

Conservation and Community Development

Highlights



- Living and working with a local community – an incredible opportunity to become immersed into Ecuadorian culture.
- Lending your time and support to a well-organized project that has clear conservation and community development goals.
- Exploring exciting Ecuador – jungles, beaches and volcanoes are all within easy reach!

About The Project

Only two hours from Quito, this small community has taken great strides in the path of sustainable development while maintaining both its cultural and natural heritage. Almost fifty families have joined forces to work in the production of jams and jellies from local fruits, delicious cheeses, sustainable agriculture, reforestation, research and tourism. The community has also been proactive in developing production processes from start to finish, from planting the seed to selling the final product either in their own market, in Quito, or for exportation. The main aims of the project are:

- To provide a socially responsible and environmentally sustainable income for the community and its residents
- To protect and restore the native ecosystems of the region
- To promote intercultural exchange between community members and non-residents

Volunteer Role

The first Monday at the Academia is an orientation day. All new students and volunteers go on a city tour of Quito to get to know the city and learn how to get around and use the public transport system. In the afternoon there's an information session in which you will learn about the Academia, as well as about important issues such as security, do's and don'ts in Ecuador, and about your volunteer project. You will then spend a day or two in Quito usually travelling to the project on the Wednesday.

As a volunteer, you will work from 8.30am – 4pm with tea and lunch breaks. The volunteer project is relatively new, and as such, volunteer flexibility is vital in order to fulfill the dynamic needs of the project. You'll be involved in some or all of the following activities:

- Reforestation
- Orchid propagation
- Production of jams and cheeses
- Teaching English
- Ecological research
- Organic agriculture
- Paper recycling



Location

The project is located two hours from Quito. This is an incredible place to be based as you are living away from the usual tourist trappings, and close to other areas of interests such as protected reserves and incredible volcanoes. If you want a weekend to relax there will be activities to take part in nearby such as sports with the local community and hikes in the forest. Pululahua Volcano is not far, and with a crater of 34 square kilometers its one of the countries largest. Views from the rim are stunning, overlooking a network of fields and settlements located around the volcanic cones of Pondona and Chivo.

If you prefer, you can travel back to Quito at the weekend for a 'city break'! As the capital city, Quito has plenty to offer in terms of culture and entertainment. The city is brimming with bars, restaurants and clubs, as well as cinemas, shops, museums, art galleries and markets. Nearby there are local attractions such as the 'TeleferiQo' cable car, providing stunning views of the city, and the 'Middle of the World Museum' where you can stand with one foot on the southern hemisphere and one foot on the northern! The area of Quito known as the 'old town' is also a must with incredible colonial architecture. If you enjoy shopping then you'll be pleased to hear that Quito is Ecuador's most important marketing center for the country's artisan products, lying very close to some of the major production areas and indigenous markets!

Accommodation

You have the choice of either staying with a host family, or within a main cabin with other volunteers.

Requirements

Volunteers must be able to commit to at least 4 weeks at the project. All volunteers must hold at least a low intermediate level of spoken Spanish. If your Spanish is at a lower level, you must join our Spanish language school prior to commencing your volunteer work in order to be able to communicate with the local community, host families and local staff.

When choosing to volunteer in a developing country such as Ecuador, it is important to remain flexible as the needs of the project are constantly evolving. This is what makes volunteering so rewarding – the fact that you are on hand to lend your support when and where it is needed. By choosing Academia Latinoamericana de Español you will have a comprehensive safety network behind you as we are here to help throughout the duration of your entire stay!

Programme Fee Includes

- Accommodation
- 3 meals per day
- Project Support
- A donation that goes directly to your project
- Orientation and city tour
- Pre-departure information
- 24 hour emergency support

Programme Fee Does Not Include

- International flights
- Transportation from Quito to Yunguilla
- Visas
- Travel Insurance
- Inoculations
- Excursions over and above the itinerary

After Your Project – Travel Ideas

We are fully equipped to you with making weekend travel arrangements, and onwards travel arrangements following your volunteer project. We work with the best tour companies to offer safe, reliable and competitively priced trips. Some of our most popular excursions include:

- Otavalo – a famous Saturday market offering a dazzling array of textiles, crafts and jewellery just a couple of hours from Quito.
- Papallacta - 8 natural hot springs to soak away the day in! A great day trip from Quito.
- Cotopaxi – you can choose to hike this immense volcano, or take a more moderate tour to see it!
- Banos – great for trekking, mountain biking, rafting and taking a dip in the hot baths! This makes for a nice weekend break from Quito.
- Mindo Cloud Forest – swing in a hammocks, spot exotic birds and animals, bath in waterfalls, float down the river in inner tubes, trek and horseback ride! All this and near enough to Quito to make it a great weekend excursion.
- The Amazon – A fantastic option for those looking to travel after their volunteer project. Stay in rustic jungle lodges, swim with pink river dolphins, search for anacondas and swim in hammocks!
- The Galapagos! Ecuador's true gem! Experience for yourself the exact places Charles Darwin got his inspiration! Take a cruise around the beautiful islands and spot seals, turtles, sharks, albatross, blue and red footed boobies, iguanas and more as you trek, swim, snorkel and explore! An unforgettable way to end your time in Ecuador!

Apply Now

If you have some further questions about this project, please feel free to contact us at info@latinoschools.ec

If you would like to book this programme, please [click here](#) to complete the booking form. We will be in touch within one week of application to confirm your booking!