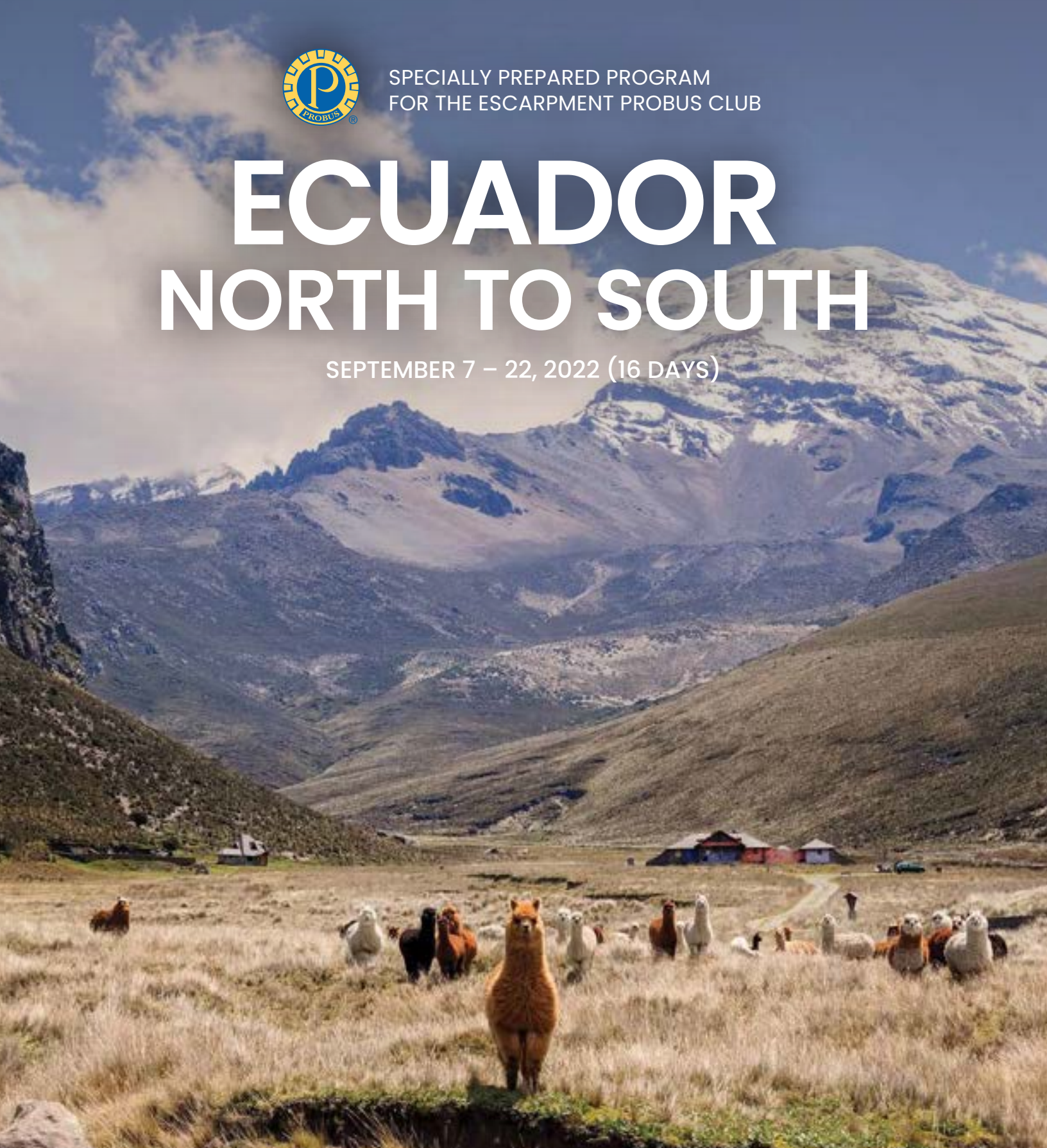




SPECIALLY PREPARED PROGRAM
FOR THE ESCARPMENT PROBUS CLUB

ECUADOR NORTH TO SOUTH

SEPTEMBER 7 – 22, 2022 (16 DAYS)



This tour is a perfect overview of Ecuador. It offers us some of the most stunning natural beauty and cultural diversity you have ever experienced. Wander cobblestone streets of colonial cities and towns, enjoy local fresh seafood and shop in one of the largest markets in South America. Two stunning railway adventures, visit an Afro-Ecuadorian community restaurant, the Avenue of Volcanoes, canyons, waterfalls, Incan ruins, cloud forests, tropical plantations and rainforest, beautiful beaches and see hump back whales. This tour has it all.



