



CUYABENO WILDLIFE RESERVE

Location:

Lower and middle elevations of the Cuyabeno reserve.
(Kichwa y Secoya Territory)

Tour Amazon Lodge 5 days / 4 nights

2 Participant minimum

ITINERARY

DAY 1.-

Our adventure begins at 09:30 a.m. at our meeting spot - Hotel Restaurant D'Mario if you have made the trek to Lago Agrio by bus or at 10:00 if you arriving to Lago Agrio by plane.

After, you board our private bus, you will travel for approximately 2 hours to reach the town of Tierras Orientales, located on the banks of the Aguarico River. Here, we provide you with a Box Lunch, we prepare to take the motorized canoe, and start our journey along the Aguarico River. This downstream voyage takes approximately 3 hours of travel until you reach the "bocana"- a place where the Aguarico River meets the Cuyabeno River. Here we'll slow down as we will have the opportunity to enjoy the incredible landscape that shifts from secondary forest to primary forest. Not even at the lodge yet and it's a great place where you can easily see the pink freshwater river dolphins. After enjoying this some time here, we continue with our tour for 30 more minutes on the Cuyabeno river traveling upstream until we reach Waita Lodge located on the banks of the San Francisco Lagoon within the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve.

Along this route we'll appreciate the great biodiversity of the Amazon. We'll have the opportunity to observe and photograph several species of animals such as monkeys, birds, reptiles, and aquatic mammals. ¿No binoculars? No worries – our naturalist guide will provide you with them just in case you left them at home.

Once our canoe excursion ends at the welcoming docks of the Waita Lodge, you'll have a brief meeting to help you familiarize yourself with your new home. After dinner, our guide will give us an informative talk about the activities for the next few days and will invite us for a night walk around the camp in search of interesting nocturnal species such as insects, spiders, amphibians, tree snakes and many others.



DAY 2.-

Since the best time for bird watching is early in the morning, our activity begins at 6:00am. We'll take the paddling canoe to enjoy the sunrise and an incredible view of the rain forest. We'll navigate through small lagoons near the lodge and during this time we have the opportunity to chance upon a great variety of birds and mammals. After a busy and pleasurable morning, we'll return to the lodge to enjoy a delicious breakfast.

After a short break, our guide will invite us to a three-hour nature walk, accompanied by our local guide. They will explain and share their knowledge about the practical use of medicinal plants that their ancestors have passed down through the generations. After feasting upon the great knowledge of our guides and their connection with the world of botany, we return to our lodge to have an appetizing lunch.

At 4:30 in the afternoon we once again we take our rowing canoe to explore the Ceibo Lagoon which is named

after the tallest tree in the jungle. It's located near our lodge and in just a short time we'll admire the forest flooded by black water. This water is also called "Igapo" by the local people and is one of the five ecosystems of the tropical humid forest. It's dominated by the famous "Macrobium" trees, that due to their great capacity to store nutrients in their bark become inhabited by countless microscopic animals, epiphytic plants, and many species of birds. We'll then visit the San Francisco River, a smaller white-water river surrounded by lush vegetation where we can find species of birds that are not found in the large rivers. After having enjoyed an afternoon full of surprises and as night begins to fall, we venture back to the lodge downriver in search of caimans - an aquatic reptile related to alligators and crocodiles. Keep on the lookout as we'll find species of other nocturnal animals such as fishing bats, tree boas and night birds along the way.

DAY 3.-

An early morning activity allows us to take advantage of nature in its purest form, since the best hours to enjoy the rainforest and its animal life are early in the morning.

Around 5:50 am, we begin our excursion down the Cuyabeno River in our motorized canoe for about an hour and a half. This is the best time for bird watching and we will have the best opportunity to enjoy a large number of species along the Cuyabeno River until we arrive at the "saladero" which is a clay bank full of nutrients exposed by the river. Colorful parrots and parakeets arrive every day around 7:00 am to feed on clay that helps them extract toxins from their bodies. Here we'll have the chance to encounter five species of parrots and parakeets that will be feeding on or perching around the clay lick. After this magnificent morning we return to the lodge to have breakfast.

With our full bellies and having taken a break we will take our motorized canoe to head downstream through the Cuyabeno River enjoying the rainforest until we reach the "bocana" - the mouth of the river. In this place we admire the cheeky freshwater dolphins and take in the landscape since the two rivers collide creating staunch aquatic borders delineated by the turbulent white waters bringing sediments from the Andes and the glassy, calm, black Cuyabeno River full of tannins its collected winding its way through the forest. After this enjoyable morning, we return to the lodge for a nutritious lunch.



In the afternoon at 4:00pm we'll take our canoe to visit the Bird Observation Tower, which is built around one of the largest trees in the forest – the Ceibo Tree.” This tower was built and is maintained by the local Kitchwa community and all profits from exploring the tower directly helps the community. From the top of the tower, at 28 meters (91 feet) high, we will have a 360, panoramic view of the canopy of the tropical jungle. We'll admire the expansive diversity of plant and animal life from atop our perch watching and listening to the sounds of the forest.

Before returning to the lodge, we will take a short walk or nocturnal boat ride around the tower, in search of new species all while admiring the setting sun and rise of the evening stars. Then it's back to the lodge where a dedicant dinner will be waiting for us.

DAY 4.-

Once again, we prepare to go in search of new adventures and new species of animals to bolster our ever-growing check list. This time we'll sleep in a few extra precious moments and have breakfast at 7:30am before our morning excursion.

