

An Ecuadorian non-profit NGO driven by the enthusiasm of its staff and volunteers to promote sustainable development in marginalized communities throughout Ecuador and to promote Cultural Exchange for mutual benefit in our increasingly globalized

Stay up to date with all the news at Yanapuma and True Ecuador Travel!

A bimonthly newsletter

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Introduction

The end of September means that summer is definitely behind us and “back to school” and “back to work” are the common preoccupations.

The regular pattern is that July is the busiest month for classes and August a little less so as students set off to travel around the rest of Ecuador and South America. Then in September a new group of travelers arrives to take classes – those who are taking an extended period off work or studies to explore Latin America.

This year has been no different, although we have seen a continued decline in the number of visitors year-on-year, which has reflected in a decline in the number of students too. The principal factors seem to be an increase in economic security in North America and Europe as well as a strong dollar for Europeans and a consequent increase in popularity for youth to travel to Asia instead. Fashions in travel are as fickle as any other types of fashion and we continue to look for ways to adapt to the changing travel landscape.

With children returning to school here in Ecuador it is now easier for

Study Spanish Online with Yanapuma!

Since 2009 Yanapuma has offered Spanish classes online to students from all continents. Many have studied with us in Ecuador, and have continued to develop their Spanish skills online once back home. We have recently switched to a new learning platform called Zoom that integrates additional functions to make classes more engaging and varied.

We offer a FREE trial class so students can try it out: <https://yanapumaspanish.org/onlinespanish.html>

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us to place volunteers in local schools to teach English and other subjects as well as act as teaching assistants. A group of 7 new volunteers arrived from Germany from the agency KulturLife to work in a variety of locations in Quito and around the country for one year.

During these two months we have also kicked our scholarship program into action, continuing to support deserving youth from disadvantaged situations to continue their education. Currently we have children and youth from elementary to post-secondary receiving scholarships to continue their studies. In addition we are supporting an elementary teacher in the Tsa'chila community of Bua to finish his teaching diploma to be able to teach Tsa'chila children at high school level in both Spanish and their own language – Tsa'fiki.

We continue to look for deserving candidates to receive help through the academic year.



El primer grito de independencia.

¿Que pasó el 10 de agosto?

El Primer Grito de la Independencia inicia el 9 de agosto de 1809. Ese día en la casa de Manuela Cañizares, ubicada junto a la iglesia de El Sagrario, un núcleo de intelectuales, doctores, marqueses y criollos se reunieron para definir una estrategia para liberarse del yugo español.

Esa noche, los historiadores afirman que ante la desmotivación de algunos de los presentes, Manuela Cañizares les increpó: “¡Cobardes (...) hombres nacidos para la servidumbre ¿De qué tenéis miedo...? ¡No hay tiempo que perder...!”.

Ya, el 10 de Agosto, el doctor Antonio Ante, secretario general de la Junta de Gobierno, visitó a Manuel Urriez, quien fue el presidente de la Real Audiencia de Quito, para comunicarle que la Junta de Gobierno decidió relevarlo de sus funciones.

A este acto, de notificación se conoce como el Primer Grito de la Independencia. Entre tanto, el coronel Juan de Salinas, al mando de las fuerzas militares, declaró la lealtad a la Junta de Gobierno y al rey Fernando VII.

Reproduced from the newspaper “El Telegrafo”



Spanish School News . . .

Summer is the busiest time of the year for the Spanish schools, and this year has been no exception, although as already noted in the introduction, it has been somewhat quieter than previous years. The Cuenca school has remained busy but Quito has not been such a popular destination to study Spanish. In general we have seen fewer tourists and visitors, which has also reflected in fewer students. Many local businesses connected with visitors, such as other Spanish schools, salsa schools, hostels, etc., have commented on this situation with some concern.



We have seen a wide variety of students, from young backpackers to families with children to retired individuals and couples learning Spanish with us. The general profile now is definitely skewed to the older students with very few young travelers in comparison.

During this time we have continued to emphasize language teaching with a focus on communication as the primary activity and goal. This means that students learn to communicate at whatever level they have, adding grammar to support the communication activity but always focused on this outcome.

The “Communicative Teaching Method” is gaining strength internationally as more teachers recognize that the traditional grammar-based learning model does not lead students towards being able to communicate in their new language. If we had a dollar for every time a new student told us that they had studied two or three semesters of Spanish but could not say anything . . . !!!!

So our classes are focused on using materials that are relevant to the daily lives of the student and encourage expression along with understanding which makes the classes more engaging and productive. Students can then go out and practice what they have learned through immersion in the culture of Ecuador.



