



# AWAKENING EXPEDITION

*Ecuador*

**GREEN  
IMPACT**



*MyWay* ENCOUNTER

# AWAKENING EXPEDITION- ECUADOR

Embark on an extraordinary expedition through Ecuador's diverse landscapes and rich cultures. Begin in the serene Choco Andino Cloud Forest, where the Yunguilla community welcomes you into their homes, sharing conservation practices and traditional ways of life. Engage in environmental education, organic farming, and cultural mingas while discovering vibrant flora and fauna.

Explore a lush biodiversity hotspot in Mindo, to enjoy its rivers, waterfalls, and chocolate-making traditions. Hike volcanic trails in the Cotopaxi national park and marvel at the majestic peaks and serene lagoons. Get to know the equator's center at Mitad del Mundo, the local village of Guamote and the Ozogoché Lakes to connect with Andean traditions. In the Amazon give back to a wildlife rescue center caring for animals and supporting conservation efforts. Immerse yourself in jungle life, visiting indigenous communities, exploring forest trails, and reflecting on the unity of nature and humanity



Ecuador



14days/  
13 nights

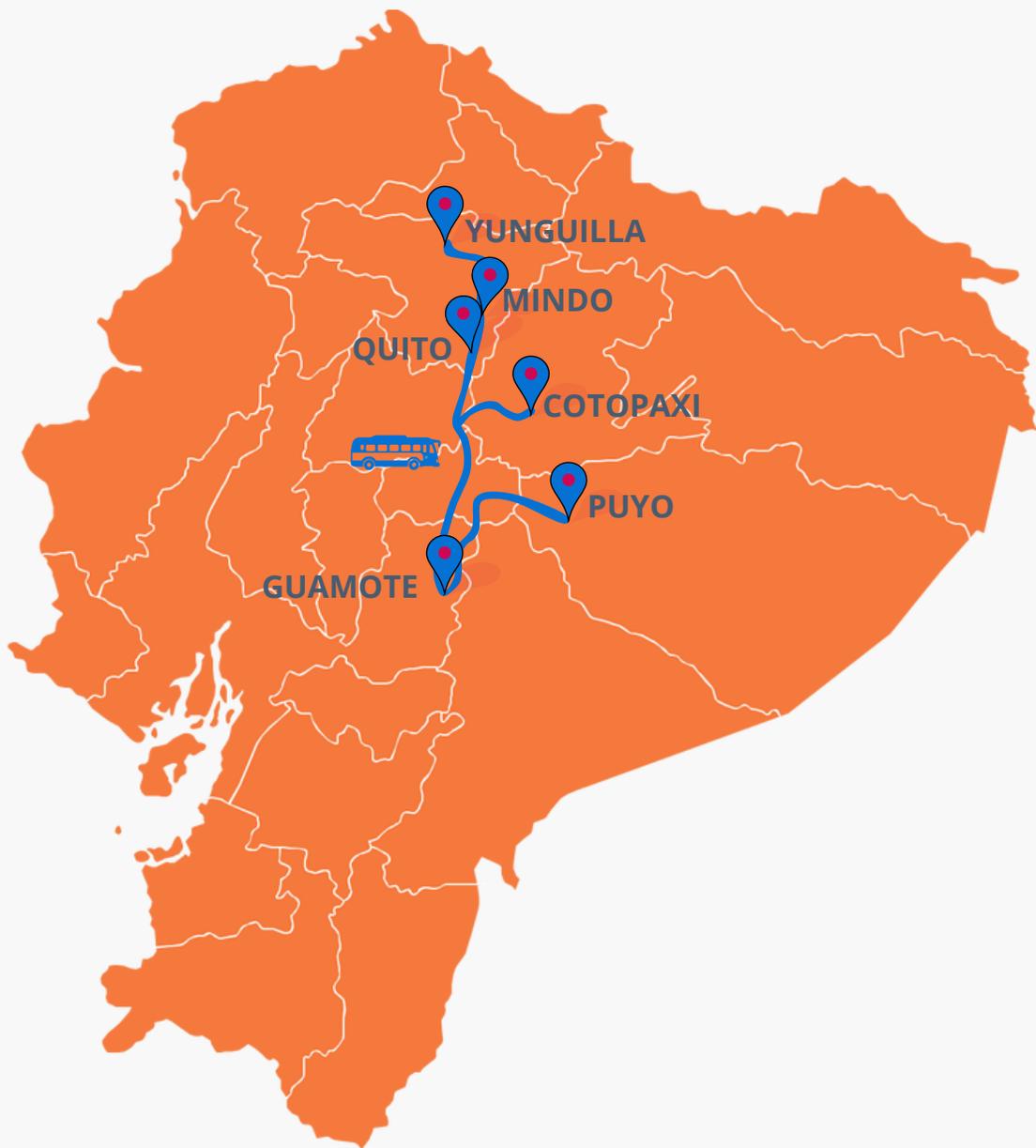


No  
Spanish Needed



minimum 18  
years old

# THE ITINERARY



# DAY 1

ARRIVE IN  
QUITO



Today you will arrive at the airport of Quito, the capital of Ecuador. Your guide will pick you up from the airport with a private transfer and bring you to the community of Yunguilla (about 2 hours). The community is located in the Choco Andino Cloud Forest, they live in harmony with nature and are committed to its conservation.

Tonight you will have a welcome dinner where you will put some group and individual intentions for this Awakening Travel program you will experience in Ecuador..

**Included:** Welcome dinner, intention ceremony, transportation airport Quito-Yunguilla, overnight in homestay shared rooms, guide.



# DAY 2 to DAY 4

YUNGUILLA



After breakfast you will start the day with a cultural landing. Your tour leader will organize a two hours capacitation including the basics of Ecuador, its culture and its language. Afterwards you will be able to greet in a formal and informal way, to order some of the most delicious (must try!) food of Ecuador and to ask for directions in the street. Also you will have a bit of understanding of the geography and history of the country in itself, and the itinerary you will undertake.

The coming days you will stay at the community of Yunguilla, divided over several homestays. With the families that make up the community organization who have experience receiving visitors in their homes. Volunteers live with the family, where they have a separate bedroom, the food they receive is from the families where they stay and consists mainly of local products (tubers of various kinds, vegetables, grains, dairy products and meat).

This type of service allows a more direct integration of visitors with the community and a richer cultural exchange. We recommend coexistence and a positive attitude of the volunteers, especially during the first days until they adapt. To achieve an equal distribution of the benefits of this modality, we have established a rotating system so that families participate by receiving guests in their homes.

