

# *EMS Photo Adventures*

**Essdras M. Suarez is a multi-award winning photographer including two Pulitzer Prizes and the Robert F. Kennedy International Photojournalism Award**



## **Fiestas de Corpus Cristi, Cuenca, Ecuador Photographic Adventure - June 15-24, 2017**

**A one of a kind!** This is the only photographic adventure that focuses on photographing the Corpus Christi Festival where participants are lead, guided and instructed by a professional photographer. All along, Essdras will share his approach to photographing the location, its people and the extraordinary activities of the festival and documenting the relaxed atmosphere of Cuenca.

### **Introduction:**

Against the backdrop of the exciting and colorful, 460-year-old Corpus Christi Festival, spend a week with award winning photographer, Essdras Suarez, photographing the city with the most laid-back culture in Ecuador—Cuenca (Santa Ana de los Ríos de Cuenca)—and outlying areas.

After what will most likely be a late arrival in Quito, Ecuador, take time to adjust to the altitude and get a good night's rest.

In the morning meet as a group to get some photographic tips and guidance from Essdras and an

overview of the week ahead. Then, prepare to spend a fund day photographing Quito' historic "Old Town."

The next day, after an early morning flight over the Andes Mountains, you will begin your adventure in Cuenca.

A UNESCO World Heritage Trust site, Cuenca has been celebrating its Spanish heritage and indigenous traditions of Pachamama and giving thanks to the harvest, with a Corpus Christi Festival since 1557. The Festival integrates commemoration, gastronomy, culture, religion and folk arts.



### **This celebration is a photographer's delight!**

During this week, Cuenca is full of colors, fireworks, folk dances and traditional music. The Parque Calderon is full of people enjoying the spectacle of burning castles and illuminates while people revel at the sights, enjoying the aromas and flavors of the Corpus candy.

And every night, when night falls, the skies are illuminated with colored lights.

### **Without a doubt, Corpus Christi Festival is an event not to be missed!**

#### **Overview:**

While enjoying the festival's activities, you will spend some time touring this colorful city and its architecture, stop at a hat-making factory, visit studios of local ceramists and take time to wander the largest market in Cuenca.

In addition, you will be making excursions outside of Cuenca to visit the:

- Cajas National Park – with a richness of unique vegetation, animals and birds
- First the Inca complex at Ingapirca, the largest known Inca ruins in Ecuador
- Picturesque artisan villages of Chordeleg, San Bartolome and Guanaco
- The Yunguilla Reserve, one of the most visually stunning valleys of the Azuay province

### ***EMS Photo Adventures Philosophy***

***Be flexible, prepared, considerate, respectful and on time!!***

Note: With the focus on photography, this adventure is geared to the advanced and intermediate photographer who is familiar and confident with their gear. Participants should have their own DSLR or Mirorless digital camera (preferably with multiple lenses), chargers, digital media storage devices, etc.

#### **Daily Itinerary:**

##### **Day 1 – Thursday, Jun 15:**

Take your flight to Mariscal Sucre International Airport, Quito, Ecuador arriving, more than likely, in the evening or later :

- If your flight arrives in the evening you will be met by the Andean Discovery staff and transported to the **Hotel Casa Gardenia**, Quito.

Because Quito is located at an altitude of 2900m above sea level, please take the time to let your body acclimatize to the elevation by moving a little more slowly, do not over-exert and drink plenty of water.

## Day 2 - Friday, Jun 16:

- This morning you will begin with relaxing breakfast at the hotel and, then, gather as a group at 9:30 a.m. in either the breakfast room or lobby to meet your fellow travelers and be briefed on how you will spend the next 8 days—find out what Esdras has in store for you!
- After the briefing the group go on a tour of Quito's historic center—**Old Town**—a maze of colonial splendor and first city to be named a UNESCO world heritage site in 1979.

Lodging: Hotel Casa Gardenia, Quito / Meals: (B,L,D)

## Day 3 – Saturday, Jun 17:

- Early morning flight (8:30) to **Cuenca** (Santa Ana de los Ríos de Cuenca) located in southern Ecuador's Andes Mountains.

