

# PASSENGER CODE OF CONDUCT

This document is a part of the sustainable policies of Casa Divina Lodge and Sabina Tour Operator, which aim to promote responsible tourism in the *Chocó Andino de Pichincha* Biosphere Reserve. Follow these recommendations and enjoy an unforgettable trip!

## LOCAL CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS



Before travelling, consult about the customs and local traditions of your destination. This will allow you to share, participate and integrate with the community. During your visit, please consider:

- ✓ In Mindo you will find tourists of different nationalities. During the weekends and holidays there can be a large number of national tourists.
- ✓ Our official language is Spanish, but in many tourist establishments you will find someone who speaks basic or intermediate English.
- ✓ Mindo's community has been recycling for years, but the growth of tourism has exceeded the local waste management capacity. Please, help us to reduce wastes, reuse plastics, and separate garbage when possible.



## SUPPORT TO LOCAL ECONOMY

Choose to buy local handcrafts and products, and contribute to the development of family and small-scale economies.

- ✓ In Mindo you will find several handcrafts stores, as well as natural and organic products (jam, coffee, chocolate, dairies, etc.) that make a great souvenir to bring home.
- ✓ Be kind and respectful with all local vendors and artisans, promoting fair trade between producers and consumers.
- ✓ Do not purchase falsified products, as well as those forbidden by national or international laws.
- ✓ Choose tourist services offered by people from the community and through established companies, to avoid scams and illegality.
- ✓ Avoid products coming from endangered species of plants, animals or plants, as well as archaeological objects being promoted as original.

## RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT



*Choco Andino de Pichincha* Biosphere Reserve is a destination in which respecting the environment is fundamental to appreciate the area and guarantee its conservation. In Mindo and other natural sites, it's important to:

- ✓ Buy products that do not use, in any case, byproducts of endangered species of plants and animals.
- ✓ Reduce, reuse and recycle solid wastes. Take your own reusable water bottle, avoid products with unnecessary packaging and bring your own bag for your purchases. Mindo, and Ecuador in general, does not offer eco-friendly disposable containers. Take your time to eat and drink in situ, saving unnecessary garbage.



## PATRIMONIAL CARE

Be careful and respectful when visiting wild, heritage and archaeological areas, so that the future generations can also enjoy the place you're visiting. When entering protected areas:

- ✓ Avoid leaving any type of waste, including the organic ones. Besides affecting the landscape, these can interfere with the native fauna and affect other visitors.
- ✓ Choose routes with a low impact in the landscape, like existing paths and trails. Guided visits help you to prevent accidents, decreasing erosion and soil compaction, while strengthening local economy and allowing you to enjoy in depth the natural richness of the area.
- ✓ Remember that protected areas have a high cultural and economic value, and there are laws to protect the site and its wildlife. Breaking them can be considered a serious felony.
- ✓ Don't feed any animal. Only under the supervision of your professional guide should you do otherwise.
- ✓ Don't let stray dogs follow you while hiking. Dogs can chase wild animals and cause damage to the ecosystem.
- ✓ Respect the signposts and indications of the communities located in the area you're visiting.
- ✓ Don't take away natural resources such as stones, fossils, snails, plants, flowers, etc., from their original environment.
- ✓ Contribute to the maintenance of infrastructure and equipment of the protected areas, by paying the official rate and using the facilities properly.
- ✓ Remember that hunting and fishing is illegal in any form. Firearms are forbidden.

## INFORMED AND RESPECTFUL TRAVELLER



- ✓ Mindo has a wet and humid climate. Bring the proper clothing and equipment for it.
- ✓ Visit tourist information offices that have official public or private institutional support in order to obtain updated information and use services and tourist activities that comply with the legal requirements of the places you visit.
- ✓ Mindo has a basic health care center and the closest hospital is located one hour away. When arriving at a new destination, be informed on how you can get medical assistance or contact your embassy in case of emergency.
- ✓ The town of Mindo is located at an altitude of about 1300 meters/4265 feet. There are two kinds of biting flies here. **The kinds of mosquitos that carry tropical diseases cannot live at this altitude.** So, while you will want to have access to insect repellent DEET repellent is not necessary. Many people feel comfortable in light, long-sleeved shirts and light, long pants (cover your ankles and elbows!) as their main strategy to avoid bug bites. However, if you are traveling to other parts of Ecuador where tropical disease does exist, you should look into using DEET repellent and possibly anti-malarial medicine depending on the length of stay and possibility of exposure in those areas.
- ✓ Be discreet and respectful in expressing your beliefs and your opinions on issues such as religion, politics and social issues.
- ✓ Respect human rights and protect children from exploitation in any of its forms – especially sexual exploitation.
- ✓ Refrain from any trafficking in drugs, weapons, antiques, protected species and products and substances dangerous or prohibited by national regulations.