

GREENTREK Cia. Ltda.

Address: El Espectador E8-13 y Shyris. Edificio El Espectador. Oficina 203. Quito – Ecuador
Phone: +593-2-600-4954 - Mobile: +593-9-9258-8303 - US Phone: (312)-450-3176
www.greentrek.org/ volunteers@greentrek.org/ Skype: greentrektravel



Organic Coffee farmers



1. Program overview

Imagine contributing to sustainable development by living and working alongside organic coffee farmers in a remote village hidden between southern Ecuador's Andean peaks. Help this community-led initiative to fulfill its dream while you the volunteer enjoy an unforgettable experience.

- Minimum time commitment: 1 week
- Spanish level recommended: Intermediate

2. Life in the program

Living, eating and interacting with a host family is the essential component of the volunteer tourist experience. Living conditions vary from traditional adobe block homes to more modern cement homes. No matter the accommodations, volunteers will be provided with:

- A private room with a lock for privacy
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner
- A bed outfitted with a pillow, sheets and blanket
- Storage for clothes
- Access to a bathroom and shower

Sharing in the local food traditions is a part of the volunteer tourist experience! Bananas, oranges, mangos, naranjillas, tomate de árbol, papayas, granadillas – there are an abundance of fruits available! The diet consists of bread, cheese empanadas, soups, rice, yucca, plantains, eggs, small salads, tuna and chicken. Locals drink coffee, aguas aromaticas and fruit juices. If you wish to supplement what your host family provides there are tiendas (small stores) in this beautiful community where you can purchase fruits, vegetables, bottled water and sweet treats.

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3. Project details & activities

Your focus will depend on the month you come. If you come between late April and early September, your primary focus will be to assist an organic coffee farmer with full-cycle coffee harvesting and processing. These months are perfect for those with a deep interest in coffee! If you come between early September and late December, your focus will be on other coffee related tasks and other crops. If you have a general interest in coffee, these months will work for you even if you can't come during harvest. If you come between January and mid-April, due to rains, agricultural work is limited to planting coffee and other crops. During this time your focus will concentrate on cultural immersion - perfect for those with a limited interest in agriculture. Of course cultural immersion is part of the program year-round.

As a volunteer tourist your primary project will be helping farmers with his or her day to day farming tasks related to:

- **Coffee**

If you come during harvest between late April and early September your contribution will be of significant impact because sometimes farmers cannot harvest and process the coffee beans as quickly as they ripen. During this time you will learn every step of the coffee process including harvesting, de-pulping, fermenting, washing, drying, sorting, toasting, grinding, packaging and marketing.

If you come outside the harvest season you will learn and help with other coffee-related tasks including selecting coffee seeds (beans), pruning, clearing land, weeding, creating organic pesticides and distinguishing between coffee varieties. You also will get to learn how to take the parchment off dry beans and toast and grind those beans.

No matter what time of year you come there will be work and opportunities to learn about a variety of crops. You will learn to identify, care for and harvest yucca, plantains and exotic fruits such as granadillas and naranjillas. You also may learn how to work with bees, pigs, cows, chickens or how to extract unrefined sugar from cane!

As you work with and get to know your host farmer, he or she will informally teach you about organic agriculture, their culture and the Spanish language.

Please keep in mind: Work pace and hours in rural Ecuador may differ from what you are accustomed to. Be flexible and relaxed in your expectations as the amount of work ebbs and flows. When it rains or there is minimal work to be done, it is not unusual for farmers to only work a half day or take Friday as a weekend. On the other hand, during harvest farmers may work through the rain and on Saturdays. Also, farmers at times have non-farming work to do. Most times they will include you in this work. This provides variety and a change of pace to your experience. Other activities can include baking bread, fixing motorcycles, cooking meals for visiting dignitaries, etc.

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4. Things to see and do!

This community is an outdoor enthusiast's paradise! There are several trails with amazing views – some relaxing and others that will get your heart pumping . Your guide will show you around these natural treasures. In late 2011, a self-guided trail system opened with maps and signage so that you can hike to your heart's content! In addition, if you love biking there are mountain bikes and if you like trekking there are tents available for our volunteers.

- Day Hike to rivers and gorgeous waterfalls!
- Overnight Hike and Camp in the paramo eco-system in Yasuni National Park!
- Mountain Bike downhill 12km from the community to the bottom of the mountain! (a truck can bring you back up)
- Hike through coffee farms and low-lying cloud forests!
- Catch incredible views of endless mountain peaks and the valleys between them
- Visit the famous “Valley of Longevity”, Vilcabamba known for its “backpacker resorts” and relaxed vibe
- Visit Podocarpus National Park and hike through paramo highlands
- Visit Zamora and get a taste of Ecuador's beautiful Amazonian landscape
- Visit Cuenca, the most charming city in Ecuador
- Visit Ingapirca, the most important archaeological ruins in Ecuador.

5. Cost

One week:	USD 245
Two weeks:	USD 305
Three weeks:	USD 365
Four weeks:	USD 455
Five weeks:	USD 550
Six weeks:	USD 640
Seven weeks:	USD 725
Eight weeks:	USD 800

If you wish to stay for a longer period ask us for a quotation!