The city, with its laid-back culture, clean streets and agreeable weather is known for its:

- Tomebamba River waterfront
- Handicrafts including Panama hats,
- Central plaza, Parque Calderón - home to the blue-domed Catedral Nueva and the 16th-century Catedral Vieja, now a religious museum.

Once you are settled into your hotel, join the group for lunch and:

- Tour **Cuenca** - Ecuador's most European city – with its 16th and 17th century Spanish colonial architecture and the city center.
- Visit the **Homero Ortega Panama Hat** museum and store devoted exclusively to the lasting legacy of the toquilla straw hat— the famous (but incorrectly known) “Panama hat.” Why the Panama Hat? The misnomer dates back to the era when Ecuador began exporting the hats through the Panama Canal and foreigners erroneously assumed the hats came from Panama. You will be able to photograph the hat-making process.

- Link: <http://www.atlasobscura.com/places/homero-ortega-workshop-and-museum>



Lodging: Hotel San Juan - Cuenca / Included Meals (B, L, D)

## Day 4 – Sunday, Jun 18:

- This morning our driver will take us on a short trip into the highlands to visit **Cajas National Park**. Between 3100 and 4450m above sea level, the park has a rich variety of unique vegetation, including the “paper tree” forest, and is home to a large variety of animals some of which are endemic or highly endangered.

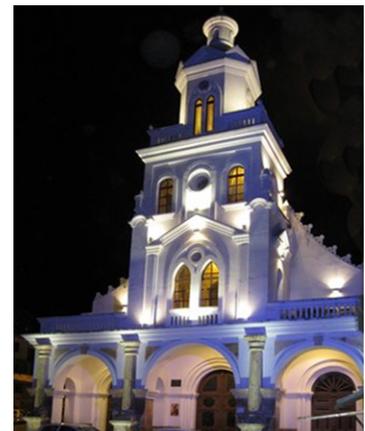
You may even see the South American condor, a Curiquinga, or the Giant Hummingbird (*Patagona gigas*), the largest humming bird in the world.

- The afternoon will be spend in Cuenca recording the festival activities.

Lodging: Hotel San Juan - Cuenca / Included Meals (B, L, D)

## Day 5 – Monday, Jun 19:

- Spending the day in Cuenca, the group will focus on the many Corpus Christi street activities and look for those most unique opportunities to photograph people enjoying themselves.
- After dinner be ready for a sunset drive to **Mirado de Turi** (“Viewpoint



of Brother” in Quechau) where one gets the best view in Cuenca – a marvelous lookout point for panoramic photographs.

Lodging: Hotel San Juan - Cuenca / Included Meals (B, L, D)

### Day 6 – Tuesday, Jun 20:

- Today visit the **Yunguilla Reserve**, one of the most visually stunning valleys of the Azuay province. The small 200 hectares reserve protects a remnant of Andean Mountain Scrub which is the last suitable habitat for the Critically Endangered Pale-headed Brush-finch.

The brush-finch is one of the Ecuadorian endemics and one of the rarest birds of the world with a population no greater than 240 individuals. Additionally, the Reserve houses the Little Woodstar, another endangered bird and a host of birds categorized as “Near Threatened and Restricted Range” species.



- Link: <http://www.worldlandtrust.org/projects/ecuador/jocotoco-reserves/yunguilla>

- After lunch in Cuenca you will have some time to organize your photographs and begin to select potentials to share with the group on Thursday.
- Join the group in an afternoon **meeting with Essdras**, where he will show some of his captures, give advice on and discuss issues pertaining to “street photography.”

Lodging: Hotel San Juan - Cuenca / Included Meals (B, L, D)

### Day 7 – Wednesday, Jun 21:

- Travel into the hills surrounding Cuenca to visit the ceramic art gallery and workshop of **Eduardo Vega**, a artist known worldwide for his work. Inspired by the people, animals and landscapes of Ecuador, he makes a wide range of beautiful, useful and durable pieces. And, his shop sitting high on a hill offers a great panorama of Cuenca.