ITINERARY

DAY 1 / WEDNESDAY / SEPT 7, 2022

DEPART CANADA – ARRIVE IN QUITO, ECUADOR (D)

We gather at Pearson International Airport for our flight to Quito, Ecuador.

For this flight, you will land the same day as you departed. Upon arrival, we meet our local guide and transfer to our hotel accommodation for the next three nights. Welcome dinner at our hotel tonight.

Transportation: Copa Air

Accommodation: Hotel Dann Carlton or similar (3 nights)

DAY 2 / THURSDAY / SEPT 8, 2022

QUITO (B, L)

Late morning departure to catch up on your rest. Quito features the largest colonial town of the Americas and is the first Unesco World Heritage Site. Enjoy the eclectic architecture ranging from the modern quarters to varied colonial facades on churches and private residences, decorated with balconies built in the last five centuries. Our tour includes parks like El Ejido and Alameda, the monument of Simon Bolivar, the gothic Basilica of the Heart of Jesús. Independence Square is flanked by the Presidential and the Archbishop's palaces dating back to XVII and XIX centuries and the Metropolitan Cathedral with excellent samples of the Spanish renaissance. Walk along the Street of the Seven Crosses and pass by the El Sagrario church with its unique orthodox cross lay-out dating back to the XVII century. The jewel of the crown, the Jesuit temple of La Compañía de Jesús, is perhaps the most important monument of baroque art in Quito. From there continue to the plaza of San Francisco. Its temple and convent were once the largest in the Spanish colonies of the Americas. Lunch at a local restaurant.



Quito

From here we head approximately 11 miles north of downtown Quito, to visit "Mitad del Mundo" (Middle of the World) and the Equator Monument situated at 0°0'0" latitude where the XVIII century French Geodesic Expedition erected one of the three pyramids as landmarks for their planet calculations. Here we see a typical central plaza, a church and bull-fighting ring. We also visit the ethnographic Museum. Dinner on your own.



"Mitad del Mundo" (Middle of the World)

DAY 3 / FRIDAY / SEPT 9, 2022

QUITO – MINDO – QUITO (B, L)

Mindo, Ecuador is part of a cloud forest ecosystem, which is characterized by the persistent low-lying clouds that deliver lots of moisture and hence thick plant growth. Located along the lower slopes of the Pichincha Volcano, Mindo's dense and misty forest canopy is full of life, particularly birds. This is one of the premier birding destinations in the world! More than 500 different types of birds have been spotted here in Mindo.

The Tarabita was built to help travelers admire the forests of the Mindo Nambillo Ecological Reserve and soars 150 metres above ground. A brief cable car ride takes you above the breathtaking scenery, allowing you to shorten the walking time to entrance of the waterfalls. Each car has the capacity to carry up to six people, making it perfect for families and groups alike. On the Tarabita, you travel between mountain tops, stopping at the falls entrances. Then we will enjoy a short hike as we walk towards the Nambillio waterfall.

Lunch today in Mindo. Those not wishing to do the cable car ride and walk, can stay in Mindo and visit the Butterfly Sanctuary and enjoy some eclectic shopping.

We will also get to visit a local chocolate factory.



Tarabita (cable car)

DAY 4 / SATURDAY / SEPT 10, 2022

QUITO – OTAVALO (B, D)

Departing early morning from Quito, we head north, driving across the colorful valleys of Guayllabamba and Cayambe. Guayllabamba is rich in fertile soil and through effective irrigation systems has become an important producer of avocado and the local cherimoya fruit. Cayambe, traditionally dedicated to dairy cattle and manufacturing of dairy products, has recently enjoyed an important boom in rose farming. This breathtaking setting offers great photo opportunities and after two hours of traveling through the riveting Andean countryside, we arrive to the province of Imbabura, known as the Ecuadorian Land of Lakes.