# DAY 2

## to DAY

### 4

YUNGUILLA



Based on your interests and abilities, the needs of the community, the season and the group sizes the main activities will be the following during the coming days:

- Environmental education: Volunteers are needed who can support the development of an environmental education program with the children of Yunguilla.
- Forest Research: You can also contribute strongly to the research of non-timber resources in the area (orchids, bromeliads, medicinal plants), or other aspects such as environmental services.



- Organic garden: You can participate in activities such as planting, cleaning the beds, harvesting and post-harvest, preparing beds, and everything related to the maintenance and production of the community's organic garden or family gardens. This will help you gain practical knowledge about organic farming.

- Tahuallullo Community Farm: Your support in construction and maintenance of trails, camping area, recreational area, composting systems and all the infrastructure works proposed in the management plan, as well as in the maintenance of the facilities, is key. These activities are coordinated and have the support of the coordinator of the Ecotourism project for the community. You can also participate directly in the Ecotourism operation.



- Family Farms: You can participate in agricultural and forestry tasks (reforestation) on the farms of the members of the community organization. These activities are carried out with the participation of family members.
- Participation in community mingas: The community has the custom of holding mingas to carry out works of common benefit. This activity is a great opportunity to share formal and informal socialization spaces with the community.
- Dairy and jam processing: You can choose to support the production of cheeses that are processed daily in the small dairy factory, or in the production of jams.
- Preparation of crafts and recycled paper.

# DAY 2 to DAY 4



## YUNGUILLA

During your stay you will also participate in social events, sports and/or parties held in the community.

The Yunguilla area ranges from 1,300 meters above sea level to 3,000 meters which means that we have many species of flora and fauna in the area. In orchids we have more than 150 species, our list of birds has 120 species including the chestnut-crowned grallaria, the sword-billed hummingbird and the Andean bill-billed toucan. There are several mammals in the Yunguilla area which have been studied in the last 6 years with the help of different projects and individuals. Yunguilla is part of the bear corridor, 44 spectacled bears have been identified in the area and during the studies other species were discovered, such as the jaguarundi, the ocelot and the puma.

During your stay we are going to make a long hike as well to try to see the spectacle bears.

**Included:** breakfast, lunch, dinner, cultural landing (day 2), activities in Yunquilla community, overnight in homestay shared rooms, guide.



# DAY 5

## MINDO



After breakfast you will make your way to Mindo. A private transfer will pick you up and drop you in the little town of Mindo (about 1 hour).

