BE AN EXPERT ON THE ECUADORIAN AMAZON ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO THE WEBINAR
ALL YOU NEED IS ECUADOR

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WHY SELL THE AMAZON?

There are many reasons for offering the Ecuadorian Amazon region. Considering that this tropical rain forest spreads by other South American countries besides Ecuador, following you’ll find four characteristics that make the Ecuadorian Amazon different:

✓ Natural places and national parks recognized by UNESCO
✓ Destination that promotes conservation and supports local communities through the application of best practices in sustainable tourism
✓ Easy connection with the main cities, national parks and haciendas in the Andes region
✓ Excellent destination for families and learning

ECUADORIAN AMAZON REGION, BRIEF HISTORY

➢ Pre-Columbian cultures (1,200-1,500 BC), Amazonian people maintained trade and exchange with Andean and coastal cultures.

➢ Inca period (1470-1534), trade relations were maintained between Incas and some Amazonian groups.

➢ Discovery of the Amazon River (1541-1542) expedition led by Gonzalo Pizarro and Francisco de Orellana in search for “el Dorado” (the expedition splits and only Orellana arrives)

➢ Fray Gaspar de Carvajal -part of the expedition- wrote his memoirs in 1542 (published in 1855); Here he describes the mythical women warriors which he called  "the Amazons" after Homer's "The Iliad"

➢ Neither Incas, Spaniards nor colonists conquered Amazon groups so they have kept their languages and traditions until today.
AMAZON TOP 5

The Amazon region features several similarities between the different countries that share this great green lung of the planet, however, some of these characteristics are unique to Ecuador and make the visits to this tropical forest as well as the creation of circuits easier, especially when combined with other completely different natural regions such as the Andes, the Pacific Coast and Galapagos Islands:

✓ Mega diversity, one in ten known species in the world is found in the Amazon
✓ Variety of land and water activities
✓ The most accessible Amazon rainforest in South America
✓ Mega cultural destination with more than 13 different indigenous communities featuring their own languages, set of beliefs & traditions inhabit this region
✓ Competitive prices

ECUADORIAN AMAZON

The Ecuadorian Amazon region is already part of the destinations within Ecuador which are marketed through Tour operators, wholesalers and travel agencies, however it worth’s to remember some of the elements that make these region so special and different. They are at the same time part of Ecuador’s four different worlds: The Galapagos Islands, the Pacific Coast, the Andes and the Amazon Rainforest.
It is the largest tropical rainforest in the world. The vast Amazon jungle spreads into nine South American nations. Ecuador offers the easiest access to it.

The Ecuadorian amazon region extends over 120,000 km² (46,000 sq. mi), approximately 40% of the country’s surface.

It is a region full of diversity, which is reflected on its inhabitants. Several indigenous people and their ancient cultures, its rich nature, flora, fauna, landscapes and diverse activities compound the Amazon basin’s attractions.

Easy connection with other important destinations within Ecuador, such as Quito and the Andes volcanoes avenue.

AMAZON REGION

This huge green region, just east of the Andean mountain range, is one of the most spectacular reservoirs of biodiversity on the planet.
AMAZON RAINFOREST LIFE ZONES

The Ecuadorian Amazon region begins in the Eastern foothills of the Andes and decreases in height while descending towards the east. This is the reason why the Amazon region encompasses several vegetation zones and life areas featuring different landscapes, as well as a variety of climates and species of flora and fauna. Its different habitats range from the Cloud forest in the upper part, to the lower area better known as the Tropical Rainforest.

