

## Preparing for La Selva

Before your arrival to La Selva there are some important facts you should consider in order to be fully prepared!

### Location, Location

One may ask why La Selva is in such a remote location. The answer is quite simple. There are few other pristine locations in the world where you can see wild animals in their most natural state and La Selva Lodge is found in one of them. The destructive hands of man have not yet reached this natural paradise and we hope to keep it this way. If you would like to investigate our location further you can look up our exact coordinates – Latitude 0.5026 °/ Longitude 76.3821 °.

### Arriving to La Selva

La Selva Jungle Lodge is located deep in the Amazon Rainforest and it is only accessible by boat on a trip of about two hours down the Napo River. Really, this is a short ride if you think about how secluded the location of the lodge is. After leaving Quito you will first arrive to the city of Coca, and then be transported to a public dock with rest rooms. This dock is not property of La Selva; it is used publicly by other lodges, merchants, and oil company employees. Also, there will be other motor canoes where you will find other visitors on their way to other establishments in the Amazon accessible by the Napo River.

It is also important to know that traveling down the Napo River does not mean you will follow a straight line. The boat has to maneuver around many sand bars and banks, not to mention any debris that might be floating in the way. This will make navigation a bit slower and irregular. Our smaller, motorized canoe we use to transport guests is perfect for navigating the Napo River and its many forks, bends and obstacles.

In order to make this adventure as real and authentic as possible, our canoes are very similar to those used by Amazon locals, of course with a few added touches for your commodity.

### Oil in the Amazon

As you make your way down the Napo River there will be roads and even trucks that can be seen beyond the river banks. These roads do not connect to any towns or cities; they were made by local oiling camps to move their supplies from the dock to the camp itself, making river transportation more efficient in general.

Since the Amazon basin is rich in oil, it has become the main source of income for Ecuador.

It is wise to be prepared to see oiling camps, drills, and tall flares along the way. This is the most important economic activity of the country, even though it generates a huge environmental impact.

We as an eco-lodge strive to preserve the territory where our activities take place, making La Selva's land a safe sanctuary.

### Electricity

If you are worried about the comforts of modern life in the middle of the remote jungle, La Selva has everything to make you feel right at home, maybe even better!

Ample rooms, exquisite food with sizeable portions and 24/7 electricity is provided. Keep in mind that electricity is provided by a high efficiency diesel generator and the current delivered to each room is 110v.

Outlets are American style, made to use with three prongs, two flat and one round. If the plugs you plan on using are different you might want to bring your own adapter specifically made to use with your electronics.

## Internet/Wi-Fi

We understand that nowadays being connected to the outside world by social media and email is an essential tool in our daily lives. Keeping in mind the location of La Selva, we are very far from cell phone towers and other central communication stations. We do have Wi-Fi at the lodge, but this connection is very basic and can be irregular at times. Checking email or receiving a message through social media may not be a problem, but could be slow. Heavy files such as photos, videos, or online video calls may not load or work properly. It is best not to expect to have the same fast and reliable service you may have at your home or office.

## Wildlife and Biodiversity

The Amazon Rainforest is one of the most biodiverse places on earth with countless plants, insects, and different animals, including the largest variety of tropical birds. This area is one of the richest locations on the planet, but this does not mean you will see all of these species during your time at La Selva. Spotting wildlife in the Amazon Rainforest is a challenge. Animals have evolved in order to hide from predators. Some of them mimic plants and branches while others are masters in the art of camouflage, blending in perfectly with the ecosystem surrounding them.

We believe it is important for our guests to understand that in addition to our commitment to the environment, and out of respect for the preservation of natural cycles and animal behaviors, we do not use any kind of artificial feeders or leave food to attract wildlife for increased sightings. We leave this up to the knowledge and wisdom of our local guides and leave nature to provide as it has done since its beginning.

In other places of the world low vegetation, small concentrations of trees and open areas make spotting wildlife easy. For example, in the Galapagos animals are not afraid of humans and the animals seem to be everywhere within feet of you. But to spot wildlife in the rainforest you must combine knowledge with good preparation and equipment. Most animals are hiding in the branches of the dense forest and binoculars are necessary to spot them. Others mimic their surroundings so well that they can be confused with plants, leaves or branches and could be sitting right in front of you without ever being seen.

## Rainy Days and Humidity in the Rain Forest

La Selva is located in the basin of the Amazon, but why is it called a rainforest? The answer is simple. This is a region where the annual average rainfall reaches an impressive 2500 to 3000 mm or (98-118 inches) per year.

You can arrive prepared for this type of weather with good shoes, waterproof jacket and pants, and extra clothes to change into in order to enjoy the many adventures at the lodge.

Another thing to be prepared for is the humidity created by the rain and heat; this type of weather can affect your electronics. Bring with you plastic bags, dry bags for canoe rides and any other waterproof equipment.

There is a dry box provided in your room to further protect your items from the weather conditions.

Rain can sometimes be very strong and consistent. This can make trails muddy, slippery and dangerous to walk on. Due to this activities may be changed or canceled due to weather conditions. In these cases you can ask your Naturalist Guide for alternative activities such as a lecture on ecology, wildlife, or subjects of interest. This is also a great time to relax, read a book, look out the observation deck above the bar, or make use of our spa massage services.

## Excursions and Activities

Excursions are planned at the lodge by the Naturalist Guides.

For each group or private group they arrange the activities in order to provide you with the best Amazon experience.

Excursions are organized according to weather conditions, physical conditions of the group and logistics.

If you are interested in a specific topic like birds, mammals, amphibians or plants, ask your guide to expand the information.

Your guide will be delighted to emphasize on the subject.

## Prices and Taxes

At La Selva you will find a well-stocked bar and souvenir shop. Our prices are fair according to the economic status of the country. In Ecuador taxes and importation restrictions make imported goods very expensive. One wine can end up costing up to 75% of its value in taxes. We want you to know that we have considered this situation carefully and have fixed the prices in order to cover the transportation costs, purchasing costs, and still have reasonable revenue for the lodge.

At the bar you will be charged the 12% VAT tax that is mandatory for all products and a 10% service tax. This is a local tax ordered by the government for all bars, restaurants, and other services. This tax is not part of the tips and is distributed among all the people that work in the lodge.

## Tipping

Tipping is an optional and voluntary way of thanking the people that served you during your stay. This is not mandatory in any way and should only reflect your satisfaction with the level of service received. If you wish to see suggestions on tipping, you can visit our web page or consult the tipping guides found in the manuals in your room at the lodge.

## Visiting the Locals

In the Amazon Basin many communities have found a source of income in tourism which helps them substantially in many aspects. Some locals have become guides and others work in lodges, while other communities have prepared interpretation centers for visitors to learn more about their culture and traditions. Many have been working in tourism for quite some time now, but for the majority this is a new and different venture. Contact with outsiders is still a foreign concept and still takes some getting used to. They are a very shy people because they live in such an isolated area where even their neighbors live more than 45 minutes away by foot. But aside from these facts, they are as eager as ever and proud to share their culture and knowledge with you. When you visit it is important to keep your mind and heart open to listen and learn about these extraordinary people as they have not only opened their heart and mind to you as well, but their homes too.

We hope this additional information will help you enjoy your visit to La Selva Lodge even more! You can never be too prepared so remember to look over this information we have provided when you are getting ready for your stay.