

EXPLORE!

Tour Notes



Ecuador Discovery (EC 2015)



TOUR DURATION
14
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate

Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Comfort: Standard

tour Code: EC

Tour Highlights - Ecuador Discovery

- ✓ Quito - Discover Ecuador's colonial Andean capital, surrounded by snow-capped mountains
- ✓ Volcanoes - Picturesque drives through the 'Avenue of the Volcanoes', walking in the shadow of Cotopaxi
- ✓ Otavalo - Visit the fascinating Indian market
- ✓ Banos - Dramatic gateway to the jungles of the Orient
- ✓ Cuenca - Explore this pretty city and visit a panama hat factory

Tour Essentials

Accommodation: 3 nights Comfortable Hotel
5 nights Standard Guesthouse
2 nights Comfortable Hacienda
3 nights Standard Lodge

Included Meals: 13 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 3 dinners

Start Point: Join tour: Quito

End Point: Tour ends: Guayaquil

Transport: Bus, Train

Countries: Ecuador

Ecuador Discovery

Explore the 'Avenue of Volcanoes' and discover the colonial cities of Quito and Cuenca on this exciting trip to Ecuador. We also visit Otavalo Market and discover Cotopaxi - one of the world's highest active volcanoes (5897m), search for wildlife in the Amazon and travel on the exciting Devil's Nose Railway. 1890.

No visit to Ecuador is complete without visiting the Galapagos. The 18 volcanic islands and 40 islets host an abundance of wildlife and natural wonders not found anywhere in the world. We have a selection of trips exploring the Galapagos from four to seven nights, with four different standards of boats available to suit your budget.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join tour in Quito

Arrive Quito and check into hotel.

Overnight: **Comfortable Hotel**
Single Room Available



 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 Tour of Quito's highlights including the Church of San Francisco

We begin with a walking tour of Quito, Ecuador's mountain capital and the second highest capital city in Latin America. One of South America's most beautiful cities, Quito lies in a narrow valley at the foot of Pichincha volcano, surrounded by snow-capped mountains and extinct volcanoes. The fascinating UNESCO Heritage Site of the Old Town, with its rich blend of colonial architecture, imposing churches and bustling local markets, makes for a stunning introduction to Ecuador. We will visit some of the main sites, including the Plaza de la Independencia, the cultural heart of the colonial city, and La Compania church with its magnificent gilded altars, walls and ceilings. At the church of San Francisco we are introduced to Quito's largest and oldest colonial church, built in 1553. A climb to the top of nearby Cerro Panecillo affords us one of the best views across the city and the surrounding mountains, presenting us with an unparalleled vista of the encircling Andes from the viewing platform offered by the statue of the Virgen de Quito.


Overnight: **Comfortable Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 3 Visit the Equator Monument en route to Otavalo

This morning we drive to Otavalo via the Equator line, stopping off at the 'Middle of the World' to visit the interesting Solar Museum at Inti Nan. Some believe that the original meaning of Quito is the centre of the earth and it is commonly believed that the pre-Hispanic people of this region knew of the importance of their mountainous location. A monument left by the French is actually some 200 metres off track, whereas the wonderfully eclectic museum is exactly right. This entertaining museum includes scientific experiments such as the effects of spiralling water in different hemispheres and the balancing of eggs on nails. Following the Panamericana Highway we then head north, towards the indigenous village of Peguche, famed for its local families who make colourful weavings plus others who play traditional Andean music by using several types of panpipes made by themselves. We will stop and enjoy visiting one of the musician families before heading to Otavalo for overnight.

Overnight: **Standard Guesthouse**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4 Explore Otavalo Market, walk near San Pablo Lake

This morning we explore the small market town of Otavalo. The town is one of South America's most important areas for ethno-tourism and its regular markets attracts traders and artisans from as far away as Peru and Bolivia. The Otavaleños are an incredibly dignified and assured people, proudly displaying their cultural traditions and ancient heritage for all to see and their market is a rich confusion of goods and styles from right across the region, with jewellery, rugs, woven linen bags, woodcarvings and leather goods on display throughout the town. Add to that the visual majesty of the setting and the colourful costumes of the protagonists and you have a truly remarkable cultural experience. Later, near San Pablo Lake we will have lunch before continuing to the tranquil setting of Cuicocha, a turquoise crater-lake located at 3100m and approached through a wonderful landscape of alpine vegetation. Located in the Western Cordillera, at the foot of Cotacachi, this now dormant volcanic caldera is a prime spot to find the 'King of the Andes', wide-winged condors that soar high above the valleys in graceful flight. There may be the option to go for a walk around the lake (1.5 hours) before continuing to Peguche Waterfall.