Mindo is a small town nestled in the Andean cloud forest of. Known for its lush landscapes, Mindo is a biodiversity hotspot, home to a wide variety of bird species, butterflies, and orchids. The town sits at an elevation of around 1,300 meters (4,265 feet) and is surrounded by rivers, waterfalls, and dense forest

The town has a laid-back vibe, with cozy lodges, cafes, and small restaurants catering to visitors. The area is also known for its chocolate production. In the afternoon you will visit a local chocolate factory to learn about the process from bean to bar. Of course, there is tasting included as well.

**Included:** Breakfast, visit local chocolate factory, transportation Yunquilla to Mindo, overnight in Sisakuna Lodge or similar (shared rooms), guide.



# DAY 6

## MINDO



Today you will have free time to do something you would like to do. Mindo is popular with ecotourists and nature lovers, offering activities such as birdwatching, hiking, tubing down the Mindo river, horseback riding and exploring butterfly farms and orchid gardens.

**Included:** Breakfast, overnight in Sisakuna Lodge or similar (shared rooms), guide.

# DAY 7



## MITAD DEL MUNDO

On the way we will stop at Mitad del Mundo, the monument marking the equator. Explore the complex, which includes the iconic monument, a small museum explaining the significance of the equator, and various exhibits on Ecuadorian culture and history. Take photos straddling the equator line, explore the Intiñan Solar Museum nearby, which offers interactive exhibits about the equator's effects on physics, and learn about the indigenous cultures of Ecuador.

In the afternoon we continue towards the national park Cotopaxi, heading south along the Pan-American Highway. You will go to a hacienda close to the National Park. This beautiful location offers stunning views of Cotopaxi volcano and the surrounding Andean landscapes. This is where we will stay for the night.



**Included:** Breakfast, visit Mitad del Mundo, entrance fee monument, entrance fee Inti ñan museum, transportation Mindo to Cotopaxi, overnight in Chuquiragua Lodge or similar (shared rooms), guide.

# DAY 8



## COTOPAXI



Today we will explore the Cotopaxi national park. Our first stop is the Limpiopungo Lagoon, a serene body of water surrounded by the majestic Andean peaks. Here, you can stretch your legs and take a leisurely walk around the lagoon, breathing in the crisp mountain air. The views of Cotopaxi from the lagoon are spectacular, making it a great spot for photography and quiet contemplation.

You will continue driving up towards the Cotopaxi parking area. From the parking area, you'll begin a hike up to the José Rivas Refuge. The trail winds up the volcanic slope, with every step offering more expansive views of the surrounding area. The hike is challenging, but the sense of accomplishment and the views at the refuge make it worthwhile. Once at the refuge, you can take a break, enjoy a warm drink, and soak in the incredible scenery or even go up a bit more towards the glacier.



## DAY 8

### GUAMOTE



Afterwards a private transfer will continue to Guamote (about 2,5 hours) where you will stay at Inti Sisa Guesthouse. Inti Sisa is a community development project and cultural center located in the small town of Guamote, in the central highlands of Ecuador. The name "Inti Sisa" means "Sunflower" in the indigenous Kichwa language. The project was founded in 1999 with the goal of providing educational opportunities and support to the local indigenous community. Inti Sisa is a model of how tourism and community development can go hand in hand, offering visitors an authentic experience while making a positive impact on the local community. This evening you will have an inspiring talk about community tourism and local culture.

**Included:** Breakfast, visit national park Cotopaxi, transportation Cotopaxi to Guamote, inspirational talk Inti Sisa, overnight in Guesthouse Inti Sisa (shared rooms), guide.

