Craig travel

ECUADOR & GALAPAGOS



October 14 - 29, 2027 • 16 Days • 38 Meals

SMALL GROUP • JOURNEY LEADER

Book Early and Save $500 pp



BARTOLOMÉ

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

UNESCO GEMS
Explore the historic centres of Quito and Cuenca, admire the gilded Church of the Society of Jesus and cruise the Galapagos Islands for four nights aboard the Yacht Isabela II.

GALAPAGOS WILDLIFE
Snorkel with green turtles and rays, spot Galapagos penguins by panga, see flightless cormorants and marine iguanas on Fernandina Island and meet giant tortoises at the Charles Darwin Research Station.

ANDES & CLOUD FOREST
Walk beneath Cotopaxi's snow-capped cone, hike among El Cajas' glacial lakes, explore Ingapirca's Inca Temple of the Sun and glide through Mashpi's cloud forest canopy on the Dragonfly aerial tram.

LIVING TRADITIONS
Visit a highland rose hacienda, browse the Otavalo Market, watch weavers on Andean looms in Peguche, discover the Ecuadorian origins of the Panama hat and visit the Intiñan Museum, which claims to mark the true equator.

SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE
Limited to 22 members

OUR CRUISE SHIP

Metropolitan Touring's Isabela II is an expedition yacht for 40 guests in 20 cabins, sailing with a crew of 26, three naturalist guides and a medical officer on board. Built in 1979 and last dry-docked in 2024, she offers a dining room, bar salon, natural history library, outdoor Sky Bar, hot tub and fitness room, along with a glass-bottom boat for viewing the marine life below.

CT RATING: 4/5

VERY CHALLENGING:
This journey involves travel at high altitudes, reaching approximately 13,000 feet, where altitude sickness is possible. Temperatures vary considerably, from cool conditions in the Andes to warm and humid weather in the Galapagos Islands. Walking excursions include rocky volcanic terrain, uneven trails, slopes and steps. During the cruise, members must be able to board and disembark small boats, including during wet landings, which require good balance and mobility. Sturdy walking shoes are essential. Members should be physically fit, fully mobile and comfortable with moderately strenuous outdoor activities. Cruise excursions may be adjusted according to weather and ocean conditions.



Visit craigtravel.com/91 to learn more!

ITINERARY

OCT 14 | CANADA / QUITO, ECUADOR
We gather in Toronto for our flights to Quito. Nestled on the slopes of the Pichincha volcano, the capital was founded in the 16th century on the ruins of an Inca city. Standing at an altitude of 2,850 metres, it offers an imposing setting for the start of our journey. We are welcomed by our local guide and transferred to our hotel. ***JW Marriott Quito - 3 nights***

OCT 15 | QUITO
Quito has one of the best-preserved historic centres in Latin America, a UNESCO site that we explore in depth today. We dive into local life at a market, browsing stalls piled with exotic fruits before connecting with the country's artistic soul at the Guayasamín Museum. We ascend to El Panecillo, once a pre-Incan sun temple and now home to the towering Virgin of Quito. We marvel at the Church of the Society of Jesus, a baroque masterpiece regarded as Latin America's most impressive for its gold-leaf interior. We visit Independence Square and San Francisco Plaza, once a bustling indigenous marketplace. At the Casa del Alabado Museum, we view pre-Columbian artifacts to learn about the spiritual practices of Ecuador's ancestors. Tonight, we gather for our welcome dinner. (BD)

OCT 16 | OTAVALO
We travel into the Andean highlands to discover why Ecuador's equatorial light and altitude create the perfect environment for growing roses. At a hacienda, we admire the rose varieties grown on-site. We continue to the lively Otavalo Market, a trading hub since the 16th century that offers a rich array of indigenous textiles and crafts. For lunch, we step into history at Hacienda Pinsaqui. Built in 1790 as a wool weaving workshop, this heritage property famously hosted Simón Bolívar as he prepared for the Battle of Ibarra. Our day concludes in the nearby village of Peguche, where we witness traditional weaving on Andean looms, crafted without electricity or chemicals, and learn about Andean instruments. (BL)

