Ecuador is more than Galapagos. The unusual variety of ecosystems packed in this small stretch of land accounts for an astounding biodiversity, the largest in the world proportional to country size.

Ecuador is home to 382 species of mammals, the largest per square metre; 1600 species of birds, more than half of those found in South America; 132 species of hummingbirds, 10% of all frogs, 10% of vascular plants, 7000 types of butterflies, 60% of the orchids found in South America, 40% of which are endemic, the finest cocoa bean in the world, twenty-two ethnic groups, with thirteen different languages… This treasure trove of riches is yours to discover in this amazing four day-four night ride on board Tren Crucero.

From the shores of the Pacific Ocean to the highlands of the Andes, join us in the journey of a lifetime, following in the footsteps of the greatest travellers, scientists and explorers of the past.
An Award-winning Train

Experience the wonders of Ecuador on board Tren Crucero, recognized as the Leading Luxury Train in South America in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Modern, electric-diesel, and lovingly restored, antique steam locomotives pull a high quality convoy of two luxury, Colonial and Republican-style themed passenger cars carrying just fifty passengers, to ensure personalized service for all.

A bar and gift-shop car with two comfortable observation lounges and an open air terrace complete the setup of this comfortable, select boutique train.
Breaking with the traditional model of luxury train rides anchored in the past and isolated from the places they journey through, and instead tapping into the very essence of Ecuador’s history and soul, Tren Ecuador created its own model of social co-responsibility in the operation of its tours, in which local communities and natural heritage are at the heart of the experience.

Together with the license-holders of our 23 station-cafes, 14 artisanal squares, 13 local museums, 2 mountain refuges, 9 music and historical recreation groups, several community-based tourism operations, Tren Ecuador’s big family of workers and stakeholders allows tourists to experience first-hand the rich natural and cultural heritage of Ecuador while at the same time creating value for local communities.

This network of Tren-Ecuador associated enterprises creates more than 5000 jobs in local communities along the tracks. Operators of Tren-Ecuador associated facilities are carefully selected within the communities, and they receive technical support, training, as well as fixed contracts compliant with fair-trade principles as suppliers for Tren Crucero or Expediciones. They also serve their communities as fully-licensed tourism companies.

We are fully committed to the principles of Sustainable Tourism and the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. All our managerial and commercial decisions are guided by the principle of contributing to the strengthening of local economies by the sustainable use of the heritage associated to the historic railway we operate.

The involvement of local communities and their protagonism in the product is the real innovation in this business model, in which public, private and community-based actors are partnered as equals with a common goal, which is to create value by preserving and sharing the material and intangible heritage associated to the railway.
Our guides and bartenders are deeply passionate about our land and our culture, and are ready to satisfy your curiosity at any time while you enjoy the views. Snacks, fresh-made juices, coffee, tea, soft and alcoholic drinks are available all day. Some meals are also served on board, while others are part of the tours.

Nights are spent in characterful countryside hotels and haciendas.
Feel the joy of discovering the hidden secrets of Ecuador with our carefully selected collection of Tren Crucero experiences. All our partners are local tourism companies with high standards of social and environmental responsibility and a deep commitment to the communities they serve.

With them, you will hike the rainforest, roam ancestral markets, visit artisans’ workshops, meet the last “ice-harvester” of Chimborazo, be welcomed in indigenous communities where you will learn about Andean cosmogony and ancestral traditions... All this straight from the true guardians of these riches, the local communities that have preserved this astounding heritage.

“Best Responsible Tourism Project” and “Gold in Best for Poverty Reduction and Inclusion”, prices won by Tren Ecuador at the World Responsible Tourism Awards, are the result of these wonderful experiences where the local communities and their cultural heritage are the main attraction.
Ancestral cuisine is an integral part of the fascinating cultural experience of this journey, thanks to the variety and diversity of ingredients found along the route.

Ecuador is home to the finest cocoa bean in the world, the “fine aroma”, “arriba” cocoa. The train crosses large plantations of sugar cane, banana, pineapple, rice, and all kinds of tropical fruits, sweeter than any other you’ve ever tasted, thanks to the higher intensity of sunlight in the Ecuador. Do not miss our fresh-made juices on board.

Quinoa crops colour the landscape, dotted with herds of sheep and llama and the bright shades of the peasant’s ponchos. The rolling hills of the Andes highlands are a tapestry of hues that translate into beautiful dishes.
“We are in an amazing country. Such trees! By day plants and animals glow with such blinding colours”
(A.v.Humboldt)
On this journey on board Tren Crucero you will climb about 12000 ft. in roughly 300 miles, thus experiencing one of the most dramatic changes in vegetation and scenery in the world as the train travels through the fertile plains of the coast into a dense cloud forest that slowly clears before the imposing walls of the Andes.