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ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

- The Amazon region is believed to be home to the most diverse set of species on the planet.
- The Amazon jungle canopy is so dense that when it starts to rain, it takes ten minutes before you even get wet!
- Many modern medicines derive from plants found in the rainforest.
- Isolated indigenous tribes live within Yasuní National Park: Taromenane and Tagaeri.
- In the deep jungle, water replaces dry land, so canoes and kayaks are the main or the only means of transportation to get to this megadiverse region.
- Altitude: The Amazon has an average elevation of 450 masl – 1,500 ft.
- Weather: The average temperature here is 26°C (79°F)
AWARDS

✓ Sangay National Park was declared World Natural Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1983
✓ Yasuní National Park was declared a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1989
✓ Sumaco – Napo – Galeras National Park was declared a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 2000
✓ Ecuador, World’s Leading Green Destination 2013 & 2014
✓ Ecuador, South America’s Leading Green Destination 2014
✓ Sustainable Standard-Setter Award 2013 by Rainforest Alliance (Kapawi)
✓ Trip Advisor certificate of Excellence 2014 & 2015 (Napo Wildlife Center, Sani Lodge)
✓ 10 Best river cruises for 2014 Fodor’s Travel (Anakonda Amazon Cruise)
HOW TO GET TO THE AMAZON?

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT TO QUITO-ECUADOR
To get to the Ecuadorian Amazon, travelers should arrive first to Quito's International airport, which has flight connections from and to some of the major airports in South America, North America and Europe and is at the same time the city with regular connections and flights to several airports at the Amazon region.

AIR CONNECTIVITY
From the Andean summits to the Amazon Rainforest: **35-minute flight**

Flights to destinations in the Ecuadorian Amazon have an average duration of 30 to 35 minutes, making of this the most accessible Rain forest in South America.

Additionally, you can get to the Andean city of Loja in the South of the country with a 60-minute flight and from there continue by car until reaching the Amazon region (90 min drive)

The average flying times are:

- Quito – Lago Agrio 35 min flight
- Quito – Orellana (Coca) 35 min flight
- Quito – Tena 30 min flight
- Quito – Shell 30 min flight
- Quito – Macas 35 min flight
- Quito – Loja 60 min flight
- Regular flights with TAME
LAND CONNECTIVITY

The Amazon road network and infrastructure allow to have a safe travel while enjoying the scenery.

Quito and other cities from which the Ecuadorian Amazon is accessible are located in the Andean alley, therefore, before descending to the Amazon region a part of the Andes has to be passed, which means a spectacular route full of different landscapes and climates in a very short time in relation to those needed to get to the Amazon in other countries of South America. In addition, Ecuador’s excellent road network guarantees a pleasant trip.

Estimated driving time by car:

- Quito – Lago Agrio 5-6 hours
- Quito – Coca 5-6 hours
- Quito – Tena 3-4 hours
- Quito – Puyo 4-5 hours
- Quito – Macas 5-6 hours
- Quito – Zamora 12-14 hours
AMAZON RAINFOREST HIGHLIGHTS

Imagine paddling a canoe or hiking on guided excursions through forest trails, while enjoying the magic of the flora and fauna of the jungle. Meet local people and communities that have retained their traditions, habits and set of beliefs, among other exceptional adventures!

AMAZON: BIODIVERSITY, ETHNIC GROUPS & ADVENTURE

The ideal place to enjoy the perfect blending of Nature & Culture

A visit to this region allows you to experience one of the areas with greatest natural diversity on the planet and also teaches us about the lifestyles and traditions of local communities that inhabit the rainforest; the perfect combination for a great adventure.

ECOLODGES

Many jungle lodges offer the chance to enjoy the tropical rainforest in complete comfort.
For a better understanding of some of the Ecuadorian Amazon region main attractions, places of interest and lodges, we have divided this region in three areas: Northern Amazon, Central Amazon and Southern Amazon.

NORTHERN AMAZON

Some of the Northern Amazon highlights include the Cuyabeno Fauna Reserve and important rivers such as the Aguarico and the Cuyabeno. The Siona, Secoya and Cofán nationalities are among the main groups that inhabit this region.

Some of the main Ecolodges in the Northern Amazon are:

- **Cuyabeno Lodge**, very close to the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve's lake system
- **Tapir Lodge**: accommodation in towers at 15 meters high

- **Siona Lodge**: Pink dolphins, anacondas, black caimans, turtles and other species live in the surrounding area

- **Jamu Lodge**: Complex of traditionally built “Cabañas” located within the Cuyabeno Reserve, 10 minutes down-river from Laguna Grande. Its name comes from Armadillo in Siona language.

