

Study Abroad: Environmental Studies and Stewardship in the Galapagos Archipelago, Amazon River Basin and Ecuadorian Cloud Forest

Tour Package through Educational Travel Adventures (ETA) Includes:

- All airfare (USA to Ecuador roundtrip and Ecuador to Galapagos round trip)
- All meals in country (19 breakfasts; 18 lunches; 19 dinners)
- All accommodations and transportation required (hotels, homestays; buses, boats, taxis)
- All entrance fees for parks and other attractions
- Program leader/guide
- Trip delay and medical insurance coverage up to \$50,000 per person (includes medical evacuation and repatriation)

Tour Package does not include:

- Cost of obtaining a passport
- Vaccinations and/or malaria pills as recommended by your doctor
- Personal spending money
- Trip cancellation insurance (which is highly recommended).

<p>Day 1 – International Flight to Quito</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will be greeted by your Program Leader and proceed to the Historical Center of Quito and the hotel. • If time permits, you will visit either Panecillo Hill for a 3600 view of the city or walk through various plazas and streets surrounding the hotel followed by a traditional Ecuadorian meal 	
<p>Day 2 – Quito to Nanegalito Cloud Forest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After breakfast at the hotel, you will leave for a combination tour at Tucanopy in the Nanegalito Cloud Forest area. You will arrive mid-morning and have a university program tour which begins with an introductory talk followed by a guided tour of a number of different ecosystems and learn about sustainable farming practices. • After lunch, you will fly on a zipline through the forest and take a canopy walk with a guide who will describe the forest flora. Later in the afternoon you will depart for the Maquipucuna Ecological Reserve where you will spend the night at the eco-lodge. • You will take a short walk to the local waterfall, an easy walk that leads to a beautiful and refreshing falls. Bring your swimsuit; though the water is not deep enough for a swim, you can enjoy a cooling natural shower under the waterfall. 	

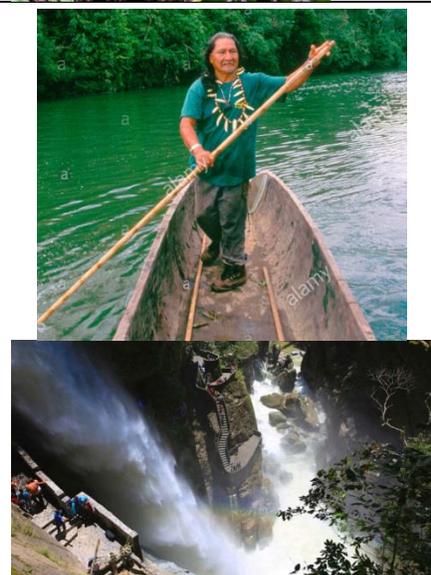
Day 3 - Cloud Forest and return to Quito

- You will rise before dawn and meet your birding guide for a bird watching tour. Maquipucuna is truly a birdwatcher's paradise and the early morning is the best time of day to spot many of the 375 identified species of the reserve. You may see at-risk species such as the Toucan Barbet and the Wattled Guan, or other important birds such as the Bay Wren, the scale-crowned Pygmy Tyrant, and the Slate-throated Whitestart. You will return to the lodge for breakfast after the tour.
- After breakfast you will hike the Bespectacled Bear Trail (3-4 hour duration, partial trek) through the secondary forest into the primary forest looking at forest succession. (Alternate hike: Humedal loop trail.)
- After lunch you will take an orchid tour and visit the orchid propagation lab followed by a return to Quito for the dinner and rest time.



Day 4 - Quito to Amazon

- After a breakfast you will have an orientation meeting about your Amazon itinerary and service project. You will drive to the Amazon region via the Avenue of the Volcanoes with a lunch stop and visit to the waterfall Pailon del Diablo, one of the most beautiful waterfalls in Ecuador. The waterfall lies in a region where the Andean highlands begin to give way to the amazing climate of the Amazon.
- After lunch, you will continue to your small host community near Puyo where you will be spending the next few days. You will be met by your host families and get to know each other over dinner.



