

ECUADOR: **QUITO, CLOUD FOREST, TREN CRUCERO, GALAPAGOS**

DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

ECUADOR

Day 1 - QUITO

Quito transfers airport/hotel
Overnight at Casa Gangotena Boutique Hotel – Luxury Rooms

(-/-/-)

Day 2 - QUITO

Live Quito like a local tour.
Overnight at Casa Gangotena Boutique Hotel – Luxury Rooms

(B/L/-)

Day 3 – QUITO / MASHPI LODGE

Mashpi Lodge Program - 3 days / 2 nights
Wayra Rooms

(B/L/D)

Day 4 – MASHPI LODGE

Mashpi Lodge Program - 3 days / 2 nights
Wayra Rooms

(B/L/D)

Day 5 – MASHPI LODGE / QUITO

Mashpi Lodge Program - 3 days / 2 nights
Overnight at Casa Gangotena Boutique Hotel – Luxury Rooms

(B/-/-)

Day 6 – TREN CRUCERO GOLD

Private transfer to Swissôtel
Quito – Otavalo – Ibarra – Quito
Overnight at Plaza Grande Hotel *Or* Overnight at Cultura Manor Hotel

(B/L/D)

Day 7 – TREN CRUCERO GOLD

(B/L/D)

Quito – Urbina

Overnight at Hacienda La Andaluza

Day 8 – TREN CRUCERO GOLD

(B/L/D)

Riobamba – The Devil’s Nose – Bucay

Overnight at Hacienda La Danesa

Day 9 – TREN CRUCERO GOLD

(B/L/-)

Bucay – Guayaquil

Overnight at Hotel del Parque

Day 10 – GUAYAQUIL

(B/L/-)

Scenic tour of Guayaquil plus lunch

Guayaquil is Ecuador’s natural port, and its largest city with a population of three million. It is also the country’s financial and commercial center. This tropical city lies on the banks of the Guayas River, thirty miles inland from the Gulf of Guayaquil. The people of Guayaquil are outgoing and open, they enjoy their city and are fiercely proud of their heritage. It is not surprising to hear the drama of Guayas, a brave indigenous leader, who in his desperation to avoid falling into the hands of the Spanish conquerors, decided to kill his wife, Quil, before drowning himself in the waters of the river. Their names were joined; a city was baptized.

Overnight at Hotel del Parque

Day 11 – GUAYAQUIL / BALTRA / LA PINTA YACHT

(B/L/D)

Private transfer between Hotel del Parque and the Airport in Guayaquil

Dispatcher service and airport assistance

Air tickets Guayaquil – Baltra

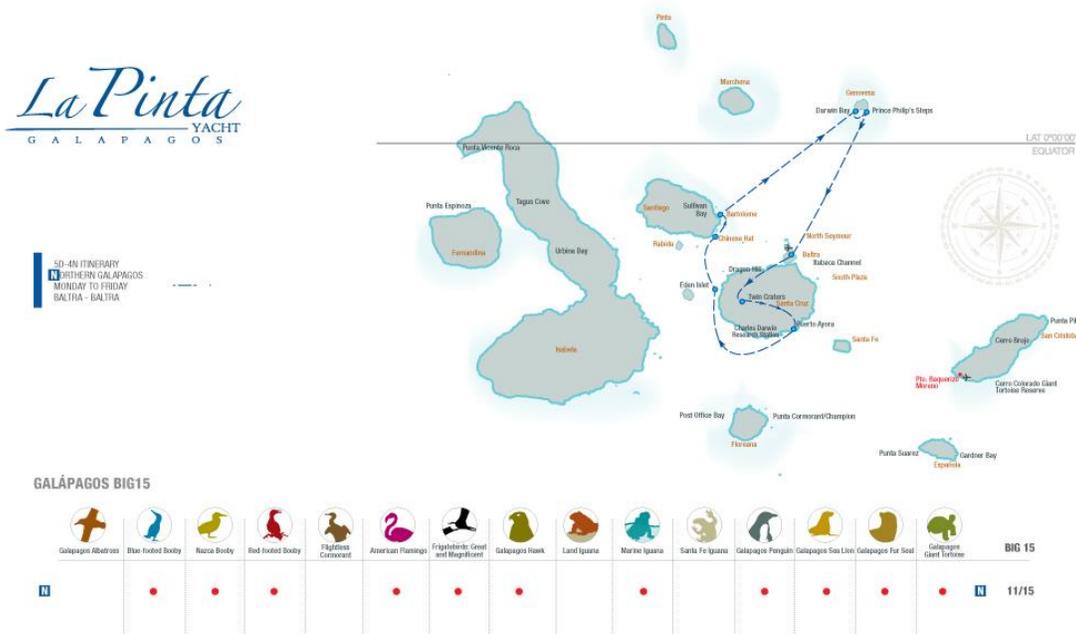
Galapagos National Park Entrance fee

Ingala card (control transit card)

