



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

2011

Otavalo

Roses, Market and Crater Lake

Otavalo (OTV 01)

One day program (Saturday)

From Quito we head down the temperate valley of Guayllabamba, where cherimoyas (cherimoya or custard-apple) and avocados grow in abundance and the road opens out into the Andean highlands.



Our first stop is breakfast at La Compañía, a hacienda constructed at the turn of the 20th century and full of antiques and decor from the era. We will have a typical highland breakfast of queso de hoja (cheese wrapped in Achira leaves), bizcochos (savory biscuits), bread, homemade jams and fresh fruit juices. After breakfast we will take a stroll around the hacienda and visit the beautifully conserved Jesuit chapel. Before heading off we will take a tour around a neighbouring flower plantation seeing how the roses are cultivated and selected for exportation around the world.



Otavalo is the biggest and most important indigenous market in all of Latin America. The colourful main handicraft and textile market spills into the streets from the central Plaza de Ponchos whilst the cacophony of the animal market is kept to the outskirts of town. The produce market impresses with the sheer number and colour of the locally cultivated fruits and vegetables. The friendly Otavaleños are more than happy to talk about their crafts and traditions and will expect you to haggle a bit on the price.

From the busy market we will head out to Hacienda Pinsaquí, built in 1790, here we will have a relaxing lunch of typical regional dishes. The hacienda origins lie in the textile industry and its long history includes the stay of revolutionary leader and liberator Simon Bolivar. After lunch a local shaman will give us

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Quito - Ecuador

Exclusive representatives of:





explanation of the regions shamanism.

Before heading back to Quito we will visit the active volcanic crater lake of Cuicocha and stop for some last minute shopping in the town of Cotacachi, a town famous for its leather products.

We wind our way back down the Avenue of the Volcanoes to Quito.

Imbabura (OTV 02) **One day program (any day)**

We head out of the city down into the arid valley of Guayllabamba, where cherimoyas and avocados grow in abundance.

As we drive over the Andean highlands we come to the 20th century Hacienda, La Compañía. The hacienda is decorated in the style of its era and home to many antiques. Here we will be served a breakfast of typical highland delicacies including: queso de hoja (cheese wrapped in Achira leaves), bizcochos (savory biscuits), bread, homemade jams and fresh fruit juices. After breakfast we will take a short tour of the hacienda and visit its treasure, a beautifully conserved Jesuit chapel.



At the neighbouring rose farm we will walk around the plantation and see firsthand how the flowers are cultivated. We continue on towards Peguche and whilst taking in the views of the stunning Andean landscape, listen to the legend of the Laguna San Pablo and the mountain 'Taita' Imbabura (Taita means Father in Quichua).

In Peguche we visit the Condor Handicrafts and textiles workshop, where the owner will show us the different looms used in the weaving of the brilliantly designed tapestries, rugs and sweaters. They will also tell us about the millennial techniques and natural dyes they use to prepare the cloth and wool. Before moving on we will visit another local workshop and see how the

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traditional Andean musical instruments are made.

We will have traditional lunch at Pinsaquí, a hacienda built in 1790 and whose origins in the textile industry. The haciendas long history includes the stay of the famous revolutionary leader and liberator, Simon Bolivar. After lunch a local shaman will give us explanation of the regions shamanism.

Our tour continues on to the active crater lake of Cuicocha and Cotacachi, a town for its leather industry and a main street lined with stores selling leather jackets, purses, shoes and more.

Train and Otavalo

Two days with train
(Wednesday - Saturday)

OTV 01 or OTV 02 plus:

At the end of this long day we can sit back and relax at the Hacienda Pinsaquí or Hostería Pueblo Viejo.

DAY 2 (OTV 03 - 04)



We head north to Ibarra and at the train station we will board La Libertad train for a special journey on rails to the valley of Salinas de Ibarra. The train takes us to the Afro Ecuadorian community in Salinas passing through the dry Andean forests, over hanging bridges, along a precipice and through mountainside tunnels.

The vegetation gives way to large fields of sugarcane and further down to plantations of cotton. At Salinas we will be welcomed by traditional songs and invited to lunch at the Gastronomy Centre run by the community, where delicious dishes made with local produce will be served.

In the afternoon we begin our journey back to Quito stopping in Ibarra to taste their famous 'Helados de Paila' (fruity sorbet like ice creams prepared in large bronze pans over a bed of dry ice).

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We wind our way back down the Avenue of the Volcanoes to Quito.

Train, Otavalo, and Pantaví

Three days
(Wednesday – Saturday)

OTV 03 or OTV 04 plus:

In the afternoon we travel to Hostería Pantaví, passing by the highland town of Tumbabiro. The town, nestled in the foothills of Cotacachi, is typical of the sierra with a central plaza and church. We will spend the night at the Hostería Pantaví, a beautiful place designed by its owner, an artist who has uniquely decorated every single room.

There is even one room with a bathroom decorated as a garden with a waterfall.

DAY 3 (OTV 05 - 06)

We start the day with a cooking class, where the Hotel's chef will teach us how to prepare the famous Tortillas de Tiesto (made with flour in an earthenware pan) for our breakfast. Before our picnic lunch we take a short horse ride through the surrounding Andean countryside taking in the stunning landscape.

After lunch we start our journey back to Quito taking the road back to Cayambe and on to the capital.



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