



## A FUN STAY IN QUITO!

Quito is beautifully located in a valley high up in the Andes, surrounded by several mayor volcanoes that can be seen from different parts of the city. The city and its surroundings offer a lot of activities for its tourists. Did you know that Quito was the first World Cultural Heritage City declared by UNESCO? This is a quick guide with some ideas of what to do in Quito written by the Secret Garden. Once you're here don't miss out on a free walking tour twice a week and daily information sessions hosted by our in house travel agency CarpeDM.

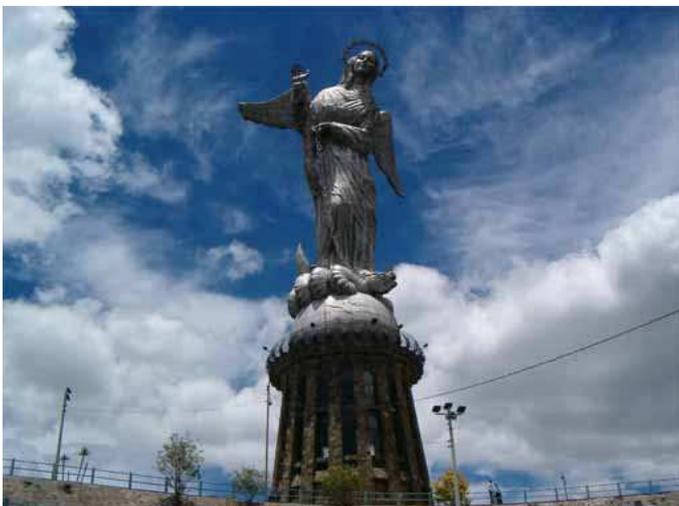
### La Basilica

The big, beautiful cathedral which can be seen from our roof top terrace. It's one piece of impressive architecture and a spot to enjoy amazing views over the city (*and take cool photos!*).

If you're up to climbing stairs and a bit of adventure you can even walk up above the clocks in the two bigger towers, then through the roof and climb up on a steep ladder on the back tower. Views are spectacular!

There's a small café that's operating a few floors up for the non-climbing visitor as well!

**Location:** Av. America y Caldas



### El Panecillo

The big hill in the very center of the city with the famous angel statue. You can see it from the terrace. Just as la Basilica el Panecillo offers extensive views over Quito. Inside of the statue is also a small museum and around it you'll find small places to buy souvenirs, basic food and drinks.

**Note:** Walking up the hill to the statue is indeed not safe. Catching a taxi to go there and back is recommended! Once up there you're safe. The top of el Panecillo is patrolled by guards.

**Location:** El Panecillo

### La Mitad del Mundo

The middle of the world directly translated from Spanish. Make it a day tour to the equator! It's quick and easy to get there (*just ask reception staff how*). Now, there has been slight confusion on where the equator is (*as there are actually several places stating "here's the equator"*) and indeed the photo to the right is not the real one, but the official symbol for it (*built by a crazy French guy it's said*).

Continuing down the road and left on a dirt road will take you to a small museum giving much more value to the trip there instead of a big official park. Have you ever managed to balance an egg on a nail? Here's the place where you will do it! I'm pretty sure it's considered a crime in some countries to go to Quito and miss out on the equator.

### Pululahua Crater

Make your trip over there complete by continuing from La Mitad del Mundo to the Pululahua crater and geobotanical reserve to see some amazing scenery.

### Some advice

Going to the equator on Sundays or national holidays are worth it – even to the official park where you can enjoy some food and often traditional music and dancing. Check it out! Bring your passport if you like a stamp in it, needless to say however; keep it safe as popular tourist destinations in any part of the world are often a popular spot for skilled pickpockets.

**Location: La Mitad del Mundo**



### El Teleférico

If you haven't got enough of views and treks yet, then take the cable car going up the active volcano Pichincha. It's advisable to go in early morning hours and preferably on days with a clear blue sky. If you have just arrived to Quito don't fool yourself by thinking it will be a piece of cake doing the trek (4050m above sea level!) – give it a few days to acclimatize.

It's easy (and cheap!) to get there by taxi. Going by bus will require a bit of knowledge on how the public transportation system work around Quito. Bring warm clothes, sun screen, a hat and plenty of water. Even some sweets of some kind may be good to keep your blood sugar level up.

**Location: Av. La Gasca y Occidental**

Psst... there's more!

## El Centro Histórico

The historic center of Quito is well-known for having the biggest and best conserved colonial heritage in the Americas.

Stroll down the streets to see the architecture, beautiful plazas, have a cup of coffee in one of the many small cafes, visit museums or chill out somewhere watching street theatre, photo or art galleries.