**YACHT LA PINTA Northern Islands 5 Days / 4 Nights
(Monday to Friday)
*Upper Deck Luxury Twin/Double Cabins***



We're delighted to have you on board for this journey of discovery to some of the most beautiful islands in the Galapagos. Our itinerary together begins on Santa Cruz Island, the most populous of the archipelago, where we meet giant tortoises in the wild and then venture to the shores of Eden Islet. From there, we hop over to the lovely crescent bay of Chinese Hat. On Wednesday, one of the iconic sites of the archipelago awaits: Bartolome Island, with its wooden walkway up to a panoramic viewpoint, golden sandy beach and great snorkeling opportunities. Close-by, Sullivan Bay gives us a great introduction to the volcanic origins of the islands. We end with an exciting visit to the sunken caldera of Genovesa, far up in the northeast of the archipelago, a privileged place to visit amid thousands of marine birds. The entire crew aboard La Pinta will do our utmost to ensure your Galapagos experience is truly deeply moving and memorable.



AM Baltra Airport / PM Highlands: Walk

Day 12 – SANTA CRUZ

(B/L/D)

AM Eden Islet: Panga ride, snorkeling or glass-bottom boat ride.

PM Chinese Hat Islet: Walk, snorkeling, panga ride.

Day 13 – BARTOLOME / SANTIAGO

(B/L/D)

AM: Walk, snorkeling, glass-bottom boat ride

PM Sullivan Bay: Walk, swimming, snorkeling.

Day 14 – GENOVESA

(B/L/D)

AM Darwin Bay: Walk, snorkeling, kayaking

PM Prince Phillip's Steps: Walk, panga ride.

Day 15 – BALTRA

(B/-/-)

AM Transfer out to Baltra
Private transfer from Yacht La Pinta to Finch Bay Hotel

Overnight at Finch Bay hotel – Suite

Day 16 – SANTA CRUZ

(B/-/-)

Day at leisure

Overnight at Finch Bay hotel – Suite

Day 17 – BALTRA

(B/-/-)

Private transfer from Finch Bay Hotel to Baltra Airport
Air tickets Baltra – Guayaquil

Special Remarks:

B = Breakfast

L = Lunch

D = Dinner

BL = Box Lunch

ITINERARY DESCRIPTION

Ecuador

A natural selection, only a Continent could give you more!

Day 1 - QUITO

(-/-/-)

Welcome to Quito and Ecuador! At the airport, you will be greeted by a member of our organization, we will escort you all the way to your hotel, giving you a short briefing about Quito and the country in general with valuable information you need to know. Enjoy scenic colonial and artistic Quito, visit museums, monasteries and the golden altars of its many churches. Stand with a foot on each hemisphere on the Middle of the World memorial. The capital of Ecuador has a setting that few cities in the world can match. During the 13th century it was the prosperous center of the Kingdom of Quitus. It later became the northern capital of the Inca Empire. In the 16th and 17th centuries, Colonial architects built formidable temples, monasteries and mansions, creating an urban jewel designated by UNESCO/UN as a World Cultural Heritage Site. Quito's artistic creativity awaits the visitor in cosmopolitan galleries and boutiques filled with contemporary paintings, sculptures and exquisite traditional crafts.

Overnight at Casa Gangotena Boutique Hotel.

Day 2 - QUITO

(B/L/-)

Live Quito like a Local

A day dedicated to exploring the lives, beliefs, cuisine and traditions of Old Town Quito, the first city named a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1978, and a revelation to many people. The tour is all about 'living Quito like a local', visiting shops, exploring markets, meeting local herbal healers, wandering the streets, learning skills from artisans, and enjoying a lunch of great Ecuadorian cooking at the sophisticated Casa Gangotena hotel.

