



# ECUADOR ADVENTURE

Indian markets, the towering Andes & the amazing Amazon

8 DAYS - STARTING QUITO 9<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021







# ECUADOR ADVENTURE

## Trip Outline

There are so many good reasons to visit Ecuador. This small country is very much a microcosm of South America. Within its borders lie snow-capped mountains, smoking volcanoes, enormous rivers, lush tropical coastal plains, amazing wildlife and dense Amazonian jungle. This, coupled with the country's rich Indian and Spanish history makes Ecuador a truly wonderful destination for the curious traveller.

Ecuador's mainland can be divided into three distinct areas that run the length of the country. The coastal region is a fertile alluvial plain, particularly famous for its banana plantations. The middle section is the Sierra, formed by the western & eastern chain of the Andes which contains several high plateaus. This is both an agricultural area and the indigenous heartland of the country and home to towering peaks and more than 30 volcanoes. On the eastern side of the Sierra is the Orient. This vast, sparsely populated area extends into the upper Amazon basin and is covered by thick tropical rainforests rich in exotic wildlife. Although remote, the Amazon is one of Ecuador's most exciting destinations.

Your brief Ecuadorian adventure starts upon arrival at Ecuador's new airport where you meet your guide and head for the colourful town of Otavalo. The town is famous for its wonderful Indian arts and crafts market. You then visit Ecuador's capital Quito. Founded by the Spanish on the ruins of an Incan city it remains the least-altered historic centre in Latin America and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is set in a breathtaking Andean valley surrounded by spectacular volcanic peaks. You discover the city's highlights and travel out to 'Mitad del Mundo' to stand upon the Equator line.

A short flight over the Andes brings you to Coca. Here you join a motorized canoe on the Napo River which brings you to Sacha Lodge - one of Ecuador's premiere rainforest lodges located in the heart of the Amazon rainforest. With your expert rainforest guide you learn about the flora and fauna of this incredibly important biosphere. There are night walks to see the nocturnal forest dwellers. You will walk atop the Canopy Bridge to see the forest from a different perspective, seek out caiman, sloths, monkeys and an amazing assortment of stunning birdlife. You will learn of the medicinal properties of different plants and the traditions and beliefs of the native Indians who call the rainforest home. All this and more from the comfort of Sacha Lodge. At the end of your Amazon jungle adventure you return to Coca for your flight back to Quito and to your journey's end.



## Tour Highlights

- The Otavalo Indian Market
- Cotacachi Village
- Cuicocha Crater Lagoon
- Quito Basilica
- Archbishops Palace
- Panecillo Hill Lookout
- La Compania Church
- 'Mitad del Mundo' (Equator)
- Intiñan Museum
- 3 Nights in Sacha Amazon Lodge
- Sacha Butterfly Centre
- Jungle Canopy Bridge
- Igapo & Terra Firma Forest s
- Lagartococha Trail Nature Walk
- Lagartococha Lake Canoe Safari
- The Kapok Observation Tower

## Tour Host – Steve Mortimer



Steve Mortimer heads up Byroads and will be your host on this tour. Steve has more than 30 years in the travel industry and has travelled to well over 100 countries. He started work in travel as an expedition leader, guiding travellers overland across Africa, Asia and South America. He has also worked with a number of well-known Australian

travel companies designing and operating holidays to some of the world's most fascinating destinations.

Steve likes nothing better than getting out and about with like-minded travellers, sharing his knowledge and introducing his guests to some of the world's most interesting places. With Byroads you can be confident you'll visit all the 'must see' attractions, however there is still time to wander and make your own discoveries. Throughout the tour a local guide provides a wealth of information and shares their extensive local knowledge. In the Amazon jungle highly professional naturalist guides (many from the indigenous community) are provided by Sacha Lodge and they will introduce you to the amazing world of the Amazon rainforest.

# 2021 ITINERARY STARTS IN QUITO



**FRI 9 APR: QUITO-OTAVALO** – Upon arrival at Quito airport you will be met and transferred to your hotel in the picturesque Andean town of Otavalo. There are no activities planned so the remainder of the day is at your leisure.

