

Quito, Ecuador 5 Days 4 Nights

Day 1:

- Begin your adventure by enjoying a quick flight to **Quito, Ecuador**.
- One meal will be served on the plane.
- Arrive in Quito. Take in its history and beautiful countryside during the ride to your hotel.

Day 2:

- Begin your morning with a breakfast buffet offering a variety of healthy and tasty options.
- Visit **San Francisco Cathedral and Square**.
- Meet your guide for a tour of **Quito**. Your tour can include:
 - **Iglesia de la Compañía**
 - **Iglesia de Santo Domingo**
 - **Plaza de la Independencia** or **Plaza Grande**, where you'll see the famous Guayasamín, which represents the discovery of the Amazon river
 - **Monastery of Saint Agustin**, with its beautiful gold decorations
 - the imposing **Basilica**
 - **Colonial Quito**, or the **Old City**, with narrow streets and red roofs, and the **New City**, where you can visit Guápulo, famous for its cafés & colonial architecture.
- Finish your tour at **Mirador de Panecillo**, where the **Virgen de las Americas** is perched. From this hilltop, you'll have an amazing view of the city and surrounding countryside. In Inca times, it was the site of a temple called Sun Yavirac.
- Return to your hotel to freshen up for dinner at a local restaurant..
- Depart for **Aeropuerto Theater** for the **Jacchigua Folklore Ballet**. Enjoy authentic music, dancing, and costumes from Andean tradition. (Only on Friday nights.)

Option: Instead of Folklore Ballet, Dinner at local restaurant with traditional live entertainment.

Music Option: Visit one or two local schools for possible music exchange program or to sit in on classes.

Saturday, Day 3:

- Begin your morning with a breakfast buffet offering a variety of healthy and tasty options.
- Visit **Otavalo, Ecuador**, about 60 miles from Quito. This little town is known for its market, which sells traditional crafts and weaving. The people who live there dress up in bright clothing on Saturday and peddle their wares, such as blankets, tapestries, and the dresses for which the town is famous. You'll also find jewelry, baskets, sandals, paintings, leather products, and even livestock.

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- Shopping and exploring at **Main Plaza and/or Poncho Plaza**. Don't forget, bargaining is expected!
- Lunch in the marketplace. **Use this opportunity to practice your Spanish!**
- Spend the afternoon exploring one of the nearby volcanoes, **Volcán Cotacachi** or **Volcán Imbabura**, or [Cuicocha Lake](#), where you'll have an awesome view of the volcanoes, at **Cotacachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve**.
- Satisfy your appetite and enjoy dinner at local restaurant
- Unwind later in the evening at a luxurious hotel and spend time enjoying the facilities.

Option: Go on a **boat tour around Cuicocha Lake** or visit **Lagunas de Mojado**, a group of breathtaking lakes 12 miles from Otavalo.

Sunday, Day 4:

- Begin your morning with a breakfast buffet offering a variety of healthy and tasty options.
- Depart for the **beach**, enjoy the untouched shores for which Ecuador is known.
- Take in the experience through the breathtaking countryside of Ecuador, valleys, tropical plantations, and mountains.
- Picnic Dinner on the Beach or dinner at local restaurant.

Option: Instead of the beach, entrance to 2 of some of the many museums of Quito and learn more about its culture and language. Museums include: **Museo de La Ciudad**, where you can learn about life in Quito during colonial times; **Museum of Art & History**, with a wax museum depicting scenes from the fight for independence; **Museo Etnográfico y de Ciencias Naturales Colegio Nacional Mejía**, **Museo de La Cases de La Cultura Ecuatoriana**, etc.

Music Option: A **performance** can be scheduled for your group at a local venue.

Monday, Day 5:

- Begin your morning with a breakfast buffet offering a variety of healthy and tasty options.
- Visit the **City of Mitad del Mundo**, on the outskirts of Quito, where you can step from one hemisphere to the other over the yellow line that marks the center of the earth. There is a monument and a sign to announce your arrival at 0° latitude.
- Depart for Quito Airport for the return journey home to the United States.
- Arrive at local airport with many new memories, friends, and experiences.

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