this fascinating cultural exchange with the Quichuas, you'll continue your way back to the lodge following a forest path. Upon arrival, a delicious snack will be awaiting us. That night after

dinner you're invited to join us for our usual cozy gathering around the fireplace.

Overnight

at Cotococha Lodge. (BLD)

#### **Thursday: Cotococha / Riobamba (BL)**

Another day of exploration begins this morning with a hike in the jungle. After another delicious lunch back at the lodge you will drive to Riobamba via Puyo to the wonderful Hacienda Abraspungo, which is located at 2,754 meters above sea level and is surrounded by the magnificence of the Ecuadorian Andes. It is named after a glacial valley that is situated between the Chimborazo Volcano and Carihuairazo, in the exact centre of Ecuador. (BL)

#### **Friday: Devil's Nose railway train / Guayaquil (B)**

After an early breakfast, transfer to the station to board the Devil's Nose train which is a favorite of many tourists, who often travel on the roof of the train. It's roughly a four or five-hour ride, depending on whether you get off at the town of Alausi or at Sibambe. The ride takes you through every climate zone, starting in the cool high lands, going through the cloud forest, and ending in the hot coastal jungle. The train remarkably descends caboose first and mounts the cliffs by means of switchbacks with thrilling twists and turns, offering spectacular views of Chimborazo and a thrilling descent down the Devil's Nose, a 45-degree gradient. At the end of the ride you will be transferred, by road, to La Eterna Primavera de Huigra town for a relaxing lunch.

The trip continues south along the old train route to Guayaquil, enjoying amazing countryside from Andean landscapes to the coast. Overnight at Hotel Hampton Inn in Guayaquil. (B)

#### **Saturday: Traverse through La Ruta del Sol (B)**

Today you will start exploring the South Coast, which has many attractions, what it does best is sun and surf. Watch the theatrics of the humpback whales off Isla de las Plata (during June to October), take in the surfer scene at Montañita, which is the combination of a perfect right wave, golden sand and tropical vegetation have made this place a truly paradisiacal beach from long time ago. A relaxing night will be expecting you at Mantarraya lodge that is located at the Machalilla National Park in the Province of Manabi, 15 minutes drive from Puerto Lopez with a beautiful Mediterranean style, it's a perfect place to rest and visit the Machalilla National Park, which is one of the most outstanding examples of Tropical Dry Forest that exists on the Ecuadorian central coast. Overnight at Mantarraya lodge (B)

#### **Sunday: La Isla de La Plata (BL)**

After a delicious breakfast at your hotel, today you will take a two-hour boat ride to La Isla de La Plata. On this route, during the navigation you have a high possibility of viewing dolphins and whales.

The locals tell that the name DE LA PLATA ISLAND (Silver Island), was given to the Island because the pirate Francis Drake at the end of the XIV century, took treasures from the Spanish ships and hid them on this island. According to the legend, much of this treasure was never claimed and is still hidden there.

De la Plata Island is a favorite spot for scuba-diving this time of the year, because even though the temperatures are at a cool 60 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit, the sea temperature is higher than 68 °F. The Island is surrounded by Coral Reefs so the marine life is exciting and plentiful. It is physically and biologically very similar to the Galapagos, as several books have described it. It is the only place in the world, besides the Galapagos, where Waved Albatrosses nest (April to November). Other birds also nest here, such as the red-billed tropic bird and the largest colony of frigate birds. In addition, the waters around the island are a playground for more than eleven different species of marine mammals, including a small colony of sea lions.

From June to October, Humpback Whales from Antarctica congregate here to bear their young and court, with spectacular displays of breaching and spy-hopping, while competing for the females' attention. Several species of resident porpoises can be observed year around.

The coral reef around the Island and on the adjacent coast is the only coral reef off mainland Ecuador. This coral reef can be explored with scuba or snorkel gear. A spectacular biodiversity of underwater marine life exists because the Humboldt Current flowing from the south meets the northbound warm El Niño current. Big game fishing is great too, with world records for marlins and other coastal species caught here.

Depending on your fitness and interest, you could do a longer or more difficult hike, or an easier and more flexible sightseeing journey. Overnight at Mantarraya lodge (BL)

#### **Monday: Mantarraya lodge – Canoa (B)**

After your breakfast you will drive to enjoy this pristine beach called Canoa that is a very peaceful and relaxed fishing town, with an 800m wide isolated beach, with natural caves at the cliff base north along the beach. This beach is becoming lately a meeting place for hang gliders, surfers and windsurfers.

#### **Tuesday: Canoa – Rio Verde (B)**

Early in the morning you will continue exploring La Ruta del Sol towards Rio Verde that is a very small hidden town in the Esmeraldas province. You will have time to share with locals and visit an Archeological local museum that shows a collection of over 5,000 archeological pieces from La Tolita culture dating from 1800 years old. You will also have time to enjoying an incredible virgin beach. Overnight at Brisas del Oceano hostería.

#### **Wednesday: Rio Verde – Otavalo – Quito (B)**

Today you will enjoy a tour through the most beautiful and lonely places in the province of Esmeraldas, it's a perfect and unique combination with its rivers, people and culture. Suddenly, you will find a totally different landscape in the mountains to reach Imbabura province named The Lake's province. Stopping in Otavalo, the largest traditional market in South America, Pick up some handicrafts, get some great photos and finally, as your active exploration of

Ecuador comes to a close, you'll drive back to Quito. Overnight at Patio Andaluz hotel or similar.

**Thursday: Transfer out (B)**

This day you'll fly home. Or perhaps continue discovering the wonders of Ecuador with an optional extension to visit the unique Galapagos Islands!

B - breakfast, L - lunch, D - dinner

Price includes: professional English-speaking guides, all transport from airport pick-up to airport drop-off, twin share accommodation, meals as stated, excursions, entry fees.

Not included: tips, personal travel insurance, incidental expenses.