Days 5-7 - Amazon Service Project at the Animal Rescue Center

- Over the next few days, you will work on a much-needed service project at the ecological center and animal rescue center. You will work between four and six hours per day.
- One of the ecological center's main goals is to rescue wild animals that have been kept in captivity or trafficked illegally, and rehabilitate them in an effort to reintroduce them to their natural habitat. Possible projects include infrastructure improvement such as refencing the enclosures that keep the animals safe, building water reservoirs, and building classrooms for local training in conservation. Additional projects related to the daily maintenance of the center such as feeding the animals and cleaning their living spaces, reforestation, and clearing trails and walkways for visitors to see the animals in a zoo-like setting are also a possibility.
- You will also visit surrounding attractions during your time



in the community. In addition to the service work at the ecological center and animal rescue center, you will have two half day tours: a hike in the Amazon to view animal life and find a hidden waterfall and a visit to an indigenous community to meet the people and learn about indigenous resistance and land rights versus private and corporate interests. Here you will also spend time with a local shaman to learn about traditional healing and the role of plant life. Some of the additional activities in the late afternoons might include: a night hike, an inner tube float on the local river, a visit to an ethnobotanical park to learn about the traditional use of jungle plants, helping your host families with traditional daily activities, visiting the local trapiche (where raw sugar cane is transformed in blocks of sugar and other sugar products), traditional cooking lessons, soccer games or dance lessons with local community members.

- For your final evening in the community, you will gather with your host families and staff of the ecological center for a celebratory farewell dinner.



Day 8 – Amazon to Quito

- After breakfast you will say your goodbyes to your new friends in the Amazon before heading back to Quito.
- Along the way you will stop to enjoy one of the following activities: white water rafting or a visit to geothermal hot springs.
- You will have lunch before returning to Quito. After arriving in Quito you will have a traditional dinner and return to your hotel to rest up for your trip to the Galápagos Islands.



Day 9 –Amazon to Galapagos

- In the morning, you will have a boxed breakfast to take on the bus to the airport as your journey to the Galápagos Islands begins. You will have a morning flight to Puerto Baquerizo Moreno on the island of San Cristobal, one of the oldest of the Galapagos Islands.
- You will check into your lodging and drop off your baggage before eating lunch. After lunch you will be able to drop off laundry which will be washed, dried and ready for pick up next day.
- In the afternoon you will visit the San Cristobal Interpretation Center which provides an overview of the island's history, development and environmental problems.
- This will be followed by a hike up to Las Tijeretas for scenic views and visiting a nesting place frequented by both the Magnificent and Great species of Frigate birds (if they are in residence).
- In the late afternoon you will head out to La Loberia where you can visit a sea lion colony, snorkel, and get your first view of marine iguanas. (If the tide is low you may get to see young sea lions learning to swim in tide pools here.)



**Please note, all activities in the Galapagos Islands are subject to change based on National Park visitation schedules and changes in regulation

Day 10 -San Cristobal

- After breakfast at your lodging you will take a boat trip to Isla Lobos, Kicker Rock, Playa Manglesito, and Playa Grande for a day of snorkeling with sea lions, sharks, sea turtles and rays.
- You will have lunch during the tour and dinner at your lodging.



Day 11 – San Cristobal to Santa Cruz Island

- You will get up early to take the 2.5 hour ferry trip to Puerto Ayora on Santa Cruz Island with a boxed breakfast to eat on the way.
- Upon arrival you will visit the Charles Darwin Center. Around midday you will check into your room at the family owned lodging where you will have a traditional lunch.
- In the afternoon you will hike to the white sand beaches of Tortuga Bay.
- This evening you will relax and have dinner.



Days 12 & 13 – Service Project

- For the next couple of days you will work on a much-needed service project on the island of Santa Cruz.
- On the first day, you will meet in the morning to be briefed on the project. Possible service projects may include a focus on organic agriculture, reforestation with endemic species, the removal of invasive species, and more.
- All projects directly benefit the local community and are accompanied by comprehensive discussions about the importance and impact of your work, the local reality in Galápagos and the daily issues that threaten the animals and their fragile environment.
- During your service days you will take breaks to visit nearby attractions such as a wild giant tortoise ranch, Los Gemelos twin volcanic craters, or a butterfly farm.
- You will work between four and six hours. In the late afternoons and evenings You will then join local community and family activities. Some of the activities may include sports such as soccer or basketball, cooking lessons, salsa dance lessons or simply walking around downtown Puerto Ayora.



