

VISIONS Ecuador

June 29 - July 26 (28 days / 4 weeks) • \$5,150

THE GALAPAGOS (1 WEEK)
ANDEAN VILLAGE (3 WEEKS)
IMMERSION IN SPANISH CULTURE
ECO-EXPLORATION, SNORKELING, ANDES HIKES
MITAD DEL MUNDO, BASILICA ZONE, MARKETPLACES
MIN. 95 HOURS SERVICE CREDIT

Mitad del Mundo is a land of extraordinary contrasts where wood-burning stoves, thatched roof dwellings and cell phones co-exist. Where the planet's rarest species live on an isolate of islands 600 miles off the coast, drawing scientists and tourists from around the globe. Where the fishing and farming activities of growing numbers of Ecuadorians living on the Galapagos threaten the very existence of this extraordinary eco-system.

In VISIONS Ecuador we divide our time between two dramatically different environs—the Galapagos Islands, where our home base is a family-run hostel, and a traditional Andean village where we live in a community hall. With both of these host communities your service engages you in agricultural, environmental, sustainable, economic, artistic and social fronts.

Galapagos projects include renovations to schools, volunteering in the classrooms and organizing *campamento* activities. We work for the Ministerio de Agricultura and Parque Nacional clearing invasive plant species or assisting in approved coffee planting. Exploration is a top priority with boat trips, wildlife viewing, trekking, snorkeling and swimming.

After about a week on the Galapagos, we head to the mainland to spend some time touring Quito, and then make our way to Chaupiloma, an intimate farming village situated on one of many agricultural hillsides of the Andes. Like so many Andean villages, Chaupiloma is a tranquil, even magical place with breathtaking views of extraordinary cloud formations rolling in and out and over the mountains, and people who are genuinely kind and welcoming.

Projects in the Andes have included constructing a preschool and community cisterns, teaching English to school children and adults, preparing greenhouse space for a communal garden, assisting reforestation, helping families milk their cows, feed their coy and rabbits, care for their sheep and harvesting crops. In the spirit of *minga* our hosts work side-by-side with us. We take our meals with the villagers, join their festivals and games, dance, play soccer and timbo, have informal spontaneous lessons in traditional weaving and embroidery, music and dance.

Andean recreation and exploration leads to the markets of Otavalo, to Cuichoa Lake and Cascada de Peguche waterfalls, to the equator, and to mountain tops with views that leave you breathless.

Participants in this language immersion program must have minimum two years of high school Spanish or equivalent proficiency.

WORK HARD PLAY HARD LIVE DYNAMICALLY CONNECT DEEPLY SERVE PURPOSEFULLY SEE DIFFERENTLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE

<http://www.visionsserviceadventures.com/programs/ecuador.htm>