



An introduction to Ecuador

We have put together this guide to introduce Ecuador to you knowing that is very easy to get bamboozled by too much information. We hope this short guide will be enough to set you on the right course, without being too detailed. As such it is not meant to be definitive - for further details we strongly recommend that you look at our website or get in touch as we would be delighted to talk to you all about Ecuador.

Country summary

Ecuador is the 4th smallest country in South America, yet it encapsulates so many of the continent's finest attributes. The central region is dominated by towering Andean peaks and fiery volcanoes and exploring this region is all about traditional life that often centres around weekly markets and town plazas. In the east is the biodiverse Amazon jungle where you can stay at a remote lodge and learn about traditional indigenous life and spot a huge variety of wildlife. Last but not least, a flight to the enchanting, tamed and revered Galapagos Islands should be on everyone's bucket list.





Cloudforest

There are several cloud forests that have mossy foliage and hugely diverse populations of birds and frogs. The moisture in the clouds makes the forest a luscious green and packed with life – well worth a visit if you are spending time in Ecuador.

Mashpi Lodge is an excellent option for those seeking luxury in this unique location – unwind in the Jacuzzi after taking a trip along the canopy cables which wind through the forest from the lodge. Mindo is also possible to visit on a day trip from Quito

The Highlands

The Highlands of Ecuador stretch through the middle of the country and comprise of the Andes mountain range making this region a focal point for the country. For those that venture into the small communities and villages you will see traditional life and escape the mass numbers that flock to the Galapagos. There are a couple of luxury haciendas that are superb places to stay whilst exploring these gorgeous locations. Our favourite hacienda has to be the impeccably run Hacienda Zuleta.

Ecuador FAQ's

When is the best time to visit?

There are several microclimates in Ecuador that influence the best time to visit. Take into consideration that the best time to visit the Galapagos Islands are from December to May, although outside of these months then we still recommend visiting the islands, apart from late September when the seas can be a little choppier and many of the boats are in dry dock. Down the central highlands of the country then the best time to visit are from June to September.

How much does a trip to Ecuador cost?

There is no easy answer to this one as all of our itineraries are designed from scratch to suit your interest and budget. As a general guide then a two week trip to Ecuador, including a week in the Galapagos Islands starts from around £6,150/\$8,000 per person. For a full itinerary please see <http://digital.africaodyssey.com/Itinerary/Landing/16DA8822-B5A7-40F6-8972-EB0F11F93C6E>

Neighbouring countries to combine with Ecuador itinerary

After exploring the Galapagos Islands and once you have exhausted Ecuador, Lima in Peru is only a short flight away from Quito or Guayaquil. Here, there is plenty to do with fantastic museums and internationally renowned restaurants - you will not get bored if you spend a few days here. For those of you with no time restraints, why not visit the legendary Machu Picchu and explore a bit more of Peru as well.

Is the altitude a problem?

Some regions of Ecuador such as Quito at 2,850m can get up to very high altitudes. It is not a problem, but just something to be wary of. We always design our trips taking into account the altitudes that you will be experiencing.

What is the currency?

Ecuador uses the US dollar, and it can be withdrawn from ATMs in larger towns using UK credit/debit.

What is the language?

Spanish is the main language. Additionally Quechua and other indigenous languages are spoken in the rural areas.



What is the time difference?

United Kingdom (GMT) is -5 hours. New York is +1 hour. California is -1 hours.

How do I get there?

There are no direct flights from the UK and popular change airports are Amsterdam, Paris and Madrid. If you are flying from the US then there are more options.

Why South America Odyssey?

First and foremost, the team here at Odyssey Travel love South America and have spent many years exploring and working in the continent in a variety of capacities. We have stayed at the hotels we work with, we have built loyal relationships with the best guides in their respective fields, and we now use our love and first-hand knowledge to craft individual tailor made itineraries. It is our intimate knowledge of the continent, combined with our relationships that help us continually deliver exceptional and authentic holidays to the continent. Our promise to you is first class service, unrivalled country knowledge and value for money.

✓ First class service ✓ Super knowledgeable itinerary designers ✓ Fantastic value for money

Our price promise

Booking through us will cost no more - and often considerably less - than booking the same trip with all the individual suppliers directly. We are able to negotiate excellent rates with suppliers, which results in savings for you. In the very unlikely event that you get a cheaper quote for the same trip from a reputable UK bonded tour operator, we will match that quote.

We are ATOL bonded (ATOL 5397) so whatever might happen to us, your money is protected.

No surcharge for currency fluctuations Once your itinerary is confirmed and your deposit has been paid,

In summary, we are able to package a holiday for less than you will be able to arrange directly, without any exchange risk, and you will benefit from our decades of experience in arranging similar trips, our impartial opinions, and the financial security that our ATOL bond offers!

we guarantee that we will make no surcharge for currency fluctuations, whatever happens to exchange rates before you actually travel.