



Educational Tours



MEANINGFUL. SUSTAINABLE. UNFORGETTABLE.

Venture into the heart of Ecuador’s lush Amazonian rainforest where you’ll find one of the world’s most diverse ecosystems. In Otavalo, you’ll experience the culture and heritage of the city, visiting the Mercados de los Ponchos—a famous market known for its beautiful local textiles—and learning how traditional crafts and meals are prepared when you visit a local family’s home. As you’re immersed in the Quito and Otavalo cultures, you’ll also put your hands to work: building and restoring local communities and promoting social justice.

6

Estimated service hours

YOUR SERVICE PROJECT THEMES

We work with the award-winning WE Charity to better understand the needs of each community and then focus projects on those issues. Themes include:

- Education
- Health
- Clean water and sanitation
- Alternative income and livelihood
- Agriculture and food security

CULTURE AND SERVICE IN ECUADOR

9 days, estimated 6 service hours

What to expect on this Service Learning Tour

MEANINGFUL SERVICE

Working side by side with locals, you'll gain insight into the challenges they face and build lasting solutions to help empower the community.

Projects include:

- Building and restoring projects in school communities so local students have a safe place to learn
- Constructing public hand-washing stations and latrines to improve sanitation
- Planting gardens to support the health and wellness of the community

CULTURAL IMMERSION

Live near the communities you serve—celebrating indigenous customs and forming lasting connections with locals.

Activities include:

- Visiting a nearby cacao plantation where you'll learn about the trade. Bring back some cacao seeds and make chocolate back at the lodge
- Playing soccer with local youth
- Learning traditional agriculture techniques by shadowing a local farmer

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Your Field Director takes your global service experience even further, developing and strengthening leadership skills through activities and workshops.

Exercises include:

- Investigating global issues, exploring social issues and building leadership skills in expert-led workshops
- Contextualizing the day's events through thoughtful discussion and group dialogue
- Reflective journaling to deepen the service experience



A local cacao farmer explains how chocolate is made from the bean





A student smiles for the camera as she works at the project site



Local girls share a traditional dance with students

9-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrive in Quito

Meet your Field Director at the airport.

Day 2: Quito

- Visit Yunguilla, a sustainable development community in the cloud forest.
- Tour the Intiñan Solar Museum and witness the natural forces at work near the equator.

Day 3: Transfer to the Amazon Basin

Take a scenic drive through the Amazon Basin and boat up Napo River to the Minga Lodge. Settle in for community orientation.

Days 4-5: Service Project—Amazon Basin

As communities evolve so do their needs. That's why we work closely with WE Charity to understand each community's challenges. Since projects are determined closer to your actual tour date, here's a glimpse at what a typical day might look like:

- Explore a community where you'll work with locals on a service project.
- Throughout your stay, you'll also be immersed in cultural activities, celebrating local customs and traditions.
- Afternoons are spent immersed in cultural activities.
- Evenings are a chance to reflect, discuss events as a group, and draw connections between the day's work and relevant global issues.

Day 6: Service Project—Transfer to Baños de Agua Santa

Bid farewell to the Minga Lodge and travel by boat and bus to Baños de Agua Santa, a city known as the Gateway to the Amazon.

Day 7: Baños

- Visit one of the 60 waterfalls that make Baños such a popular world attraction.
- Explore the beautiful Pastaza river canyon and then return to Quito.

Day 8: Otavalo

- Peruse local markets for crafts and regional foods.
- Learn how to make ponchos at a workshop taught by a local family.
- Visit Mercado de los Ponchos, a famous market where indigenous Otavaleños sell woven textiles like blankets and tablecloths.

Day 9: Depart for home

- Please note, some flights will depart late in the evening which will result in the group arriving back in Canada on the following day.



LOCAL INSIGHT AND SUPPORT

Your Field Director deepens your connection to the land, people and indigenous culture. With local perspective on community challenges and skilled training in service leadership, they'll provide insight and global context, as they:

- Lead skill-building workshops and meaningful group reflections
- Connect you with local non-profits and nearby villages
- Facilitate group orientation and safety training
- Handle all on-tour details, from meals to transportation



Everything you get: 8 overnight stays; round-trip flights on major carriers; daily breakfast, lunch and dinner; local ground transportation; full-time Field Director; sustainable service project with WE Charity; sightseeing tours led by expert guides; entrance fees



An afternoon hike takes students deep into the jungle



Students peruse the colourful and vibrant Otavalo market



Your partners in global education

EF EDUCATIONAL TOURS

For 50 years, EF has worked with educators across the world to help millions of students become citizens of the world through one global mission: Opening the World Through Education. With more than 500 schools and offices in over 50 countries, our staff can respond in person wherever you are, 24 hours a day.

ME TO WE

ME to WE is an innovative social enterprise that provides people with better choices for a better world. It measures the bottom line—not by dollars earned, but by the number of lives changed and the positive social and environmental impact made. Half of ME to WE's net profit is donated to the WE Charity, and the remainder is reinvested to further the social mission of their enterprise.

START PLANNING

To enrol on this tour, ask your teacher for the tour number and visit eftours.ca/enrol or call 1-800-263-2806