- **Caiman Lodge**: located very close to “Laguna Grande” it features “Cabañas” or huts and a Birdwatching tower.

- **Amazon Dolphin Lodge**: located inside the Pañacocha protected forest reserve; Central to a biological corridor linking Yasuní National Park and the Cuyabeno Wildlife Refuge.
CENTRAL AMAZON

The Central Amazon has a large concentration of Ecolodges and visit options; this region encompasses well known cities and towns, among the main ones: Tena, Misahualli and Francisco de Orellana port aka "Coca". Some of the highlights include the Upper Napo (Jatunyacu), the Misahuallí and Napo rivers, the Sumaco – Napo – Galeras National Park and the renowned Yasuni National Park. The Kiwcha and Huaorani groups are among the main indigenous people inhabiting this region.

Some of the main Ecolodges at the Central Amazon are:

- **Napo Wildlife Center**, Considered one of the most luxurious lodges in the Ecuadorian Amazon region

- **Sacha Lodge**, and its 275 meters long canopy walk, 30 meters above the floor.

- **La Selva Amazon EcoLodge & SPA**, accommodation in the Amazon jungle in a hotel with 25 years of experience

- **Sani Lodge**, is 100% owned and operated by the Kichwa community of Sani Isla.

- **Yasuni Kichwa Ecolodge**, Located within the Yasuni National Park, on the banks of the Napo river
- **Anakonda Amazon River Cruise**, is the only luxury expedition boat in the Ecuadorian Amazon jungle. It navigates along the Napo River.

- **Manatee Amazon Explorer**, Explore the remote areas of the Tropical Rainforest cruising along the Napo River

- **Casa del Suizo**, resort close to Tena & Misahuallí towns, on the banks of the Napo river

- **Huasquila Amazon Ecolodge**: Located in the Sacred Valley of Cotundo, within the Sumaco Biosphere Reserve, where the Eastern Slope of the Andes ends and the Amazon jungle begins.

- **Cotococha lodge**: 22 bungalows, located in the upper Amazon basin overlooking the majestic Napo River

- **Huaorani Ecolodge**, awarded during the National Geographic “World Legacy Awards”; this lodge is owned by the Huaorani people, one of the most isolated ethnic groups in the Amazon.
Hamadryade Lodge, French-owned and managed, this lodge provides the perfect example of modern architecture integrated into a forest environment.

Cabañas San Isidro, a large reserve with some of the best access to primary mid elevation cloud forest in Ecuador.

Hakuna Matata, this private “hacienda” of approximately 150 ha lies only 10 km from Tena, capital of the Napo Province.

SOUTHERN AMAZON

The southern Amazon features also several highlights such as the Pastaza and the Tigre River; the Sangay National Park and the Podocarpus National Park among others. People belonging to the Shiwiar, Shuar, Achuar, Huaorani, and Zapara nationalities inhabit this region.

Some of the Ecolodges and accommodation options include:

Kapawi EcoLodge, is one of the most remote, ecologically responsible and culturally sensitive ecolodges.

Casa Simpson, located between the Andean foothills and the Amazon rainforest at 2500 masl within the Tapichalaca reserve (part of the Jocotoco Foundation). It is next to the Podocarpus National Park. This site is a paradise for bird watching enthusiasts.
Parque Nacional Podocarpus, there are camping options for the more adventurous ones and for nature and outdoor enthusiasts.

Altos del Pastaza, a great view of the Pastaza River is part of the offer of this lodge located at 16 km from Puyo to Macas.

Huella Verde Rainforest Lodge, one of the most accessible destinations from the cities of Baños and Puyo with a focus on sustainable operation.

