

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 world

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

A bimonthly newsletter

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Introduction

Summer is upon us, and we have been pleased to welcome students, volunteers and visitors to Ecuador to take part in our programs, be it to study Spanish, volunteer, or travel around the country and visit the Galapagos Islands on our Island-Hopping tours.

These two months have kept us very busy, especially at the school in Cuenca where we have received individual students, couples and families to learn Spanish in this delightful, historic, colonial city.

We have to add though that it has been quite cold there in July which is fairly normal but quite disconcerting for first-time visitors expecting to enjoy high temperatures on the equator!

In Quito too we are seeing the results of a shift in the weather patterns as July has had several rainy days with cooler temperatures – something unknown in past decades.

The project work of

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Yanapuma Foundation has continued for the past two months with contributions from volunteer groups taking part in our “Edible Forest” project that you can read more about on the following pages.

We have also been gearing up for a new academic year for our scholarship program to provide funds to enable some deserving students to continue their studies who would otherwise have been obliged to give up their education for lack of funds.

Finally, this summer has been a record-breaker for our Galapagos Island-Hopping tours which are proving very popular and are generating great reviews. These are created to give a deep insight into the stunning biodiversity of the archipelago and priced to be the most economical way to experience much of what is on offer there.

Study Abroad in Ecuador!

Since 2007 Yanapuma Foundation has been offering opportunities for individual students and groups to carry out programs in Ecuador in the areas of Study Abroad, Service Learning, Global Citizenship studies, etc.



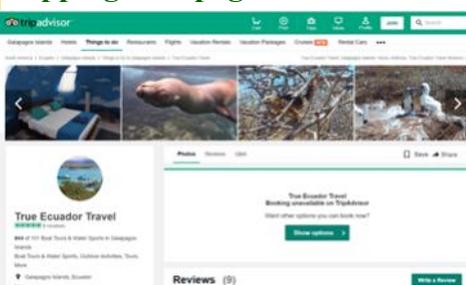
Volunteers in the Galapagos Islands.

Although Ecuador is one of the smallest countries in South America, it contains a wealth of cultural and biological diversity within a small and relatively easily-reachable area. This makes it ideal as a destination for universities, high-schools and organizations looking to create study programs to satisfy their particular requirements.

With our extensive contacts with grass-roots organizations and communities and travel agency, we can put together programs from just a week or so up to whatever length is needed, combining the options of Spanish classes, volunteering, research and internships, and general travel arrangements to the Amazon rain forests and cloud forests, the Andes Mountains, the Pacific coast and the Galapagos Islands.

True Ecuador Travel? On TripAdvisor!

Check us out on TripAdvisor to see the reviews of our island-hopping Galapagos tours.



We work hard to ensure that every trip is a memorable experience that goes off without hitch for each of our clients.

https://www.tripadvisor.co/Attraction_Review-g294310-d15690724-Reviews-True_Ecuador_Travel-Galapagos_Islands.html

True Ecuador Travel News . . .

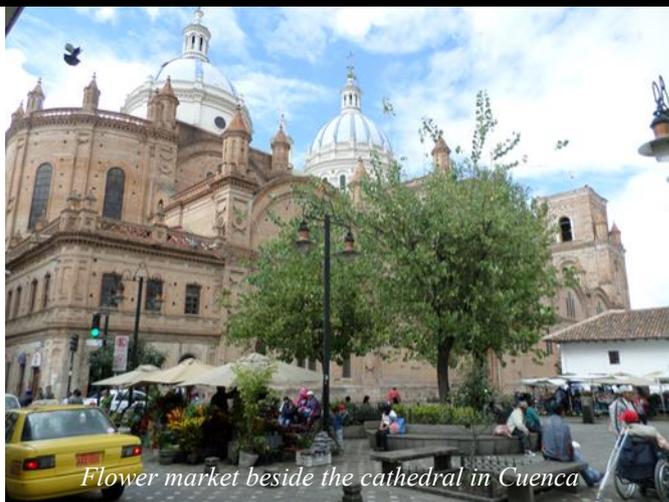
June and July have been busy months for the travel agency with many individual travelers, couples and groups arriving to start their adventures in Ecuador. The Galapagos Island-Hopping programs have been especially busy with dozens of visitors heading off to the archipelago to explore the wonders on offer there.

Maria, our administrator, has been kept especially busy as the inevitable last-minute details need to be dealt with at all times of day and night. In the Galapagos, from one day to the next a tour can get cancelled because a boat has problems or the authorities decide to rest an island for a week, and we have to figure out how to work around the changes and complete each visitor's program. Fortunately this does not happen too often, but when it does it certainly keeps us on our toes!

