



Julio Verne Travel  
*Ecuador Tailor-Made*

## Andes Classical



**COMFORT LEVEL:** Mid Range / First Class

**DEPARTURES:** any Sunday with a minimum of 2 people

### **Day 1: Quito**

Arrive at Quito, the world's second highest capital at 2850 m. altitude. Airport reception and private transfer from the Mariscal Sucre Airport to one of the charming boutique hotels in the old town.

***Accommodation in hotel / this day no meals are included***

### **Day 2: Quito Colonial Centre - Mitad del Mundo**

At 9.00 a.m. our guide will meet you at the hotel to start the excursion to Colonial Quito and Mitad del Mundo. The city tour starts at La Plaza Grande, also known as Plaza de Independencia, with the governmental palace. We will visit several churches where you can see the typical Latin-American mix of Gothic, Moorish and Baroque styles. Then we continue to the small but precious Casa del Alabado, a museum devoted to the preservation of PreColumbian art. Afterwards drive to the Middle of the World (Mitad del Mundo), 22 km. north of Quito, where Charles Marie de La Condamine in 1736 made the measurements showing that this was the equatorial line. Here you can stand with



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one foot in each hemisphere, and learn all ins and outs about the equator and its importance to the native cultures of Ecuador. We will have lunch in a restaurant located right on the edge of the crater of the volcano Pululahua, with spectacular views. In the afternoon return to Quito.

***Accommodation in hotel / including breakfast and lunch***

### **Day 3: Capilla del Hombre - Volcano Avenue**

Pick up at the hotel at 9.30 a.m. and drive to the Museo Fundacion Guayasamin, located on a hill in the northern part of Quito. The expressionist painter and sculptor Oswaldo Guayasamin, who lived from 1919 to 1999, is considered one of the greatest artists of Ecuador. The main theme in his paintings are the suffering of the repressed people of Latin America. Near the museum is the impressive Capilla del Hombre, Guayasamin's chapel dedicated to mankind, from where you have excellent views of Quito. In the afternoon we leave Quito and drive south along the Volcano Avenue. With clear weather you can see the snowcapped peaks of the Illinizas, Cotopaxi and Antisana volcanoes. After about 2-hour drive we arrive at La Cienega, a 17th century hacienda that has been converted into a hotel.

***Accommodation in hotel / including breakfast and dinner***

### **Day 4: Roses - Cotopaxi National Park - Riobamba**

After breakfast we visit one of the rose plantations near the hacienda, where you can learn about the production process of the Ecuadorian roses, that are considered the best in the world. After a short visit to the Cotopaxi National Park, named after one of the world's highest active volcanoes, we continue our trip south to Riobamba, capital of the Chimborazo province. With clear weather you will have good views of Chimborazo, Carihuairazo, Tungurahua and Altar volcanoes.

***Accommodation in hotel / including breakfast***

### **Day 5: Guamote - Devil's Nose Train - Alausi**

Early morning departure and 1-hour drive to the small town of Guamote. This is a very quiet town but every Thursday it gets crowded with colorfully dressed indigenous people at one of Ecuador's most authentic markets. There are 3 different market squares: one for potatoes, vegetables and fruits; another one for animals including llamas, sheep and pigs; and a third one for ponchos, hats and other pieces of clothing. Furthermore you will find in every street of town all kind of merchandise you can imagine: from household ware to traditional medicine. Afterwards we continue to the traditional



highland town of Alausi, where we will take the afternoon train to the Devil's Nose. This railroad, that was constructed around 1900, is considered one of the world's masterpieces of railway engineering; a zig-zag carved out of the rock, which allows the train by a series of switchbacks to travel along the steep mountainside to Sibambe.

***Accommodation in Alausi / including breakfast***



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## **Day 6: Ingapirca - Cuenca**

From Alausi we continue to the southern highlands. On the way we will visit the Ingapirca ruins, the most important Inca ruins of Ecuador, where we will learn about the Inca and the Cañari cultures. After lunch in a local hacienda we will continue to Cuenca, a World Heritage Trust Site. Arrive at Cuenca in the late afternoon.

***Accommodation in hotel / including breakfast and lunch***



## **Day 7: Cuenca**

In the morning you will have a city tour in Cuenca. This is Ecuador's third largest city, but it has a compact historic center which has preserved much of its colonial ambiance. From the Turi Hills we will enjoy a beautiful panoramic view of the city. Furthermore we visit the Calderon Park with the Cathedral, the famous flower market, and the Panama Hat factory. Free afternoon.

***Accommodation in hotel / including breakfast***

## **Day 8: Gualaceo - Chordeleg - Sigsig**

Today we will make a day tour to the villages in the subtropical valleys northeast from Cuenca. In the small and authentic town of Sigsig you can see the weaving process of the famous Panama hats. The second place, Chordeleg, has nice crafts in silver and wood. Finally we will visit the picturesque town of Gualaceo, with its Sunday market, and the orchid farm just outside town. In the afternoon return to Cuenca.

***Accommodation in hotel / including breakfast***

## **Day 9: Airport transfer**

Transfer to the airport and fly to Quito or Guayaquil, from where you can take an extension to the Amazon rainforest or to the Galapagos islands, or get on an international departure.

***including breakfast***