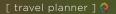
EXPERTS ON THE AMAZON



AMAZON ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Considered a natural laboratory because of its biodiversity of plant and animal species.

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Places to visit:

Kapawi Ecolodge

Tiinkias Eco tourism Center

he Achuar are an Amazonian indigenous group who live in Ecuador and Peru. In Ecuador, they form the Achuar Nationality of Ecuador (NAE), which owns more than 700,000 hectares of tropical rainforest in the provinces of Pastaza and Morona Santiago. The Achuar maintain their beliefs, rituals and traditions.

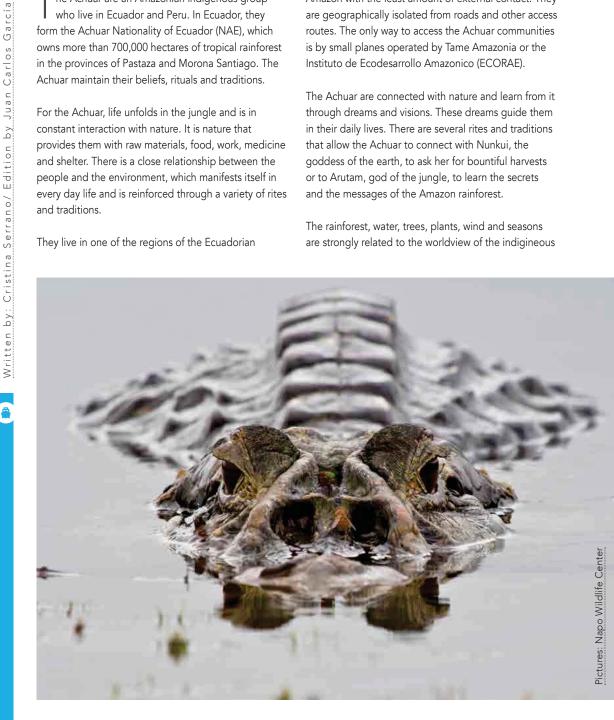
For the Achuar, life unfolds in the jungle and is in constant interaction with nature. It is nature that provides them with raw materials, food, work, medicine and shelter. There is a close relationship between the people and the environment, which manifests itself in every day life and is reinforced through a variety of rites and traditions.

They live in one of the regions of the Ecuadorian

Amazon with the least amount of external contact. They are geographically isolated from roads and other access routes. The only way to access the Achuar communities is by small planes operated by Tame Amazonia or the Instituto de Ecodesarrollo Amazonico (ECORAE).

The Achuar are connected with nature and learn from it through dreams and visions. These dreams guide them in their daily lives. There are several rites and traditions that allow the Achuar to connect with Nunkui, the goddess of the earth, to ask her for bountiful harvests or to Arutam, god of the jungle, to learn the secrets and the messages of the Amazon rainforest.

The rainforest, water, trees, plants, wind and seasons are strongly related to the worldview of the indigineous







people of the Ecuadorean Amazon region. This is the thought of the shamans (spiritual healers), who have practiced rituals from ancient times to the present time. Shamans perform their rituals publicly at tourist sites, whether in the interpretation centres of eco-hotels or in their own communities.

The Achuar culture is closely linked to the tropical rainforest and is one of the most important assets that Ecuador has.

Tourism as a leading method of sustainable growth is necessary in order to help maintain the natural and cultural heritage of the Achuar people as evidenced by projects like the Kapawi Ecolodge or the Tiinkias Ecotourism Centre. These projects allow us to discover, learn and enjoy the richness of Achuar culture responsibly and support sustainable development. Indigineous groups like the Shuar, Kichwa, Zapara, Siona, Cofan, Secoya and Huaorani also have extensive ancestral knowledge about the secrets of the forest, their gods and their relationship with the ecosystem.

When indigeneous people dream, they usually take the form of snakes, dolphins, alligators, spiders or fish. They interpret and relate these dreams with their daily life in the forest. Shamans from Ecuadorean Amazon region clean people's energy upon request. It is part of the indigeneous people's world view. They think that people have to be in a good state of mind.

