

SERVICE LEARNING TRIP

DENTAL RIOBAMBA

ITINERARY



**SMILES
MOVEMENT**
Dentistry For Low-Income Families Everywhere



Dear MEDLIFers,

Thank you for joining the MEDLIFE Movement via a Service Learning Trip with us! Here at MEDLIFE, our mission is to build a worldwide Movement empowering low-income communities in their fight for equal access to healthcare, education, and safe homes. As an SLT participant in the central highlands of Ecuador, you are joining that worldwide Movement!

The following is a sample travel plan for you to review. Please go over it before your trip and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. Thank you for joining the MEDLIFE Movement, and we can't wait to see you in the high-altitude Andean region of Riobamba!

Overview:

Riobamba, nestled in the Andean highlands of Chimborazo province, is where MEDLIFE's journey began. Surrounded by snow-capped volcanoes like Chimborazo, this high-altitude region is rich in Indigenous culture and history, yet many surrounding rural and high-elevation Indigenous communities face severe disparities in healthcare, sanitation, and educational resources. Geography and isolation present unique challenges to accessing routine dental and medical services. By joining a Dental Service Learning Trip in Riobamba and the surrounding highlands, volunteers deliver essential dental care, preventive hygiene education, and sustainable development support to underserved Andean communities.

Highlights of the Week:

- Learn about the socio-economic and geographic challenges faced by rural Indigenous communities in the Ecuador highlands on a Reality Tour
- Gain experience shadowing healthcare professionals at Mobile Dental Clinics serving remote high-altitude communities around Riobamba
- Raise awareness of the importance of early education for children's oral health in preventing dental complications.
- Build bridges across cultures by connecting directly with Kichwa-speaking and local highland community members

Key Pillars

- **Service:** By volunteering on a Mobile Clinic and Development Project, you'll help bring accessible medical care, health education, and a safer home to the marginalized communities you visit.
- **Education:** Learn about the historical, cultural, and environmental factors shaping health realities in highland Ecuador. Deepen your understanding of global health equity by collaborating with and shadowing local Ecuadorian dental professionals.
- **Life-changing experiences:** Through eye-opening experiences and building human connections, a Service Learning Trip will renew your passion for building a world free from the constraints of poverty.

DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Arrival → Departure

Day 1	Arrival to Riobamba	Day 6	Permanent Clinic
Day 2	Walking Tour & Orientation	Day 7	Development project
Day 3	Reality Tour	Day 8	Optional Tourism Activities
Day 4-5	Mobile Clinics	Day 9	Departure

DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY

1

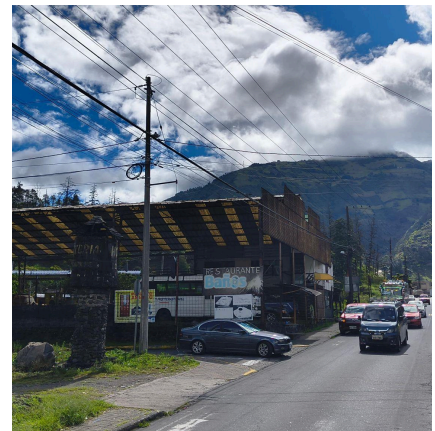
Saturday

Arrival to Quito

Arrive at Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO) between 5pm and 11pm. A MEDLIFE associate will be waiting for you outside of the airport with a MEDLIFE sign. Participants will arrive at the hostel and have the night to settle in at the hotel and recover from the long travel day. Meals are not provided today, but there are restaurants nearby.



Overnight
Quito MEDLIFE Hostel



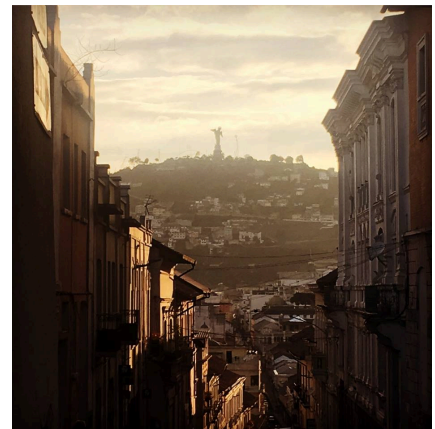
DAY

2

Sunday

Walking Tour & Orientation

Arrive at Riobamba. Sunday morning will be dedicated to an orientation meeting where we will cover what to expect for the week and review safety precautions. Today will be an introduction to Riobamba for all students with a walking tour led by your Trip Leader. In the afternoon, participants can enjoy some free time to explore the area. Meals are not provided today.





