

# Destination Fact Sheet: Ecuador

Worldwide region:	South America
Capital City:	Quito (GMT - 5hrs)
Environment:	Mountains, cloud forest, rainforest.
When to go:	April - Oct
Itineraries:	Explorer, Expedition
Highlights:	Andes Mountains, Otavalo town and market, Amazon rainforest, Galapagos Islands
Essentially:	An extraordinary country which incorporates lush tropical forest, stunning Andean peaks and a thriving indigenous cultures.



## About the country

Ecuador is the smallest of the Andean nations but is home to a staggering array of scenery, wildlife and cultures. The imposing high Andes provide a dramatic backdrop to the pretty, traditional Andean villages found in the highlands. At the lower altitudes you can experience lush tropical rainforest, as well as rich cloud forest, crammed with thriving vegetation and alive with the sounds of the jungle fauna. Indeed, Ecuador is one of the most biologically diverse countries in the whole of South America and the Galapagos Islands add only to its magnificent and varied wildlife.

## Explorer Programmes

Begin your journey in Quito, Ecuador's capital city, where you can appreciate the grandness of the colonial Old Town (a UNESCO world heritage site) as well as exploring 'New Quito', home to the city's business and shopping districts. From here, head north into the foothills of the Andes to visit the traditional Indian market at Otavalo and access a variety of trekking options. You may choose a route that leads to the dramatic Inca ruins of Ingapirca or your group could explore the western cordillera, before ending your trip with a visit to the lush Ecuadorian Amazon.

## Expedition Programmes

Spend a period of acclimatisation in the highlands area close to Otavalo town and hike around Cuicocha and the Mojanda lakes. Enjoy a visit to the Cotopaxi National Park before beginning the main trekking phase of your expedition in the spectacular mountain scenery of the high Andes. Travel to the town of Baños, in the Ecuadorian Amazon, where you can rest your weary muscles in the natural hot springs and canoe your way to reach the remote jungle lodge where you will spend your last few days experiencing some of Ecuador's most stunning flora and fauna.

**Please note: It is possible to incorporate multi-day trekking and boat trips to visit the Galapagos Islands into any Explorer or Expedition Programme itinerary.**

## In summary

Ecuador is an excellent all-round destination, combining cultural encounters and physical challenges. Groups should be experienced with outdoor adventures and must undergo a fitness programme in order to prepare for the itinerary.



**To discuss the variety of options for tailor making a trip to Ecuador for your group, please telephone us on 0845 634 4670 or visit our website at [www.schoolsworldwide.co.uk](http://www.schoolsworldwide.co.uk)**