All you need to know:

Sirens or "yakurunas" might be seen deep in the rainforest. It is an indigenous myth that says that sirens reward or punish people, according to their attitude on behalf of nature protection or not. It is a popular myth.

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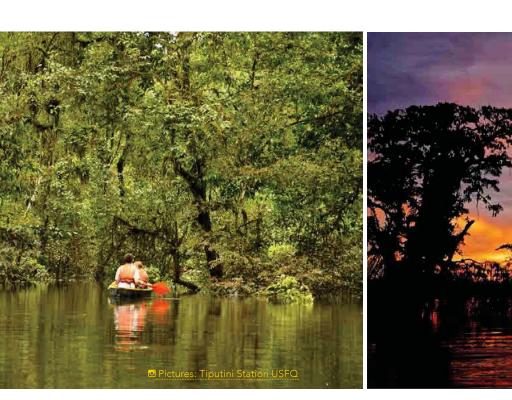
T ropical rainforest is the expression that is constantly used to describe the diverse and complex set of ecosystems that make up the Amazon. There is a great diversity of flora and fauna. A fifth of all the fresh water on the planet is in the Amazon basin of South America.

There are lowland forests called varzea forest (floodplains) which are located on the banks of rivers and firm land. There are also flooded areas, areas which receive strong winds and others that do not. There are also areas with mature trees (primary forest) and other areas recovering after having had trees uprooted, says Kelly Swing, director and founder of the Tiputini Biodiversity Station (TBS), of the Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ).

Swing states that the categorisation of forests depends on the observers perspective. "Some people see the world as a single ecosystem or organism", says Swing.

The main functions that the rainforests possess are the production of oxygen and the absorption of carbón dioxide (CO2). "As a carbon storage site, made of wood and leaves, trees are important for the concentration of the air. Another function is the provision of habitats for most flora and fauna on the planet. Eighty per cent of all species are probably living in equatorial regions," says Swing. As for water, its circulation in the Amazon affects climate (rainfall) in over half the country.





In the rainforest, the presence of so many species with their roles and multiple interactions, the Amazon region should be considered as a complex unit that deserves a strong focus on research and the application of optimal protection strategies", argues the director of the Tiputini Biodiversity Station.

The conservation of ecosystems is of key importance in regulating the Earth. "The cycles of minerals, oxygen and water pass through the world's ecosystems. Both nature and humans depend on these resources. There are no raw materials that do not come from nature" he says.

When speaking about the Amazon, Swing argues that "the Amazon rainforest is so extensive and its role is particularly important for the planet" the director states.

The intact forest works to a certain level of efficiency in relation to all of this; for instance in the renewal of resources that we would like to use. When exploited, its capacity decreases", says the director of TBS.

"The flow of energy between the atmosphere and the biota is part of the balance that influences global and local climate. A change in any part of the cycle (introduction of carbon, deforestation, etc.) causes changes in the lives of those who depend on the environment, which also effects the availability of water and agricultural productivity", mentions Kelly Swing, director of Tiputini Biodiversity Station (TBS) of the Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ).





4,000 species of trees and vines



FAUNA 200 species of

mammals 600 species of birds 120 species of reptiles



INVERTEBRATES

100,000 species per hectare in the Amazon rainforest



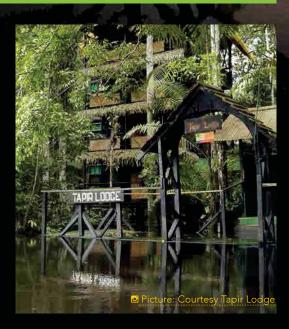
1,000 plants with roots and epiphytics, bromeliads and orchids.

area

TAPIR LODGE

A HIGH UP ADVENTURE

he Piraña and Ceiba towers of the Tapir Lodge house guests fifteen metres above the ground. This alternative style of accommodation is the main feature of this hotel, located in the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve, in Sucumbios. From this vantage point, the experience of the Amazon rainforest is intensified and brings visitors closer to the birds and their songs. In addition to the two towers, the third type of accommodation available is the Bungalow; which has a total of 10 rooms divided between two floors. There are 8 double rooms and 2 guadruple rooms. Like the Piraña and Ceiba towers, the Bungalow has screens on the windows to ensure proper ventilation and prevent insects from entering. Each room has a private bathroom with hot water. The Piraña tower has 4 rooms which can be used for single or double occupancy. From the balcony, it is possible to observe orchids. birds and primates.