Overnight
Riobamba MEDLIFE Hostel

DAY

3

Monday

Reality Tour

Today we gain a better understanding of the geographical, political, and social realities of the region. Your first stop is at the Iglesia de Balbanera, the oldest church in Ecuador, where you will continue to learn about Spanish colonization and the influence of Catholicism in Andean Ecuador. Here you can purchase local artisan goods from local vendors.

We will visit a Medical Center in Llinllin de Columbe to talk about the conditions of public health in the area. After this visit we'll head to the San Martin community to share some rural activities with the local comuneros and get acquainted with the indigenous culture as well as understanding historical events like the Reforma Agraria from the people who have experienced it firsthand.



Overnight
Riobamba MEDLIFE Hostel

DAY

4-5

Tuesday to Wednesday

Mobile Clinics

Every day, Mobile Dental Clinics travel to various communities, with 30-minute to 2-hour travel times. Upon arrival, volunteers unload supplies and attend a brief training session before opening the clinic at 8-9 am. They work until lunch around 11:30 am, then switch stations. Clinics close between 1-3 pm, depending on patient volume.

Volunteers will also visit a permanent clinic to learn from and shadow local doctors while overseeing deeper and more complex treatments for patients. Procedures can include surgeries, permanent dentures, and more!

On free days, they can explore the city.



Overnight
Riobamba MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

6

Thursday

Permanent Clinic

Volunteers visit MEDLIFE's permanent dental clinic to learn about and observe our long-term Patient Follow-Up Program. Patients who require specialized or complex procedures that cannot be completed during Mobile Clinics—such as root canals, oral surgeries, dental implants, or prosthetics and dentures—are brought to the permanent clinic. On this day, volunteers shadow local dental specialists and healthcare professionals during advanced treatments, seeing firsthand how MEDLIFE provides continuous, sustainable care to patients in need.



Overnight
Riobamba MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

7

Friday

Development Project

On Development Project Day, volunteers work alongside local community members and MEDLIFE staff on hands-on development projects that address long-term infrastructure and safety needs in partner communities. Designed in collaboration with local community leaders, these sustainable initiatives may include constructing pedestrian staircases, building water and sanitation facilities, or renovating community spaces and schools. Volunteers engage in physical building and improvement activities, fostering meaningful cross-cultural connections while helping improve quality of life and access to essential services.



Overnight
Riobamba MEDLIFE Hostel

DAY

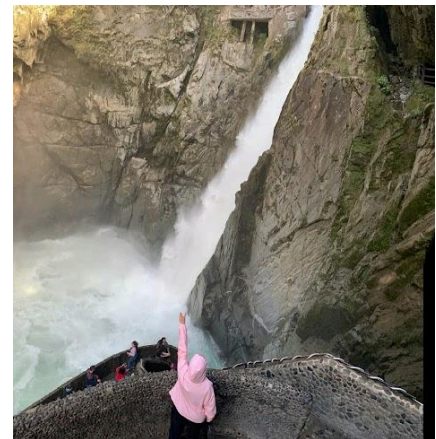
8

Saturday

Optional Tourism Activities

Make the most of your trip by participating in an optional tourism activity or extension. In Ecuador, most volunteers choose a Day Trip to Baños, a super fun city to visit.

[Click here to see the full list of extension options.](#)



DAY

9

Sunday

Departure

Continue exploring Quito or return home. Depart anytime between 12pm and 9pm.



INCLUDED

- ✓ 8 nights dorm room accommodation
- ✓ Breakfast, lunch, and dinner from Monday to Friday
- ✓ Transportation to and from the airport (within the established schedule), and to SLT activities
- ✓ English-speaking Trip Leader
- ✓ Safety equipment (including face masks)

NOT INCLUDED

- ✓ Flights
- ✓ Tips
- ✓ Pre or post-trip accommodation
- ✓ Optional excursions
- ✓ Weekend meals

Travel Advisory

All volunteers require a valid passport of at least 6 months from the SLT start date. You can register for the MEDLIFE SLT without a passport, but you must submit the info at least 2 weeks before the trip. You must ensure your passport validity before departure.

If you're not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, **you may need a visa** to enter certain countries. It is your responsibility to determine if you need a visa and make appropriate arrangements.

Visit your doctor: MEDLIFE does not require any vaccinations; however, you should follow all CDC requirements and any advice from your medical professional.