- Link: <http://gringosabroad.com/handmade-ceramics-in-cuenca-ceramic-art-by-eduardo-vega/>

- We will return to Cuenca for lunch and spend part of the afternoon enjoying and photographing Corpus Christi events.
- Return to the hotel to take time to look over your images and select a three to five to share with your fellow travelers.

Lodging: Hotel San Juan - Cuenca / Included Meals (B, L, D)

### Day 8 – Thursday, Jun 22:

Today will be a busy one spent outside of Cuenca:

- First our driver will takes us to the **Ingapirca Archaeological Complex**. It is the first and largest known Inca ruins in Ecuador. Here you will learn about the Canari and Inca cultures and photograph construction styles dating back 500 year and its most significant building– The Temple of the Sun.



- Link: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ingapirca>

- Next, you will travel to the picturesque artisan villages where we will learn about the artisan activity of the southern Ecuadorian Andes in:

- **Chordeleg** where you will meet some of the artists and learn about Ecuadorian jewelry and see some of the elaborate and prized jewelry created for the most demanding of clients.

- **La Macona** a city well known for the production of the famous “makanas” or shawls made with the technical weaving known as “IKAT”, which consists of different techniques that give threads unique designs to these items.
- In the afternoon, you will return to the hotel for a bit of leisure before joining Essdras for a review and critique of everyone’s photos, then, enjoy a farewell dinner

Lodging: Hotel San Juan - Cuenca / Included Meals: (B, L, D)

## Day 9 - Friday, June 23

This day will be spent in Cuenca.

The morning will be spent visiting:

- The **Cementerio Patrimonial Cuenca** has a history dating back to 1843 and cemetery location dates back to the time of the Inca. The cemetery is unlike any you have likely seen. Surrounded by towering, white, burial chambers housing thousands of crypts you will find architecturally ornate mausoleums, beautifully maintained grounds and elaborate stone walkways.
- Link: <http://phase3adventures.com/blog/cuenca-cemetery-cementerio-patrimonial-cuenca>
- **Andrea Tello’s Jewelry** gallery and store. Andrea Tello is one of Ecuador’s most internationally famous artists, having exhibited her work at the Louvre in Paris and representing the whole of Latin America in events for UNESCO. You will view a video showing how artists create the elaborate filigree jewelry and have time to peruse the gallery.

Taught by her grandfather, Andrea is a fourth-generation filigree jeweler, working with silver, gold, and other metals. Her work is inspired by the symbolic patterns found in the clothing of Andean women and represents her history, culture, and heritage as well as her personal identity.

Ref: <http://thrivinginecuador.com/category/cuenca-arts/>



Late morning:

- Have group lunch
- Pack for the flight back to Quito and be prepared to check out at 2 p.m. Luggage will be held in the hotel storage until we are ready to leave for the airport.
- Wander the **Feria Libre Mercado** - one of the biggest Outdoor Markets in Cuenca where the farmers bring their crops to sell to the public. If you like fruits and vegetables it is a great place to shop. They have every kind of fruit and vegetable imaginable.
- Link: <http://www.aswesawit.com/feria-libre-cuenca/>



Late afternoon, return to the hotel and prepare to take a 8:20 pm flight to Quito.

Lodging: Quito Airport Wyndam Hotel / Included Meals: (B, L)

## Day 10 - Saturday - Options:

- Take an early morning flight home.
- Extend your South American adventure and make arrangements with Andean Discovery for a five to seven-day trip to the Galapagos Islands or Machu Picchu.
- Link: See Andean Discovery website for options - <http://www.andeandiscovery.com>

## **The Details:**

**Group Size:** This will be a small group adventure - minimum of 8 - maximum of 12 participants.

### **Cost Per Person:**

- \$3,140 Double occupancy
- \$3,830 Single occupancy (an additional \$690 for a single room)

**The package includes,** in addition to instruction, guidance and critiques by Essdras:

- All accommodations (standard 4-star hotels)
- Professional Andean Discovery guides
- Private ground transportation, internal flights and airport transfers:
  - Internal flights from Quito to Cuenca and return
  - All ground travel in a private mini van
  - Airport transfers on arrival and departure
- Most meals
- Park fees and entrances

### **The package does not include:**

- The cost of transportation to and from Ecuador – including all costs associated with that activity such as baggage surcharges, taxes and fees.
- Gratuities and personal expenses such as: alcoholic drinks, phone calls and snacks.