Overnight: **Standard Guesthouse**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 5 Visit Cotopaxi, drive via the Avenue of the Volcanoes to Machachi

Our journey takes us south through some of the most impressive mountain scenery in the entire country, into the landscapes so aptly described by the German explorer Alexander von Humboldt as the 'Avenue of the Volcanoes'. En route we drive into the spectacular Cotopaxi National Park, where we shall see one of the world's highest active volcanoes. Ecuador's second highest mountain, Cotopaxi is a classic volcanic cone, snow covered and rising an imposing 5897m from the valley floor below. We will take some time whilst we are here to walk around the Limpiopungo Plateau (1.5 hours), where a shallow glacial lake presents us with a perfect spot to explore something of the rich flora and fauna of the paramo (high altitude Andean grasslands). Set between the imposing masses of Cotopaxi and Ruminahui, the plateau is a haven for birdlife, as well as wild horses, the south american fox and the white tailed deer.

Overnight: **Comfortable Hacienda**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 6 Drive to the Amazon, our base for the next three nights

This morning we will drive to the north-east to Termas de Papallacta, this route was the same taken by the Spanish conquistador Francisco de Orellana in 1542 as he crossed the Andes mountain range upon discovering the Amazon and Amazon River. Termas de Papallacta Spa & Resort is located just 67 km (40 miles) from Ecuador's capital. With an altitude of 3300 meters (10,824 feet) above sea level and a cold wet climate we will enjoy a day at the thermoludic area, which consists of five hot thermal pools and one cold pool. This area is the ideal place to experience a variety of different hydromassages using either water jets or air bubbles. We'll continue driving into the Amazon Region and will take a short walk around the lodge before dinner.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7 Explore the Amazon by canoe searching for wildlife

After breakfast we will depart the lodge for a canoe trip on the Misahualli and Napo River to the protected forest of Misicocha where we will go for a walk in the forest. We will admire the extraordinary flora and the exotic sounds of the primary rainforest. If we are lucky, we might see toucans, oropendulos, parrots and small monkeys. The local guide will explain the flora and fauna of the Amazon Region with special emphasis on medicinal plants. We will have lunch in a typical hut with a wonderful view over the Napo River. Then we will get back in the canoe and ride upstream to visit the Indian village of Muyuna and found out how to prepare 'chicha', a fermented yuca drink. Finally, we continue our canoe ride to visit a local witch-doctor. Learn about the medicinal plants, see a cleaning ceremony and experience the blow pipe, a traditional form of hunting. Return to the Lodge by canoe.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8 Walk along the Misahualli River learning about local plants and visiting an Indian Community

Today we go for a walk with a native guide who will explain the typical plants of this area and their daily use. During the hike we will pass through a labyrinth of high rocks with caves and amazing vegetation. After lunch, we will walk along the Misahualli river to the small village of Pununo where we cross a suspended bridge and enter the territory of the Indian Community of 'Alto Pununo' where we will see how the local Indians live and work.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9 Travel the Waterfall Route to Banos

Crossing from the Amazon Jungle to the Highlands we will drive through the 'Avenue of Waterfalls'. We'll stop to visit the Pailon del Diablo waterfall. Depending on the activity level of the Tungurahua volcano we hope to visit the town of Banos and take a dip in its thermal baths. Then we head to our beautiful accommodation on the outskirts of Patate with fantastic views of the Tungurahua volcano.

Overnight: **Comfortable Hacienda**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10 Visit Chimborazo Forest Reserve, overnight in Riobamba

Today, we plan to see the highest peak in Ecuador in the Chimborazo Forest Reserve. At 6310m, Chimborazo is also the most distant point from the centre of the earth. This reserve is an important protected area that guards a wide variety of vegetation and animals, including the llama. This is one of the most scenic hikes in the Ecuadorian Andes. Leaving this magnificent scenery, we will continue driving to Riobamba.

Overnight: **Standard Guesthouse**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 11 Travel on the 'Devil's Nose' Train to Alausi before continuing to Cuenca

Leaving early this morning we take the bus to Alausi and then the train on to Sibambe, which is inaccessible by road. The train is basically like a bus body mounted on rail wheels - this is currently the only way of travelling on the 'Devil's Nose' route. This famous railway is a triumph of engineering. From Alausi the track drops 800m down a ridge and into the gorge of the Río Chanchan. This almost sheer descent, known as the 'Devil's Nose', was achieved by building a series of switch backs, making it one of the most exciting train rides in the world. The train returns to Alausi where we rejoin our bus. From here, our trip continues south along the scenic Panamerican Highway with a stop in Ingapirca, the main Inca complex in Ecuador where we will visit the museum and its principal archeological sites, before continuing to Cuenca.

Overnight: **Standard Guesthouse**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 12 Cuenca city tour, visit the Panama Hat Factory

Today, we'll visit the principal neighbourhoods and streets of Cuenca and do a walking tour to see 10 de Agosto Market, Parque de las Flores, Calderon Park with its new and old cathedral. We will also visit a panama hat factory.

Overnight: **Standard Guesthouse**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 13 Discover Cajas National Park before travelling to Guayaquil

Today we drive to Guayaquil on the El Cajas route. We will stop at the national park. After this, we'll go to the Tres Cruces point for 1 hour walk and then to La Toreadora Lagoon where we will start the visit to the San Luis Polylepis Forest before continuing to Guayaquil for the night.

