

# 10-Day Student Expedition: Ecuador

## SERVICE LEARNING AND ADVENTURE IN THE CLOUDFOREST AND AMAZON



### **DAY 1: Arrival to Quito**

Arrival to Ecuador (transfer to hostel).  
Lodging at hostel in Quito.

### **DAY 2: Quito city tour and creative recycling workshop (Meals included: B & L)**

Surrounded by snow-capped volcanoes and standing at 2,800 meters above sea level, Quito is the second highest capital city in the world.

The historic center of Quito, or “centro historico,” is home to some of the best-preserved colonial architecture in the Americas. While exploring the beautiful plazas and narrow cobblestone streets, you will learn about Spanish settlement, and the stories behind the grandiose churches, some still home to active cloisters. You will watch century-old techniques for making sweets and snacks in small shops hidden away in the maze-like streets of the centro historico.

Lunch will be served at La Cuchara de San Marcos, a private restaurant and art gallery that serves organic vegetarian and non-vegetarian food. You will take part in a recycling workshop after lunch where you will learn how to transform old magazines, bottles and cans into unique crafts!

### **DAY 3: From Quito to the Cloudforest (Meals included: B, L & D)**

Today you will travel to your host community in the heart of the Cloudforest on the Western slope of the Andes. First, we'll make a stop at the Equatorial line where you will visit a unique museum that features a number of interactive exhibits demonstrating

mysterious events that only occur on the equator. Traditional Andean cuisine for lunch, and if you're feeling adventurous, you can try the local delicacy: Cuy, or roast guinea pig. Upon arriving to the community after lunch, you will meet the community president and engage in a welcoming activity to get to know the community members. Homestay accommodation has been arranged in this community, providing you with the opportunity to improve your Spanish speaking and comprehension skills, as well as to get a feel for rural Ecuadorian culture.



### **DAY 4: Cloudforest community volunteer work (Meals included: B, L & D)**

During your stay in the community, you will contribute to a grassroots conservation and community development initiative. The community owns forest that provides priority habitat for the endangered Andean Spectacled Bear, and the area has also been identified as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by Birdlife International due to its high level of endemic and threatened bird species.

### Learning Objectives:

- Grasp the social, economic and environmental threats to biodiversity conservation.
- Gain hands-on experience in sustainable development.
- Obtain inspiration from direct interaction with conservation organizations working in the Amazon and Cloudforest.
- Engage in cross-cultural exchange and improve Spanish language skills.

**PRICE: \$ 1000 pp \***

### *INCLUDES:*

- Private ground transportation.
- Bilingual guides
- Lodging in 2x and 3x rooms
- Meals according to itinerary
- 24/7 Emergency contact
- Activities according to itinerary
- All airport transfers
- Tips

### *NOT INCLUDED:*

- Travel insurance
  - Extra beverages
- \* Referential Price based on 15 travelers

Greentrek Contact:

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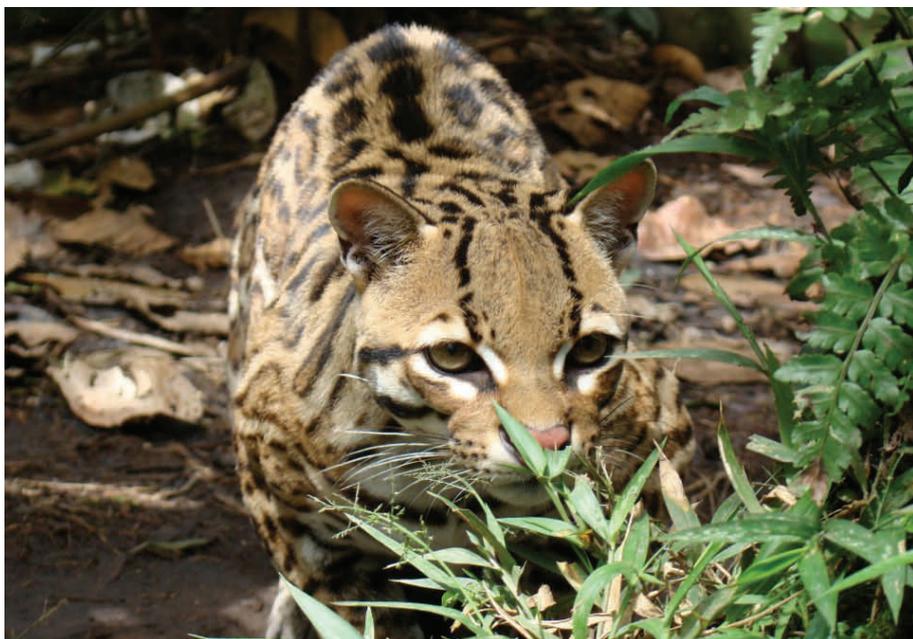
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### **DAY 4 Continued:**

The community has made a commitment to conserve forested areas of their land and are developing an Ecotourism Lodge to provide an alternative source of income. Daily activities may include: Organic farm work, contribution to on-going reforestation projects, creating crafts in the artisan shop, trail development and maintenance, ecotourism infrastructure development, helping in the school and teaching English. Accommodation in homestays.

### **DAY 5: Cloudforest community volunteer work (Meals included: B, L & D)**

Today will be the second day of work in the community where you will actively contribute to the sustainable development of the community and conservation of key Cloudforest habitat. In the afternoon, community members will perform traditional dances and you will have a farewell celebration and a thank you dinner with the community.

### **DAY 6: Zip line and chocolate tour (Meals included: B & L)**

After breakfast, pack and get ready to visit an ecological reserve where you will have the opportunity to Zipline above the

canopy of the cloud forest! Later, the group will learn about how organic cacao is transformed into delicious chocolate bars at a local chocolate shop in Mindo. Lodging in a hostel in Mindo.

### **DAY 7: Travel to the Amazon (Meals included: B & L)**

Today, you will cross the Andean mountain range on a scenic drive to the city of Tena, an attractive and quiet city. Tena is a popular launching point for jungle, kayaking and rafting tours in Ecuador's Amazon rainforest region. After settling in, a representative from a local conservation organization and/or university will meet your team at the hostel to discuss conservation priorities, challenges and current research underway in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Lodging in a eco-hostel in Tena.

### **DAY 8: Wildlife rescue and rainforest research centers (Meals included: B & L)**

Today you will explore the Napo River by motorized canoe. First, you will visit a wildlife rescue center where the group will receive an exclusive tour and learn about illegal wildlife trade, rescue, rehabilitation and release of wildlife, and efforts that their

organization, partners and authorities are taking to limit illegal wildlife trade. You will also visit a private conservation reserve managed by an Ecuadorian non-profit organization. Here you will learn about on-going rainforest research, and about the social, economic and environmental pressures that threaten conservation. Lodging in Tena.

### **DAY 9: Andean hot springs and return to Quito. (Meals included: B & L)**

On your way back to Quito, you'll stop at an award-winning natural hot springs and spa complex where you can soak in the springs, get a massage, or go for a guided walk through the Andean grasslands in search of a Condor and other Alpine birds. Arrival late afternoon to Quito. Lodging at hostel in Quito.

### **DAY 10: Transfer to airport (Meals included: B)**

Safe travels home!



### **Greentrek Sustainable Travel**

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