Hotel El Jardín, Located in the city of Puyo, few minutes from downtown near the Río Puyo Boulevard; the entrance to the lodge is possible through a suspension bridge.

ACTIVITIES

Whether embarking on a dawn bird watching trip, canoeing rainforest rivers or taking a nighttime hike to see nocturnal wildlife, a trip here reminds us how precious and irreplaceable the Amazon Basin is.
RESEARCH

Scientific research and education is a basis for conservation: research stations of the Yasuní (Catholic University of Ecuador); and Tiputini (Universidad San Francisco de Quito)

JUNGLE GUIDED HIKES

Great excursions through rainforest trails accompanied by local guides

FAUNA WATCHING

The Amazon rainforest is inhabited by unique species of Fauna. Witness an incredible array of amazing wildlife. Around 4,500 butterfly species. Among them, the beautiful blue Morpho sp.

FLORA

Ecuador’s nickname could be “The Country of Orchids”. It has more than 4,500 orchid species. Most of them in the Tropical Rainforest.
BIRDWATCHING

Definitely a Birdwatchers Paradise, home to more than 600 bird species. From different hummingbird species to a variety of Parrots and Toucans.

STARGAZING

Clear skies full of bright stars just outside your room.

AMAZON CULTURES

Local indigenous cultures and their ancient traditions. Friendly people ready to show your passengers their ways of life.
SHAMANISM & TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

Medicinal rainforest plants have served as their natural pharmacy for centuries. Shamans are the spiritual guides that do purification rituals in their communities.

RAFTING & KAYAKING

Whitewater Rivers cascade down from the cold snow-capped peaks into the warm Amazon basin.

EXPLORATION & CANOEING THE AMAZON RIVERS

Canoe the rivers of the Amazon to observe its wildlife up close.

AMAZON GASTRONOMIC SPECIALTIES

The Ecuadorian Amazon region offers different options of exotic food that make of its cuisine unique and different from the other three natural regions of the country. There is a wide variety of products, herbs and spices and certainly animals and fruits, all of this along with traditional preparation and recipes make of the Amazon cuisine a Palate-pleasing Adventure of its visitors.

The most recognized specialties include:
YUCA OR CASSAVA

Yucca is the dietary staple here; commonly used to prepare “Chicha” a traditional local beverage.

GUAYUSA TEA

Prepared with the Guayusa “super leaf”. It provides energy and helps to focus.

MAITO

River fish wrapped with plantain leaves and served with green bananas.
CRAFTSMANSHIP & AMAZON ART

From pottery to vegetable raw materials, such as wood, seeds and fibers, are used to create a wide variety of handicrafts such as necklaces, earrings, among other utilitarian objects.

BALSA WOOD

Light wood easy to carve. Mainly used in the Pastaza province. The Amazon’s Flora and Fauna are the most frequently elements represented in the handicrafts carved in this wood.

TAGUA

A palm seed known as the "vegetable ivory" due to its similarity with the ivory. It is possible to add different colors to these seeds which allows to work in a variety of designs.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

http://trade.allyouneedisecuador.travel/es/directorio

TRAVEL TIPS AND RECOMMENDED ITEMS

➢ During jungle treks, a small backpack is the most efficient way to carry your gear

➢ Important items to consider packing for an Amazon adventure vacation are:

➢ Bottled water, purification pills, sunscreen, insect repellent, hat, good medical kit, knife, face mosquito net, rain poncho (it’s the rainforest), light shorts, pants (important for hiking), light jacket, flashlight, batteries, earplugs, sunglasses, and a waterproof camera case (resealable plastic bags are pretty handy to keep your belongings dry)

➢ Other recommended items are:
  ➢ Binoculars for birdwatchers; and,
  ➢ Rubber boots which are usually provided by the ecolodges

➢ At least two nights are required to have a great jungle experience
VISIT THE OTHER WORLDS OF ECUADOR
“The communication campaign to the international industry: All You Need Is Ecuador, is a promotional action of the Ecuadorian Ministry of Tourism”

Ecuador, July 2015