We head out for a walking tour of the Old Town, intent on understanding more about the people who live in the largest and best-restored historical center in the Americas. We begin by meeting our local resident guide, part of a grassroots NGO organization that has created a walking tour of its Quito neighborhood, called San Roque. The guide takes us through the nearby streets, stopping to meet artisans, shopkeepers, hat makers and sweet confectioners. Up the hill on Calle Rocafuerte, we explore the San Francisco Market, one of the oldest in the capital. Here, we learn all about the fruit and vegetables produced in Ecuador and some culinary traditions.

We also have the chance to meet and learn from one of the local herbal healers who have locales in the market.

From the market, we walk downhill to the emblematic street of La Ronda, considered one of the flagship regeneration projects in the city. It's a quiet, cobbled street with typical balconies overflowing with geraniums. Here we visit the *Manos En La Ronda* project and meet artisans in the workshops. We then visit the chocolatier on the ground floor, where we enjoy a snack and have a chance to discover and taste the finest chocolate in the world – which, of course, comes from Ecuador..!

From La Ronda, we walk northwards through the handsome streets of the Old Town to the Plaza Grande, the political heart of the city. Following a brief explanation, we stroll to the Jesuit church of La Compañía with its stunning gold-leaf interior. Returning to Plaza San

Francisco, we visit the church, choir and pretty patios of the Franciscan order before arriving at Casa Gangotena, on the same square, for a lunch of Ecuadorian specialties prepared by the hotel's talented chefs.

In the afternoon, we cross the street to the excellent Casa del Alabado Archaeological Museum. It houses a fantastic collection of pieces dating back some 5,000 years, arrayed beautifully within a restored 17th-century colonial mansion.

This tour also includes a visit to a panoramic viewpoint to appreciate Quito in all its Andean splendor.



Overnight at Casa Gangotena Boutique Hotel.

Day 3 – QUITO / MASHPI LODGE

(B/L/D)

Mashpi Lodge Program - 3 days / 2 nights

The adventure begins in Ecuador's heritage capital, Quito, at our 8 AM pick-up time for guests staying in Quito's main hotels (Time will be confirmed by our Operations Department). Mashpi Reserve, a 1,300-hectare (3,200 acres) conservation property located within the Metropolitan District of Quito, forms a part of the Ecuadorian Choco rainforest, known as one of the world's greatest biodiversity hotspots. The sudden shift in altitude (from 2800 masl to 1000 masl) will allow us to discover the spectacular natural diversity of the Andean landscape as we travel through the dry valley of Pomasqui towards the cordillera's western flank, into lush, misty cloud forest, and finally reach Mashpi.



After been comfortably settled in our room we are greeted by one of our naturalists who will give us an introductory talk about the cloud forest and its conservation, the activities during our stay and some helpful tips about what to wear and what to bring to the excursions. This talk will take place before lunch at our library and lasts around 30 minutes.

At 3:30 PM we will gather together at the lobby in order to head to the Napa Trail. This trail starts at the side of the road, across areas where the forest is regenerating and large patches of pristine forest. For this reason, this trail is ideal to explain the ecological succession processes and the importance of forest conservation for the Chocó region. Also, this is a trail of great scenic beauty and toward the end of the trail you will find one of the unique attractions, a forest of "iron palm" (*Iriartea deltoidea*), which wood is used in different ways, mostly in house construction. This is also a very good trail for bird watching. It is a moderate difficulty trail and the excursion takes 2 hours.

Every evening for all our guests interested in knowing more deeply the cloud forest ecology, we have prepared a series of different lectures like the "Secret Wildlife of Mashpi, the trap camera project", the "Chocó, a biological hotspot" about the formation and diversity of the Chocó, or about our scientific research projects. The lectures will be given by one of our naturalist or our resident biologist at 7:30 PM.

Day 4 – MASHPI LODGE

(B/L/D)

The forest always rewards the "early birds", as the dawn light lures a variety of fascinating species in their search for food. A good place to find birds is actually right at the hotel's terrace, with a cup of fresh coffee, tea or hot chocolate in hand, from where we can enjoy not only the beauty of the forest but also the many species that come to feed on insects and fruits at nearby trees. Our guides will help us spot what's around, offering a peek inside their telescope for a close-and-personal view of the incredible bird richness Mashpi possesses. This activity begins at 6:30 AM and lasts about an hour. Enjoy breakfast at our hotel restaurant.

