

# ***ECUADOR, AMAZON & GALAPAGOS ISLANDS***



**MY TRAVEL EXPERIENCE**

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## **Ecuador & Galapagos Islands Tour with Flights**

**Duration:** 13 days

**Stay:** 11 nights hotels

**Travel style:** Partially-escorted tour with flights from Australia

**Booking code:** ECGG13M

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# 13 Days Ecuador, Amazon & Galapagos with Flights

## About the holiday

Set your 'wow' dial to high with this stunning trip that includes historic cities, traditional markets, the world's largest ecosystem and extraordinary volcanic islands!

Fly to Ecuador and explore the colonial city of Quito. Stand at the Middle of the World Monument and wander through a traditional market with weird and wonderful items for sale. Take a canoe ride into the Amazon rainforest and hike in a private nature reserve.

Transfer by boat to the Galapagos Islands, where you'll have 3 nights on Santa Cruz Island in an eco-friendly seaside resort hotel. This will be your base for exploring the amazing archipelago, where other residents include the Giant Tortoise. Learn about the rich sea life, go snorkelling in calm coves and see the unique wildlife and flora all around you.

This journey through Ecuador will leave you with indelible memories of the country's rich culture and extraordinary natural wonders!

## Why you'll love this tour...

- Visit Colonial Quito and walk through its cobblestone streets
- Stand at the Middle of the World Monument, situated at latitude 0°
- Browse for local goods at the traditional Otavalo Market
- Stay in the Amazon region, the world's largest ecosystem
- Embark on a journey to the beginning of time in the Galapagos Archipelago of volcanic islands
- Tour the Charles Darwin Research Centre to learn about their preservation goals
- Explore areas with blue-footed boobies, frigate birds and sea lions

## Travel dates

**2024 & 2025** - Monthly departures, contact us for available dates

*Departures are subject to confirmation at time of booking and price may vary depending on your travel date.*

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### Tour Package Includes:

- **Flights** - Return economy airfares from Melbourne, Sydney & Brisbane to Ecuador
  - Airline taxes & fuel surcharges
  - All intra-flights: Quito-Baltra & Baltra-Guayaquil
- 11 nights accommodation
  - 2 nights Quito
  - 1 night Otavalo
  - 1 night Papallacta
  - 2 nights Punta Ahuano (Amazon)
  - 1 night Baños or Patate
  - 3 nights Galapagos Islands
  - 1 night Guayaquil
- Hotel taxes, fees & service charges
- Hotel portorage
- 27 meals: 11 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 9 dinners
- Services of English-speaking tour manager (Days 2-8)
- Services of English-speaking naturalist guides in the Galapagos (Days 9-12)
- Entrance fees per itinerary
- Galapagos National Park fee of \$100
- Galapagos Transit Control Card fee of \$20

### Package excludes:

Airport transfers - let us know if you'd like to pre-book transfers

Meals & sightseeing not specified in the inclusions or itinerary

Optional tours & activities

Personal items, such as drinks, snacks, laundry, WiFi etc.

Gratuities for guides, representatives & drivers

Travel insurance is essential - please request a quote

Prices are based on twin share, please contact us for single rates

*Package is subject to confirmation by hotels, tour company & local operators.*

*Booking conditions & cancellation fees apply.*

## Itinerary:

### **DAY 1, Thursday - Fly from Australia to Ecuador**

### **DAY 2, Friday - Arrive Ecuador**

Depart for Ecuador. Arrive in Quito, capital of Ecuador, founded in the 16th century on the ruins of an Inca city; catch a taxi to your hotel or ask your travel designer about pre-booking a transfer. The Quito airport is approximately an hour drive from the city. Balance of the day is at leisure to get acquainted with this lively city's priceless historical treasures of art and architecture. Tonight, enjoy your first taste of Ecuadorian food at one of the city's world-class restaurants and cafes

**Overnight:** Quito ▲

### **DAY 3, Saturday - Quito City Tour & Visit to the Middle of the World**

After a morning orientation meeting, continue to the colonial section of Quito. Walk through the narrow cobblestone streets and feel the charm of 16th century Quito. See the Independence Plaza, the Cathedral, Presidential Palace, and the Archbishop's Palace. Then, visit La Compañía de Jesus Church, with its gilded interior, or the Church and Monastery of San Francisco, with its grand atrium. Afterward, visit the Middle of the World Monument, located at a latitude of 0°, and stand with one foot in the Northern and one in the Southern Hemisphere. Continue to Otavalo for dinner and overnight. The town is located in the highlands of the Andes Mountains at an elevation of 8,441 feet

