

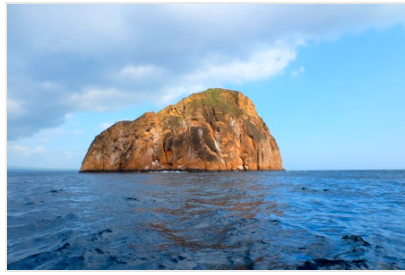
Ned Henry Interview

Q: What made you pick Ecuador as your dream destination?

A: My wife and I enjoy adventure vacations that are a bit "off the grid" and offer an authentic, immersive cultural experience.

"The Galápagos Islands are one of those once-in-a-lifetime, bucket list destinations that has always been in the back of my mind.

When I contacted Sandy Cunningham at Outside GO to talk about planning our trip, I told her I was interested in a land-based trip to the Galápagos and would like to do some surfing and mountain biking. She suggested that we stay at the Galápagos Safari Camp on the centrally-located island of Santa Cruz and take day trips by car or boat to different beaches and other islands. She also highly recommended that we spend some time on mainland Ecuador for mountain biking in the Andes at the end of our trip. Going to the mountains was not really even on my radar until Sandy recommended it, and our experience at Hacienda Zuleta in the Andes turned out to be every bit as amazing as the Galápagos Islands, but in a completely different way.



Q: Who were your traveling companions?

A: We traveled with our son (14) and daughter (12) and had been waiting until they were old enough to be able to fully enjoy the hiking, surfing, snorkeling, horseback riding, and mountain biking.

Q: What were your expectations for the trip?

A: One look at their website is all it took to see that Outside GO really had it together, so my expectations for the trip were high. Sandy told me that Robyn Goldblatt, who works at Outside GO, had recently returned from Ecuador and had stayed at both Galápagos Safari Camp and at Hacienda Zuleta (in the mountains) so I felt great about her local knowledge, recommendations, and the itinerary that she put together for us.

Outside GO far exceeded my expectations in every way, starting with the time Sandy spent with me on the phone tailoring the itinerary to accommodate my family's interests. The attention and service we received were superlative.

“This was a high-end but extremely casual trip. We ate the most amazing fresh, organic food in a beautiful setting with spectacular views while still in our bathing suits!

Sandy organized our trip in a very thoughtful manner so that we would get the most out of our time in Ecuador, yet the pace felt relaxed and Katrien, the wonderful manager of Galápagos Safari Camp, and her staff were very flexible and happy to make changes, even at the last minute, to allow for as much spontaneity as we wanted. This was nice when, for example, we decided to have an extra day of surfing because the swell was so good. Our hosts, guides and naturalists were so gracious, accommodating and knowledgeable and making friendships with these people is truly what made the trip so special.



Q: What was your favorite activity for the whole family?

A: Snorkeling with the sea lions, which we did twice, was amazing. The sea lions were so curious, playful, and interactive and we had never experienced anything like that.

Q: Explain the best day of the entire week.

A: Wow, this is tough one. Obviously the scenery and wildlife in both the Galápagos Islands and the Andes were incredibly beautiful. I would have to say that surfing Tortuga Bay in crystal clear water with only one other person in the line up was awesome.

Q: Tell us the one story that comes to mind when you reminisce about the trip.

A: We became friends with Jan and Michelle Niedrau, a family from Quito who were vacationing at Galápagos Safari Camp and happened to be friends with the owners,

Michael and Stephanie. They invited us to their home on mainland Ecuador, where they hosted a fabulous dinner party and also invited the owners of GSC and their family. It was great fun to make these new friends and made us feel truly connected.



Q: The recent earthquake in Ecuador has been devastating. As someone who has already helped in the relief efforts, why do you think people should donate?

A: The death toll of Ecuador's 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck on the April 16, 2016 rose to 655. In total, 12,500 people were injured and over 7,000 buildings have been destroyed. More than 29,000 people are currently living in shelters. Our friends Jan and Michelle have organized the [Ecuador Earthquake Recovery Fund](#) and at the time of writing have raised \$57,000 which they are administering themselves to make sure the funds go where they are needed most.

Ecuador is a beautiful country and the people there are as friendly and hard-working as anyone I have met. While the Galápagos were spared, this earthquake has been devastating for much of the coastal region. This area is not well known like the Galápagos, and thus the devastation there is not receiving the attention it should. All

the more reason for folks to chip in and contribute to this relief fund.

Q: Will you travel again with Outside GO?

A: Absolutely! I like to be a traveler rather than a tourist and that is exactly the experience that Outside GO delivered. Sandy put together such a well thought out trip and took care of everything down to the last detail. She followed through to make sure everything went off flawlessly and was delightful to work with. After being spoiled with all the personal touches, it would probably be disappointing to do a trip any other way!

Make a donation to the Ecuador Earthquake Recovery Fund at the link below.

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