We depart around 8:30 AM to the Sky Bike and Observation Tower (a 15-minute walk from the hotel). Looming above the treetops, Mashpi's observation tower allows our guests to enjoy the protected forest in all its glory. At 30 meters (100 feet) above the ground, this is an ideal site for nature lovers, allowing us not only allows to appreciate the forest's complex structure, but also the incredible species richness that thrives throughout the canopy (70% of the forest's biodiversity is found here). We climb 162 steps to reach the top.



The aerial bicycle makes for an original and exciting way to explore the canopy up close. Designed for two people to use at once, one person pedals the bike along a cable stretched between two points, around 200 m (655 feet) apart, crossing a gorge and river. Silent, easy-to-use and fun, it's an activity that provides guests with yet another vantage point to experience Mashpi's lush natural world. To enjoy the ride, one must be at least one meter tall (3.2 feet) (children must be accompanied by an adult). The bike ride takes no more than 20 minutes.

Once completed, you can walk back to the lodge along one of our many trails. One of the trails takes us to San Vicente waterfall, a 45-minutes-to-an-hour steep hike that demands good physical condition. You can also hike the Oxibelis trail that takes us to a small waterfall before taking us back to the lodge. The combination of activities (sky bike, observation tower and hike) can take between 2 to 4 hours, depending on the trail. At the lodge, a refreshing natural juice and fresh towels will be waiting for us; we then will enjoy a varied and delicious lunch at the hotel restaurant. The best way to reach the Life Centre is actually through the forest, so we take what we've come to call the "Howler Monkey's trail". This path crosses primary forest dominated by many ancient trees, being the "copal" (*Dacryodes cupularis*) the most emblematic of them.

We occasionally get to listen to rare birds, such as the Rufous-fronted Wood-quail (*Odontophorus erythrops*) or the Rufous-crowned Antpitta (*Pittasoma rufopileatum*). Our guides are keen on noticing every sound that comes from the forest deep, hoping to reveal colourful birds or elusive howler monkeys, while our naturalist guide explains the habitat's ecology; both share with us their extensive knowledge on forest plants and their medicinal uses. Once at the Life Centre, we are offered a great view of the forest from the comfort of an expansive wooden deck, where wildlife abounds. We will identify the different birds and mammals that visit our fruit feeders. The centre is conceived as a place for learning and discovery, but also a place where guests can disconnect from the humdrum of today's world. We will explore the life of butterflies, the many species found in the Mashpi area and their metamorphosis process from egg, larva and caterpillar, to chrysalis and finally winged wonder. We will also discover various species of host plants that butterflies use to lay their eggs on, such as passion flowers, birds of paradise, milk weeds and other species found in the garden. Not far from the Centre, we have also established a "tropical orchard" where many varieties of fruit trees, including banana, manioc, cacao, hot chili pepper, coffee and wild raspberries are grown. For those interested in learning more about the Ecuadorian cloud forest, we offer a lecture that sums up the different scientific research projects that take place at Mashpi. The talk lasts around 30 minutes, and will include footage from our hidden camera traps, a great display of the astounding diversity that thrives inside the forest.

Day 5 – MASHPI LODGE / QUITO

(B/-/-)

This activity begins at 6:30 AM in the hotel lobby and takes advantage of the fact that many bird species come to the hotel to feed. After a cup of coffee, we walk down the road seeking out mixed-species feeding flocks: these usually feature different insectivorous bird species that move together while foraging. In a single flock, we may see over 20 different species, making these more-or-less common encounters an undeniable treat for bird aficionados. The activity takes one hour; we return to the lodge for breakfast.

Overnight at Casa Gangotena Boutique Hotel.

Day 6 – TREN CRUCERO GOLD

(B/L/D)

Private transfer to Swissôtel

Quito – Otavalo – Ibarra – Quito



We depart Quito early in the morning for a one-and-a-half drive north. In Otavalo, home of a millenary market, a carefully restored steam engine awaits us.

At a slow pace, we will discover the many wonders hidden in this part of the country: musicians, painters, weavers and the skillful woodcarvers who keep the renowned Quito School style alive. After a tasting of traditional Andean cuisine and a visit to very special export-class rose plantation we return to Quito.

Day 7 – TREN CRUCERO GOLD

(B/L/D)

Quito – Urbina

We board our convoy at Quito Chimbacalle station and begin our journey south along the Avenue of Volcanoes. If the weather permits, you can spot up to twenty volcanoes from the train –most extinct or dormant for centuries.



