



ECUADOR

February 15 to February 23, 2025
ISL Leader: Michelle Annett (Sociology)
Fee: \$3800

Ecuador has a population of approximately 14 million people. The population is a mix of indigenous natives whose forebears were the Quechua speaking Inca, and Mestizo people with Spanish roots.

The main exports of this country are oil, bananas, shrimp, and other agricultural products.

There are three distinct regions consisting of the coastal lowlands, the tropical rainforest, and the highlands. Quito, the capital, is situated in the highlands at an elevation of 2850 meters. It is a city rich in history with well-preserved colonial architecture alongside newer modern developments. This region is also home to a chain of snowcapped volcanoes of varying seismic activity and size.

This Immersion Service Learning experience introduces participants to ecotourism, grassroots environmental conservation and community development projects in a cloud forest community, including environmental restoration and habitat conservation efforts. Students will also explore the Intillacta cloud forest ecological reserve, learn about chocolate production at a cacao farm, and visit the Mindo waterfall sanctuary.

Transportation

Group members fly into Quito and will use various ground transportation methods during their stay.

Housing & Meals

Accommodations may include hostels or modest hotels, with private bathroom facilities. Students will share double or triple rooms. Meals are provided on location. Vegetarian diets may be accommodated with prior notice. Menus are limited, based on locally available foods. Students will NOT have a choice of foods. Please note: host cannot guarantee an allergen free trip, including gluten, and peanut products.

Service Placements and Group Sessions

Service participation may include organic farm work, tree nursery maintenance and reforestation, helping in an artisan craft shop, and trail development. According to the current needs of the community.

Saturday 15	Halifax to Quito flights.
Sunday 16	Transfer to hostel and welcome to Quito
Monday 17	Visit Quito Old Town. Walking history and culture tour. Travel to Otavalo.
Tuesday 18	Indigenous community learning in Cotacachi, and a visit to the Cuicocho crater lake ecosystem.
Wednesday 19	Waterfall hike. Visit traditional musicians and local wool artisans and then explore the largest craft market in South America
Thursday 20	Travel to the Cloudforest. Community learning and service on active nature conservation initiatives.
Friday 21	Mindo Waterfall Sanctuary. Zip line through the canopy and discover the biodiversity of the forest. Visit a Butterfly Farm and then learn about cocoa and chocolate production.
Saturday 22	Transfer to Quito. Farewell dinner and evening departure flight
Sunday 23	Arrival Halifax.



Please note this schedule is a guideline for typical activities and is subject to change based on a number of factors. Flight delays, available space and staff at facilities, to name a few factors, all play a role in the scheduling process. Students should be prepared to be flexible.