After breakfast, we'll take our rowing canoe to navigate the Cuyabeno River upstream until we reach the San Francisco River, a narrow white-water river surrounded by exuberant vegetation where we can find species of animals that are not common in the large rivers. After having explored this wonderful place and grown our appetite, we return to our lodge to have lunch and indulge in a chocolate snack, we'll help prepare Amazonian chocolate learning the process cacao beans must go through before turning into a delicious dessert. We'll then enjoy the chocolatey fruits of our labor with delicious crepes.

In the afternoon at 4:30pm. we'll take the canoe to navigate upstream along the Cuyabeno River in search of new adventures, flora and fauna. We will make a stop to refresh ourselves in the black waters of the Amazon and relax in the depths of the jungle. Maybe some cheeky dolphins will stop by to say hi. Just as night begins to fall, we will return to our lodge, sailing in the dark in search of caimans and other nocturnal animals. After our enjoyable adventure in the jungle, we return to our lodge where where a nutritious dinner awaits us.

DAY 5.-

This is our last day in the most magical place on earth. We wouldn't want you to leave without one last early activity with a brief excursion in the forest by foot or by canoe, to enjoy the awakening of nature.

A great opportunity for birdwatching, this excursion allows us to preserve a lasting memory of this wonderful place.

After breakfast you'll have to prepare your luggage for our return trip. We will travel 30 minutes on the Cuyabeno River downstream and then take the Aguarico River upstream for 3 hours until we reach our pickup point at Tierras Orientales. Our transport will be waiting for us (and with boxed lunch) to transfer us to the city of Lago Agrio, arriving approximately 4:00 pm. This allows ample time to take the bus or make your flight from the Lago Agrio airport.



OUR SERVICES

What´s included?

- River transport (canoe)
- Naturalist bilingual guide, trained in biology and ecotourism speaks English and Spanish
- Accommodation in traditional cabins. Comfortable rooms with private bathroom (twin doubles, matrimonial)
- Three nutritious meals a day (including purified bottled water and an assortment of hot drinks)
- Breakfast is served at 8:30 a.m.
- Lunch is served at 1:30 p.m.
- Dinner is served at 7:00 p.m.
- Tea, coffee, chocolate enabled all day.
- Catering for vegetarians or vegans
- We have electricity to charge batteries at night (from 6h00am to 10h00pm)
- Equipment for the outdoors
- Water poncho • Rubber boots • Binoculars for a better view of flora and fauna
- From 6:30p.m. to 9:00p.m. "happy time" you can enjoy free caipirinha in our bar
- Biodegradable soap and shampoo

What´s not included?

- Transportation Quito Lago Agrio Quito by private transport, bus, or plane
- Additional drinks such as beer and wine inside and outside the Lodge
- Visit observation tower 6 dollars per Passenger.
- First day breakfast • Last day dinner
- Tips for our crew and guides
- Our recommended tipping guidelines are as follows 20 dollars each day for the guides and the staff.
- Souvenirs made by our community artisans.





What should I bring?

- Original Passport or a color copy
- Cash for tips and souvenirs
- Lightweight quick-drying short-sleeved shirts
- Quick-drying Long-sleeved shirts
- Quick-drying material long pants
- Comfortable sandals or shoes (flipflops not recommended)
- Swimsuit and personal towel
- Hat or Cap with strap
- Sunglasses with UV protection
- Backpack with water protection
- Insect repellent with citronella preference
- Sunblock
- Water bottle for your personal use
- Hand-head flashlight with separate batteries or recommended rechargeable flashlight of 500 lumens led light.
- Binoculars (10x42) if you can. These are recommended for the best viewing of the various animals we're likely to encounter in the reserve.
- A field notebook to keep track of all the amazing things you've seen and learned.
- Small knife may be useful in some cases.
- Reading material for your free time

THE AMAZON AND TROPICAL INSECT VECTORED DISEASES

When you are traveling in Ecuador do not forget to bring your original passport or a color copy.

This area of the Amazon has a very low infection rate from these tropical diseases including Yellow Fever, Malaria, Leishmaniasis, or Chagas Disease. Before organizing your trip, we ALWAYS recommend visiting your doctor to obtain the most appropriate information about the tropical diseases and their recommendations for the appropriate medications.

We recommend the use of our provided mosquito net while sleeping or resting in your bed, so you are protected from mosquitoes and other biting insects during your rest.

Other biting insects and arthropods such as chiggers (a mite) and ticks may be present within the reserve. These do not carry infectious diseases but can be very annoying. We recommend using insect repellent and long sleeves while out on hikes. Upon return to your room, do not sit on your bed and immediately take a shower and change your clothes and hang them up to mitigate the risk of biting arthropods remaining on or in your clothes.

OUR SEASONS

The Cuyabeno reserve in the Amazon has a dry season marked from November to February and the rainiest season runs from May to July. The temperature in the Amazon rainforest for most of the year ranges from 18 to 25°C (64-77°F) during the day and at night temperatures can drop to 15°C (60°F).

GROUP SIZE

For our activities it is very important to work with small groups. We maximize our groups to 10 passengers per guide to guarantee our visitors a unique and personal experience in the jungle with all its splendor. This also helps us reduce impact that directly or indirectly affects the unique ecosystems we visit.

If you wish for a private guide for a smaller group, feel free to contact us as we can provide you with a private, naturalist bilingual guide for an additional cost.