Here, the Andes range splits into two arms that run parallel down south. The fertile valley trapped between these stone walls hosts a treasure trove of biodiversity. From the comfort of our panoramic cars we watch the change of vegetation and landscape as we slowly climb the Andean highlands to Urbina, the highest point in our itinerary at 11,800 feet above sea level. In the skirts of mount Chimborazo we meet the last ice-merchant and learn the story of his ancestral trade.

Day 8 – TREN CRUCERO GOLD

(B/L/D)

Riobamba – The Devil’s Nose – Bucay



We depart Riobamba towards Colta, where the Spanish conquerors built their first settlement in Ecuador. We cross colorful quinoa fields painted in purples, yellows and reds, alternating with endemic species of flora and wildlife, indigenous settlements and the remains of ancient cultures.

We visit Guamote market, one of the last indigenous markets in the Andes, before continuing south towards the mythical Devil’s Nose pass. A vertiginous descent of 450metres zig zag takes us from the Andean highlands down towards the coastal plains.

We continue our descent along the narrow Chanchán river gorge and crossing an impressive cloud forest towards the temperate city of Bucay.

Day 9 – TREN CRUCERO GOLD

(B/L/-)

Bucay – Guayaquil



The landscape changes again as the train leaves the tropical forest behind. Rice, sugar cane, pineapple and banana plantations pass before our eyes.

We have lunch at a traditional hacienda, where we can learn about the growing and harvesting of the best cocoa bean in the world. Later, the steam engine whites its way across the fields towards the shores of the Pacific Ocean and the end of our trip in a hotel in Guayaquil for overnight.

Day 10 – GUAYAQUIL

(B/L/-)

Scenic tour of Guayaquil plus lunch

This visit includes the main attractions of the Port of Guayaquil, starting with the Centennial Plaza that honors the heroes of Guayaquil's independence, and then along 9th of October Boulevard to the heart of the business district of the city with the Plaza of the Administration and the striking Government and Municipal Buildings. A short stroll takes guests to the famous Moorish Clock Tower and Bolívar Park, with an equestrian statue of South America's liberator, Simón Bolívar. The latter is also called "the park of the iguanas", as here they roam undisturbed and perch on the treetops, blending perfectly with the green leaves. Beside the park is the neo-gothic Metropolitan Cathedral. Then drive to the southern end of Guayaquil's ravishing Malecon 2000 to see the Crystal Palace, the Integration Square, the Plaza of the Flags and the Plaza Olmedo, which are together, at the beginning of a 2.5 Km. (1.5 mile) waterfront, running parallel to the River Guayas and featuring historical, cultural and entertainment areas. An easy walk, past decorative elements featuring the four elements: earth, fire, water and air, leads to La Rotonda, which commemorates the meeting of Simon Bolivar and Jose de San Martin, the liberators of South America. Then on to Barrio Las Peñas, one of the oldest neighborhoods of Guayaquil, whose wooden constructions have been beautifully restored, housing many art galleries. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.



Overnight at Hotel del Parque

Day 11 – GUAYAQUIL / BALTRA / LA PINTA YACHT

(B/L/D)

Private transfer between Hotel del Parque and the Airport in Guayaquil
Dispatcher service and airport assistance
Air tickets Guayaquil – Baltra
Galapagos National Park Entrance fee
Ingala card (control transit card)

YACHT LA PINTA Northern Islands 5 Days / 4 Nights (Monday to Friday)

Baltra Airport

Following our morning arrival at Baltra Airport, we transfer to the Itabaca Channel, taking a small ferry across the channel to the north shore of Santa Cruz Island. We board our bus to the highlands, where we'll learn about Santa Cruz's unique ecosystems and biodiversity. Lunch is served at a local restaurant.



Highlands (Santa Cruz Island)

After lunch, we continue by bus to reach a reserve that is one of the best places in the archipelago to see giant tortoises in their natural habitat. The tortoises are easy to spot, lumbering around, eating grass and leaves and wallowing in the small pools. There are several lava tunnels in the reserve, too. A short bus ride takes us down to Puerto Ayora to board Yacht La Pinta.