The Amazon rain forest is the other big draw for visitors to Ecuador and this year is no different to past years, with many visitors taking one of the tours or lodge stays that we offer. Visitors can choose their level of comfort and level of penetration into the Amazon region, and of course their level of "economic" comfort with a wide range of prices for different experiences.

For our visitors to the Galapagos Islands, our Vamoos app is proving invaluable as a source of information on their program, additional low-cost or free activities, local maps, up-to-date weather, and the day-by-day details of pick-up and drop off points and times, etc. The app works online and offline so our visitors need never feel lost.

One of our initiatives over the last two months has been to develop materials for children visiting the Galapagos. Intern Romy was invaluable in researching to create a pack of drawings for coloring, check lists for species, and other resources to teach children about the islands. We hope to finish these and have them published soon!



Flower market beside the cathedral in Cuenca



Study Spanish in the Amazon rain forest



Quilotoa crater lake



Study Abroad Itineraries for Ecuador!

We are always happy to help faculty create the perfect study abroad / service learning / global citizen ship program for their students.

We can create itineraries to stay within your budget while offering a reliable and inclusive service to ensure that the program runs smoothly from start to finish.

We can also supply translators/guides for groups to accompany them to their projects and on their travels, or to stay with them during their research and service programs.

Check it out here: <https://true-ecuador-travel.org>

Spanish School News . . .

As expected, the numbers of Spanish students have grown during these two summer months, especially in the Cuenca school which has been pretty much full since the start of June. We are happy to welcome families with parents studying alongside their children as a family group, or separating to take classes apart with other groups at their level or age.

As we receive inquiries from potential students we emphasize our commitment to teaching students to communicate in Spanish above focusing mostly on grammar which is still the most common method used by teachers in Ecuador.

At times we receive students who have left other schools after a week of classes, frustrated because while they have a notebook stuffed with grammar notes, they are no nearer being able to travel and comfortably interact with native Spanish speakers.



The “Communicative Language Teaching” method aims to involve students in activities and learning that are relevant to their lives and aims, with a focus on developing those communication skills at whatever level they may be at.

At the start of August the schools remain busy although often we find that during this month students start to head off to explore the country or take part in other activities like volunteering or internships.



Staff & Intern News . . .

In June we said goodbye to three interns who had been with us for 3 months – Sebastian W, Romy vander Straeten and Hanne de Kinder all provided invaluable help in a wide variety of areas from helping in the Spanish school, researching for the travel agency and leading volunteer groups in the field.

We are very grateful for their contributions and were sad to see them go! We wish them all well in their careers.

Meanwhile, intern from Alabeda University, Joel Gijs, continued his internship with us, spending time in the school in Cuenca to help out there, leading volunteer groups on their projects and helping with research and development at the offices in Quito.

We are always happy to discuss internship options with students from a wide range of disciplines from tourism to international development and more.

Foundation & Volunteer News . . .

At the start of July we welcomed a group of students from Sotogrande International School in Spain to work with the Tsa'chila of Bua at the Centro Cultural Shinopi Bolón. The 17 students spent two weeks working with the Tsa'chila.

One task was to plant out 2500 saplings as part of our ongoing "Edible Forest" reforestation project. The saplings of local trees were grown by members of the cultural center while the introduced species were grown by Cristina Calazacón who trained for the edible forest project as part of our larger project funded by the Inter American Foundation. Cris supervised the planting of the trees which are planted according to direction, slope, relationship with other trees, shade capacity and other factors, to create a viable forest that has the added advantage of including trees that are of nutritional and economic value to the Tsa'chila.

From previous plantings which are now several years old, locals have commented that they are seeing the return of animals, birds and insects that have long been absent as the forests were felled to make way for agriculture.

Choosing plots for the edible forest that link up with still-existing areas of forest allows us to create biodiversity corridors where the natural flora and fauna can recover, strengthening the ecology and balance of the area.

The group also worked in the local school with an after-school program of activities to stimulate the children's learning and creativity.

We also welcomed 3 groups from UK organization Outlook Expeditions. As part of their program of adventure in Ecuador the groups spend a week doing a service project. One group went to the Tsa'chila community of El Poste where they did reforestation and general maintenance on the cultural center there. The other two groups went to the ecological project of the Shuar culture Selva Vida. Local Director César organized work for the groups to further their ecological development in the Amazon rainforest.



Volunteers in Quito for orientation prior to traveling to their volunteer site.



Donation News . . .

We were delighted to receive a donation of \$4,625 from former student John Greenhalgh towards our scholarship fund for disadvantaged but deserving children and youth to continue their studies at high school and beyond.

We welcome small donations from individuals and organizations, pledging 100% of such donations to direct project costs, providing our own admin and overhead costs.

Visit our website: <https://yanapuma.org>