

# La Selva Jungle Lodge



## Highlights

- Comfortable lodge with great staff willing to go the extra mile for guests.
- Excellent spot for birdwatchers.
- Native and naturalist guides.
- Canopy tower in an excellent position.
- Butterfly farm.
- Swim in the lake, go canoeing, do a bit of fishing ...

## Situation

On the edge of a lake in the heart of primary forest, two hours by motorized canoe from Coca down the Napo River.

## Activities

Guided rainforest hikes, night excursions, canopy tower visit, kayaks.

La Selva Lodge is in a picturesque setting on the edge of a lake in the heart of primary forest, two hours by motorized canoe from Coca down the Napo River. It's an eco-lodge, paying particular attention to environmental sustainability and working with as many local people as possible. It won the World Congress on Tourism and the Environment award years before many other lodges were even giving responsible tourism a thought.

The accommodation is in rustic cabins built to local native design and in keeping with the surroundings. Each of the 17 double cabins are built in the traditional Indian style of the region and are set on a hill overlooking the Garzacochoa Lake. The rooms have private bathrooms with hot showers, mosquito screening, individual mosquito nets for each bed, and a hammock. La Selva Lodge has a reputation for its excellent food which blends local ingredients with French, North American and Ecuadorian dishes. Expect to try many tropical fruit juices, and freshly caught local fish (when available). A particular speciality is the Amazonian pizza! Vegetarians can be catered for on request.

There are many activities to enjoy at La Selva. Guided walks are led by a local native guide as well as an English speaking naturalist which gives an interesting perspective on the forest and its traditional usage. As well as walks along the extensive trails, there are river excursions in a dugout canoe, night excursions (walking or by canoe) to view nocturnal wildlife, and a 35 metre high viewing tower, which gives an

unparalleled view across the primary rainforest canopy.

The lodge is a top spot for keen birdwatchers with over 500 species having been recorded in the area. These include some rarities like the zigzag heron, as well as toucans and trogons, jacamars and tanagers, antbirds, hummingbirds and macaws as well as around 20 other species of parrots. There are kayaks available for guest use, and those wishing to cool off after a rainforest hike can swim to a balsa raft in the middle of Garzacocho Lake.

There is a butterfly breeding farm 5 minutes from the lodge which provides the unusual opportunity to see and photograph a spectacular range of Amazonian butterfly species. There is also the Neotropical Field Research Institute, which is a research facility for biologists, so there is often the chance to speak to researchers and learn about the current studies.

In 2009 giant otters have again been seen in the lake, which is excellent news!

**Fair trade travel / Responsible tourism:**

La Selva work closely with their local Quichua community and help with a variety of projects, both environmental and community-orientated. For example, one of the latest is that they have bought pigs, which they fatten on the scraps from the lodge, then they give the pigs to the community. As well as giving the obvious (ie good nutrition for the community), it means that hunting the rainforest wildlife has been diminished. It is thought that this is one of the factors in the return of the giant otters.