Enjoy the sights and treats of the Otavalo indigenous market and surrounding areas. The Otavalo Craft Market is the most famous and picturesque in South America. Markets are meeting places for shopping, bargaining and chatter, while the locals exchange produce, animals, utensils, pots and pans or textiles. For visitors, the markets offer the possibility of approaching Ecuadorians at a more intimate level, as you negotiate prices of bags, hats, or flutes or simply appreciate the skills that have created such an elegant array of handicrafts, clothing and more. Free time for lunch on your own to explore this unique market. Dinner at hotel.

Accommodation: Hacienda Cusin or similar (2 nights)



Otavalo Market

DAY 5 / SUNDAY / SEPT 11, 2022

OTAVALO – IBARRA – SALINAS – OTAVALO (B, L)

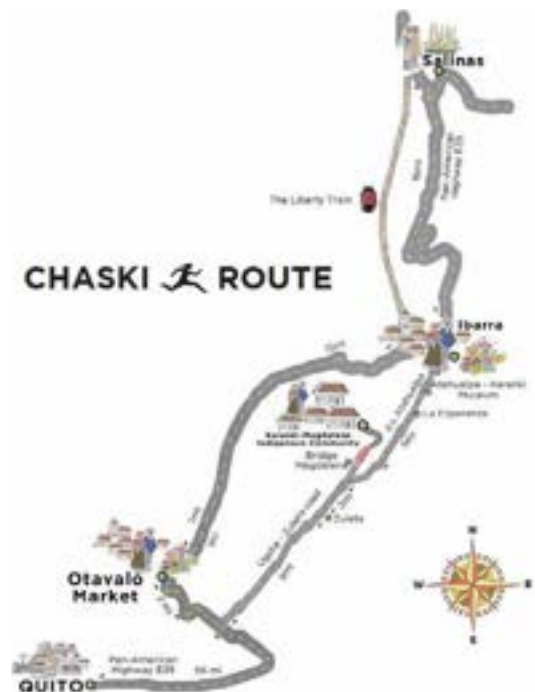
Today we travel to Ibarra to catch the messenger train that runs on an early 20th-century railroad system connecting the northern Ecuadorian Andes with the Ecuadorian Pacific Coast. Depart from Ibarra and descend into the warm, dry valley of Salinas, across sugar cane plantations, magical landscapes, tunnels and bridges overlooking steep gullies and patchwork fields.

Transportation: The Liberty Train



Bomba Dance at Train Station

The 26-km stretch takes 2 hours to complete, as the railway plunges from 2200 m. to 1500 m. above sea level. Enjoy a unique lunch at the Salinas Afro-Ecuadorian community restaurant, implemented by our land operator in an effort to boost tourism and cultural recovery in and around this fascinating area, with a vision of helping it become an important tourist destination. The menu has been carefully developed through a joint effort with the community and melds local savoir-faire with high quality standards. After lunch, visit the Salt Museum. Then return by coach to Otavalo in the afternoon. Dinner on your own tonight.



DAY 6 / MONDAY / SEPT 12, 2022

OTAVALO – QUITO (B, D)

Depart Otavalo in the morning and transfer to Quito. Upon arrival, free time at leisure for rest of the day. Or get on a double decker Hop-on-Hop-Off bus (ticket included for you) that takes you around the city. With 11 stops you can get on and off at your preferred location at your own pace. Dinner included tonight at the hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel Dann Carlton or similar (1 night)

DAY 7 / TUESDAY / SEPT 13, 2022

QUITO – BAÑOS (B, D)

Departing from Quito to the south of the country "Avenue of the Volcanoes" we stop near the impressive Cotopaxi Volcano (5,897 m) to admire from afar its beauty and continue along a series of temperate valleys with some villages and towns like Latacunga, Salcedo or Ambato before arriving in Baños, a small and friendly town/thermal bath resort nestled amidst mountains and found midway between the Andes and the Amazon.



