

Conservation & Spanish in Ecuador

Week 1: Arrival, program orientation and farm life exploration: El Carmen, Ecuador

Hola Ecuador! Our semester starts with an orientation with your group. You'll spend the first 4-5 days setting the foundations for an incredible journey ahead. You'll learn more about the program and fellow group members, and discuss strategies for staying safe and healthy while traveling. We'll be living on a farm near the coast, and during orientation, we'll also get introduced to farm life. We'll learn about planting, harvesting, and selling bananas from the family who owns the farm, we'll enjoy homemade meals, and we'll also get to hike in the nearby forest, take a dip in some of the local swimming holes, and visit the beach over the weekend.

Week 2: Spanish language study: Baños de Agua Santa, Ecuador

Heading inland, we'll spend a week studying Spanish in the beautiful and friendly community of Baños. We'll study Spanish with local teachers in the mornings and spend our afternoons hiking and exploring the Rio Pastaza, discovering the breathtaking waterfalls of El Pailón del Diablo and Agoyán, and soaking in the hot springs for which the town was named.

Week 3: Trekking: Andes Mountains, Ecuador

Spend 5 days exploring the majestic Andes mountains in central Ecuador, trekking around the Quilatoa loop trail. Starting with a view of the azure colored waters of the crater lake Laguna Quilatoa, we'll hike from village to village as we loop through rolling hills and mountain trails, past small farms, follow rivers, all while staying in local guest houses along the way.

Weeks 4: Environmental Conservation: The Amazon River Basin

Heading east down the slopes of the rugged Andes Mountains, the group will now explore the renowned Amazon region. Partnering with a local NGO (Arajuno Foundation), we'll be learning through service by engaging in projects to help prevent riverbank erosion, protect river turtle nesting sites, and maintain a healthy river ecosystem. The group will also have the opportunity to hike and swim in this amazingly biodiverse and beautiful part of the world - and even white water raft in the world class rivers near Tena!

Week 4 - 4.5: Final retreat: near Quito, Ecuador

Spend your last couple days at a retreat near Quito. We'll take a few days to reflect and celebrate together as a group before we head back home.

**Carpe Diem reserves the right to make changes to the program at any time, and indeed has the responsibility to do so in some instances; changes may be required to provide the best possible experience, protect the safety of participants, or respond to changes in weather or political conditions.*