Day 12 – SANTA CRUZ

(B/L/D)

Eden Islet (Santa Cruz Island)

After breakfast, a panga ride takes us to Eden Islet, located off the coast of Santa Cruz, where we can observe blue footed boobies diving into the water, reef sharks and frigates. There's a chance to snorkel and, if weather conditions permit, to ride in the glass-bottom boat. The volcanic setting of this area is quite stunning due to its variety of volcanic debris, including cinder cones, tuff cones, and semi-eroded lava flows.



Sombrero Chino Islet

The tiny island of Sombrero Chino gets its name from its appearance, reminiscent of a Chinese hat. This islet, formed only fairly recently, makes a beautiful visit as one explores the wildlife along its 400-metre long trail, which begins at a crescent-shaped white sandy beach. The cove offers excellent swimming and snorkeling opportunities amid white-tipped reef sharks and Galapagos penguins.

Day 13 – BARTOLOME / SANTIAGO

(B/L/D)

Bartolome Island

This morning, a Galapagos icon awaits: Bartolome Island. A great way to start the day, with a steep climb up a wooden staircase: the view from the top is worth the effort! Following the walk, we take to the dinghies for a ride around colossal Pinnacle Rock, followed by time to enjoy the beach and some snorkeling. We can also ride in the glass-bottom boat for great views of the underwater world.



Sullivan Bay (Santiago Island)

After lunch, we board the pangas to land at Sullivan Bay on the east coast of Santiago, a white coral sand beach great for swimming and snorkeling, and with a trail over a lava field that flowed here less than 100 years ago. This is the perfect place to see and feel the volcanic origin of Galapagos while observing its wildlife.

Day 14 – GENOVESA

(B/L/D)

Darwin Bay

In the morning, we begin our exploration of this island with an easy stroll to observe marine and land birds. There is an optional walk over sharp lava and uneven terrain for dramatic views, or else we can return to the beach to enjoy swimming and snorkeling at this beautiful natural harbor. The more adventurous can snorkel along the cliffs or paddle sea kayaks.



Prince Philip's Steps (Genovesa Island)

The afternoon starts with a very interesting panga ride along the cliffs before we disembark for a short but steep climb up a wooden staircase. Once at the top, the land is flat, allowing for a captivating walk of about a mile to the other side of this small island, observing large colonies of Nazca boobies, frigate birds and storm petrels and the elusive short eared owl.

Day 15 – BALTRA

(B/-/-)

Baltra's flat substrate (due to its uplifted origin) is the reason why the island was chosen back in the 1940s as the location to building an airport.

Private transfer from Yacht La Pinta to Finch Bay Hotel

Overnight at Finch Bay hotel – Suite

Day 16 – SANTA CRUZ

(B/-/-)

Day at leisure

Overnight at Finch Bay hotel – Suite

Day 17 – BALTRA

(B/-/-)

Private transfer from Finch Bay Hotel to Baltra Airport
Air tickets Baltra – Guayaquil.

END OF SERVICES

NOTES

Private transfer from airport /hotel and vice versa in Quito

Notes

Quito airport is located about one and half hours from Quito depending on traffic conditions, please make sure you do not leave anything behind.

Recommendations

Please check all your travel and personal documents before leaving your hotel.

Included

Private transportation and guide, handling of two pieces of luggage per person at the airport and the hotel)

Not Included

Tips.

Live like a local

Notes

- The order of the visits may vary - depending on weather conditions and the day of the week.
- This tour includes walking at altitude
- Daily (except Sundays).

Recommendations

- Dress in layers (T-shirt, blouse, sweater, and coat).
- Rain protection
- Sun protection (SPF 40).
- Good walking shoes.
- Great photo ops, don't forget your camera

Included

Private tour with guide and driver, full day program, daily in Quito (minus Sundays), including lunch mentioned.

Not Included

Drinks not mentioned, personal expenses, tips.

Mashpi Lodge Program - 3 days / 2 nights

Summary of activities

Trails

As you enter the realm of the rainforests, you will become aware of Life at every step: mushrooms and "fox fire" fungi below, tree trunks festooned with orchids, lichens and mosses, giant ferns reaching up to the light above, coiling vines, swirling mists and clouds of moisture. And then, from nowhere, comes the sound of rushing water, a waterfall amid this glistening, green world, where you can wade through rivers, walk along their banks, revive your senses...