fauna species has the Cuyabeno Reserve, in its 603 380 hectares of surface, located in Sucumbios province, in the northern amazon

CUYABENO LODGE: MAGIC IN THE BIG LAGOON

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The Cuyabeno Lodge was the first hotel built in the middle of the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve. Since 1988, the Cuyabeno Lodge has welcomed visitors to its 7 individual cabins and three additional rooms in a tower overlooking the forest canopy. You can observe river dolphins, tapirs, caimans, anacondas, piranhas and monkeys, among other species. There are two tours. The first is 4 days, 3 nights, while the second is 5 days, 4 nights. Both tours include a canoe ride in the Laguna Grande where visitors can observe black caimans and hoatzins (also knows as the stinkbird). In the lagoon, visitors can swim and enjoy spectacular sunsets. Both tours also include bird watching, dolphins, monkeys and other mammals typical of the area. The hotel also offers night walks to observe insects, spiders and nocturnal birds, such as owls.



SIONA LODGE: CONSERVATION THROUGH ECOTOURISM

T urtles, pink dolphins, anacondas and black caimans are among the species that live in the lakes and rivers around Siona Lodge. Located in the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve, this hotel combines hiking in primary rainforest and the opportunity to visit aSiona indigenous village via the black water lagoons. Puerto Bolivar is the name of the indigenous community of the Siona people. Like other small communities in the area, it is situated on the banks of the river Cuyabeno. On this site, the local shaman explains their ancestral religious practices and medical knowledge that has been passed down through many generations. A few minutes away from the hotel there is primary forest ideal for watching mammals like capuchin, howler and spider monkeys, sloths and various species of birds such as toucans, tanagers, macaws and harpy eagles.



Dicture: Napo Wildlife Center

NAPO WILDLIFE CENTER: JOURNEY IN THE YASUNI

Onsidered the most luxurious ecolodge in the Ecuadorian Amazon, Napo Wildlife Centre (NWC) is situated by the Añangucocha lagoon, on the KichwaAñangu Reservation which covers 21,000 hectares of Amazon rainforest in the Yasuni National Park.From El Coca, Orellana, visitors can travel by motorised canoe down the Napo River for two hours before reaching the entrance of the black water canal of the Añangu community where passagers transfer to a paddle canoe. There are several activities to do during your stay. Climbing the observation tower to view the rainforest canopy (tree tops) is the main activity. The tower is 40 metres high and is joined to a tree. Howler and capuchin monkeys, sloths, harpy eagles, toucans and tanagers can all be seen from this tower. NWC has 16 rooms, a restaurant and bar. There are two tours; 5 days, 4 nights and 4 days, 3 nights.

SACHA LODGE: WILDLIFE AND COMFORT

oucans, harpy eagles, kingfishers and woodpeckers are some of the bird species that the Sacha Lodge nature guides will point out to visitors on the 2,023 hectare ecological reserve. The hotel is located in Sucumbios, on the north bank of the Napo River. The hotel has a 275 metre long footbridge, suspended 30 metres above the forest floor and is anchored to the ground by three reinforced metal towers. From the footbridge or the tower platforms, visitors can observe howler and spider monkeys, and harpy eagles. Another attraction is the 43 metre-high wooden tower, built around a kapok tree. From the upper platform, birds, mammals, insects, epiphyte plants, and landscapes can be seen. They offer tours of 4 days, 3 nights and 5 days, 4 nights. The hotel has 26 rooms divided in cabins, a restaurant with international and ecuadorian gastronomy and a bar.

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Place in biodiversity worldwide: Yasuní National Park, located in Orellana province. In one hectare of Yasuní there are more tree species than in all Northamerica.

