



**ANDANDO^o
TOURS**
Mainland Ecuador &
Galápagos Islands

2011

Mindo Pichincha

Cloud Forest Adventures in Mindo



To the north-west of Quito the landscape becomes dry and sandy and in this desert like place we come to the Mitad del Mundo, the middle of the earth as calculated and measured by the French Geodesics Mission.

DAY 1

We will pass by the small towns of San Antonio de Pichincha and Calacalí. As we drive down you can see how the vegetation becomes denser and the leaves of the plants and trees, larger. At the archaeological site of Tulipe are the ruins of ceremonial pools used for ritual baths and sacraments by the Yumbos, a pre-Incan population. Here an explanation of their way of life and their organisation of an important trading route between the coast and the highlands will be given. The Yumbos and the Spanish conquerors were contemporaries and at the Museum a guide will tell you more about how the arrival of the Incas and Spanish affected the Yumbo people.

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At the Molienda, a traditional mill, they use horse power to turn the mill, crushing the sugarcane in order to extract the sweet juice. You can have a go too turning the mill and collecting the extracted juice. The juice is then used to make Guarapo, sugarcane alcohol and panela, brown sugarloaf.

Before arriving in Mindo we visit Pahuma, an orchid reserve in the mountainous cloud forest home to a great number of epiphytes like moss, bromeliads and over 270 species of orchid.

On to the town of Mindo and its cloud forest which has more than 400 species of birds and the second highest number of endemic species of butterfly in the country. Here we will have lunch at the Hostería Mariposas de Mindo.

After lunch we will visit a Butterfly Farm and see the different phases of a butterfly's life cycle.

From here we will take a short walk into the cloud forest, keeping an eye out for exotic birds, and mammals amongst the lush vegetation and listen to the gentle background hum of life in this mega diverse place.

We will stay at the beautiful Hostería Sachatamia, where the hummingbirds dive around the cloud forest garden.

DAY 2

After a breakfast at Sachatamia it is time for our canopy adventure. A team of professional and prepared guides will take us on an amazing journey above the cloud forest on a series of zip lines. So harness up and enjoy the forest from above and the adrenalin of flying through the air with the birds. After a safe landing we head to El Nómada Pizza place for lunch, where pizzas of our own creation are baked in a brick oven.

In the afternoon options include more adventure with tubing and trekking or the chance to relax in a hammock.

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