The two main trails are the Howler Monkey and Cucharillo (named after an oak). Both link up with the Tower #5 of the canopy gondola system. Along the trails, guests will learn more from both their Naturalist Guide and Local Guide about the myriad plants, insects and animals that inhabit this biodiverse universe. The guides will enthusiastically share their knowledge of their characteristics, behavior and uses.

Due to Mashpi's mountainous topography, trails are rarely flat. The Howler Monkey (mainly primary forest) and Cucharillo (mainly secondary), although short – 2 km and 700 m, respectively – are steep. The trails' steepness is an advantage since the hillsides enable more light to penetrate the forest, thereby increasing the diversity of plants and animals that one can observe at each stratum. Both trails have been specially adapted to make walking easier, using embedded recycled plastic crates to create steps and firm paths.

The way back uphill on both these trails can be aboard the gondola, reached by wading through the shallow river in rubber boots, and walking the connecting trail to the Cotinga Tower.

Life Centre

Close to the lodge, the center is conceived as a place for learning and discovery, but also where guests can disconnect, where they can contemplate the views, sit in comfortable chairs, read a book, and enjoy a fresh cane juice.

Guests will learn more about the butterflies that inhabit the region, being shown the process of these creatures from eggs to pupae to chrysalis to winged wonder. Some 200 species of butterfly have been identified to date in the Reserve, with nearly a dozen observable at the Centre. Other points of learning dozens of species of orchids, bromeliads and passion flowers all around the structure.

Close to the Centre, we have established an area for growing medicinal plants (ideal for a reviving herbal infusion) and beyond, many varieties of bushes and fruit trees, including banana and plantain, manioc, cacao, tobacco, coffee, bread fruit and heart of palm. These attract all sorts of wildlife, from birds to rodents to mammals – making for easier observation from the comfort of the Centre's expansive wooden deck. Most of the interpretation at the center will be imparted by local guides or people involved with the project from local communities. Guests will find ingredients from these gardens in the dishes prepared back at the lodge.

Observation Tower

There are few easier or better ways to appreciate the beauty of the Mashpi Reserve's forest and hills than climbing the Observation Tower. Here, guests are able to enjoy an exciting bird's-eye view and the dramatic panoramas that surround the lodge from the observation tower. This is a metallic structure, with a staircase that climbs to about eight-stories high (26 m or 85 ft.), ideal for wildlife observation, particularly at dawn or dusk. Species that can be spotted here include toucans, woodpeckers, barbets, tanagers and parrots as well as raptors. The tower lies a 10-minute walk from the lodge.

Night walks

The Mashpi forest is transformed at night, with far more activity than during the day. Optional night walks will head out from the hotel after dinner to discover its nocturnal creatures and their behaviors, ranging from moths as big as your hand, to miniature glass and tree frogs, croaking toads, birds, owls, rodents and mammals, and even fox fire, an Avatar-like luminous fungus. It's a magical world, often astounding at the micro level, and seldom explored, ready to be discovered in expert company.

Sky Bike

Located close to the hotel, the sky bike makes for an original and exciting way to explore the forest canopy up close. Designed for two people to use at once, one person pedals the bike along a cable stretched between two points in the forest, around 200 m (655 feet) apart, crossing a gorge above a river flowing between rocks and trees below. Silent, easy-to-use and fun, it's an activity for children over 8 years-old accompanied by an adult, providing

guests with another chance to observe the natural world close to the lodge and even spot its denizens.

Hummingbird Viewpoint

The forests of Mashpi boast 22 hummingbird species identified to date, inhabiting different specific altitudes, with around 16 species alone observable by guests. In order to make it easier to see these amazing creatures, a shelter with seating provides the ideal setting, feeders for the birds strung from its roof. The site is located at a natural viewpoint, which, on clear days, provides breathtaking views of the Reserve's forested hills.

Refreshing waterfalls

Water is key to life in Mashpi, and there's nothing like a refreshing dip at the end of a walk. Several rivers cross the Mashpi Reserve close to the hotel, many forming beautiful small waterfalls, cascades and pools. The water temperature is between 18-20°C (64-68 F).

Included

- Accommodations
- all meals
- guided daily excursions (in English and Spanish only) to primary forest
- Sky Bike
- Specialized lectures
- Rain ponchos and rubber boots
- Transfers in (shared basis), includes entrance fee and visit the Tulipe Archaeological Site
- Transfer out (Mashpi-Quito, shared basis)

Not Included

- Dragonfly
- Gratuities
- Bar
- gifts and personal items.