OCT 17 | COTOPAXI NATIONAL PARK / CUENCA
Leaving the capital behind, we travel south along the spectacular Avenue of the Volcanoes to the landscapes of Cotopaxi National Park. Dominated by the perfect snow-capped cone of the Cotopaxi Volcano, this reserve offers a dramatic backdrop for our day. We explore the páramo ecosystem on a walk along the shores of Limpiopungo Lagoon, keeping a lookout for Andean foxes, caracaras and, with luck, the majestic Andean condor. After a home-style lunch with incredible mountain views, we drive to the airport for our short evening flight to the colonial city of Cuenca. ***Four Points by Sheraton Cuenca - 3 nights*** (BLD)

OCT 18 | CUENCA
We discover the true Ecuadorian origins of the famous Panama hat at the Homero Ortega Hat Museum. We then walk the cobblestone streets of the historic centre, visiting the vibrant Flower Market and the leafy Parque Calderon, the Old Cathedral and the massive blue-domed Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. After lunch, we stroll along the Tomebamba River to admire the greenery of the El Barranco neighbourhood. We continue to the Turi Lookout for a panoramic view of the city's red-tiled roofs, followed by a visit to the gallery of renowned ceramicist Eduardo Vega. (BLD)

OCT 19 | EL CAJAS NATIONAL PARK
El Cajas National Park is a protected sanctuary for more than 40 species of mammals and over 150 species of birds. Its landscape is a stunning mosaic of glacial lakes, moorlands, and ancient polylepis forests. After a rewarding hike and a delicious lunch at a nearby restaurant, we return to Cuenca, where you can enjoy the evening at your leisure. (BL)

OCT 20 | INGAPIRCA / GUAYAQUIL
We travel to the fascinating archaeological site of Ingapirca, where the Inca constructed a ceremonial complex over an earlier Cañari settlement. We explore the impressive Temple of the Sun, an unusual elliptical structure constructed from precisely cut andesite stone, as well as the workshops, terraces, and even a section of the famous Inca Trail. After lunch, we continue to the bustling port city of Guayaquil. ***Hilton Colon Guayaquil - 1 night*** (BLD)

OCT 21 | GUAYAQUIL / GALAPAGOS
The day we have been waiting for is here. We fly to the Galapagos Islands, a sanctuary of evolution. We land at Baltra, ferry across the Itabaca Channel and enjoy a scenic drive across Santa Cruz, stopping for lunch along the way. We visit the Charles Darwin Research Station and its giant tortoise breeding facilities to learn about the conservation efforts that protect these remarkable animals. Stroll the Puerto Ayora waterfront before we embark on our vessel to toast the start of our cruise with the Captain's welcome cocktail and dinner. ***Yacht Isabela II - 4 nights*** (BLD)

OCT 22 | BARTOLOMÉ & SANTIAGO ISLAND
Bartolome Island is the archipelago's most photographed island. A climb up a wooden staircase rewards us with a stunning panorama of volcanic cones. We set off on a panga ride around the majestic Pinnacle Rock in search of Galapagos penguins. In the afternoon, we land at Sullivan Bay on Santiago Island to witness the island's volcanic origins. The otherworldly lava fields contrast beautifully with the pristine white coral sand beach where we enjoy a refreshing swim. (BLD)

OCT 23 | SANTA CRUZ & SANTIAGO ISLAND
Back on Santa Cruz Island, we explore Dragon Hill, named for the iconic land iguanas that roam its rocky slopes. Our trail winds past a brackish lagoon often teeming with American flamingos, leading to panoramic views of the western archipelago. After a chance to snorkel with green turtles, sharks, and rays, we navigate to Buccaneer Cove on Santiago Island. Once a refuge for explorers stocking supplies, this dramatic coastline now offers sanctuary to sea lions and marine birds. We admire striking rock formations like "Elephant Rock" and "The Bishop" before exploring by snorkel, panga, or glass-bottom boat. (BLD)

OCT 24 | ISABELA & FERNANDINA ISLAND
The nutrient-rich waters of Punta Vicente Roca are best explored by panga, allowing us to observe Galapagos fur seals, nesting Nazca boobies, and penguins from the water. Snorkellers may also see green sea turtles beneath the cliffs. Then, we visit Fernandina, the archipelago's youngest and most pristine island. At Punta Espinosa, set against a backdrop of active volcanoes, we see colonies of marine iguanas and the unique flightless cormorant. (BLD)