### **Booking Conditions: Registration Deadline March 14, 2017**

- A \$500 per person deposit is required upon reservation and by March 14, 2017 to confirm participation.
- The deposit can be made by credit card (Visa or MasterCard), personal check or wire transfer.

### **How to Make a Reservation:**

- Phone Andean Discovery at 1-800-893-0916 and their personnel will take your information and means of payment.
- After making your reservation, you will be invoiced
- Know that full payment will due no later than 90 days prior to your departure - March 15, 2017.
  - NOTE: Full payment must be in the form of a personal check or wire transfer.

### **Full Booking Conditions:**

See the attached Andean Discovery Booking Conditions and Liability Agreement.

- Link: <http://www.andeandiscovery.com/visiting-ecuador>

## Ecuador Travel Information

<http://ecuador-travel-guide.org/general/VISASs.htm>

### Airport Departure Tax

\$25 USD Departure Tax is charged for international flights departing from Ecuador.

### Luggage

Domestic airline regulations permit 20 kilos (44 pounds) per suitcase, maximum two suitcases per person.

### Visas

Citizens of the United States, Canada and most European countries are not required to obtain a visa for Non-Working Stays Up to 90 Days (Visa 12-X) Ecuador.

### Specific Requirements:

- Valid passport for more than 6 months.
- Return ticket (for air, land or sea travel).
- Proof of economic means to support yourself during your stay in Ecuador (may be requested by Immigration authorities upon arrival).

### Health Risks

No inoculations are required for entry. However, it is recommended to get vaccinations for hepatitis A and B, typhoid, and there is a minor risk of cholera and rabies.

### Financial

- VISA, Mastercard, American Express, and Diner's Club are the most widely recognized cards in Ecuador.
- Credit cards are useful for purchases in hotels, shops, restaurants, and for cash advances from Automated Teller Machines or banks.
- We recommend you should also carry some cash, especially in out-of-the-way places such as Andean or coastal villages. Carry mostly \$1, \$5, and \$10 bills, and make sure they are in good condition or you could have trouble using them as everybody checks for fraud bills if it's a 5 or higher.

### Local Taxes and Tipping:

- With each purchase, you pay a tax of 12% IVA. Sometimes it's included in the price so you don't think that there is a tax.
- For hotels and restaurants services you pay another 10% service tax, kind of as an automatic tip.
- Tipping is completely to your discretion, but because of the 10% service tax in restaurants and hotels most people don't feel the need to tip, but if you are pleased with the service, feel free to leave a tip.



Travel Documents	
	Airline tickets/e-tickets
	Passport
	Shuttle voucher, if applicable
	Travel insurance info
	All travel documents
	Inoculation Certificates
	Travel Itinerary
	Emergency Contact Numbers
	Spare passport Photos
Photocopy of	
	airline tickets
	main passport pages
	travel insurance, if applicable
	Charge Card information
	Spare passport photos
Security - Money	
	Cash - small bills for tips and misc
	\$25 for Departure Tax
	Credit cards
	TSA approved locks
Equipment	
	Camera, lenses, filters
	Laptop or multiple cards to save images
	USB thumb drive for sharing photos
	Charger
	Electrical Converter
	Mutli-plug extension cord
	Binoculars
	Flashlight / headlamp (and spare batteries)
	Small backpack for day trips
	iPod/iPad
	Kindle/Books
Miscellaneous	
	Sunglasses with good strap
	Refillable water bottle
	Phrase book
	Alarm clock
	Tea Bags
	Snacks
	Sugar Substitute Packs
	cloth to wipe off bottles before drinking
	alarm clock
	note book - pens - pencils

