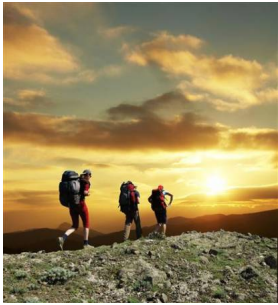


ECUADOR IN BLOOM: RUTA DE LAS FLORES FOR VISITORS INTRODUCED



Flower growing is one of the main export articles in Ecuador and in order to promote this industry, Ecuador has recently introduced a very tourist-friendly and colorful attraction - 'Ruta de Las Flores', or the Flower Trail.

Ecuador is famous for the variety and beauty of flowers it produces. In fact, local roses are deemed to be the finest in the world, though many varieties of local summer flowers do not stay far behind in fame and reputation. **Ecuadorian government has recently introduced a new initiative to encourage tourists to come and explore local wondrous world of flowers and lures travelers to explore the Flower Trail.**

It shall lead travelers through the famous 'Avenue of the Volcanoes' in the Andes, where they may witness not only the beauty and richness of the flower-growing industry, but also many other natural charms. Ecuadorian customs and traditional, rural way of life is worth the while and even adventure seekers will not get bored. The Andes offer many thrilling activities; mountain bike rides will be a worthy challenge and those who wish to enjoy the scenery without extensive muscle strain will find horseback riding along the mountain ranges very refreshing. Trekking and camping are also immensely popular in the area.

The long tradition of flower growing is very important to local authorities and being in the tourist spotlight means that rural migration to the cities or even abroad might be prevented. It will bring more money to the individual regions and will help promote local roses all around the world. While tourists wander around and enjoy their time in Ecuador, they are bound to discover local delicious traditional cuisine with some modern twists. Many prefer to stay in the historic haciendas which are very much part of the true Ecuadorian heritage.

The Flower Trail runs from Ibarra in the north to Cuenca in the south and local communities can't wait to welcome all visitors. After all, they will be the first ones to benefit directly from any income generated from the tourist visits and will make sure all the visitors will have a great time - and hopefully will return one day.

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