Day 14 –North Seymour Island

- You will take a boat trip to North Seymour where you will hike across the island and visit Magnificent Frigate Bird and Blue-Footed Boobies nests. At this time of year it is possible that you might get lucky and see the elaborate mating rituals of these birds. On this hike you will see finches and pelicans as well as colonies of iguanas and sea lions.
- After eating a boxed lunch, you will head to Bachas Beach for snorkeling where you may be able to see tropical fish, corals and sea turtles, among other animals.
- In the late afternoon you will return to Santa Cruz for dinner and pack overnight bags for a trip to Isabela Island.



**An alternate tour for this day could be a boat tour to Bahia

Ballena with a hike to Dragon Hill on Santa Cruz Island.

Day 15 – Isabela Island Snorkeling and Island History

- Early in the morning you will take a 2 hour boat ride to Isabela Island. Upon arrival you will bicycle up the coast to the historical Wall of Tears. Here you will learn a bit of the island's history as a penal colony and explore the site where prisoners were forced to build a wall of lava rocks.
- You will also visit a flamingo lagoon and the local giant tortoise breeding center.
- After lunch at a local restaurant in the village, you will take smaller boats to explore a set of islets called Las Tintoreras. If you are lucky you will see Galapagos penguins on this trip.
- After a short trail walk, you will spend some time snorkeling in the area. Here you may see sea turtles, sting rays, sea lions and of course many kinds of fish.
- Finally, you will travel by bus to the highlands of the island where you will visit a privatereserve. Here you will also have delicious dinner and a comfortable camping experience in nature.



Day 16 – Isabela Island – Trip to Sierra Negra Volcano

- After breakfast, you will take your bus to the trailhead of the Sierra Negra Volcano. From here you will start your full day excursion along the amazing volcanic landscapes.
- You will horseback ride for approximately five to six hours (with breaks for water and a box lunch) until you reach the Chico Volcano where you will view fumaroles and other signs of volcanic activity.
- At stops along the way you will learn about the history and geology of this and other islands. You will visit old lava flows and enjoy some of the most amazing and unique landscapes in the world. You will see how several craters have been formed and if time allows you will visit a sulfur mine.
- The Sierra Negra's crater is considered to be the second largest in the world. The beauty of this site is also combined with great bird watching in the surrounding area. The land birds that are seen most frequently in the area are finches, Galápagos mockingbirds, owls and stunning red and black vermilion flycatchers. The red and black vermilion flycatcher is known locally as pájaro brujo (Warlock Bird).
- You will return to the private reserve in the highlands to freshen up and have the option of visiting the beach in the late afternoon before dinner and overnight camping in the highlands.



**Optional extra day on Isabela could be added to include a visit Los Tuneles followed by a wetlands walk.

Day 17 – Santa Cruz Island

- You will take an early ferry back to Puerto Ayora.
- After arriving you will have breakfast and walk to the quiet lagoon of Las Ninfas followed by free time to hang out or shop for souvenirs in Puerto Ayora.
- After lunch you will tour Academy Bay by kayak followed by a hike to Las Grietas, a network of flooded volcanic cracks where you can swim and relax. The kayaking departure will be dependent on the tides.

**Kayaking can be switched for the Bahia tour by boat if the group does not want to attempt the kayaks.



Day 18 – Galapagos Islands to Quito

- Today you depart from the Galápagos Islands and return to Quito. You will enjoy a hearty box lunch before boarding your plane.
- Upon arrival, you will visit the old town, also known as Quito Colonial and then have dinner at a local restaurant.



Day 19 – Equator and Otavalo Market

- On the way to Otavalo, you will stop for a visit at the equator! Here's your chance to stand in two hemispheres at the same time!
- You'll also explore the Quitsato scientific project located on the equatorial line where you will learn about how early indigenous communities took advantage of astronomy to organize their culture.
- Upon arrival to Otavalo, you will stop at a viewpoint to admire some of the surrounding lakes. You will then visit the famous indigenous market known to be largest in South America. Here you will find typical handicrafts such as hammocks, bags, ponchos and necklaces amongst other more modern souvenirs such as t-shirts and paintings.
- You will spend the whole morning in the market and then you will head in direction to a local community that will be waiting for you with a traditional lunch.
- If time allows, you will visit the beautiful Cuicocha Lake and a leather market to do some more shopping before traveling back to Quito.
- In Quito you will attend your final dinner celebration on a hill overlooking the city of Quito. During dinner you will reminisce about the time you shared together in Ecuador.
- After dinner you will return to your hotel to rest before your international flight home.



Day 20 –International Departure

- You will have an early flight out to return home.