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## DAY 9

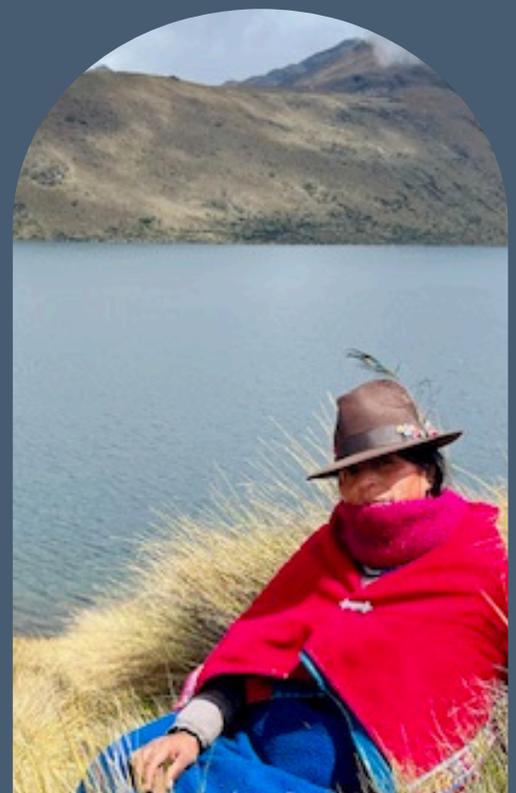
### OZOGOCHÉ



This morning you will make a day tour to the Ozogoché Lakes. You head out from Guamote, driving through scenic Andean landscapes and passing traditional indigenous villages. The Ozogoché Lakes are a remote group of glacial lakes nestled in the Sangay National Park. Explore the serene trails around the lakes, taking in the stark beauty of the deep blue waters surrounded by rugged mountains. Learn about the cultural significance of the lakes to the local indigenous communities and witness the mystical atmosphere of this high-altitude region.

Enjoy a local lunch in the community, where you can try traditional Andean dishes. After more exploration and perhaps spotting local wildlife, like Andean foxes or condors. Today offers a unique blend of natural beauty and cultural insight.

**Included:** Breakfast, lunch, visit to Ozogoché, transportation from/to Guamote, overnight in Guesthouse Inti Sisa, guide.

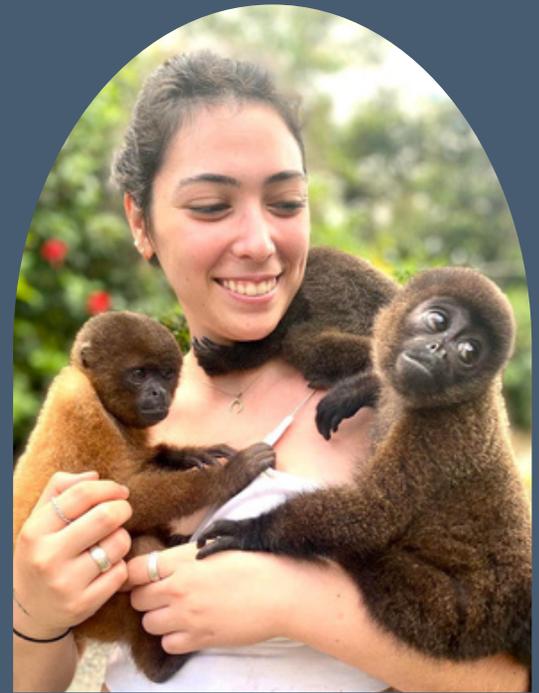


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# DAY 10

Today you will have a private transfer to Puyo (about 3,5 hours), which is a laid-back jungle town in the Amazon of Ecuador. Puyo has many native tribes like Waoranis, Kichwas, Zapara and Shuars. The Zapara tribe (in Ecuador and Perú) was recognized by UNESCO as a masterpiece of the "Intangible Heritage of Humanity" for their cultural manifestations and its oral traditions.

The coming days you will contribute and stay at a wildlife rescue center in Puyo. This center was founded in 2006 with the aim of protecting the wildlife of the Amazon region through the rescue and rehabilitation of local flora and fauna. The animals at the center have all been abused, neglected, or abandoned.



# to DAY 13



Some of the animals were orphaned when their parents were killed by hunters, others

were rescued from animal dealers who were trying to traffic the animals out of the country and others have been removed from families who had kept these animals in captivity. Unfortunately, the majority have suffered some sort of physical or psychological abuse.

Some of the animals have been handed over to the care of the center by Government authorities who have rescued or taken custody of the animals; others have arrived at the center by voluntar means from families who realized that wild animals are not to be kept as domestic pets.

There are currently at least 40 different species of animals at the center which include: Ocelot, tayra, capibara, parrots, Red and Yellow Macaws, the Red Titi Monkey, White- bellied spider monkeys, tortoises, and caimans amongst others. The center is also open for tourists to visit, charging a small entrance fee that is the center's only other source of income.

YANACOCHA

Depending on the needs of the project and the season you will be helping the next couple of days in the wildlife center on different activities.

# DAY 9 to DAY 12



- Day to day care of the animals.
- Cutting up fruit, preparation of diets, feeding the animals.
- Helping new arrivals adjust to the center.
- General maintenance and cleaning.
- Construction work; repairing and building new enclosures.
- Cage and enclosure enrichment.
- Assisting the vet when necessary.
- Other activities such as gardening, improving trails, and making signs for visitors.