Around the biggest plaza (*naturally named Plaza Grande*) you'll find several impressive churches and even the presidential palace – where you're even allowed in for a visit!

Often missed out by a lot of tourists is "La Ronda" – one of the nicest parts of the old city. The neighborhood offers everything from amazing architecture to typical Ecuadorian food and drinks. Make sure you try a canelazo – but be careful, one too many can easily knock you out! Ask for a map in the reception or the hostel management on the ground floor and we'll tell you how to get there.

Other sites around el centro histórico are Santo Domingo, San Francisco, La Compañía (*which has a quite bizarre painting of hell*) and la plaza del teatro, home to the impressive Teatro Sucre and top restaurant Teatrum.

**Location: Centro Histórico**



## El museo de Guayasamin

You don't need to be an art lover to actually enjoy the museum of the most famous artist of Ecuador – Oswaldo Guayasamin.

The images capture political oppression, racism, poverty and class division throughout South America.

The art is impressive and is mainly famous for the way that hands are painted. It also houses a collection of primitive and religious art.

The museum is located at La Bellavista in northern part of Quito. It's easy to get there either by bus (La Ecovia) or taxi.

**Website:** <http://www.guayasamin.org/>

**Location:** Bosmediano 543 y José Carbo

## Parque Carolina, Alameda and Ejido

These parks are all located fairly closet o the hostel.

**Parque Alameda**, basically just down the road, is a great park for relaxing. There's also an option to do some boating on the small canal.

**Parque Carolina**, the biggest of them, offers wide possibilities for sports and even has an impressive skate park and 3.6km running track, football and basketball courts. Don't miss out on the organic market every third Sunday of the month.

**Parque Ejido**, is famous for its Sunday art market!





### **Vivarium – Parque Carolina**

While at Parque Carolina don't miss out on the Vivarium. It's a small reptile center giving detailed information about these animals living in Ecuador. Definitely worth a visit!

But there's more!

Parque Carolina also offers a quite interesting botanical garden where you can take a closer look on many of the different plants of Ecuador.

**Website:** <http://www.vivarium.org.ec/>

**Location:** Av. Amazonas y Republica (Parque Carolina)



### **El Centro Comercial "El Jardín"**

Have you been travelling for quite a while and just miss doing some shopping in a proper American/European like shopping center? El Jardín is the place to go! Actually this shopping center is the place to go for almost anything that you might want when it comes to medium or high quality clothing, shoes, electronics, books.

Sorry, they don't sell the vege/mar-mite or any other of that dodgy Australian/English stuff.

**Location:** Av. Amazonas y Republica



### **Ice skating in Quito?**

A huge, expansive mal called the Centro Comercial Iñaquito includes various stores selling all kinds of branded and local goods varying from food items, clothing, electronics, books, etc.

It also includes a multiplex cinema theatre, ice skating rink, arcade and several American and Ecuadorian food courts.

**Location:** Av. Amazonas y Naciones Unidas

### **Rumiñahui Climbing**

It's not climbing the actual Rumiñahui volcano, but a decent climbing wall not far north from the hostel.

Definitely worth to check out if you're a climbing enthusiast or just mad!

The wall is about 25m high.  
Bring sun screen.

**Location:** Coliseo de Rumiñahui





### **Cosmic Bowling**

“Bowling” pretty much speaks for itself, right? No need for much explanation here. But bring some friends to go bowling at the Quicentro North.

**Location: Avenida Naciones Unidas y 6 de Diciembre**

### **Mercado Artesanal**

Just at the very end of your trip and soon about to go home? Don't forget to bring souvenirs! El Mercado Artesanal located just a stone throw from the heart of La Mariscal (*Gringolandia*) offers great variety of typical Ecuadorian clothing and souvenirs.

The prices are good and can get even cheaper if you know how to bargain a little bit.

Mercado Artesanal is definitely a popular visit for anyone who is in Quito.

**Location: Reina Victoria y Jorge Washington**



### **Movies**

Up for a movie? Quito has several huge cinemas that offer many of the newest films - and in an English alternative! A movie normally is between \$3-6 depending on the cinema, the release date of the movie and if you're going to watch it in 3D. Check out

**Website: <http://www.cinemark.com.ec>**

**Location: Plaza de Americas**

For the ones who like alternative films you should definitely visit Cine Ocho y Medio. They'll also show classics and offer a fancy café where you could get a bite to eat or choose between wide menus of drinks!

**Website: <http://www.ochoymedio.net/>**

**Location: Valladolid N24 353 y Vizcaya La Floresta**