



Highlights

- *Quito City Tour*
- *Ethnographic Museum*
- *Visit Calderon, Guayllabamba*
- *Visit Cotacachi*
- *Visit Cotopaxi Volcano*
- *Visit the Balbanera Church, Colta Lake, and Guamote*
- *Ride the "Devil's Nose" train*
- *Visit Ingapirca Fortress*
- *Visit straw hat workshop*
- *Cajas National Park*
- *Interpretation Center on La Toreadora Lake*

Options

- *Limpipungo Lake*
- *Dinner in Cuenca*

Itinerary Quito (3), Otavalo (1), Riobamba (1), Cuenca (2), Guayaquil (1)

DAY 1 Upon arrival to Quito's Mariscal Sucre Airport, you will be greeted by our helpful guide. The guide will serve as a translator, help with luggage, and assist with the transfer to your hotel.

DAY 2 QUITO Explore the bustling streets and squares of the largest historical centre in the Americas, including churches such as the impressive Cathedral, majestic Compañía and iconic San Francisco. We begin the tour the quirky Guapulo quarter; take in the Congress building, before heading to the Old Town. We finish the day at the "Panecillo" hillside with its breathtaking views of the old and modern city surrounded by the rolling Andes Mountains. As an addition to the Quito Colonial City Tour, we travel to "La Mitad del Mundo" complex. The Ethnographic Museum at the complex provides a fine overview of Ecuador's varied cultures and geography.

DAY 3 OTAVALO & COTACACHI This morning you will leave Quito with your tour guide, heading to Otavalo. On route on the Panamerican Highway we will stop at Calderon, a town where the famous masapan dolls are made, continuing on through Guayllabamba town where you can sample its typical fruit the cherimoyer. We will also stop on the highway to admire the beautiful landscape and snow-capped mountains in the area. We continue on, making a short stop at San Pablo Lake before arriving in Otavalo. Here we will visit the textile market located at the "Plaza of Ponchos," one of the most famous markets in South America. After which you will enjoy some free time for bargaining and buying with the friendly Otavaleños. Enjoy lunch before going to the small artisan village of Cotacachi and then we will return to Quito late afternoon/early evening and you will be taken to your hotel.

DAY 4 COTOPAXI - RIOBAMBA VOLCANO AND NATIONAL PARK-RIOBAMBA We will depart from Quito heading south through the famous "Avenue of the Volcanoes." Around midday we will arrive in the National Park. The Cotopaxi Volcano is one of the most important landmarks in Ecuador because it is the highest active volcano in the world. Lush endemic flora and fauna of the area can be observed, including: one of the most

representative species is the Chuquiragua (also known as the mountaineer's flower), wild horses, deer, llamas, and more. While in the National Park you can also visit Limpiopungo Lake, or go hiking to observe birds. Later, head to the town of Riobamba. Here you will have an evening at leisure to enjoy as you please.

DAY 5 RIOBAMBA - ALAUSÍ - CUENCA After an early breakfast depart Riobamba to the south, as we head for Alausí where we will board the train to the "Devil's Nose." En-route we will visit the Balbanera Church, Colta Lake, and the indigenous town of Guamote. Mid-morning we will arrive at the town of Alausí where we will begin our adventure on Ecuador's famous "Devil's Nose" train. Afterward, we will pay a visit to the Ingapirca fortress, the most important ruins in the country. After visiting the ruins we will finish our trip on the road to Cuenca, arriving in the early evening for an optional dinner and free evening.

DAY 6 CUENCA Cuenca is Ecuador's third largest city; its red tiled roofs, cobblestone streets, flowery plazas and museums make it very special and the city is considered by many the most beautiful in all of Ecuador. Today we will enjoy a city tour to discover the beauty and charm for which Cuenca has been recognized as a World Cultural Heritage Site. On this walking tour you will have the opportunity to enjoy the colourful parks and plazas, religious monuments and handcraft shops, along with a glimpse of Cuenca's history. We will also visit a workshop where Panama straw hats of the best quality are made and then you will be transferred to your hotel.

DAY 7 CUENCA-CAJAS NATIONAL PARK-GUAYAQUIL Just after breakfast, depart northwest towards Cajas National Park. Arrival in Cajas National Park will allow us to take part in different activities such as hiking, fishing, bird-watching, viewing flora and fauna, and more. At the Interpretation Center located on La Toreadora Lake you will see pictures and interpretations of the park. In the afternoon we will make the journey to Guayaquil by way of the glorious Ecuadorian coastline.

DAY 8 RETURN HOME Transfer to the airport for your return flight back home.