## YANACOCHA



-We will also make some fun activities, like hikes in the Amazon and exploring the water roads. You will also visit a local community in the jungle one of these days. You will stay in shared cabañas with dorm rooms. There is a shared kitchen, bathroom and social area with TV and DVD player, hammocks, and books. Accommodation is basic, and all meals will be provided during your stay.

**Included:** Breakfast, lunch, dinner, activities at Wildlife Center, transportation Guamote to Puyo, overnight in camp Wildlife Center (shared rooms), guide.

# DAY 14



This morning you will say goodbye to the animals and the people you have been connecting with the last few days. A private transfer will bring you to the airport of Quito for your flight home.

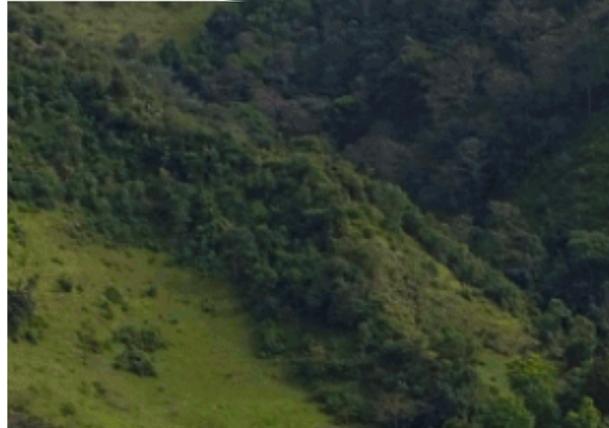
## YANACOCHA

**Included:** Breakfast, transportation Puyo to airport Quito, guide.

Awakening travel expeditions are more than just sightseeing, it's an opportunity to connect with the world around us and cultivate a deeper sense of purpose and well-being. We have researched the region, its challenges, and the way in which responsible mindful travel can contribute effectively. All of the activities have been carefully selected and they represent the values we believe in.

The experiences aim to spiritually awaken our participants by cultivating the following core values

- **Meaningful connections.** Allow you to connect with locals on a deeper level, fostering meaningful relationships and gaining a deeper understanding of different cultures.
- **Personal growth.** By stepping out of your comfort zone and immersing yourself in a new environment, you have the opportunity to learn and grow as an individual.
- **Cultural understanding.** Awakening travel expeditions encourages you to respect and appreciate the customs, traditions, and values of the communities you visit, fostering cultural understanding and empathy.
- **Positive impact.** We have lived and breathed Latin America over the past 2 decades and all of our projects have been carefully selected because they carry out what we believe in. We have researched the region, its challenges, and the ways in which volunteers can contribute effectively. With us, you'll volunteer where your help is needed the most whilst living a life-changing experience at the same time.
- **Self- reflection.** Throughout the journey, we incorporate mindfulness sessions during special moments to help participants fully appreciate their unique experience. We encourage them to approach everything with an open mind, free from preconceptions, and to embrace differences with a spirit of acceptance and active engagement





- **Empowering local communities.** One of the most impactful ways to give back it's to support local businesses and social enterprises that empower individuals and create jobs. . We work closely with local people to develop activities that align with their goals and contribute to their ongoing progress
- **Fun.** Of course we included moments that are designed to create enjoyment, excitement, and memorable experiences. Incorporating fun into an itinerary is one of our key values.

All itineraries have fixed elements in the programs which make the Awakening travel expedition transformative journeys that will wake you up from life. Hereby some of the examples:

- Welcome dinner with an **intention ceremony**, both on a group and individual basis to set a goal for your expedition.
- **Cultural landing**, which will prepare you with the basics of the country's history and customs.
- **Experiences with local heroes.** In our destinations you will be in contact with unique persons. **Our local heroes are game changes**, people that are passionate about something and can share their journey and knowledge with our guests through a talk or activity together.
- **Participation in a triple impact local project** , a gathering of people that comes voluntarily together to achieve a shared goal that will benefit the community.
- Time off to process. For everybody there will be **time to reflect** after an activity in their own way.
- Good guidance. We believe that **the role of the guide/ tour leader is crucial** in these types of programs. Our tour leaders are expertly trained to guide you through transformative experiences. With their deep knowledge of the region, they create a supportive atmosphere that fosters personal growth and meaningful connections with the destination
- New destinations, we want to avoid the crowds and **offer a more peaceful and authentic travel experience**

# WHAT IS INCLUDED



Green  
impact Ecuador

CONTACT US

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