LA SELVA AMAZON ECOLODGE & SPA



With 25 years of experience, the Selva Amazon Ecolodge is a hotel with extensive knowledge in hosting tourists from around the world. It is located on the banks of the Garzacocha Lagoon, two hours from El Coca, Orellana by boat. It offers tours to suit all tastes and interests. La Selva offers packages of 5 days, 4 nights as well as 4 days, 3 nights. They include visits to the observation tower, parrot feeding grounds (clay and mineral site), a trip to a local community, a canoe ride on the Garzacocha Lagoon and other activities in and around the hotel. The SelvaEcolodge is situated in what is considered one of the best areas for bird watching because of its priviledged location in the north of the Yasuni Park, the most biodiverse place on the planet. There is a bird watching tour for early risers, which departs at 4 am.

SANI LODGE: BIODIVERSITY BETWEEN TWO PROTECTED AREAS



S ani Lodge is found by the Challuacocha Lagoon. It is an eco-hotel located in a corridor of 42,000 hectares of forest between the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve to the north and the Yasuni National Park to the south. It is home to 1,500 species of trees, 567 species of birds, 162 species of reptiles and amphibians, and 173 species of mammals. On the jungle treks you can find up to 13 species of primates, Brazilian tapirs, 2 species of peccaries, harpy eagles, black caimans and Amazonian manatees among others. Among the species of birds, toucans, macaws and parrots can be seen. The hotel can accommodate 40 people (in cabins). There are 10 rooms and 4 family cabins. Each cabin has a private bathroom and electricity provided by solar panels. Sani Lodge offers a package of 4 days, 3 nights. It has a tower where visitors can observe the animals and birds of the jungle.

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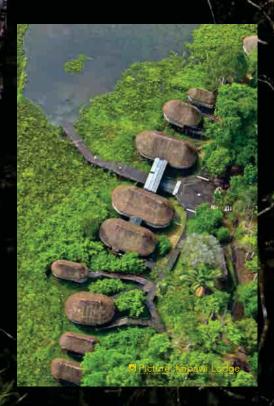
AREA

KAPAWI ECOLODGE:

THE ACHUAR PEOPLE IN THE RAINFOREST

Apawi Ecolodge is situated near the Ecuador-Peru border, a short distance away from where the Pastaza and Capahuari rivers join. The hotel is surrounded by almost 2 million hectares of Achuar territory. Visitors can travel to the hotel by plane from Shell, Pastaza. This area of the Amazon is very remote; far from populated areas. It is a well-preserved part of the western Amazon basin because it is isolated from deforestation and oil and mining extraction.

Experience Kapawi is the main tour (4 days, 3 nights) offered by the hotel and is run by the Achuar people. To reach the hotel from Quito, you should go to Shell, Pastaza by bus or car, then travel by air to the Kapawi community and finally travel in a canoe for 30 minutes to the hotel. Kapawi has straw cabins that are sustainable, spacious and well-ventilated. Each cabin has a private bathroom, bedroom, solar panels that provide hot water when the weather allows it and mosquito nets to protect guests from insects during nightime. There is a restaurant offering international and Achuar cuisine.



[travel planner]

Mammal species, 560 bird species and 63 orchid species compound the biodiversity of the Podocarpus National Park, located in Zamora Chinchipe and Loja, in Southern Ecuador.