Staff News . . .

We were pleased to welcome Gabriela Padilla as our new volunteer coordinator after our previous coordinator had to leave unexpectedly for personal reasons. Gabriela is from Quito and has a degree in education from the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos in Madrid in Journalism and a Masters in Gender Studies.

Her first focus was on learning about all the programs and projects that we collaborate with as well as taking over organizing the newly arrived volunteers on the Weltwarts program.



We were also pleased to welcome new intern Lisa Meysman, a tourism student from Thomas More University in Belgium. Lisa began her internship helping out at the school in Cuenca as well as with tasks for the travel agency. Then she travelled to the Tsa'chila community of Bua at the very end of September to take over leadership of a group of volunteers. In October Lisa will be working out of the Quito office to finish up her time with us with an opportunity to explore the capital city as well.

The Communicative Teaching Method

This modern method of language instruction promotes communication skills as the primary goal, rather than grammar acquisition. Materials must also be related to the daily life of the student, making classes relevant, productive and engaging for students of all ages.

Project News . . .

Our principal focus over the past two months has been on getting our scholarship program organized and functioning for the new academic year, although the academic year at the coast is offset from the rest of the country, starting in April and finishing in January.

We were pleased to welcome 7 volunteers from Germany on the “Weltwärts” program (*below*) which is sponsored by the German government. They arrived in August to spend one whole year volunteering in local schools around the country. Two are volunteering at the “Yachay Wasi” indigenous school in Quito where we



have two scholarship recipients studying. One volunteer is in the Andean community of Agato, near Otavalo, helping in the local school there. Two more volunteers are at the Selva Vida project, a Shuar culture project in the Amazon region, where they are also teaching in the local schools. The other two volunteers are working at the INEPE schools in the south of Quito with primary and secondary school children.

The volunteers will teach English and act as teaching assistants for the schools that they are helping, offering vital help to children to learn English in schools that would otherwise not have this option.



Volunteers News . . .

At the start of September we welcomed two groups of volunteers from the Leap UK - one for Ecuador and one in Peru.



The group in Ecuador (*above*) started with a couple of days in Quito to adjust to the altitude before traveling to the Kichwa community of Agato in the Andes north of the capital. There they helped with local infrastructure projects and regular activities before returning to Quito to prepare for a second volunteering stint with the Tsa'chila in the community of Bua where they are helping with maintenance of the cultural center.

Meanwhile, the Peru group met in the city of Arequipa where they took Spanish classes and explored their new surroundings before traveling to the inspiring Colca Canyon and the oasis of Sangalle. Then they traveled to Puno to visit the famous floating islands of Uros before moving on to the Aymara community of Karina where they helped in the local school as well as taking part in seasonal activities on local farms.



These groups help the communities that they live and work in not only by their physical labour and work in local schools, but by offering the opportunity for those that are developing community tourism projects to get used to dealing with foreigners in a relatively low-risk situation. They learn to organize projects and activities for the group and improve their skills in time.

True Ecuador Travel News . . .

The end of the summer signals the need to start gathering the prices and product updates for the following year – always a drawn-out process as we reach out to providers to update our database. This can be frustrating as there are always some who only begin to think about prices at the end of the year, or worse – decide to raise them at the start or in the middle of the next year!

In general we are not seeing much of an increase. A recognizable slow down in visitors has meant that most providers are unwilling to raise their prices, so there will only be very modest increases for programs for 2019 if at all. One or two have even lowered their prices for next year!



*Family vacations with a difference!
Spanish immersion for the whole family!*

Our land-based Galapagos programs have sold well this year, and we are now looking to reach out via international fairs and conferences to begin promotion on a larger scale, confident that we have ironed out any potential wrinkles in the processes with providers.

We also continue to develop new connections to promote Study Abroad and other educational travel opportunities in Ecuador. With so many different cultures and environments in relatively close proximity, Ecuador offers unparalleled options for creating well-focused study and travel itineraries for individual students and groups on faculty-led or independent programs and tours.



Donation News . . .

We were pleased to receive a donation of \$100 from **Corin Nunnelley**. This fund will be put towards a small project or need that arises where it will make a difference.

Throughout the year we come across opportunities to fund small and micro projects - worthwhile development activities that we can move ahead with just a small amount of funding.

We also received a donation of \$340 from the **Colège Edouard Montpetit** of Quebec towards our scholarship program.

We always commit 100% of such small funds to direct project costs as we cover our own administrative overheads from our for-profit activities.

Learn more: <https://yanapuma.org>

Your donations from the USA and the UK are tax deductible!