There is a USD \$50 application fee that is valid for 18 months and you can apply to as many programs as you like without having to pay this again.

What is included

- Pre-departure support
- Arrival orientation(Monday thru Friday at 3 PM at our offices in Quito)
- Long term experienced staff
- Welcome meeting
- Location orientation

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- 24-hour in-country support
- A personal guide dedicated to integrating volunteer tourists into the community through community events and excursions with daily availability to answer questions or concerns
- Daily education in organic farming practices with a focus on coffee production (excluding Saturday and Sunday)
- A private room with lock
- Access to a bathroom and shower
- 3 meals per day (upon arrival to the community)
- Transportation from the Loja bus terminal or Loja (Catamayo) airport upon arrival to the program

What is not included

- Flight or bus transportation from Quito to Loja and back
- Flights
- Medical and travel insurance
- Visa costs
- Personal kit
- Additional drinks and gratuities
- Extra local excursions
- International and domestic airport taxes
- Lodging outside the Project

Suggested packing list

- Bug Spray
- Camera – You are going to want to capture these views!
- Desire to Learn!
- Discretionary money
- Ear Plugs - Unless you are used to being around the morning crow of chickens, we highly recommend these gems!
- Hat and/or Sunglasses – For extra protection against the sun.
- Flip Flops/Shower Shoes
- Light Weight Long Sleeves & Pants – Nights can be chilly in El Airo. Also, light weight long apparel is needed when working in the farms due to bugs. (This is a must bring item)
- Long Socks - Rain boots purchased in Ecuador are tall, ending just under your knee. As a result, long socks are recommended.
- Outlet Converter - Most outlets are 2-pronged, therefore we recommend bringing a 3-pronged outlet converter
- Personal First Aid Kit

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- Rain jacket or Wind Breaker
- Sturdy shoes – Hiking or work boots are needed. If you own rain boots, please bring them. If not, they may be purchased upon arrival to Ecuador. (This is a must bring item)
- Sun Screen
- Toiletries – This includes sufficient shampoo, conditioner and soap. You can buy these items in the larger cities but supplies are limited within the community.
- Towel
- Umbrella

Preparing for your Trip

Passport / Visa Requirments

Please note that you need a full valid passport. Some countries do not require a visa for Ecuador, please confirm this with the embassy. Upon entry you will be issued with a 3 month permit (at no cost). Make sure the correct date and length of stay in the country is entered onto your visa when at immigration. Longer-term visitors need to obtain a volunteer visa in their home country. We can help you sending you all the documents you required for paperwork.

Arrival / Departure Information

You need to fly to Quito international airport, and make your way to a hotel. Taxis from the airport to the center of Quito cost approximately US\$8. If you would like to have the transfer service and/or hotel reservations please contact us in order to arrange this for you. After arrival you have to attend an introduction meeting at our main offices in Quito. Introductory meetings are at 3pm Mondays through Fridays. During these meetings you will receive all the information you need to volunteer in the project. If you need to change this appointment time let us know in advance.

(IMPORTANT NOTE: We kindly ask you to arrive in Ecuador at least a two days ahead of the start of your volunteer placement. Most projects WON'T receive volunteers on the weekends so please plan accordingly. Also remember you have one meeting with us at our offices, this happens at 3 PM Mondays thru Fridays.)

Direction to our Offices

Directions to our offices in Quito:

Take the Ecovia (Red bus running along 6 de Diciembre Avenue) & get off at the Estadio Olimpico stop. Walk west in Naciones Unidas Avenue (towards the big mountain, Pichincha) and get to the corner of the Naciones Unidas and Shyris Avenue (on the corner of Quicentro Shopping Mall). Cross Shyris avenue; then walk two blocks north (to your right) in Shyris avenue until you reach El Espectador street. Look for a building with blue windows called El Espectador. We are on the second floor. Office 203

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Finance

The Ecuadorian currency is the US Dollar. In general we recommend that you take travellers cheques or worldwide recognized credit cards instead of cash as your main source of money. Please be aware that you may have a maximum limit on cash withdrawal for your bank card in a single day, so it is advisable to come with most of the cash you'll need right away to avoid complications or delays in getting the cash you need.

Ecuador is a cheap country in which to live. A normal person's daily expenses (excluding room, laundry and board) range between US \$20 to US\$25. Urban public transport is US\$0.25 one-way regardless of distance.

Medical Information

High altitude, e.g. in Quito (2800 metres) can affect some people's health. You should check with your doctor if you have any doubts before you travel. If visiting Quito you are advised to take it easy for the first couple of days.

Health and Safety**Field Base safety**

All volunteers will be informed of the risks, health and safety procedures for the field on the arrival orientation. It is imperative that everyone both understands and respects them.

Volunteer safety

Look after your passport and take a separate photocopy with you. Do not wear jewelry or walk around areas outside with valuable items on display e.g. cameras. Do not carry large amounts of cash. In the unlikely event that you are targeted for your belongings, hand them over without resistance. If you are traveling in public transportation in Quito, always be aware of your belongings; put your backpack on your front instead of in the back. Be careful with your wallet and keep it in your front pocket. If you are taking taxis, be sure to get on an official taxi (yellow with orange plates).