The “Nariz del Diablo” pass looms in the distance. The convoy zig-zags its way up the daunting tracks to arrive at the quaint village of Alausi in the Andean Highlands. From here on, imposing volcanoes preside over the landscape as the train cruises the grazing lands, ordered patches of vegetables speckled with herds and colorful quinoa fields. On arrival at Urbina station, in the eastern flanks of Chimborazo, we meet the last “ice-harvester.” Tasting an ice-cream made of fresh fruit and hand-harvested ice from the glacier is a unique experience!

From here we make a slow descent along the Avenue of Volcanoes. We visit a mountain forest around Cotopaxi, the most renowned volcano in the area, before continuing our journey to Quito, a Unesco World Heritage Site.

Early next morning we set out to Otavalo, home to an ancestral market, where a restored steam engine awaits us. At a leisurely pace we will discover the culture and traditions of the Northern Andes: music, cuisine, weavers and the skillful woodcarvers, heirs to the renowned Baroque Quito School style passed down by the colonial masters. After a visit to an export-class rose plantation and Andean lunch we return to Quito, where our trip ends.

Train to the Clouds (Guayaquil – Quito)

4 days/4 nights Saturday to Tuesday

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"So many wonders..."
(A.v. Humboldt)
Train of Wonders  
(Quito - Guayaquil)  
4 days/4 nights  
Tuesday to Friday

Our journey starts in the Northern Andes, homeland to pre-Inca cultures. In Otavalo, home to a millenary market, steam engine awaits us. At a slow pace we will discover the many wonders hidden in this part of the country: musicians, painters, weavers and the skillful woodcarvers who keep the renowned Quito School style alive; After a tasting of traditional Andean cuisine and a visit to an export-class rose plantation we return to Quito.

Next day we start our descent of almost 12,000ft towards the shores of the Pacific Ocean, travelling along the Avenue of Volcanos. Here, the Andes split into two parallel ranges. The fertile valley in between these imposing stone walls is home to a veritable treasure trove of biodiversity. Pristine landscapes, endemic species of wildlife and flora, indigenous cultures as well as archaeological and historical remains are scattered everywhere, guarded by magnificent volcanoes. The train leaves behind Cotopaxi volcano and National Park and slowly climbs towards Urbina station, the highest point in on our route at 11843ft. There, by the Chimborazo volcano awaits Baltazar Ushca, the last “ice-harvester” and guardian of this ancestral trade.

After a visit to Guamote traditional indigenous market, the mythical “Nariz del Diablo” pass awaits; a vertiginous descent of 1476ft. that signals the transition from the Andes to the tropical lowlands. The landscape changes as we leave the narrow gorge of the Chanchan river and its cloud forest and ride into the wide, fertile tropical plains. Rice, banana, cocoa, pineapple and sugar cane plantations pass before our eyes as the steam engine whistles its way towards the Pacific Coast and the end of our trip.
A Ride Through History

For Tren Crucero travelers looking for a deeper cultural experience, we are pleased to introduce our newest option: The Gold Class.

Gold class passengers will share The Luxury Experience 4-day/4-night itinerary, and every night will enrich their experience in signature accommodations along the rails. Located in historical properties, these hotels offer a unique journey through the history of Ecuador.

From Quito's colonial, UNESCO World Heritage main square or the city's early XXth century cultural centre, to historical haciendas and restored public buildings dating from the cocoa boom in XIXth century Guayaquil, these properties have been carefully selected for their singular character, their attention to detail and their excellence in service, to guarantee a unique experience.
What's included? The program includes transportation on board Tren Crucero, all meals during the itinerary, snacks and soft drinks on board the train, Spanish/English speaking guide, excursions as detailed in the itinerary, land transportation during the itinerary and accommodation in double basis for 4 nights. Luggage porterage at hotels is included. The stretch from Quito - Otavalo & Ibarra - Quito is operated by bus. Children rate $1,560 (net).

What's extra? Taxes, alcoholic drinks (wine, beer and whisky are available on the train’s bar), meals or visits not detailed in the itinerary, airline tickets, personal expenses, tips or shuttles/transfer to non-specified hotels. We strongly suggest to all customers to purchase a travel insurance separately.

Rates valid from Jan 01st to Dec 31st 2018 • Non commissionable rate • Rates for children apply from 2 to 11 years and 11 months ols shering room with 2 adults • Tren Crucero does not allow triple accommodation • Rates and departures are subject to change without prior notice.
look, feel, live, ride.

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