OCT 25 | GALAPAGOS / QUITO
We disembark for our return flight to the mainland then transfer to our hotel for an evening at leisure. ***JW Marriott Quito - 1 night*** (B)

OCT 26 | QUITO / MASHPI LODGE
We depart for the lush northwest, entering a 2,800-hectare sanctuary that protects a rare transition zone between cloud forest and rainforest. Upon arrival at the award-winning Mashpi Lodge, we discover a unique approach to exploration where there is no set schedule; instead, expert naturalists curate our activities based on our interests. We might begin with a walk through the forest as darkness falls. A hidden ecosystem stirs to life on our nocturnal exploration, offering the chance to spot glass frogs, snakes, and tarantulas in their natural habitat. ***Mashpi Lodge - 2 nights*** (BLD)

OCT 27 | MASHPI LODGE
We spend a full day immersed in this rich ecosystem, home to pumas, kinkajous, and over 400 species of birds. A highlight for many is the "Dragonfly" aerial tram, an open-air gondola that glides silently through the canopy, offering a rare chance to see life in the treetops. For a more active perspective, you might climb the observation tower to spot toucans, woodpeckers, barbets, and tanagers. Those seeking tranquillity can hike to the refreshing waters of the Copal Waterfall, head to the Hummingbird Garden, or visit the Life Center, a lounge raised into the canopy. (BLD)

OCT 28 | MASHPI LODGE / QUITO
We bid farewell to the cloud forest this morning and begin our return to Quito. Our first stop is the Tulipe Site Museum, where we explore the history of the ancient Yumbo people. We then ascend to the Pululahua volcanic crater for a lunch with spectacular views of the reserve below. Before reaching the capital, we visit the Intiñan Museum to stand on the equatorial line and test the unique physics of the middle of the world. Upon arrival in Quito, there is time to freshen up before we gather for a farewell dinner together. ***JW Marriott Quito - 1 night*** (BLD)

OCT 29 | QUITO / CANADA
Our journey draws to a close as we catch our flight to our homes across Canada. (B)

B: BREAKFAST (15) L: LUNCH (12) D: DINNER (11)

DID YOU KNOW?

At Ingapirca, Ecuador's most significant Inca archaeological site, the remarkable Temple of the Sun stands out for its unusual elliptical design, unlike the rectangular structures found at many other Inca sites. Built with precisely cut stones fitted together without mortar, the temple reflects the extraordinary craftsmanship and astronomical knowledge of the Inca civilization, while the surrounding site reveals the rich cultural heritage of the Cañari people who inhabited the region before them.



INGAPIRCA

CRAIG TRAVEL INCLUSIONS

- International flights, domestic Canadian flights and airport transfers with air-inclusive packages
- Domestic flights within the destination
- Carefully selected accommodation as listed, or similar
- All sightseeing and entrance fees as described
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Dedicated journey leader, national guides, and local specialists where applicable
- All gratuities, surcharges, fees, and taxes
- International eSIM to keep you connected
- Visa support for Canadian citizens as required
- Free insurance quote (contact us for details)

TOUR & AIR COST

Land Only	$15,965
Toronto	$17,345
Ottawa / Montreal	$17,535
Halifax / Winnipeg	$17,735
Calgary / Edmonton / Vancouver	$17,735
St. John's	$17,835
Saskatoon / Regina	$17,835
Victoria	$17,835
Single Supplement	**On Request**

Deposit is $2,000 per person
Final payment is due June 9, 2027

Image credit Cathy Semler



Visit craigtravel.com/91 to learn more!

Prices are in Canadian dollars per person. Land-only members join and leave the group at the hotel in Quito. Airfares from other gateways are available on request. The tour price is based on sharing a twin-bedded room. Prices are based on a minimum of 20 members and on rates, taxes and fees effective November 2026, and are subject to change due to factors beyond our control. The group will be escorted with a minimum of 20 members. For full terms and conditions, visit our website: craigtravel.com/terms-conditions. Canadian passport holders do not require a visa for tourist visits to Ecuador of up to 90 days. Comprehensive travel insurance is strongly recommended.

Contact us or visit our website to learn more and reserve your place.

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