**Overnight:** Otavalo

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

### **DAY 4, Sunday - Otavalo Market, Transfer to Papallacta**

This morning visit Peguche, known for its picturesque waterfall. Then, tour the market in Otavalo, one of the largest in South America, run by the local Otavaleños. Here, enjoy the lively atmosphere and browse the various stalls for traditional goods, such as handwoven cloth, rugs, jewellery and more. This afternoon, transfer to Papallacta located in the Andes Mountains. The remainder of the day is at leisure, or join the *optional* tour to Papallacta's spas and hot springs, for which it is famous

**Optional:** Termas de Papallacta Spa Package (PM)

**Overnight:** Papallacta

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

### **DAY 5, Monday - Transfer to Amazon Resort**

After breakfast, transfer by bus to La Punta Ahuano on the Napo River where you will board a canoe that will take you to your Amazon lodge\*. Take in the serenity that the lodge has to offer and prepare to be amazed by both the wildlife and the culture inherent to the Amazon. In the afternoon, visit Ahuano and a local Quechua community interpretation centre to learn about their way of life firsthand before returning to the hotel

*\*Upon arrival the lodge is approximately a 5-10 minute walk uphill from where passengers will exit the canoe. Passengers are required to transport their own carry on luggage*

**Overnight:** Amazon

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **DAY 6, Tuesday - Hike in a Private Nature Reserve**

After a morning canoe ride, hike in the Misicocha Private Nature Reserve for approximately two hours while beholding the flora and fauna up-close. Keep an eye out for the innumerable species of tropical plants and insects of the Amazon rainforest, the world's largest ecosystem. Cross suspended bridges and fly through the jungle on a short zip line basket ride. At the end of the hike, take a rafting trip on a traditional balsa log raft\*. Balance of the day is at leisure or, choose to participate in one of the *optional* tours, including the Butterfly Farm & Balsa Wood Carving Demonstration, Cacao Farm & AmaZOOnico Rescue Center or Canopy Adventure Park

*\*This is an active hike and sections of the path include steps. Also, those who participate in the rafting trip will need to step through the water to reach the raft and will get wet during the ride*

**Optional:** Butterfly Farm & Balsa Wood Demonstration

**Optional:** Cacao Farm & AmaZOOnico Rescue

**Optional:** Canopy Adventure Park

**Overnight:** Amazon

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **DAY 7, Wednesday - El Pailon del Diablo & Baños**

This morning, board a canoe for the short trip back to La Punta Ahuano, continuing by coach to Patate. Stop along the way to visit the powerful El Pailon del Diablo or "The Devil's Cauldron", one of Ecuador's most beautiful waterfalls. Drive to Baños, an idyllic little town known for its hot thermal baths and the Tungurahua Volcano. Eat lunch at a local restaurant. In the late afternoon, check into your hotel in the Valley of Patate. Balance of the day is at leisure

*\*It is an active hike to and from El Pailon del Diablo waterfall*

**Overnight:** Patate

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **DAY 8, Thursday - Visit to a Rose Plantation**

Today, take a tour of a rose plantation. Although roses are not native to Ecuador, the country has a perfect environment for rose cultivation and is presently one of the world's major producers. On the plantation, you'll learn more about the farming process. After lunch, continue to the hotel in Quito. This evening during dinner, bid farewell to your Tour Manager

**Overnight:** Quito

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **DAY 9, Friday - Galapagos Islands, Baltra, Santa Cruz**

After breakfast, embark on a journey to the Galapagos Archipelago of volcanic islands, five million years in the making. Your flight from Quito takes you to Baltra Airport; you'll be met by your naturalist guides and transferred by boat to Santa Cruz Island. Here, visit the Giant Tortoise Reserve and see their natural habitat. The area is teeming with wildlife, including multiple species of birds. After lunch, on to the most developed town in the Galapagos Islands, Puerto Ayora. Upon arrival, board the Finch Panga that takes you to Finch Bay, an eco-friendly resort hotel in a private seaside location surrounded by mangroves, your home for the next three nights. The rest of the day is at leisure to enjoy the hotel's pool, natural spa, white coral beach, or admire the view from the comfort of your hammock. Tonight, savor dinner highlighted by local delicacies

