

Markets

One of the most fascinating and unique things about Ecuador is its markets. In any given region, the market is held on a different day of the week in a different town square. Market day is a grand, colorful fiesta with hundreds of people buying and selling almost everything: food, hardware, clothing, tapestries, with most things made or produced locally. Vendors and buyers travel from kilometers around, in carts, on donkeys, on foot, or by truck to buy, sell or trade.

MK-01	<p>Saquisilí Market <i>1 day, Thursdays, lunch included</i></p> <p>One and a half hours South of Quito sits the town of Saquisilí with one of the most colorful and complete Indian markets in Ecuador. The whole town is a market on this day and one can walk around, shopping for handicrafts of all kinds. Especially attractive is the animal market. Lunch served at La Ciénega, a 300-year-old restored hacienda, now a beautiful country inn. After lunch explore the gardens of the hacienda, or stroll along the country lanes. Late afternoon departure back to Quito.</p>
MK-02	<p>Pujilí Market <i>1 day, Sundays and Wednesdays, lunch included</i></p> <p>Departing from Quito to the South for some 90 km is Pujilí, a town known for its ceramics. Many Indians gather here, with their llamas loaded with colorful fruits, vegetables and other goods. Visit this picturesque scene and enjoy the taste of a real Andean market. Lunch at La Ciénega. Return to Quito in the afternoon.</p>
MK-03	<p>Zumbahua Market <i>1 day, Saturdays only, box-lunch included.</i></p> <p>Start very early in the morning going along the Avenue of the Volcanoes. Reaching the city of Latacunga, we turn towards Pujilí and then up the old road to the coast. Here we see the really desolate Andean terrain with an occasional shepherd in the distance. Zumbahua is a typical mountain market where llamas and riding horses are traded. After the market, we visit Quilotoa lake, which is a beautiful aquamarine-colored crater lake. From the crater rim, the view of the surrounding countryside is spectacular. Picnic lunch. PM return to Quito.</p>
MK-04	<p>Otavalo Mini Country Tour <i>1 day, daily, lunch included.</i></p> <p>In a very packed day, visit Otavalo and Peguche, towns known for their weavings and for some of the best handicrafts in the country. Continue on to Cotacachi, known for its leather goods. Lunch at a local restaurant. Along the way, see the fascinating agricultural mosaic of rural Ecuador.</p> <p>Note: When this tour is run on Saturday, visit the famed Otavalo Indian Market.</p>
MK-05	<p>Otavalo Country Tour <i>2 days, starts Fridays or Saturdays. Breakfast, lunch and accommodation</i></p> <p><i>Day 1.</i> Travel North to Calderon's "bread-doll" village, then on to San Pablo lake via the Eastern side of Mt. Imbabura, passing through picturesque Indian villages. Overnight at a hacienda or hotel.</p> <p><i>Day 2.</i> Market day at Otavalo: excellent shopping for weavings and sweaters and a delight for the photographer. Then on to Cuicocha crater lake. Hike around the area. Visit the town of Cotacachi, known for its leather crafts. Late afternoon return to Quito, with a stop at the Equator en route.</p> <p>Note: The order of the activities may be inversed, depending on departure day.</p>

<p>MK-06</p>	<p>Imbabura Country Tour <i>3 days, starts Thursdays, Fridays or Saturdays.</i></p> <p><i>Day 1.</i> Travel North to Calderon's "bread-doll" village, the pre-Inca ruins of Cochasqui, then on to San Pablo lake via the Eastern side of Mt. Imbabura, passing through picturesque Indian villages. Overnight at a hacienda or hotel.</p> <p><i>Day 2.</i> A visit to one of the weaving communities, then on to Cuicocha crater lake. Hike around the area. Visit the town of Cotacachi, known for its leather crafts.</p> <p><i>Day 3.</i> Market day at Otavalo: excellent shopping for weavings and sweaters and a delight for the photographer. In the afternoon, stop at the Equator line before returning to Quito.</p> <p>Note: The order of the activities may be varied according to departure day, in order to accommodate the visit to the Otavalo market.</p>
<p>MK-07</p>	<p>Indian Market - Baños – Thermal Springs <i>2 days, breakfast, lunch and accommodation</i></p> <p><i>Day 1.</i> Depending on the day of the week we will visit a different Indian market, then stop at the Salasaca Indian weavers before descending to Baños, where we spend the night.</p> <p><i>Day 2.</i> Up early for a soak in a thermal spring at the foot of Mt. Tungurahua. Hike along the slopes of the Pastaza River canyon in the cloud forest with its waterfalls, lush vegetation and many species of birds. Afternoon return to Quito.</p> <p>Optional: MK-01, 02 and 03 may be extended to two-day programs. The first day visit Cotopaxi with an overnight at the 300-year-old hacienda, La Cienega, and the second day visit an Indian market. MK-01 & 02 may be altered upon request to have a box lunch and continue on to Cotopaxi volcano or Quilotoa crater lake. The scenery en route is spectacular, with desolate Andean countryside cultivated by indigenous communities, as they did centuries ago.</p>
<p>AH-01</p>	<p>Thermal Springs of Papallacta <i>1 day, lunch included</i></p> <p>Leaving Quito, cross the Eastern Cordillera along a dramatic glacier-carved canyon. Before arriving at a cloud forest area we'll see many changes in vegetation. Thermal springs are nestled in these beautiful Andean Highlands. Spend the rest of the day in these curative sulfate alkaline thermal waters, enjoying the extraordinary landscape. PM drive back to Quito.</p> <p>Note: Optional overnight at cabañas "Termas Papallacta". Price upon request.</p>