Clothing	
	Wind/waterproof rain jacket/poncho
	Good walking socks
	Sun hat with wide brim and tie
	underwear
	sleeping attire
	Shorts
	Long pants
	T-shirts
	Tank tops
	Light & light colored pants
	Sweater/sweatshirts - long sleeved shirt
Toiletries	
	Small first-aid kit
	Sewing Kit
	Toilet paper
	Tampons (hard to find outside Quito)
	Antiseptic Travel wipes/ tissues
	Anti-bacterial Hand Gel
	Insect repellent
	Sunscreen - 30/45/70
	Lip balm
	Moisturizer
	Q-tips
	Adhesive Bandages
	Tweezers
	Benzene
	Ibuprofen
	Antihistamines
	Antibiotic Ointment
	Band-aids / Butterfly Closure Strips
	Vitamins
	Prescription Meds
	Immodium
	moleskin
Shoes	
	Walking / hiking shoes - good traction
	Tevas
	Sneakers

## BOOKING CONDITIONS

### **DEPOSITS**

A \$500 per person deposit is needed to reserve a space on a trip. The deposit can be made by credit card (Visa or MasterCard), personal check or wire transfer. A \$500 per person administrative fee applies for all cancellations received more than 90 days before departure. If advance payments are required prior to 90 days before departure for flights or high season departures, these payments are non-refundable, regardless of the date of cancellation. Trip extensions or extra services may require additional trip deposits. All trip deposits and advance payments are non-refundable.

### **PAYMENTS**

You will be invoiced upon making a reservation and full payment is due no later than 90 days prior to your departure. Payment is accepted as follows: 1) U.S. Dollar check posted to our U.S. office 2) Wire Transfer or ACH transfer to our account at Bank of America (please contact us for transfer instructions).

Please make checks payable to Andean Discovery and send to:

Andean Discovery  
339 Boston Post Rd  
Sudbury, MA 01776  
Tel. 1-800-893-0916

### **CANCELLATION AND REFUNDS**

Notification of cancellation must be made in writing to Andean Discovery. At the time we receive the cancellation, the following cancellation fees will apply. If at the time of cancellation you have already made your final payment, all moneys will be refunded less the following cancellation charges, deducted from the total package price.

Booking - 91 days before departure	Deposit
90-61 days before departure	50% of the package price
60-46 days before departure	70% of the package price
45 days or less before departure	100 % of the package price

Within 90 days prior to departure and under, cancellation fees will apply. You may also be responsible for any fees imposed by hotels, airlines etc., over and above your land arrangements, due to your cancellation of your original date bookings.

Please note that no refunds will be given for unused meals, hotel rooms, airport transfers, or other unused tour features for any reason whatsoever. Andean Discovery reserves the right to increase the tour price in the event of cost increases due to changes in airfares, currency fluctuations, park fees increases or fuel surcharges. Andean Discovery reserves the right to alter the tour without notice. Andean Discovery is not responsible for expenses incurred by trip members in preparing for the trip (e.g. non-refundable advance purchase air tickets, visa fees, equipment, etc.) or for any necessary additional travel arrangements pre or post tour. Accommodations are subject to change. We strongly recommend trip cancellation insurance.

**Signature required on page 2**

**RELEASE FROM LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND BINDING ARBITRATION CLAUSE**

**This Agreement is important. It includes terms and conditions and releases Andean Discovery from liability. It must be signed by all participants.**