**Overnight:** Galapagos

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **DAY 10, Saturday - Excursion to Divine Bay, Charles Darwin Research Station**

Today, travel by boat to Divine Bay, abundant with wildlife, which lies a short distance away from Academy Bay and Puerto Ayora. Noddy terns, herons, marine iguanas, blue-footed boobies and Galapagos brown pelicans are commonly seen here. This morning's visit includes snorkelling on a calm section of the cove and swimming in Playa Punta Estrada. Afterward, a dry landing and a short walk to the south shore of the island, to a small beach called Playa de los Perros (Dog Beach). This is a great place to see intertidal organisms and learn more about the rich sea life of the Galapagos. Return to the hotel for lunch, followed by an afternoon visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station and the Fausto Llerena Giant Tortoise Breeding Centre. Gain insight into the huge efforts being made by scientists, guides, rangers and park managers to preserve this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Hotel dinner tonight

**Overnight:** Galapagos

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **DAY 11, Sunday - North Seymour Island**

You'll be transported on your yacht, The Sea Lion, to North Seymour Island, lifted from the ocean floor by a seismic event. The cliffs are only a few feet high from the shoreline and a tiny forest of Palo Santo trees stand just above the landing. Keep on the lookout for the magnificent wildlife all around you, including frigate birds and sea lions. After your enlightening walking excursion, return to the hotel and spend free time before dinner

**Overnight:** Galapagos

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **DAY 12, Monday - Port of Baltra, Flight to Guayaquil**

Depart the Finch Bay Hotel. On your way to Baltra, stop at the Twin Pit Craters to view the depressions of volcanic material, as well as the Scalesia trees, ferns, mosses, and orchids. Proceed to the airport for the flight to Guayaquil.

Arrive late afternoon and transfer to the hotel. Evening is at leisure

**Overnight:** Guayaquil

**Meals:** Breakfast

### **DAY 13, Tuesday - Depart Ecuador**

Check out of your hotel this morning and make your own way to the airport for your departure flight

*Some flights depart shortly after midnight in the very early morning of day 13 and will require a transfer on day 12. Transfers are recommended to depart the hotel approximately 4 hours prior to flight time*

**Meals:** Breakfast

▲ Due to the high elevation, travel in the Ecuadorian Andes may cause some passengers to experience the temporary effects of altitude sickness. If you have any concerns about traveling to higher than your accustomed elevation, please consult your healthcare provider.

**Please note: The day-by-day descriptions are intended as an indicative guide only. Travel by nature is unpredictable. Weather patterns, road accessibility, river levels, sea conditions, public holidays, travel restrictions and many other factors may necessitate itinerary changes that are ultimately for the client's benefit. It is essential that clients are flexible in this regard.**

### **Is this trip right for you?**

This very active trip covers a lot of ground each day. Expect from three to four hours walking every touring day. The pace is fast and you will encounter some uneven surfaces, such as sandy and rocky beaches, stairs, steps and significant slopes. A bus ride will take you to Puerto Ayora and then a panga boat ride to your hotel. This tour visits areas of high elevations in Quito (9,300 feet) and in Papallacta (10,600 feet) and may be a consideration for those who have heart conditions or are otherwise affected by height. If you have any concerns about traveling to higher than your accustomed elevation, please consult your healthcare provider.

Early wake-ups are necessary on some mornings to cover the territory. In the Galapagos, it takes approximately two hours, on foot, to get to and from the areas populated with wildlife. You will experience wet landings in water, on sand or rocks and dry landings on wooden docks. The weather in Galapagos is hot, particularly December through June. Getting to the Galapagos requires a flight from Quito to the Island of Baltra, where you will transfer to the Baltra Seaport and travel by boat to Santa Cruz Island. This tour is not recommended for people who have difficulty walking. This is a Partially Escorted program.

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**Please read the following information prior to making your reservation**

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**This is a summary in brief for our customers:**

1. Upon making a reservation with My Travel Experience you will receive a booking form, which needs to be filled out and signed to confirm that you agree to the terms and conditions.
2. Your booking will then be confirmed to you in writing and you will be required to pay a deposit to hold your reservation.
3. At this time, you must take out travel insurance for your holiday to protect you against any unforeseen circumstances.
4. 90 days prior to departure you will be asked to make the balance payment for your trip (the exact due date for your travel supplier will be advised at the time of booking).
5. 10 days prior to departure you will be sent your travel documents electronically via email.



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