SIMPSON LODGE: TAPICHALACA RESERVE

TAPICHALACA AND PODOCARPUS NATIONAL PARK

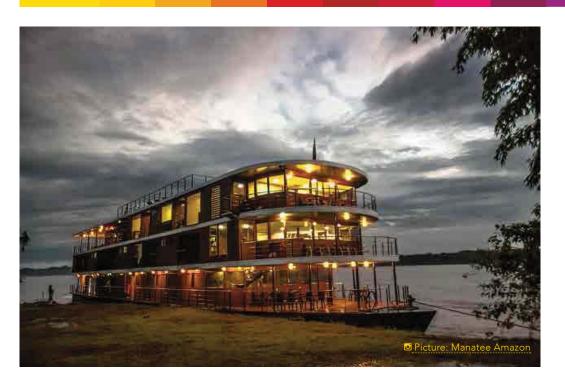
🖻 Picture: Simpson Lodge

A t 2,500 metres, Casa Simpson Lodge is located in the Tapichalaca Reserve in Zamora Chinchipe province, in the Southern amazon region. The Reserve belongs to the Jocotoco Foundation. The hotel is located in the eastern foothills of the Andes, opposite the Tapichalaca hill. To reach the hotel, visitors should take the Loja-Vilcabamba-Zumba highway. It is located near the Podocarpus National Park. The hotel has several pathways through the cloud forest of Zamora Chinchipe. The hotel has a capacity of 15 people; 5 rooms in the main building and a separate cabin with 2 double occupancy rooms. The Jocotoco pathway is a popular two kilometre walk that lasts two hours. You can see the bird of the region: the Jocotoco Antpitta, during your visit.

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Tapichalaca was the first reserve created by the Jocotoco Foundation in September, 1988, with the aim of protecting the endemic bird species and Jocotoco Antpitta. Since 2010, the reserve has consisted of 3,500 hectares. This bird was discovered by Dr. Robert Ridgely in November, 1997. Ridgely made recordings of bird songs, until he heard a strange sound. This was the discovery of the Jocotoco Antpitta, also known as the Grallariaridgelyi, thanks to the discovery made by Dr. Ridgely and the Ecuadorian ornithologist Lelis Navarrete. The Podocarpus Park was created in 1983, with an area of 144,993 hectares. It is between 990 and 3,600 metres at its highest point. On the moors there are glacial lakes that give rise to basins.

COMFORT IN THE WATER



MANATEE AMAZON EXPLORER

ANAKONDA AMAZON CRUISES

The Manatee Amazon Explorer Cruise combines an adventurous ride down the Amazon River, whilst guaranteeing safety and enjoyment. On the boat there is a dining room, a lounge, a bar, and comfortable cabins. By canoe, visitors can explore areas of the jungle difficult to reach, with guides who have extensive knowledge of the area.

The itineraries offered allow the visitor to closely observe the flora and fauna of the jungle, along with the indigenous communities. Visitors can also visit the Yasuni National Park, Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve and Pañacocha blackwater lagoon. The five-star floating Anakonda hotel navigates through the rivers of the Ecuadorean Amazon, creating minimal environmental impact. It has 18 suites adapted perfectly for enjoying a comfortable ride through the jungle. There is a spacious observation deck, outdoor Jacuzzi, and a dining room and bar.

With the help of the guides, visitors can plan and enjoy a fastastic outing: boating, kayaking and shore excursions are some of the activities visitors can do during their stay. Aboard the Anakonda, it is possible to visit the Yasuni National Park and Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve. Visitors can also taste some local and international dishes.



CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY AND UNIVERSIDAD SAN FRANCISCO DE QUITO

Created in August 1994 by the Ecuadorian State, the Yasuni Research Station (ECY) is managed by the School of Biological Sciences of the Universidad Católica del Ecuador (PUCE). It is situated on the right bank of the Tiputini River, a short distance from where this river meets the Tivacuno River. It is located within the Yasuni National Park, considered to be a natural laboratory for studying flora and fauna.

ECY's mission is to "support scientific research in the Amazon rainforests of Ecuador and in all areas of knowlege. It is based on the principal that science and technology are essential for a healthy society that respects life", as mentioned by the Reseatch Station's website. The Research Station has a digital repository of scientific articles and publications that are available to university students as well as the national and international scientific community. Regular studies of the flora and fauna in the area are performed. The Research Station provides food, internet connection, water, electricity, rooms, laboratories and classrooms. It has an observation tower above the trees and a pathway system that goes through the Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas.

On the other hand, located in the northern central boundary of the Yasuni National Park,

on the north bank of the Tiputini River, the Biodiversity Station sits on 638 hectares of Amazon rainforest. This territory was loaned in November 1994. The Ecuadorian State granted this extension of the Amazon to the Universidad San Francisco de Quito in cooperation with the University of Boston, USA.