Cotopaxi Volcano

After visiting the village, we head down into the Pastaza river canyon to the so called "Avenue of Waterfalls" where we find Cascada de la Virgen, the Bride's Mantle, Machay, Pailón del Diablo, all of which lie along the riverbed of the Pastaza and surrounded by green lush vegetation. The tallest waterfall, Pailón del Diablo (the Devil's Cauldron) can be observed from a breathtaking suspension bridge, we spend the night in Baños, known as the "Gateway to the Amazon". Dinner included at the hotel tonight.

Accommodation: Hotel Samari Spa Resort or similar (1 night)

DAY 8 / WEDNESDAY / SEPT 14, 2022

BAÑOS – RIOBAMBA (B, D)

Departing from Baños to Chimborazo Reserve, you will admire the volcano and landscape. Afternoon drive towards the city of Riobamba and weather permitting we will view the highest mountain in Ecuador, Chimborazo at over twenty thousand feet. Continue to the city for a panoramic tour of Riobamba. Tonight you will enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Accommodation: Hostería Andaluza or similar (1 night)



Pailón del Diablo

DAY 9 / THURSDAY / SEPT 15, 2022

RIOBAMBA – ALAUSÍ – INGAPIRCA RUINS – CUENCA (B, L)

We start the day traveling through some of the country's most picturesque areas before reaching the railway station at Alausí. Travel by train through the Andes down tracks that form a unique zigzag pattern known as the Devil's Nose, a true feat in railway engineering of the early twentieth century.

Transportation: Devil's Nose Train

Continue south and experience a dramatic landscape change with deep canyons and small green valleys to reach the village of El Tambo and detour to visit the Incan Archaeological site of Ingapirca, which means "Wall of the Inca" and has the most important Incan relics in Ecuador. This citadel was built in the XV century on an ancient route that connected Quito to Cuzco. The Solar Temple and the surrounding buildings follow the system of construction found in the ancient Incan capital. Lunch included at local restaurant. We arrive in Cuenca by nightfall.

Accommodation: Hotel Oro Verde or similar (2 nights)



Devil's Nose Train



Ingapirca Inca Ruins

DAY 10 / FRIDAY / SEPT 16, 2022

CUENCA (B, D)

Cuenca is one of the most beautiful colonial cities in Ecuador and also an UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is a city of facades dating from the last five centuries, which have been kept intact due to the unique privilege of being the only city on the Ecuadorian Andes which has not being hit by major quakes. We visit the Cathedral, Main Square, the flower market, San Francisco and Santo Domingo churches and the Central Bank Museum with permanent archaeological, anthropological, colonial and republican art collections, including interesting photography documenting the city's history.

In the late afternoon, we visit a Panama hat factory where a wide variety of goods made from "toquilla" fiber like bags, dolls and of course literally thousand possible hat styles, colors and prices. We shall also enjoy a panoramic look at the city from Turi viewpoint.



Main Square



Panama Hat Factory

DAY 11 / SATURDAY / SEPT 17, 2022

CUENCA – EL CAJAS NATIONAL PARK – GUAYAQUIL (B, L)

We depart from Cuenca to Guayaquil for a four-hour drive across El Cajas National Park, famous for its more than 200 lakes and lagoons, such as La Toreadora where we can see some birds and plants such as Polylepistrees. In less than 3 hours, the highway will take us from 4000 metres down to sea level, making it possible to observe some of the different habitats responsible for Ecuador's diversity: Andean moorlands, the cloud forests and the subtropical and tropical rainforests, along with some tropical crops such as cacao, bananas, sugar cane or rice.

Accommodation: Hotel Wyndham Guayaquil or similar (5 nights)



El Cajas National Park

DAY 12 / SUNDAY / SEPT 18, 2022

GUAYAQUIL (B, L/A)

Our tour begins by visiting the Centenario Park which is devoted to the independence and freedom of the old city from the Spanish. We continue on to the legendary Barrio Las Peñas. We continue the original and only surviving colonial district of the city where you can have some fantastic panoramic views of the city and Guayas River.

Free afternoon. Lunch allowance provided by Tour Design. Stroll along charming river promenade, Malecón 2000: we'll admire the Rotonda monument dedicated to San Martin and Bolivar, leaders of South American Independence together with some important historical landmarks such as the Moorish clock tower.



