

Cuenca

Cuenca, the third largest city in Ecuador, is situated in a fertile valley in the southern highlands of Ecuador. Perhaps because of its isolation, Cuenca has kept its old-world architectural charm and its colonial ambience. Many Ecuadorians consider it to be the most beautiful city in the country, as well as the center of arts and crafts such as jewelry making and ceramics. With streets running at right angles and block numbered, Cuenca is a city to go strolling in without getting lost. Please note: Entrance fees to museums, churches, etc. are not included

QC-06	<p>Cuenca Scenic tour <i>3 hours, daily</i></p> <p>Cuenca is situated in a fertile valley on the banks of the Tomebamba River. This is a city famous for its art and history and for its huge and beautiful Cathedral that faces the small, more colorful, Indian Cathedral. Visit La Merced Convent, some churches and the Crespo Toral Museum. See silversmiths at work and handicrafts of almost every kind.</p>
QC-07	<p>Ingapirca Fortress of The Incas <i>1 day from Cuenca, lunch included</i></p> <p>Ingapirca is Ecuador's most important Incan ruins. Drive from Cuenca to Ingapirca, seeing Cojetambo Park and several towns such as Azogues, Cañar and EI Tambo. Ingapirca was the Incan ceremonial center of the area and was built about 50 years before the arrival of the Spaniards. The ruins include large ceremonial bathtubs and a rock carved to depict a face. Picnic lunch will be served.</p>
QC-08	<p>Quito-Cuenca Overland with Train Ride Riobamba-Alausi-Sibambe (Devil's Nose) <i>3 days, breakfast, lunch and accommodation (airfare Cuenca-Quito or Cuenca-Guayaquil not included)</i></p> <p>One of Ecuador's special attractions is the highland railway. Built at the turn of last century, it took over 35 years to complete. Sitting in the rail carriage, one captures the beauty of the typical Ecuadorian highlands and scenery and the patchwork of fields rising up the slopes of the Andes.</p> <p><i>Day 1.</i> Leaving Quito, drive along the Avenue of the Volcanoes to visit an Indian market. Lunch. Arrive in Riobamba in the early afternoon. Visit the church of La Concepcion, which has a good collection of colonial art.</p> <p><i>Day 2.</i> At 6 a.m. board the train in Riobamba. Travel through spectacular Andean countryside while observing indigenous people at work in their fields. The current train route is Riobamba/Alausi/Sibambe/Alausi. The train ride ends in Alausi around noon. Bus ride to the Incan ruins of Ingapirca, the finest example of their stonework in Ecuador. Lunch at the ruins. Continue on to Cuenca, considered by many Ecuadorians to be the most beautiful city in the country.</p> <p><i>Day 3.</i> In the morning a city tour of Cuenca. Lunch. Transfer to airport for flight to Quito or Guayaquil.</p> <p>Optional: We also run another rail journey (Quito/ Riobamba). Details upon request. Note: We cannot hold responsibility for the train operation. In case the train is not operative on the day required, the tour will be completed overland.</p>
QC-09	<p>Quito-Cuenca Overland "The Route of The Incas" <i>5 days, breakfast, lunch and accommodation (airfare Cuenca-Quito or Cuenca-Guayaquil not included)</i></p> <p><i>Day 1.</i> Drive South via the Avenue of the Volcanoes to the Cotopaxi National Park. Afternoon arrival at La Cienega hacienda, where we spend the night.</p> <p><i>Day 2.</i> Morning visit to an Indian market then on to the cloud forests of Baños. Accommodation at a hotel on the outskirts of Riobamba.</p>

	<p><i>(Quito-Cuenca Overland "The Route of The Incas".. continued from previous page)</i></p> <p><i>Day 3.</i> Travel through picturesque countryside to Ecuador's most important Incan site at Ingapirca. Overnight at a hotel in Cuenca.</p> <p><i>Day 4.</i> Visit the Gualaceo Valley where jewelry, pottery and other handicrafts are made.</p> <p><i>Day 5.</i> In the morning, visit Colonial Cuenca. Afternoon flight to Quito or Guayaquil.</p>
QC-10	<p>Quito-Cuenca by air <i>3 days, breakfast, lunch and accommodation (airfare Quito-Cuenca-Quito not included)</i></p> <p><i>Day 1.</i> Morning flight to Cuenca. Visit the colonial city. Accommodation at one of Cuenca's colonial hotels.</p> <p><i>Day 2.</i> Visit to Ingapirca and the village of Biblian.</p> <p><i>Day 3.</i> In the morning, visit the Gualaceo valley. Afternoon return flight to Quito.</p>