



## ***Itinerary***

### **Day 01 Transit / Quito**

Depart on United Airlines via Houston and arrives late in the evening PM in Quito.

### **Day 02 Quito**

Your first full day in Ecuador gives you a chance get acclimatized. You will be able to sleep in a bit and then, after breakfast, you will depart by coach on a drive about 40 minutes northwest of Quito to San Antonio de Pichincha where the Middle of the World Monument is located. Before visiting this important site, you will stop to visit the Intiñan Museum, which proudly advertises itself as the home of the “true” equator. Located a short way from the “official” equatorial monument, the museum is bisected by a line of red paint which marks what proprietors claim is the “unofficial official site” of the middle of the world. A local bilingual Spanish/English speaking museum guide conducts the tour around the premises, stopping occasionally at life-size dioramas depicting Ecuadorian daily life. The tour offers a sampling of native culture, peppered with the occasional interactive demonstrations. The central focus of the museum is a totem pole surrounded by several stations, each designed to test the unique physical forces at work in the equatorial region. Here, there is also the blow dart range, pickled snakes, and a “genuine shrunken head” to look forward to. Afterwards, you return straight back to Quito in order to prepare for your late afternoon cooking class of Ecuadorian cuisine. After eating what you have prepared for lunch, it is time to head back to the hotel for the evening.



### **Day 03 Galapagos / Puerto Ayora**

You will be leaving the hotel very early for your flight to the Galapagos Islands, specifically the island of Baltra. You will be transferred to the town of Puerto Ayora, on the island of Santa Cruz, and after checking into your hotel, go for a walk to the Charles Darwin Scientific Station. Here the oldest and largest tortoises in the islands are kept in a unique research program, which is essentially financed by donations from around the world in the attempt to save various indigenous species from dying out.

### **Day 04 Galapagos / Puerto Ayora**

Your first full day in the archipelago has you visiting the highlands on the island of Santa Cruz. There will be a stop at a farm where you will find the giant "Galapagos" tortoises which gave the islands their name. The walk in this area is a special experience as the path leads into the lava tunnels that were created when the lava stream cooled down. After lunch you will head over to Tortuga Bay before heading back to Puerto Ayora.



### **Day 05 Galapagos / Puerto Ayora**

This day you depart by boat to Isabela Island, the largest of all of the islands. Isabela's rich animal, bird, and marine life are beyond compare. Isabela is home to more wild tortoises than all the other islands. It also has a flamingo lake and several beautiful trails along the way to the "Wall of Tears". This wall is proof of the genuine human history of the islands. Before Galápagos was declared a National Park, this island used to be a penal colony (around 1946). The prisoners were kept busy carrying and placing the sharp lava rocks to form this impressive wall. Your trip to the island will include time to walk on some of the trails and see close up and personal much of the wildlife.

## Day 06 Galapagos / Puerto Ayora

Time to explore another of the islands of the Galapagos! Today you will depart again by boat for a full day trip to Floreana, an island that accommodates large colonies of sea lions as well as land iguanas, the Galapagos Hawk and many other endemic species of birds. This enigmatic island is the least inhabited of the archipelago, in spite of the fact that it was the first one to be colonized, by national and foreign settlers during the first decades of last century. Many legends have been written about its people. "Floreana" by Margaret Wittmer is a most interesting novel that describes the situations of these settlers! The main attractions are: the historical Post Office Bay and Asilo de la Paz, Punta Cormoran, Corona del Diablo, Enderby and Gardner Bay. You will return back to Puerto Ayora in time for dinner.



## Day 07 Quito

After breakfast you depart today on the flight back to Quito. Your flight departs at 12:30 PM with an arrival at 4:50 PM. You will be met at the airport and transferred to your hotel. There will be lunch on the plane but you will go for an early dinner just to make sure you stay well fed.



## Day 08 Cangahua

After breakfast, you depart Quito for the mountain highlands. The morning begins with a visit to the very famous Otavalo Indian Market, considered the finest and most well-known on the continent. There, you can shop for weavings, sweaters, belts, etc. and bargain with the colourful and the industrious locals. After lunch and the market, you will be transferred to your hotel near Cangahua which will be your home while working at the school project. in time for dinner.

## Day 09-12 Cangahua

These days will be spent working with the local school of Cangahua which is located 73 kilometres north of Quito. The school is located roughly fifteen minutes' drive outside the town and is at an altitude of 3,673 metres therefore, the weather may be cold and windy. The landscape however, is incredible picturesque and there are great views of the Andes and the Cayambe volcano. This area is mainly a farming area and the local people are indigenous people who work on the farms and rose greenhouses in the Cayambe area. The school and next door nursery are very poor so there are many needs and work that can be accomplished here. The nursery home has approximately fifty children, aged one to four years old. One of the projects that may be undertaken is the construction of a classroom for the nursery. Other work may involve some or all of the following: cleaning of the rooms, classrooms, and kitchen, painting the classrooms, fixing tables, desks, chairs, planting in the garden, or teaching some games, English, or other activities such as helping with the little ones at the nursery. On the last day of your work project, you will return to Quito for the evening as to prepare for your next adventure.

## Day 13 Quito

Today you will have an early breakfast before checking out of the hotel and departing on the two hour drive northwest of Quito, to the cloud forest area of Mindo. Mindo is a watershed mountain area located at the western side of the Ecuadorian Andes where two of the most bio-diverse Eco-regions in the world meet. It is a beautiful valley located behind the Pacific slopes of the Pichincha volcano and will give you the opportunity to enjoy a good mixture of both nature and adventure activities. You will visit a butterfly farm and hummingbird feeders and then the adventure continues with a canopy adventure that includes several ziplines of different lengths ranging from 20 to 400 metres. Later in the afternoon you return to Quito where you have a late dinner before going to the airport in the evening for your overnight flight home. Your flight departs just after midnight for Houston.



## Day 14

Your flight arrives in Houston early in the morning. You then make the connection home where you arrive later that afternoon

### ***Includes:***

- Round Trip airfare
- All domestic flights and transportation
- All accommodations and meals
- All tours and entrance fees as indicated
- Galapagos Park fees
- All taxes (international and domestic)
- English speaking guide throughout the trip
- Project materials and supplies
- Medical and cancellation insurance
- Tips and gratuities

### ***HOTELS:***

#### **Quito**

- Hotel Embassy
- Reina Victoria
- Tel: 593 2 2561990

#### **Cangahua**

- Hacienda Guachalá
- Buena Esperanza
- Tel: 593 2 3610908

#### **Galapagos / Puerto Ayora**

- Hotel Tortuga Bay
- Tomas de Berlanga, Puerto Ayora
- Tel: 593 5 3013351

