



Volunteer in Ecuador



Volunteer Abroad with United Planet in Ecuador

When you volunteer abroad with United Planet, you become part of a movement to build a better world. We hope you will join us in a journey that will open your mind, your heart, your world.

You learn a lot about a new culture and about yourself, develop greater independence, enhance your communications skills, and gain greater maturity. United Planet volunteers are adventurous, flexible, open minded, and willing to conquer any challenges that may arise during their time abroad.

You will have a chance to change your life -- and to have a real impact on a community in need. Volunteering abroad is about giving of yourself, learning about the lives of others, and getting back a huge amount in return.

Immerse Yourself in Ecuador

Ecuador has amazing diversity: Considered a microcosm of South America, Ecuador actually offers mountains (Quito is at 9,000 feet), jungle, beaches, Inca ruins, indigenous communities, and the Galapagos Islands. As Ecuadorians speak excellent Spanish, it's a great place to learn the language.

Depending on your length of stay, the program includes visits to the famous Equator line, national parks and indigenous clinics and markets. You won't even have to exchange money - Ecuador adopted the dollar in 2000 to stem inflation.

Finding yourself through the joy of service

"In the Cloud Forest in Santa Lucia we worked on carving out a walking path and did reforestation work. One day we went into the forest, found saplings and took them to the lodge to put them in bags with good soil. On our last day in the Cloud Forest we collected sugar cane, squeezed the juice and actually made sugar—all by hand with no electronics involved.

My favorite part of being in the Cloud Forest was waking up in the morning and looking out, as our window looked out at the whole cloud forest. One day we got up at 4 am and took a 3-hour hike to see the "Cock of the Rock". We saw the cotinga bird, which is bright red. It was mating season and we saw hundreds of them."

—Matt Rakhit, 16 years old, Ecuador in 2011



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Highlights*

- > Work in a community project in the morning (clinic, school, orphanage, other)
- > Live with a local family
- > Spanish classes
- > Cooking and Salsa dance classes
- > Excursion to Otavalo, Ecuador's most famous indigenous market
- > Excursion to the Equator line and Quito city tour

Community Development Quests

In Quito, volunteers can work with children from low-income families at a day care or center for special needs. Volunteers organize activities, and spend time giving children individual attention. Volunteers may also teach English to high school students or work at a physical therapy practice. In the jungle, volunteers may live and work in an indigenous community.

Healthcare Quests

United Planet works closely with some unique healthcare projects: public clinics, children's hospital, NGO hospital, and more. Volunteers may help with physical therapy, speech therapy, nursing, and rehabilitation. Some projects are open to those without a medical background.

Environmental Quests

United Planet works with projects in the Cloud Forest of Nanegal, located just two hours north of Quito. Volunteers plant seeds and organic coffee, identify flora and fauna, and assist in environmental education and outreach in the local community. In the Galapagos, volunteers work on a reforestation and community development project and may mentor children as well.

Wildlife/Animal Quests

Work with and protect Ecuador's Amazon flora and fauna. Volunteers help improve the lives of animals that have suffered maltreatment and have been victims of trafficking. At the Animal Rescue Center, you will have the opportunity to house and properly feed these animals.

* Depend on location



"My entire UP Quest experience in Ecuador was even better than anticipated. From the friendly staff at the UP offices, country coordinator and host family, to the volunteer placement and cultural activities, it's only enhanced my desire to return to a Quest sooner than later."

—Karen Berry, United Planet Volunteer Ecuador