The mission of the Station is to "research, educate, conserve, learn, share and safeguard the natural riches of the land", according to Kelly Swing, director/founder of the Tiputini Biodiversity Station. Swing states that "research provides information that helps us understand the ecosystem and a basis for justifying environmental conservation".

"The big challenge for all of science is to build bridges between our discoveries, society and politics" he says. All the work done at the Station has the final aim of environmental conservation. "Some projects are easier to connect to the idea of saving this bastion of nature, but all information gathered about the biodiversity or functions of the Reserve will be used to advocate on its behalf in the future". On the subject of scientific research, Swing states that they have had dozens of researchers who have visited them from various parts of the globe each year. "They make studies of flora and fauna at all levels". SCIENTIFIC Research stations

The Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ) is a private liberal arts university. Trips to the Tiputini Biodiversity Station are offered to students pursuing various degrees. For more information, visit: https://www.usfq.edu.ec/programas_academicos/Tiputini/Paqinas/About-us.aspx



Crystalline rivers, spectacular landscapes of forests and towering waterfalls. These are some of the characteristics that describe the experience of adventure sports in the Amazon. The most popular sports are rafting, kayaking, canyoning, cycling and trekking. Napo province is one of the most popular in the Amazon region to experience them.

The most popular sport is rafting, "because in most cases no experience is needed to do it. There are rivers of different levels of difficulty and accessibility", explains Roberto Rueda, a representative of the Torrent Duck tour operator. The Quijos canton is the centre of attractions for these sports. The Jondachi, JatunYacu, Anzu and Napo Rivers are suitable for rafting.

"In Napo, the rivers boast a variety of landscapes, offering many possibilities to pursue this sport in the area", says the expert. "In Ecuador, rafting is growing as it can be done in several different provinces in the country, it is important that visitors follow the safety measures in all areas", says Rueda.

On the other hand, kayaking is done in the Papallacta, Oyacachi, Cosanga, Quijos, Jondachi, Upper and Lower Misahualli, Pano, Tena, Anzu, JatunYacu and Napo rivers.

"Ecuador is the third best destination in the world for rafting and kayaking. River kayaking in Ecuador is special because there are more options for it than rafting. We are in a strategic location for river kayaking thanks to the Andes Mountain Range as many of the rivers flow down from the eastern and western mountains", says Rueda. The best places for kayaking are: Baeza, Tena, Macas, Baños, y Zamora Chinchipe.

"We should make better use of all the rivers available







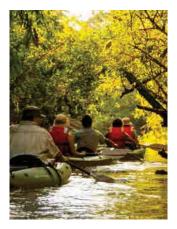




for kayaking as this sport has much more potential than others because of the variety of locations where it can be done" adds Rueda.

Referring to places where several adventure activities can be combined, Rueda speaks of Cotopaxi National Park, Antisana Ecological Reserve, Cayambe Coca National Park and Sumaco-Napo-Galeras National Park, being the main parks with a high potential for adventure sports. Other potential areas for these sports include Zamora Chinchipe, Macas in Morona Santiago, Intag and Mira in Imbabura province.

"Ecuador has tremendous potential to develop adventure tourism routes in all of its protected areas. The key would be to enhance existing operations near the areas and to integrate them into the protected areas. It is also important to train operators in how to develop activities in protected areas", says Roberto Rueda, representative of the Torrent Duck tour operator.



DESTINATIONS Look for tourist attractions close to the place you are visiting.



NAPO It is the province where most adventure sports are done



RIVERS Jondachi, Jatun Yacu, Anzu, Pano, Misahuallí Alto y Bajo and Napo

Make sure suppliers have the appropriate operating permits and that their guides are certified and experienced. Look for the best options for tours according to the weather (water level); this will allow you to find the tour you need, with perfect conditions for your sport. Look for specialised local operators.

Sites of interest:

Torrent Duck Operator: https:// www.facebook.com/pages/ Torrent-Duck/286170521536305?pnref =story Inside Ecuador Operator: http:// www.imagineecuador.com/ banos/rafting/ Rios Ecuador Operator: http:// www.riosecuador.com/rios_ ecuador/index.php Yacu Amu Rafting Operator:

http://www.raftingecuador.com/