DAY 13 / MONDAY / SEPT 19, 2022
GUAYAQUIL - SALINAS (WHALE WATCHING) –
GUAYAQUIL (B, L)

From small fishing villages to resort towns, the Pacific Coast of Ecuador is home to some of the most beautiful beaches in South America. Today we take a day trip to the coastal town of Salinas. It is known for its upscale beach lifestyle and such popular beaches as San Lorenzo and Chipipe. People travel from all over the world because the surfing in Ecuador offers an ideal climate all year round. Following lunch we go on a whale watching cruise. Migratory humpback whales pass the rocky point of La Chokolatera, which offers panoramic views over the Pacific Ocean. Every year from June to September, the Ecuadorian coast is visited by these giants of the sea, making Ecuador an impressive whale watching destination. Their habitat is at the south part of the continent, in the Antarctic region, where there is abundance of fish, their main food. As they are migratory mammals, they begin their journey through the Pacific Ocean to the north until they reach the coast of Ecuador. This journey of about 4,320 miles takes about 3 months.



DAY 14 / TUESDAY / SEPT 20, 2022
GUAYAQUIL (B, L)

Discover what everyday life is like in a tropical hacienda; explore local fruits and produce including sugarcane, bananas, coffee, cocoa and more. You will also be able to discover Ecuadorian cattle ranching as well as the montubio traditions and enjoy a first-rate meal amidst the colorful gardens. Return to Guayaquil. Lunch is included today.



DAY 15 / WEDNESDAY / SEPT 21, 2022
GUAYAQUIL (B, D)

Free day at leisure. Tonight features our farewell dinner at local restaurant, including wine/beer/soft drink.

DAY 16 / THURSDAY / SEPT 22, 2022
DEPART GUAYAQUIL, ECUADOR (B)

Breakfast at hotel, then transfer to the airport for flights home.

Transportation: Copa Air

***** END OF TOUR *****

B – Breakfast

L – Lunch (L/A – lunch allowance from Tour Design)

D – Dinner

TOUR MAP



PRICING & TERMS

PACKAGE RATE (CAD\$, PER PERSON)

CAD\$5,549 per person based on double occupancy

CAD\$1,695 for single supplement

INCLUSIONS:

- Roundtrip international flights from Toronto to Quito and Guayaquil to Toronto
- 15 nights accommodations as per itinerary with daily breakfast
- 7 lunches and 7 dinners as per itinerary, including water and coffee/tea
- 1 lunch allowance provided by Tour Design
- Tours, transfers, and activities as per itinerary
- 2 local trains within Ecuador
- Porterage at hotels wherever available (1 piece per person)
- All gratuities for local guides, drivers, and included meals
- All local taxes

EXCLUSIONS:

- Air taxes and fuel surcharges, currently CAD \$160 per person.
- Meals not included in the itinerary
- Optional travel insurance

AIR CREDIT:

If you wish to arrange your own air from Toronto to Quito and Guayaquil to Toronto, an **air credit of CAD\$700 per person** will be deducted from the tour cost. And the air taxes and fuel surcharges of CAD \$160 per person will NOT be applicable. So you will have a total of CAD \$860 per person to use towards your own flight arrangements.

Please contact us for air deviation, premium economy or business class upgrade surcharges.

SPECIAL NOTE:

- Names provided at time of booking MUST match exactly your passport
- You must have a passport valid for at least 6 months after your return date
- If you wish to purchase optional travel insurance with us, it MUST be purchase prior to final payment date
Please contact us for a quotation.

DEPOSIT & FINAL PAYMENT:

At time of booking:

CAD \$1,000 per person

Final payment:

remaining balance due May 6, 2022

CANCELLATION TERMS:

Between time of booking and May 5, 2022: CAD \$1000 per person

Between May 6, 2022 and date of departure: 100% of tour cost

Program designed in conjunction with Joanne Millichamp, email: jmillichamp@hotmail.com or call 289-878-2969. To book this program, please complete the Booking Form and email, mail or fax to Tour Design.



TOUR DESIGN

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