Overnight: **Comfortable Hotel**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 14 Morning city tour of Guayaquil city tour before the tour ends

This morning there is time for a tour of Guayaquil before the tour ends. We'll visit the administration square, where the local government buildings are located. Then we'll go Parque Seminario, also known as 'Parque de las Iguanas' due to the colonies of land iguanas that can be found there. Then we will walk along the Maleco, including a visit to the Palacio de Cristal, Torre Morisca, La Rotonda and gardens area. To finish, we'll visit Las Penas, the oldest neighborhood of Guayaquil, where we could find some art galleries inside their traditional architecture.



Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 13 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 3 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Ecuador

Lunch £: 10.00

Dinner £: 13.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Ecuador

Bottle of Beer £: 1.70

Water £: 1.3

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Mindo - Butterfly farm \$5.

Rose Plantation - \$2.

San Pablo - Condor bird rescue centre US\$4.

Banos - Thermal baths approximately US\$3.

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Local Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

In this area, tipping is a recognised part of life. Some local staff will still look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow US\$80.

Foreign Exchange

Ecuador

ATM Availability: Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a 10% service charge

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques can be awkward or expensive to change

Local Currency: US Dollar.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Carry all your funds in U.S. Dollar Cash (NOT Sterling, which is almost impossible to change). The US dollar is the currency used in Ecuador. It is advisable to bring some US\$400 - \$500 of your total spending money in cash, in small denomination notes (in good condition). 100US\$ bills are very difficult to use.

Where to Exchange: Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip from 01 January 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit www.explore.co.uk/insurance. Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the FCA's website www.fca.gov.uk or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

Visa Information

Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Please ensure your passport is stamped with the T3 permit (for 30 or 90 days) on arrival in Ecuador.

Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

USA (If flights transit): According to US law, passengers will have to disembark, collect luggage and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight.

Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). This applies if you enter the country by sea or by air on a carrier participating in the visa waiver scheme, holding a return/ onward ticket. The passport requirements are that it must be machine readable, and must contain a digital photograph of the holder and also an integrated circuit chip that stores biographic information.

All passengers travelling to the USA under the Visa Waiver Programme must provide their details online no later than 72 hours prior to travel. British travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be detained and sent home.

When completing an application for transit you should enter the words 'In Transit' with your final destination location in the address line. Anyone applying for an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ESTA) to travel under the Visa Waiver system will be charged a fee of 14USD (9GBP).

For more information, and to apply online, please visit the following website at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. Once obtained, the application will be valid for a period of two years, or for the validity of your passport (whichever is shorter).

For more information about who is eligible for the VWP, or any other questions you may have regarding your eligibility, or machine readable passports, please contact your local consular office, or visit www.usembassy.org.uk

Vaccinations & Protection

Ecuador

We recommend protection against yellow fever, malaria, (for the Amazon & Coastal regions only) infectious hepatitis, typhoid, tetanus and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria.

Preparing for your Tour

Climate

Ecuador

Temperature ranges are similar all year round. In the highlands: the dry season lasts from June to mid-September. November and December are partially dry. The rainy months are October and from January to May, but showers are short and mostly in the afternoons. Temperatures range from 12°C to 24°C. Nights are cold at altitude (4°C - 10°C). The Coastal Region: from December to May it is hot and wet. From June to November it is generally cool and misty with sudden light showers. Temperatures range from 16°C to 32°C. The Amazon Area: it is humid all year round. Temperatures range from 16°C to 32°C. From April to August the rainfall is heavier. The Galapagos: On the Galapagos, the hot season is January to April with largely sunny days and the possibility of heavy showers; the cool season runs from May to December and is generally more cloudy with much cooler seas. Please note that although it is windier from July to November the sea can be rough at any time of the year. On the mainland the dry season lasts from June to October, though September can be wet.

Clothing

Daytime clothing should be lightweight and loose fitting, but warmer clothing is needed at altitude, particularly at night. Long-sleeved lightweight clothes are useful for protection against sunburn. Bring a swimsuit, sunhat, sunglasses and a thick sweater or fleece. Lightweight waterproofs are essential. Remember that altitude can make places much colder, especially at night, so bring something to wrap up in, including a pair of gloves, hat and scarf and a fleece.

Equipment

A torch, water bottle, insect repellent, high factor sunscreen, ear plugs, binoculars, camera memory card and an umbrella during the hot season may be useful.

Footwear

Comfortable walking boots or shoes and trainers or sandals with a good grip.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of luggage, plus a daypack. Remember, you are expected to carry your own luggage - don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Ecuador

Population: 15,007,343

Size of Country: 272,046

Major Language: Spanish

Religion: Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: -5

Electric Supply & Plugs

Ecuador

2 Pin Flat

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to - and make some

EXPLORE! The Adventure Travel Experts available online 24/7

new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditions, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

- [The Travel Foundation](#)

Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk

- [Tourism Concern](#)

Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk

- For further information on responsible travel go to <http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/>

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at <http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety>

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

EXPLORE! The Adventure Travel Experts available online 24/7

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

These tour notes were printed on 02/03/2015 01:58:18