Tren Crucero

Recommendations

- Dress in layers,
- comfortable clothes and shoes,
- sunscreen,
- sunglasses,
- hat,
- insect repellent.

Included

- Excursions,
- accommodation and full meals,
- snacks and non-alcoholic beverages,
- English/Spanish-speaking guides

Not Included

- Alcoholic drinks,
- meals and excursions not specified on program,
- personal expenses,
- tips
- We strongly advise you to get Travel insurance.

Scenic tour of Guayaquil plus lunch

Notes

Daily from Guayaquil

Recommendations

- Wear light clothes for warm weather.
- good walking shoes or sandals
- hat or cap, sun protection even if is overcast.
- Altitude: sea level.
- Guayaquil is a tropical city, with temperatures ranging between 21-30°C (70-90°F) all year. Here the vibe is Caribbean, in marked contrast to Ecuador's Andean region.
- Guayaquil, in the last years has become a very interesting tourist destination.
- Rain protection is advised, especially from January through May.

Included

Private service with guide and driver, 5 hours, lunch, all entrance fees.

Not Included

tips, drinks, personal expenses.

Private transfer from airport /hotel and viceversa in Guayaquil

Notes

Guayaquil is a tropical city, with temperatures ranging between 21-30°C (70-90° F) all year. Here the vibe is Caribbean, in marked contrast to Ecuador's Andean region. Expect rains from November to end of April.

Recommendations

Please make sure you have all your personal and travel documents with you.

Included

Private with guide and driver, baggage handling of two pieces of luggage per person at hotel and at airport.

Not Included

Tips.

YACHT LA PINTA Northern Islands 5 Days / 4 Nights (Monday to Friday)

Recommendations

- On Day 1, Note: please dress with comfortable shoes and clothes, a light raincoat – this area is often wet and muddy – bring a small backpack with any medicine you might be taking, sunblock, insect repellent and anything you need during the excursion as you will only board Yacht La Pinta at the end of the day.
- All your luggage will be sent on board the ship straight to your cabin.

PACKING LIST:

- 1 small backpack
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Sneakers with rubber soles
- Shorts
- Long pants
- T-shirts
- Long and Short sleeved shirts

- Windbreaker
- Bathing suit -wetsuit for snorkelling in cold months
- Toilette kit (biodegradable shampoo please)
- Sun block
- Sunglasses
- Binoculars
- Camera & camcorder
- Any medicine you may be taking
- Book/notebook/e-reader

Included

- Accommodation,
- all meals,
- soft drinks*,
- island sightseeing,
- naturalist guides and lecture services in English/Spanish only,
- wet suit rental and snorkeling gear,
- Internet*,
- taxes and transfers in the islands.
- Transfer from main hotels in Quito (Casa Gangotena, Hilton Colón, Swissôtel, Marriott, Dann Carlton) and in Guayaquil (Hilton Colón, Oro Verde, Hampton Inn, Sheraton) to airport for flights to / from Galapagos are included in these rates. To coordinate these transfers, we must have guest's hotel contact.

* Please note: soft drinks include juices and carbonated drinks, not "virgin" cocktails.

* Internet connections aboard consist of 2 computer stations in the library and Wi-Fi in the yacht's social areas; due to the Galapagos' remote location, internet connections are intermittent and low-bandwidth.

Not Included

- Airfare to/from Galapagos,
- Galapagos National Park admission fee (US\$ 100 subject to change without notice)
- transit Control Card for Galapagos (US\$ 20 per person)
- alcoholic drinks,
- tips,
- gifts and additional items.

Finch Bay Galapagos hotel

Recommendations

- For excursions, please take solar protection, cap or hat, bathing suit, long-sleeved shirt, water bottle, snorkeling gear (if you have your own; mask, snorkel and fins are provided free of charge), camera, appropriate shoes for wet landings and hikes on lava terrain (sneakers or similar) with thick soles. Expedition staff will give further details and recommendations, as well as more natural history background, the night before.
- Lunch is served on board the yacht during excursions. Please let us know of any dietary restrictions.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES – AT EXTRA COST – PLEASE ENQUIRE

- Cerro Puntudo hike.
- Specialised birdwatching; full-day mountain biking; full-day surfing; full-day kayaking;
- SCUBA diving packages also available.