**SAT 10 APR: OTAVALO-QUITO** – Today you will explore the town of Otavalo, famous for its indigenous market. Saturday is traditionally the biggest market day of the week and the most colourful. Later you visit Cotachi village, known for its leather and a great place to meet local craft workers. You also visit the Cuicocha crater lagoon before heading to Quito in the late afternoon. (B)

**SUN 11 APR: QUITO** – Following breakfast you start your tour of the colonial centre of Quito. First stop is at the neo-gothic Basilica Church and then the Plaza Grande, home to the Presidential Palace, the national Cathedral and the Archbishop's Palace. A highlight is the baroque La Compania Church with its volcanic stone face and its gold laden interior. In the afternoon you venture out to the 'Mitad del Mundo' monument situated on the equator line. Here you visit the Intinan Museum where you can experience a captivating combination of physics, folklore and Ecuadorian culture. You return to Quito in the late afternoon. (B)

**MON 12 APR: QUITO-COCA-SACHA LODGE** – This morning you transfer to the airport for your short flight over the Andes to Coca. This small city is located in the Amazon Rainforest at the confluence of the Coca and the Napo Rivers. Here you join motorised canoes on the Napo River and travel 2 hours downstream to Sacha Lodge situated on the edge of the Pilchiococha Lagoon. After settling in there is time to visit the Butterfly Centre, a magical place where you can observe a plethora of exotic butterfly species and learn about their life cycles. Following your first dinner in the jungle those who are feeling adventurous can head out on an evening walk through the rainforest to see different species of insects, snakes and other creatures only visible at night. (BD)

**TUE 13 APR: SACHA LODGE** – After an early breakfast head to the Canopy Bridge, one of the features making Sacha Lodge truly unique. Here, you can walk 275 meters through the forest at an altitude of 36 meters; a magical experience! It affords an excellent view of the canopy, where you can spot beautiful bird species and, with some luck, monkeys jumping from tree top to tree top. You then follow a trail through a Terra Firma and Igapo forest, while the native naturalist guide explains the flora and share their knowledge about traditional medicinal plants. After lunch you can choose between two hiking options. The first has a low difficulty level and leads you along the Napo River, while the second is a bit more challenging, following the Leoncillo Trail and giving you the opportunity to spot the dusky iti monkey. In the evening, a wonderful dinner is served in the restaurant. (BLD)

**WED 14 APR: SACHA LODGE** – After breakfast, you begin your hike along Lagartococha. Besides enjoying beautiful nature, this trail also offers us the chance to learn more about the local people and their relationship with the forest. During the hike, your guide tells us more about the native people's beliefs. When you arrive at Lagartococha Lake, you take small canoes to explore the swamp and look for anacondas, caimans, and capybaras. Your group continues the hike on the other side of the lake, where you may spot capuchin monkeys or squirrel monkeys jumping from tree to tree. Back at the lodge, you have some time to rest before lunch. In the afternoon, you can fish for piranhas from the terrace of the restaurant, after which you can join others in a dugout canoe safari, navigating over small streams in the swamp area that will bring you to one of the most peaceful places in the jungle. Keep your eyes wide open, because wildlife, like the lazy sloth, is hiding behind every tree. The canoes will bring you to an ancient Kapok tree where a wooden tower allows you to see a stunning sunset from above. Afterwards, you return to the lodge for dinner. (BLD)

**THU 15 APR: SACHA LODGE-COCA-QUITO** – After breakfast, you depart for a short walk over the boardwalks to hopefully spot monkeys and tropical birds one last time, before returning by motorised canoes back along the Napo River to Coca where you are brought to the airport for your return flight Quito. On arrival at the airport you are transferred back to your hotel in the colonial centre where the remainder of your day is free to make some of your own discoveries. (B)

**FRI 16 APR: QUITO** – Your Ecuador Adventure ends after breakfast this morning. Taxis are available to take you to the airport or you can arrange a transfer with Byroads at the time of booking. Additional accommodation is also available should you wish to stay on in Quito. (B)

***For those who would like to visit the Galapagos Islands please visit the Byroads website and consider our 16 Days 'Ecuador & the Galapagos Islands' tour which combines this Ecuador Adventure with a wildlife cruise in the Galapagos Islands.***



## Prices & Inclusions

### 8 Days Ecuador Adventure

**Price in US Dollars: USD 3250 (p/p twin-share)**

**Provisional Single Supplement: USD 395**

**Price includes:** Steve Mortimer as Tour Escort, local tour guide, expert rainforest guide, arrival transfer, all local transportation, entrance fees, return flight Quito to Coca, 7 nights accommodation and meals as indicated.

**Not Included:** Visa fees, travel insurance (compulsory), international flights, additional meals, drinks, departure transfer, optional tours, spending of a personal nature, laundry and tips.

**Transportation:** Transport by comfortable air-conditioned minibus, motorised boats and canoes, paddle canoes. Return flights from Quito to Coca.

**Accommodation:** For your Ecuador Adventure we have selected some wonderful accommodation. On the outskirts of Otavalo you stay in a 300 year old hacienda whilst in the colonial heart of Quito you stay in an elegant boutique hotel. For your stay in the Amazon Jungle you stay at Sacha Lodge, one of Ecuador's best wildlife lodges. Remote yet accessible, unspoiled yet comfortable, the eco-lodge is the perfect base for you to explore the fascinating Amazonian rainforest.



150 year old Hacienda in Otavalo



Charming rooms with character



Comfort in Quito's historic centre



Stylish rooms with en-suite



Ecuador's premier jungle lodge



Absolute comfort in the jungle

**Food and drink:** Breakfast is included each day. Elsewhere, you enjoy the great variety of local food on offer. At Sacha Lodge all meals are included. Beer, wine, spirits, soft drinks, tea, coffee and bottled water is widely available at extra cost.

**Group size:** Maximum 16

**Fitness:** A moderate degree of physical fitness is required in order to get in and out of the canoes and to walk the jungle trails. In the Amazon there are limited medical facilities so you should also be in good health.

**Additional Expenses:** Food is not particularly expensive in Ecuador. As a guideline allow US\$7-\$12 for a light lunch and between US\$12-\$25 for dinner. In addition you should budget for any personal shopping you may want. Please also allow extra funds to tip your local tour guide, naturalist guide, driver and porters (full details will be provided in the pre-trip Field Guide).

**Bookings:** Travel on Q (Sydney) is the sole booking agent for this tour. Please register your interest ASAP in order to secure your place and note there are a limited number of single rooms available. A non-refundable deposit of AUD 750 per person is required with final payment due 90 days prior to tour commencement.

**Travel on Q** (Carole Grassby and Tina Briggs)

Tel: (02) 9357 6800

Email: [travel@travelonq.com.au](mailto:travel@travelonq.com.au)

**Currency:** Due to the volatility of global currencies the tour price has been quoted in United States Dollars (USD) however you will pay for your tour in Australian dollars based on the buying rate set by Westpac Bank on the due date of your final balance.

**Flights and Transfers:** Most flights to Ecuador travel via Santiago in Chile or Buenos Aires in Argentina. LATAM Airlines and Air New Zealand fly from Australia and New Zealand to South America. An arrival transfer is included; however the departure transfer is not and can be arranged on request. Travel on Q can assist you with your flights and advise you on your best options.

**Extra Nights in Otavalo & Quito:** Additional nights can be booked pre and post tour however you must advise Travel on Q well in advance to ensure availability.

**Activities in the Amazon:** Activities in the Amazon may vary depending on the weather and there can be some small entrance fees which must be paid for locally that normally benefit the local Indigenous community.

**Visas:** Ecuador visas are not currently required by Australian or New Zealand citizens.

**Documentation:** Upon receipt of final payment, a comprehensive field guide will be mailed and you will be sent the relevant tour and accommodation vouchers prior to departure.

**What Next?** Contact Travel on Q to discuss your travel plans and to make your booking. Further information is also available at [www.byroads.com.au](http://www.byroads.com.au).



Byroads Pty Ltd, Trading as Byroads Travel (ABN 88615738746)

Please indicate if you wish to remain on our mailing list: ☐ Yes ☐ No

# BOOKING FORM

Byroads Travel is the operator of your tour. Byroads Travel (henceforth referred to as Byroads) is a registered trading name of Byroads Pty Ltd (ABN 88 615 738 746). Travel on Q Pty Ltd (ATAS 10482 / ABN 40 059 566 184) is the sole booking agent for Byroads.

## RESERVATION AND DEPOSIT

A deposit is payable on all tours. The amount payable is stated in the Byroads brochure. This deposit must be paid to Travel on Q and accompanied by a signed booking form. When paying a deposit for your tour and signing the Booking Form you accept these conditions. Your Byroads tour booking will only be confirmed once the deposit and signed booking form have been received. This Booking Form forms the basis of your contract between you and Byroads.

## PAYMENT

Payments may be made to Travel on Q by direct deposit or by credit card. If paying by credit card the following surcharges will be applied to the cost of your tour arrangements: 1.5% for Visa and MasterCard, 3.5% for American Express, and 3 % for Diners Club.

## FINAL BALANCE

The balance of your tour payment is due 90 days prior to the start of your tour. If, for any reason, the balance payment is not received by the due date, Byroads reserves the right to treat such failure to pay the balance as a cancellation and to apply the appropriate cancellation charges.

## CANCELLATION BY YOU

If, for any reason, you cancel your tour booking, Byroads shall apply the following cancellation penalties. Charges are per person:

- \* Cancellation up to 90 days prior to departure, forfeiture of the total deposit
- \* From 90 to 60 days prior to departure, 30% of tour price shall be retained
- \* From 60 to 30 days prior to departure, 50% of tour price shall be retained
- \* Within 30 days prior to departure, no refund will be made

In addition to the above charges, cancellation fees may also apply to any domestic airfare component of your tour. No refund will be made after your tour has commenced or in respect of lost or unused tickets, hotel coupons, meals or any other services not utilized.

## AMENDMENTS

Up to 90 days prior to the departure of your tour, any amendment to a confirmed reservation will incur a fee of \$50 per change per file, in addition to any charges levied by Travel on Q, airlines, or any other service provider. From 90 to 30 days prior to departure, any amendment to confirmed travel arrangements will incur a fee of \$100 per change per file. Once documents have been dispatched, any amendment will incur a fee of \$150 per change per file.

