

CARRIE BROWNSTEIN + FRED ARMISEN | TWILIGHT'S CATHERINE HARDWICKE | SNOOKI 4EVER

BUST

Portia de Rossi

finally comfortable
in her own skin

LYKKE LI
& DIPLO

*(in bed...
but not together)*

SEX BLOGGERS
EXPOSED!

we ♥ sex

OUR SEX ISSUE REVEALS THE SHOCKING TRUTH!

THAT'S WHAT
SHE SAID
the results of
our first-ever
sex survey!

TOP
10
adulteresses
of all time

DIY DEPRESSION
REMEDIES

STICK IT IN
how to tap
your own
maple syrup





Set your sights on the Centro Histórico



The Basilica towers over Quito



Sunday cyclers

quito, ecuador

STRADDLE THE EQUATOR
IN THIS SOUTH
AMERICAN CAPITAL

[BY LIBBY ZAY]

QUITO, WHICH SITS two miles high on the slopes of the Andes, is a city of high-rises, nestled between a pair of mountain ranges. A perfect first stop for travelers on the South America circuit, Ecuador's capital is colorful and jam-packed, full of personality but easy on the wallet. And the weather couldn't be better; since the "City of the Eternal Spring" sits right on the equator, you can expect sunny, 70-degree days all year round. From dancing the night away at modern, thumping discothèques to spending afternoons in quiet cafés tucked into colonial buildings, your Quito to-do list will be a mile long.

Though it's a little touristy, the bustling **La Mariscal** area—known as La Zona to locals who love it and jokingly referred to as Gringolandia by those who don't—is a good place to acquaint yourself with Quito's busy vibe. The neon-bathed **Plaza Foch** (Foch and Reina Victoria) is the central square and serves as an evening meeting spot for folks heading out to dine, drink, and dance. Every night of the week is lively in La Mariscal, but on Wednesdays the partygoers spill out into the streets from every bar and club. Start your night by listening to last year's Top 40 hits at **Bungalow**

6 (Calama and Diego de Almagro), which is open solely to women from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Sip free Cuba libres—rum and cokes with a splash of lime juice—as you watch men coral outside, impatiently waiting to rush in. Dip out before the floodgates part and head to **La Aguijón** (Calama E735 and Reina Victoria), a warehouse-like salsa club swarming with Quito's young and cool.

If you're looking for a more laid-back evening, **La Estacion** (Diego de Almagro N24-19 and Wilson) serves cheap pizza accompanied by live acoustic acts. Or grab dinner around the corner at **El Maple** (Foch and Diego de Almagro). This vegetarian eatery offers up one of the tastiest meals in town: a meatless version of a traditional Ecuador meal, including soy steak, white corn, potato fritters, and veggie chorizo. If you prefer to sample the real deal, try **Cactus** (Jeronimo Carrion and Amazonas), a hole-in-the-wall gem that also serves another Ecuadorian delicacy, roasted guinea pig. The service is slow, so sit back and enjoy being serenaded by the live pan-flute players.

To mingle with the city's coolest locals, hit up **La Naranja Mecánica** (JL Tamayo and General Veintimilla). The bar's name means "a



Ocho y Medio movie-goers



Quito's street scene



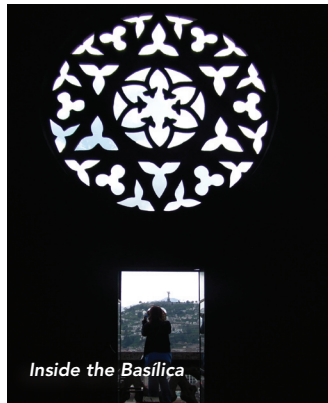
Catch a flick at Ocho y Medio



Makin' moves at the Mercado Artesanal



Good eats at El Maple



Inside the Basílica



The author on the equator

clockwork orange," so it's no surprise that you'll find fuzzy walls and furniture made out of mannequins inside this hipster haven. For a taste of the city's favorite pastime, head to nearby **Seseribó** (Veintimilla 352 and 12 de Octubre); the oldest and most popular salsa club in the city pumps out infectious beats all night long. If you're clueless when it comes to dancing, stop by on Saturday at 8:30 p.m. for a free lesson.

Head a few blocks east and find yourself in **La Floresta**, a pleasant artsy neighborhood with a handful of bars and eateries. The best of the bunch is **El Pobre Diablo** (Isabel La Católica N24-274 and Galavis), a candle-lit restaurant and jazz club that hosts live bands nearly every night of the week. Also in the neighborhood is **Ocho y Medio** (Valladolid N24-353 and Vizcaya), Quito's independent movie theater that screens a carefully chosen selection of films from around the world.

Guápulo is another bohemian neighborhood worth exploring. Just a short taxi ride from La Floresta, it's home to a cluster of graffiti-covered bars and cafés situated on a narrow street that winds

down a steep hill. The patio at **Pizzeria Ananké** (Camino de Orellana 781) is the best place to take in the view of one of the most richly decorated churches in the country and the surrounding valley below. The pizza is cheap and tasty, and if it's a chilly night, you can challenge your palate with Quito's strange beverage specialty: hot chocolate mixed with cheese (it tastes as weird as it sounds).

When you're ready to call it a night, head to **Hostal Arco Del Sol** (Juan Rodríguez 7-36 and Reina Victoria). With a sun-drenched common room, free breakfast, and a friendly landlord, it's easy to make it your home away from home. In the morning, get ready to wander the cobblestone streets of **Centro Histórico**, the original colonial center of the city. Head to the **Basílica de Voto Nacional** gothic church, where after ascending a series of stairs and rickety ladders, you'll take in sweeping views of the city. If you're into biking, visit Centro Histórico on a Sunday, when several main streets are closed to car traffic and filled with cyclists. Rent a bike in **Parque El Ejido**, the nearby park, then make

your way to **La Ronda**, one of the oldest streets in Quito. At night, the narrow lane is packed with vendors selling *canelazo*, a spiced-rum-and-cinnamon drink.

When it comes time for picking up souvenirs, head to the **Mercado Artesanal** (Juan Leon Mera and Jorge Washington), an enormous warehouse that features stalls piled high with local handicrafts, such as hammocks, knit hats, and alpaca blankets. There are plenty of unique jewelry and figurines up for grabs, too; keep an eye out for anything made out of *tagua*, a vegetable that when dried out and carved looks just like ivory. Then take a break at **Fonfone Café** (Mariscal Foch and Amazonas), a tiny, family-owned coffee shop where the homemade snacks and straight-from-Ecuador espresso will have you feeling recharged in no time. For something heartier, grab a tasty burrito down the street at **Rodríguez** (Mariscal Foch E5-43 and Reina Victoria). A cold glass bottle of Coca-Cola and a healthy dose of reggae-ton will be sure to bring you back to life. From its epic views to its quirky cuisine, Quito will steal your *corazón*.