



23 Jun 5 Great Day Trips from Cuenca, Ecuador



Cuenca, Ecuador has been one of our favorite cities to spend time in. Part of it is the UNESCO World Heritage level of charm, the ability to [practice Spanish](#), and the affordable [things to do](#) and [to eat](#). But there are also a variety of nice day trips from this city that can add another dimension to the experience.

These are 5 day trips from Cuenca that we have tried and tested, plus a couple other suggestions we heard about during our two months in the Andes.

Listed driving times are one-way on public transit, unless otherwise specified. And total costs are for one adult, traveling independently (not in a package tour).

Ingapirca Ruins



Ecuador's most monumental Incan/Cañari ruins are just a two hour bus ride from Cuenca. While perhaps more humble than ruins found in Peru or Mexico, we enjoyed learning about the fascinating and unique history of these sacred grounds.

Driving Time (one-way): 2 hours

Total cost: \$13.50 (bus, entrance fee, lunch)

More info at: [Visiting Ingapirca Ruins from Cuenca, Ecuador](#)

Cajas National Park



Just North of Cuenca you'll find Cajas National Park, a place of natural beauty with some truly unique qualities: this high-altitude park sits on the Continental Divide and not far from the equator. It's a great place for hiking but be prepared for the elements!

Driving Time: 1 hour

Total cost: \$4-\$50 (bus or taxi)

More info at: [Cajas National Park: A Great Day Trip from Cuenca, Ecuador](#)

Amaru Bioparque Zoo



This one is more of a half-day trip since it's right on the outskirts of Cuenca, but it was certainly a highlight. The park, which sits high on a hill overlooking the city, is a non-profit that features species native to Ecuador (with the exception of lions) in a unique and very natural setting. Be prepared to hike!

Driving Time: 20 minutes by taxi

Total cost: \$16 (\$6 park fee plus roundtrip taxi)

More info at: [Amaru Bioparque Zoo: A Must See in Cuenca, Ecuador](#)

Girón Waterfall Hike



While the lower falls at El Chorro park sees a fair number of visitors, few venture to the middle or upper falls, which are truly stunning. It's a challenging yet rewarding climb through mountain cow pastures and jungle. Directions are a little hard to find so we did our best to provide instructions in the blog post linked below.

Driving Time: 1 hour

Total cost: \$14.50 (bus, taxis, park entrance fee)

More info at: [Epic Girón Waterfall Hike: Day Trip from Cuenca, Ecuador](#)

Gualaceo, Chordeleg, and/or Sig Sig



These three towns are each known for different artisan skills, and you can easily visit one, two, or all three within a day. Typically, tourists arrive in a package tour but we made our way independently. If you have some extra time and enjoy roaming small towns in the mountains or hunting for handicrafts, this makes a nice quiet adventure.

Driving Time: 1-2 hours

Total cost: \$7.15 (buses and lunch)

More info at: [Gualaceo, Chordeleg, Sig Sig Day Trip from Cuenca, Ecuador](#)

<http://intentionaltravelers.com/day-trip-cuenca-ecuador/>