

# **MRACX Ecuador Itinerary**

## **DAY 1. QUITO ARRIVAL DAY**

Welcome to Quito! The largest, best-preserved colonial city of America - declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978. The city is considered the Cultural Capital of South America and is located on the equator in a valley at the foothills of the Pichincha volcano. Depending on arrival time, you can spend your day exploring the old town of Quito and the surrounding area. ADVENTURE JOURNEYS can help you to organize a day trip (please request in advance). In the evening, one of our trip leaders will meet you at the hotel's lobby for a welcome briefing at 18:00 hours. At this time, we will discuss the details and questions you may have regarding the adventure. Our first day is an acclimation and information day

**Accommodation:** Sheraton (Quito)

**Meals:** Welcome dinner

## **DAY 2. TREK IN COTOPAXI NATIONAL PARK**

After breakfast, we leave Quito driving southwards along the gorgeous Avenue of Volcanoes, getting the chance to see the colorful Andean fields. On our way, we will reach 12,000 feet. (3657 meters). After arriving at the Cotopaxi National Park, we will go hiking around Limpiopungo lagoon of the foot hills of the Rumiñahui volcano. From here, we have the best views of Cotopaxi, the highest active volcano in the world. In the afternoon we continue our drive towards the Llanganates National Park, known as the sacred mountain, until we reach the town of Baños, located at the entrance of the Amazon. Here we can enjoy the best night life by drinking cocktails and dancing salsa. Trekking Activity Level - Moderate, this adventure is at high elevation, make sure you drink a lot of water or coca tea (in case of altitude sickness). The trail is on dirt surrounded by bushes and grass.

Trekking Time: 3 hours

Trekking Distance: 4 miles (6.4 km)

Elevation Gain: 1200 feet (366 meters)

Minimum Elevation: 12700 feet (3870 meters)

Maximum Elevation: 13850 feet (4222 meters)

NOTE - In case the weather and physical conditions are good you may trek to the Basecamp and the maximum elevation would be 16000 feet. (4888 meters)

What to wear today: Pants, t-shirt, fleece, hiking shoes, gloves, hat, buff, bring rain jacket and pants, water bottle, sun cream, binoculars.

**Accommodation:** Selina Baños

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch.

### **DAY 3. BIKING IN THE CLOUD FOREST**

This morning we cross country mountain bike from the Llanganates National Park down to the Pastaza River Canyon, enjoying the beauty of the special cloud rain forest climate. The road brings us through some Andean farms and a great canyon with many waterfalls, while descending into the jungle, we will have a breath-taking view of Baños, a town well known for its spectacular location right at the foothills of the Tungurahua volcano, which has been active since 1999. The volcano is the main attraction of this region. In the afternoon we will have some time to explore the town and also go to The Swing of the End of the World, where the winner of the 2014 National Geographic photo contest took his photo.

Biking Activity Level - Moderate, mostly downhill, the first 45 minutes up hill and then afterwards just down. You will be riding on cobblestone and dirt roads for the first two hours, and 1 hour on asphalt.

Biking Time: 3 hours

Biking Distance: 20 miles (32.18 km)

Elevation Gain: 500 feet (152 meters)

Minimum Elevation while

Biking: 5500 feet (1676 meters)

Maximum Elevation while

Biking: 10450 feet (3185 meters)

NOTE - In case you want to avoid the uphill, there will always be the support of our transportation, and our driver will be happy to give you a ride till you decide to join the biking group.

What to wear today: Shorts, t-shirt, fleece, tennis shoes, buff, bring rain jacket and pants, water bottle, sun cream, mosquito repellent.

**Accommodation:** Selina Baños

**Meals:** Breakfast

#### **DAY 4. THE ROAD OF WATERFALL**

This morning we will hit the road of the waterfalls. The first stop will be at the bride's Veil waterfall, where we will take the Tarabita (cable car) to get across the Pastaza River. Then we will hike down to the Pailon del Diablo waterfall, the second highest in Ecuador, later, we will go deeper into the jungle inside the Llanganates National Park. The name "Llanganates" comes from "beautiful mountain" in the local native language. Here, 600 years ago, the Incas hid their golden treasures. Many explorers have spent years looking for these treasures, some have even disappeared with no luck in this dense pristine jungle. During a hike through the tropical rain forest, we will climb through several waterfall canyons. Our local native guide will teach about the incredible flora and fauna that thrive in this unequaled habitat.

**Accommodation:** Homestay

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

#### **DAY 5. RAFTING**

We greet the day by preparing our gear to paddle the wild waves of the Jatunyacu River, located just a 5-minute drive from the homestead. The beauty of this river will inspire you and reveal the magic of the Amazon rain forest, after a very important safety briefing from our rafting guides, we will start our class III rafting expedition down the Jatunyacu River, well known for its clear waters and awesome rapids. We will have a lot of fun playing some games and also exploring one of the canyons. The end of the journey offers us a stop for a picnic, prepared by our guides, we conclude our day with a drive back up to the Andes to a spot called Papallacta, where we will stay the night and recharge in the volcanic hot springs high in the midst of the cool Andes.

Rafting Activity Level - Moderate, this is considered a class III river for white water rafting. There are some awesome waves and also plenty of flat water to go swimming. The river is surrounded by amazing views of the Amazon landscape.

Rafting Time: 4 hours, depending on the level of the water, it can be less time.

Rafting Distance: 18 miles (28.96 km)

What to wear today: Shorts, water long sleeve t-shirt, water sandals, water bottle, sun cream, mosquito repellent.

Accommodation: Selina Tena

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, dinner

## **DAY 6. TERMAS DE PAPALLACTA**

The hot springs and Touristic Complex of «Termas de Papallacta» is an amazing place where short hikes can be done, where your guide will explain the richness of this ecosystem called the Cloud Forest, along the trail you can find orchids and colorful birds, later you will have some time so you can soak into the volcanic pools and take some optional treatments at the Spa. Your guide will recommend a place to have lunch and later you will get back to Quito. This is the perfect anti-stress therapy recommended for your health!

**Accommodation:** Termas de Papallacta

**Meals:** Breakfast

## **DAY 7. QUITO TO GUAYAQUIL - PUERTO LOPEZ**

Today we will depart early in the morning to the magic coast of Ecuador, we will take a flight from Quito to Guayaquil and then land transportation to Puerto Lopez to reach the beach.

**Accommodation:** Hotel Mandala

**Meals:** Breakfast

## **DAY 8. PUERTO LOPEZ**

Today we will enjoy some free time for sunbathing, relax on the beach, additionally we will go in a trip to Isla de la Plata, known as the “Pequeñas Galapagos” where we will admire turtles, gannets and frigates.

**Accommodation:** Hotel Mandala

**Meals:** Breakfast

## **DAY 9. DEPARTURE**

Today we will take a transfer from Puerto Lopez to Guayaquil. International departures, end of services. Take with you memories and photos and leave a piece of your heart, as you will want to return to Ecuador soon to experience more of this enchanted land. We wish you a “buen viaje”!