## TOUR PRICES

Byroads tour prices and provisional tour prices are based on tariffs and prevailing rates of exchange when tours were costed. Prices are subject to change without prior notice. In the

event of fluctuations in currency exchange rates, service providers' tariffs, fuel prices or any other cost that affects the price of your tour, Byroads reserves the right to adjust tour prices at any time up to the day of departure.

## TOUR OPERATION

Although Byroads will endeavour to ensure that tours are operated as advertised, an express condition of making a reservation is the acceptance by you that the tour itineraries, schedules, advertised accommodation, sightseeing and mode of transportation as outlined in the Byroads brochure and/or supplied in the pre-departure information are subject to change without prior notice. If for any reason Byroads is forced to cancel a tour before it commences, all monies paid in respect of the tour will be refunded in full less any credit card fees collected.

Unforeseeable circumstances such as force majeure, adverse weather conditions such as floods or earthquakes, airline flight rescheduling, technical faults with transportation and road conditions may also have a consequential effect on the content of your tour after it has commenced. Any decision made in respect of tour services provided by Byroads to reroute or amend the itinerary due to the above or similar circumstances shall be at the sole discretion of Byroads. Byroads and Travel on Q shall not be liable for any claim whatsoever arising from such events that affect the schedule and content of your tour.

## HEALTH AND FITNESS

Byroads operates soft adventure tours. All participants are required to be fit and healthy. Some of the hotels used by Byroads may not have lifts or porters so you must be prepared at times to carry your own suitcase. Before travelling with Byroads, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with any health requirements applicable to areas through which you will be travelling.

## ACCEPTANCE OF RISK

You acknowledge that the nature of the trip is adventurous and participation involves a degree of personal risk. You will be visiting places where the political, cultural and geographical attributes present dangers and physical challenges greater than those present in our daily lives. We use information from government foreign departments and reports from our own contacts in assessing whether the itinerary should operate. However it is also your own responsibility to acquaint yourself with all relevant travel information and the nature of your itinerary. You acknowledge that your decision to travel is made in light of consideration of this information and you accept that you are aware of the personal risks attendant upon such travel.

## PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Australian passport holders must have at least 6 months validity on their passport after the date of return to Australia. Visas are required for a number of our tours and it is your responsibility to obtain them. Travel on Q can assist with this process. Non Australian passport holders are asked to check passport and visa requirements at the time of booking.

## ITEMS NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR COST

The cost of your Byroads tour includes hotel accommodation, transportation, transfers as

specified, sightseeing and meals as indicated in the tour brochure. It does not include international airfares, airport departure taxes, unspecified meals, optional sightseeing, additional transfers, gratuities for hotel staff, guides and tour leaders, items of a personal nature such as laundry, phone calls etc. or any other incidental expenses.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is an express condition of travelling with Byroads that you have comprehensive travel insurance including full cover for repatriation. It is highly recommended that you take out travel insurance at the time you pay the deposit to guard against any unforeseen circumstances. If on the first day of your tour you cannot provide evidence that you have purchased comprehensive travel insurance you will be required to purchase a policy before proceeding with your tour.

## LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

We contract with a network of companies, government agencies and individuals to assist in the running of our trips as agent for these third parties. We are not responsible for the acts and omissions of these third parties. To the fullest extent permitted by law:

(i) any liability for any loss, death, injury or damage which you may suffer (directly or indirectly) in connection with or arising out of your participation in a trip, or any breach of the Booking Conditions, is excluded;

(ii) Travel on Q acts only as agent for Byroads and accepts no responsibility for the acts and omissions of Byroads or any of its associated service providers for any inaccuracies in information provided, negligence, loss, damage, omission, accident, detention, diversion or theft in regard to luggage or any personal belongings whatsoever.

(iii) you release Byroads and its officers, employees, agents and representatives from any liability and expressly waive any claims you may have against us arising out of or in connection with your participation in a trip; and

(iv) any condition or warranty which would otherwise be implied by law into these Booking Conditions (Implied Warranty), is excluded.

To the extent an Implied Warranty cannot be excluded, our liability in respect of the Implied Warranty is limited to (in our absolute discretion): (a) the provision of a similar trip to an equivalent value; or (b) a refund of the total amount received by us from you in connection with your booking.

Any claim by you is excluded to the extent that it is for indirect or consequential loss, loss of profits or economic loss, however it arises, or for indirect, special, punitive or exemplary damages.

## APPLICABLE LAW

The laws of Victoria, Australia govern these Booking Conditions to the fullest extent allowable. Any disputes in connection with a trip or these Booking Conditions must be initiated in the courts Victoria, Australia.