Nikroc Adventure Travel, LLC, its and their employees, shareholders, officers and directors (collectively, "Andean Discovery") does not own or operate any entity which is to or does provide goods or services for your trip including, for example, ownership or control over hotels or other lodging facilities, airline, vessel, bus, van or other transportation companies, local ground operators, providers or organizers of optional excursions, food service or entertainment providers, etc. All such persons and entities are independent contractors. As a result, Andean Discovery is not liable for any negligent or willful act or failure to act of any such person or entity, or of any other third party. Without limitation, Andean Discovery is not responsible for any injury, loss, or damage to person or property, death, delay or inconvenience in connection with the provision of any goods or services occasioned by or resulting from, but not limited to, acts of God, acts of government, force majeure, acts of war or civil unrest, insurrection or revolt, strikes or other labor activities, criminal or terrorist activities of any kind, or the threat thereof, overbooking or downgrading of accommodations, structural or other defective conditions in hotels or other lodging facilities, mechanical or other failure of airplanes or other means of transportation or for any failure of any transportation mechanism to arrive or depart timely, dangers associated with animals, marine life or vegetation of any sort, dangers incident to recreational activities such as scuba diving, zip lining, snorkeling, paddle boarding, swimming, kayaking, sailing, canoeing, rafting, hiking, bicycling, rock climbing, etc., sanitation problems, food poisoning, lack of access to or quality of medical care, difficulty in evacuation in case of a medical or other emergency, illness, epidemics or the threat thereof, or for any other cause beyond the direct control of Andean Discovery. In addition, I release Andean Discovery from its own negligence and assume all risk thereof.

Andean Discovery may take photographs or video of its trips and trip participants grant Andean Discovery permission to do so and for it to use same for promotional or commercial use without payment of any compensation to participant. Andean Discovery reserves the right to change the itinerary as necessary for the safety, comfort or convenience of the group or as necessary by reason of political, climatic, environmental or cultural considerations. Any such increase in cost necessitated by such changes, is the responsibility of participant.

**MEDICAL PROXY.** Passenger hereby gives Andean Discovery and its contractors permission to arrange emergency medical treatment for passenger if necessary, and passenger agrees to hold Andean Discovery harmless for the provision or non-provision of such services.

**ASSUMPTION OF RISK.** I am aware that adventure travel such as that I am undertaking involves hazardous activities, some in remote areas of the world, with a risk of illness, injury or death which may be caused by forces of nature, the negligence of Andean Discovery, or other persons and companies known or unknown, or of willful or criminal conduct of third parties. I am aware that weather conditions may be severe, adverse and/or unpleasant. I am also aware that medical services or facilities may not be readily available or accessible during some or all of the time during which I am participating on the trip. In order to partake of the enjoyment and excitement of this adventure travel trip I am willing to accept the risks and uncertainty involved as being an integral part of my adventure. I hereby accept and assume full responsibility for any and all risks of illness, injury or death and of the negligence of Andean Discovery.

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.** I acknowledge that I have voluntarily applied to participate on the trip designated on this application (or a trip which I may change to) and that I have read the description of the trip as it appears in the current Andean Discovery catalog and supplements or brochures relating to the trip, together with all information contained in this application. I am voluntarily participating in this trip with knowledge of the hazards involved.

**ARBITRATION.** I agree that any dispute concerning, relating, or referring to this contract, the brochure, or any other literature concerning my trip, or the trip itself shall be resolved exclusively by binding arbitration in Boston, Massachusetts, according to the then existing commercial rules of the American Arbitration Association. Such proceedings will be governed by substantive (but not procedural) Massachusetts law. The arbitrator and not any federal, state, or local court or agency shall have exclusive authority to resolve any dispute relating to the interpretation, applicability, enforceability, conscionability, or formation of this contract, including but not limited to any claim that all or any part of this contract is void or voidable.

**KNOWING AND VOLUNTARY EXECUTION.** I have carefully read this Agreement and the booking information sections on page 1 of this document, and fully understand its contents. I am aware that this is a release of liability and a contract between myself and Andean Discovery and/or its affiliated organizations and sign it of my own free will.

***Please Sign***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Releaser

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

***For a Minor***

I, as an authorized parent or guardian of the below named minor, hereby give my permission for my child or ward to participate in the trip and further agree, individually and on behalf of my child or ward, to the terms of the above. In the event this trip travels outside the United States and the minor is not accompanied by all legal guardians on this trip, I agree to carry with me a notarized document from each legal guardian, not on the trip, granting his or her approval for the minor to travel on this trip and to present said document(s) to any authority requesting such. In the event I am the sole guardian of the minor, I agree to carry documentation evidencing such and present to any authority when requested.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Minor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Releaser

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated