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EXPERIENTIAL ROUTE WITH

Crafts in Cuenca



Workshops, galleries and artisans including in this booklet, have been chosen according to a thorough process of selection based on technical criteria of Inter-American Center of Crafts and Popular Arts, CIDAP, Association of Jewellers of Azuay and Cuenca's Tourism Board

SOURCES AND REFERENCES :

Sjöman, Lena. "Cerámica Popular de Azuay y Cañar"

Municipio de Cuenca / CIDAP. "Revista Cuenca Ciudad Artesanal"

Aguilar, María Leonor. "Tejiendo la Vida"

**For more
information
about places
for crafts in
Cuenca, please
enter:**



#CraftRoute

EXPERIENTIAL ROUTE WITH **Crafts in Cuenca**

Cuenca is made of clay, wrought iron, carved wood, and corners that surprise you with the beauty of a thousand details, finely finished, and with the creativity of its hard-working craftsmen. It is a city with charm, whose inhabitants permit their soul to reveal itself in order to transform that soul into an artistic piece.

It is our intention that all who participate in this craft route will capture in their own souls the subtle beauty of craft production by men and women who are heirs to an ancestral legacy. A return to their roots is essential in order to explore the essence of the human being behind the craftsman, to become one with the fire of the forge, with the clay of the potter, with the metal transformed into subtle shapes, with the tireless hands that weave a life... As we visit each of these spaces with our senses atuned, we will discover another reason why Cuenca is considered by many "the treasure of the Andes."



EXPERIENTIAL ROUTE WITH
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Ceramics

Currently Cuenca's ceramics production shows a great variety with respect to shapes, styles and designs. In addition to the production of utilitarian objects, such as flowerpots, dinner sets, pots, etc., fine decorative pieces are being turned out. Master potters of traditional style, as well as those of more contemporary tendencies, stand out as much for their unusual skill as for their great creativity in the national craft panorama.

Current popular ceramics can be divided into ceramics made according to pre-Hispanic techniques and ceramics made using methods introduced by the Spaniards. In the first case, the tools are few and simple and the production process is totally manual, with a quite simple decoration based on engobes (also known as slips) with firing done out of doors. In the second case, modeling is done using a potter's wheel and firing is done in ovens of adobe or brick employing wood or gas. In the majority of cases the glaze technique is used and the decoration painted using oxides, most commonly green-colored oxides of copper.



EDUARDO SEGOVIA

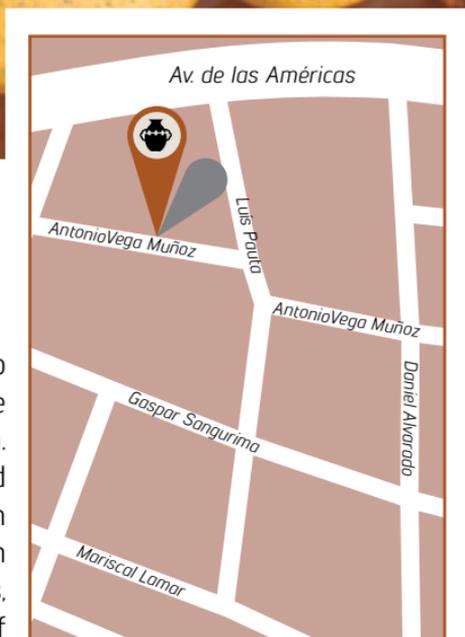
Eduardo Segovia is one of those artists whose career was shaped based on his passion for life and for learning. From an early age, he became interested in everything around him, and having grown up in the traditional potters neighborhood of Convención del 45 Street, it was inevitable that he would end up developing a great enthusiasm for fire and clay.

Eduardo Segovia has had innumerable participations in national and international galleries, as well as countless awards and prizes for his work. His source of inspiration is Latin America, its culture, nature, people, its traditions, popular celebrations, traditional dancers, etc. His work is the reflection of constant experimentation with new styles, shapes and designs, running from figurative to abstract, from geometric to the baroque. His workshop

Address: Vega Muñoz 22-30 and Luis Pauta

Telephone: 282-4707

Hours: Any day at any hour with a prior appointment



and home are always open to those who wish to share something of his life with him. Visitors are pleasantly surprised by the beauty of his home, which is practically a museum that, in addition to his fantastic works, holds collections of art of Ecuadorian and foreign artists. In addition the visitor has the opportunity to see the artist working with different techniques, such as modeling clay, firing, engobe, enameling and glazing

Consider the following:

-Eduardo Segovia was invited to participate in the "Chapel of Man" of Oswaldo Guayasamin (Quito) with the murals "The Bird Woman" and "The Inca Mural."

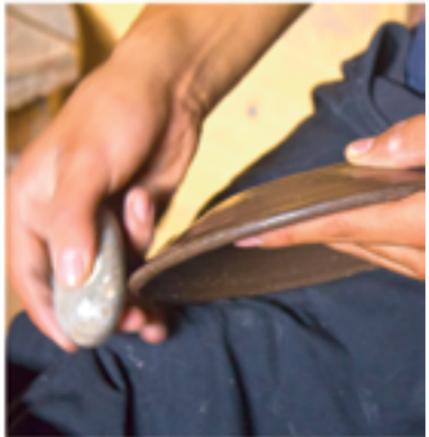
-Do not forget to try modeling your own piece with the high plasticity clay found in the workshop.



Estimated time of the visit: 1 hour



A voluntary contribution is suggested



ENCALADA WORKSHOP

Jose Encalada's workshop is one of the few that still offers the visitor the possibility of a unique cultural experience observing Cuenca's traditional process of pottery making.

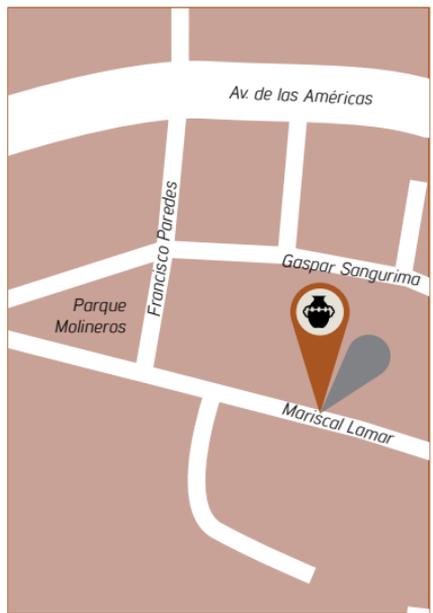
Don Jose affirms that initially this activity was very profitable. It wasn't appreciated by the public, however, because those who pursued this craft were considered simply potters, who provided objects of everyday use for the inhabitants of the city. Today the opposite occurs: the cultural value of this activity is recognized, although it becomes increasingly difficult to make a living. "If the potter doesn't seek to innovate with creative ideas, he is condemned to obscurity," he says. For that reason, today his workshop produces a wide variety of objects for both practical and ornamental use.

The "Encalada Workshop" offers the visitor the possibility to discover all the steps in pottery making. The raw material is obtained from clay mines that are generally found in Sinincay. First one proceeds to remove all the impurities from the clay before submitting it to the milling process. After that it is mixed with water and kneaded. The next step is to roll out this paste on a surface to work it until a mixture of good plasticity is

Address: Lamar 2-90 and Francisco Paredes

Telephone: 282-6218

Hours: Everyday from 7:00 to 20:00



obtained. Three possibilities exist for shaping the clay: plaster molds, potter's wheel, or sculpting by hand. Once pieces have been modeled, they are smoothed and sanded before allowing them to dry. Finally, they are fired in the oven and painted when they are cold.

It is striking that everything in this workshop is traditional. The mill and the potter's wheel are completely manual. Although an electric oven was recently acquired, the old brick oven is still used, in which pieces are fired at a temperature of 700 degrees centigrade. Don Jose Luis Encalada keeps his workshop in his home, where he works with two of his sons. A great variety of pieces, such as decorations, flowerpots, sculptures, dinner sets and, of course, the star product: black ceramics, which are exhibited and on sale.

Consider the following:

-The Encalada Pottery workshop is the only place in the city where the famous "black ceramics" are produced as the result of an accidental discovery Don Jose made in 1975.

-Modeling a piece of pottery on the potter's wheel can be an interesting experience you should try.



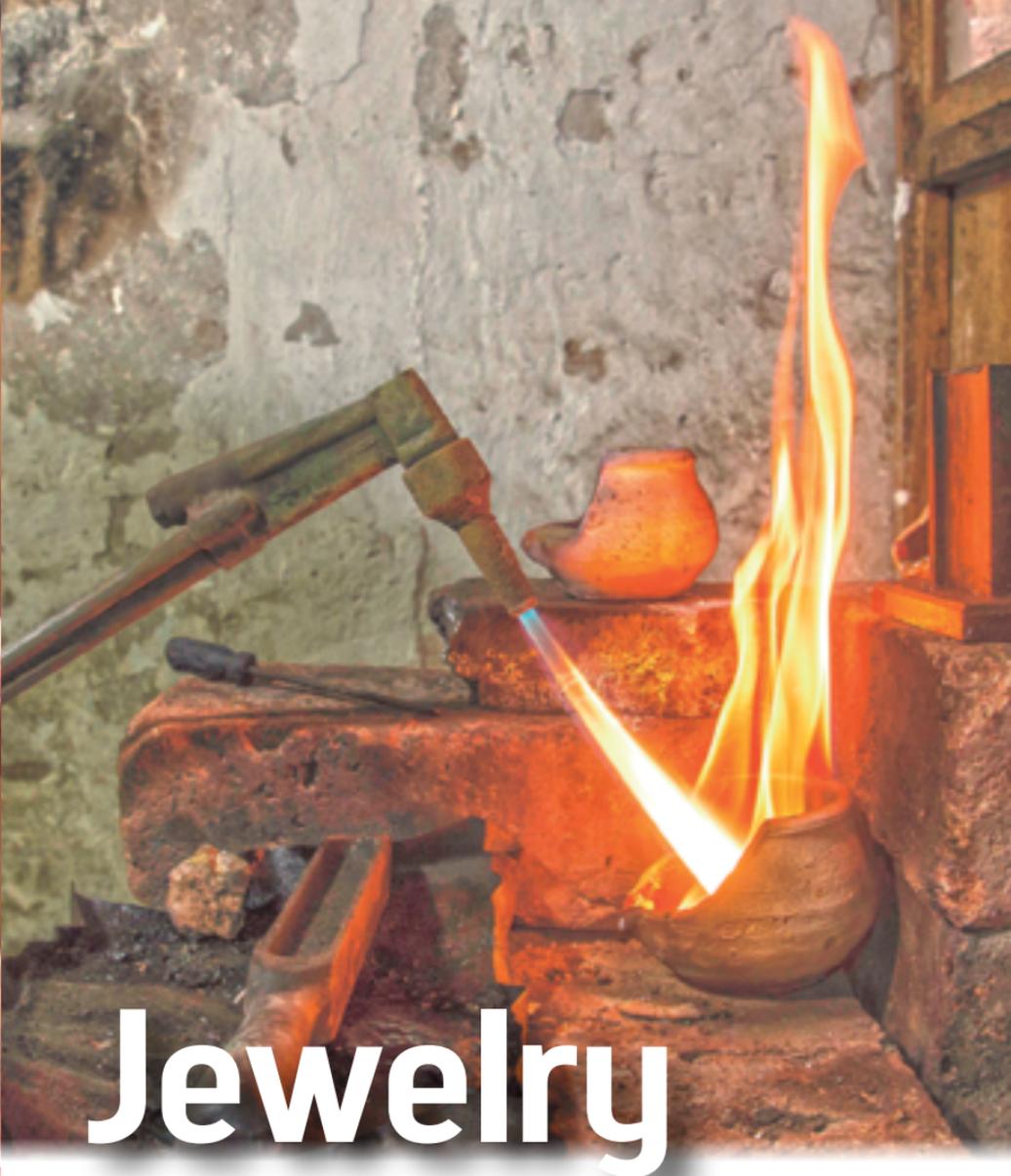
Estimated time of the visit: 45 min.



A minimum contribution of \$2.00 USD per person is suggested.



EXPERIENTIAL ROUTE WITH
**Crafts in
Cuenca**



Jewelry

Cuenca's jewelry is recognized as one of the best in the country for its quality, originality and tastefulness. Talented gold and silversmiths, both in Cuenca as well as the surrounding areas, produce a great variety of earrings, rings, brooches, bracelets, pendants and chains in silver, gold and other materials. In the majority of cases, the designs that are produced preserve a marked influence from pre-Colombian and colonial art, although today varied contemporary motifs are also used. For mounting, stones such as emeralds, diamonds, opals, aquamarines, topazes, garnet, saudes, alexandras, and genuine cultivated pearls are used. Many of these materials are imported from other countries.

It is known that during the pre-Hispanic era, the Cañaris worked with metals and precious stones employing techniques such as casting, forging and embossing. They embossed gold or silver sheets in the process of making jewelry that was used for religious ceremonies, wedding offerings, emblems of social rank and ritual vestments. In colonial times, jewelry making was considered a prestigious activity in Cuenca, and those who performed it enjoyed a higher status than all the other craftsmen. It was for this reason that the jewelry workshops were located on the streets adjoining the Central Plaza. In those workshops, artistic pieces in gold, silver, and precious stones were produced, which were principally destined as ornamentation for religious works, such as the Virgin and the saints.

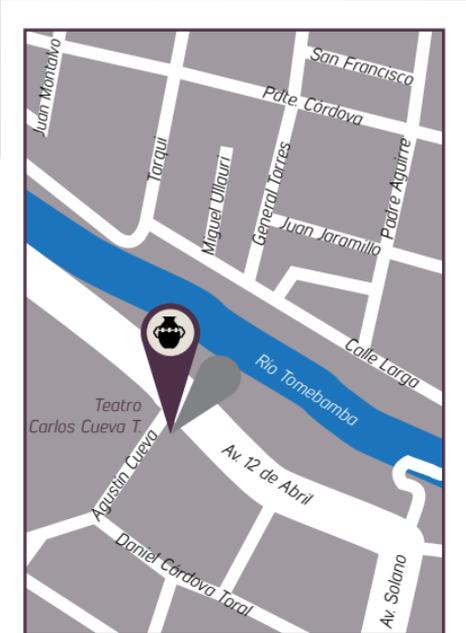


ANDREA TELLO GALLERY AND WORKSHOP

Andrea Tello represents the third generation of jewelers in her family. Having been surrounded always by gold, silver and precious stones, it was natural that as a little girl she began to involve herself in the world of jewelry. Her passion for this trade led her to spend innumerable afternoons observing the work of craftsmen, learning from them the techniques that, little by little, she perfected until she created her own style.

In her workshop, Andrea derives satisfaction from each process in the production of a piece of jewelry. She has mastered to perfection the art of mixing metals and the art of filigree. Having spent more than twelve years in field investigation, she has learned to read the signs and symbols of Ecuadorian Andean clothing. This has led her to

*Address: Avenida 12 de Abril and Agustin Cueva (Corner of the Arts)
Telephone: 284-1944
Hours: Monday to Friday from 10:00 to 19:00; Saturdays from 10:00 to 17:00 and Sundays from 11:00 to 15:00*



develop a collection that seeks to rescue that culture. She also possesses a contemporary line, whose source of inspiration has been the trips she has made all over the world.

In Andrea Tello's locale, creations of unique beauty are exhibited and on sale. Among them you will find pieces in gold and silver, such as earrings, combs, necklaces, bracelets, chokers, purses, etc. In addition her workshop is here, and visitors can see this excellent craftswoman at work.

Consider the following:

- Andrea Tello is the only jewelry craftsperson in Cuenca who has received the "UNESCO Award of Excellence for Handicrafts" which was given to her in 2010.
- In 2011, Andrea Tello was cataloged in Paris as one of the five best craftspersons in the world; in 2012 she was named "Art Ambassador" by Japan, and in 2013 she was declared "Woman of the Year" by the Ecuadorian magazine, Hogar.

 Estimated time of the visit: 30 min.

 A voluntary contribution is suggested



“MAMA QUILLA” SILVERSMITH’S SHOP

Mama Quilla, which in Quichua means “Mother Moon,” is one of those special places in which the visitor can be easily transported to a different world, where beauty and tradition combine in beautiful and elegant creations. The proprietor, Ernesto Peña, is a jeweler who is truly devoted to his trade, which he considers to be a legacy of great value that must be rescued and shown in its true dimension.

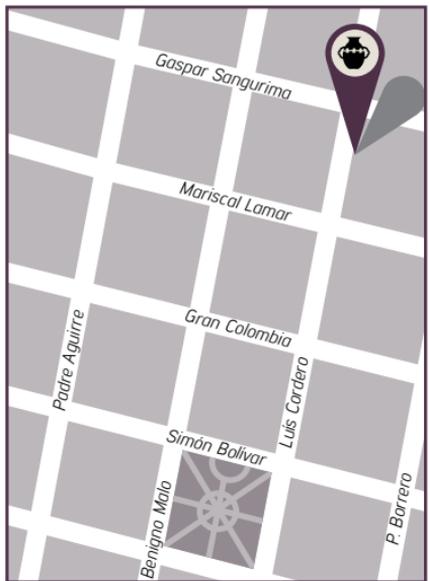
As the grandson of Don Antonio Peña, founder of the Jewelers Association of Azuay, his passion for the art of jewelry making has been a part of him from an early age. Even though he earned a degree in clinical psychology, Ernesto always knew that his calling was artistic creation in metal and precious stones. After experimenting with numerous techniques and styles, he developed a special artistic inclination toward filigree, and a great part of his work today is considered an excellent example of this fine art.

Address: Luis Cordero 11-72 between Mariscal Lamar and Gaspar Sangurima.

Telephone: 07 284-1549 Mobile: 0980958875

Hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 13:00 and from 15:00 to 19:00;

Saturdays from 9:00 to 16:00



The locale of Mama Quilla has an exhibition and sales area and a workshop, where the goldsmith offers his visitors the opportunity to have direct contact with this fascinating work. For example, here you can observe the process of producing a piece of filigree, which requires the reduction of silver to extremely fine threads, which must be spiraled and rolled to form the internal part or filling of the piece. Ernesto has innovated his creations with techniques such as cold glazing, which gives a transparency similar to glass, and which does not dull the beauty of the raw material. Also, many times he uses “aging” by means of a chemical process with sulfur and fire.

Consider the following:

The jewelry of Mama Quilla possesses great personality, because it takes inspiration from the flora of the Cuenca region and is a cultural inheritance derived from the Cañaris and Incas. Many pieces show innovative designs with spiral lines and asymmetric shapes, which evidence their creator's interest in constant innovation and originality.



Estimated time of the visit: 30 min.



A voluntary contribution is suggested



MUSEUM OF CUENCA'S JEWELRY

The Museum of Cuenca's Jewelry is a living space, a place where history, tradition and creativity meet. It is intended here to generate a public approach to jewelry, which is an important part of the cultural heritage of the city. In this Museum you can understand the true value of each jewel, which is not monetary, but rather human, because it synthesizes the identity, knowledge, tradition and history of the goldsmith.

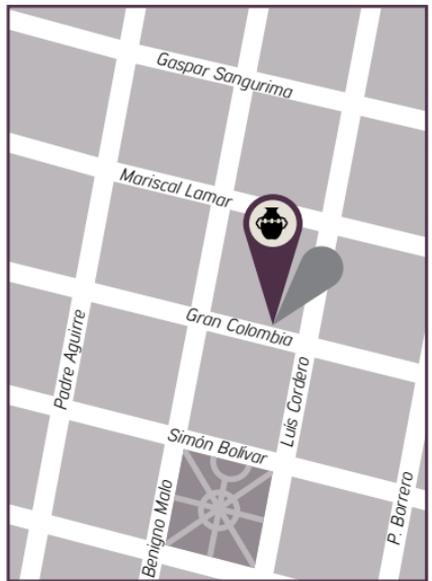
The museum consists of the following sections:

- A space to honor the heritage of leading Cuenca's jewelers like Emilio Huiracocha, Ariolfo Vázquez, Julio Segovia, Jose Manzano, Ruben Villavicencio, etc.

Address: Gran Colombia 8-66

Phone: 2849326

Hours: Monday to Friday from 15:00 to 19:00; Saturdays from 10:00 to 17:00 and Sunday will be addressed by appointment



-A sample of tools and techniques used by goldsmiths, such as torches, hand drills, the bellows, the rolling machines, compasses, gauges, scales, etc.

- A workshop where you can see the process of making jewelry, casting raw material, laminating, embossing, polishing, etc.

Showroom with an excellent sample of modern and traditional jewelry.

Consider the following:

- This is the only place in Cuenca where you can find a museum, a workshop and a showroom dedicated entirely to jewelry

- The Museum of Cuenca's Jewelry is located in Gran Colombia street, where most jewelry stores are located.





EXPERIENTIAL ROUTE WITH

Crafts in Cuenca



Toquilla Straw

Toquilla straw weaving to make hats and multiple handicrafts, such as ornaments, baskets, bags, purses and other articles, is one of the most traditional activities in the region of Cuenca and Azuay province. This fiber, which comes from the "Carludovica Palmata," is also found in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, but it is only in Ecuador that its use became an important source of income for multiple families and eventually developed into an important export industry.

In Ecuador the Carlodovica Palmata is grown in the coastal region, where toquilla straw craft centers have developed in Jipijapa and Montecristi. This activity also flourished, however, in the southern Ecuadorian highland region, and from the middle of the 19th century, it became the most important source of income for numerous families of the provinces of Azuay and Cañar.

Generally the fiber that is ready to be worked is sold at different sales points or markets of the coastal and highland regions, where craftspersons come to buy it. The first step to produce a hat is the division of the straw: the finer the fibers obtained, the greater the quality of the hat. The weaving is done by hand in a circular fashion with the aid of a mold to shape the three parts, the top of the crown, the crown and the brim.

In the majority of cases, craftspersons sell their product semi-finished to the marketing businesses, where the process of "repair" takes place, which includes the azocado (cutting off excess straw) washing, smoking or bleaching, pressing, pounding, ironing and the inclusion of leather inside bands and external hatbands. In this way the hat is made ready for sale or export.

The toquilla straw hat is known worldwide as a product of high quality and has become synonymous with elegance and distinction. In addition, in December of 2012 the UNESCO declared the traditional activity of weaving toquilla straw to be an Intangible World Cultural Heritage.



“HOUSE OF THE HAT” MUNICIPAL MUSEUM

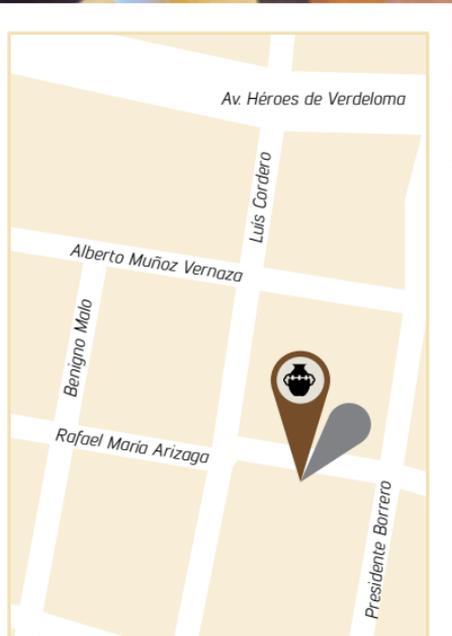
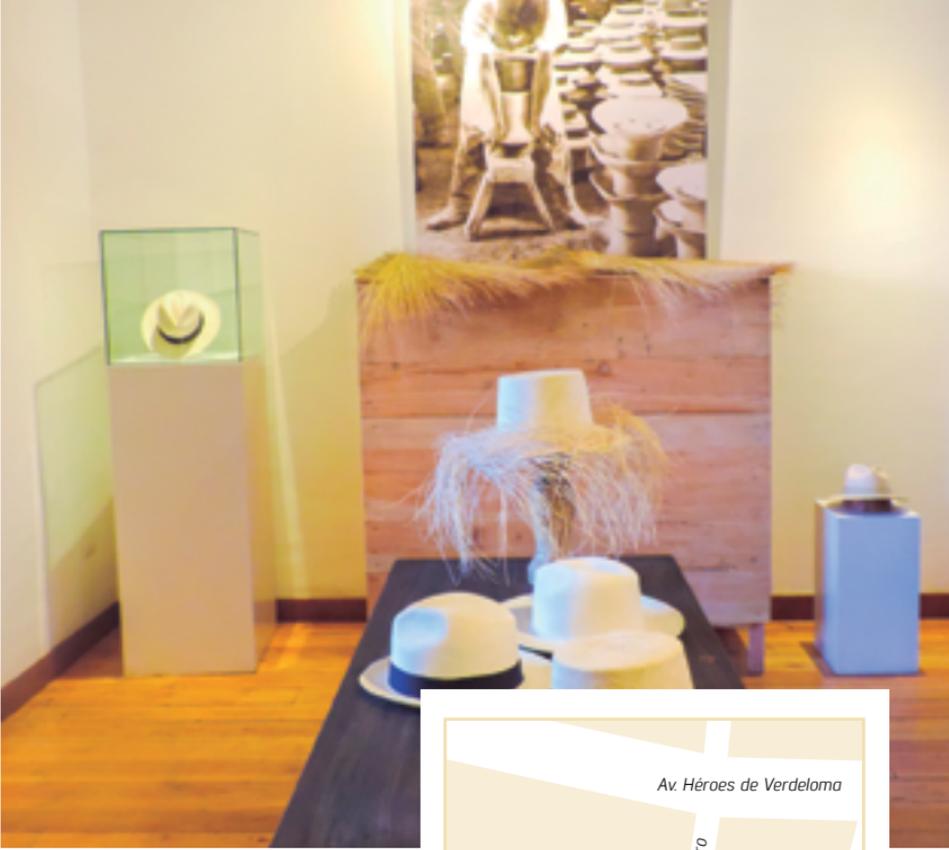
This museum is unique in that it is one of the few museums in the world that is framed in an economic model that is popular, social and solidary. Through an agreement with a number of associations, the hat weavers of the rural area of Cuenca have successfully made this museum into a space that is alive, since craftsmen and craftswomen have promised to constantly carry out interactive activities with the public in exchange for the opportunity to occupy the museum store without cost to sell their products.

The weavers are expert professionals, who, among the various activities they have promised to provide the House of the Hat Museum, have offered to give toquilla straw weaving classes free of charge, thus giving whomever wishes the opportunity to begin this fascinating activity. The museum will be responsible for issuing a certificate to those who have completed the course, which certifies them to be “toquilleros (weavers of toquilla straw). Through this type of program the museum personnel provide continuous support to promote this craft activity, which has been declared a World Heritage by the UNESCO.

The House of the Hat Municipal Museum functions in an emblematic building, as it occupies the locale where the first toquilla straw hat factories were established; it was constructed in 1880 in

*Address: Rafael Maria Arzaga 7-95 and Luis Cordero
Telephone: 0992351934*

*Hours: Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 13:00 and from 15:00 to 18:00;
Saturdays and Sundays from 9:00 to 13:00*



the likewise iconic Rafael María Arizaga Street. The museum has an exhibition room for the products produced by workshop students, a room with information about the history of toquilla straw, and an exhibition and sales room with photographs of the complete process of hat production. In addition there are spaces where weavers constantly interact with the public.

The "House of the Hat" Municipal Museum is one of the "Memory Spaces" of the plan for Saving Traditional Toquilla Straw Hat Weaving, organized by the Ministries of Culture and Heritage; Tourism, Industries and Productivity; Foreign Relations; Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fishing; Environment; Economic and Social Inclusion; Foreign Commerce, and the National Cultural Heritage Institute.

Consider the following:

-The Municipal Museum organizes health campaigns for the prevention of skin cancer. In this work they have the support of the Ecuadorian Society for the Fight Against Cancer (SOLCA in Spanish), which offers free examinations for the detection of this illness during the campaigns. At the same time marches are organized in which hundreds of persons parade through the streets of the historic center of Cuenca for the purpose of creating public consciousness of this problem and to promote the use of toquilla straw hats, which according to the experts, guarantees adequate protection from UV solar rays for the natural components of the fiber from which they are made.

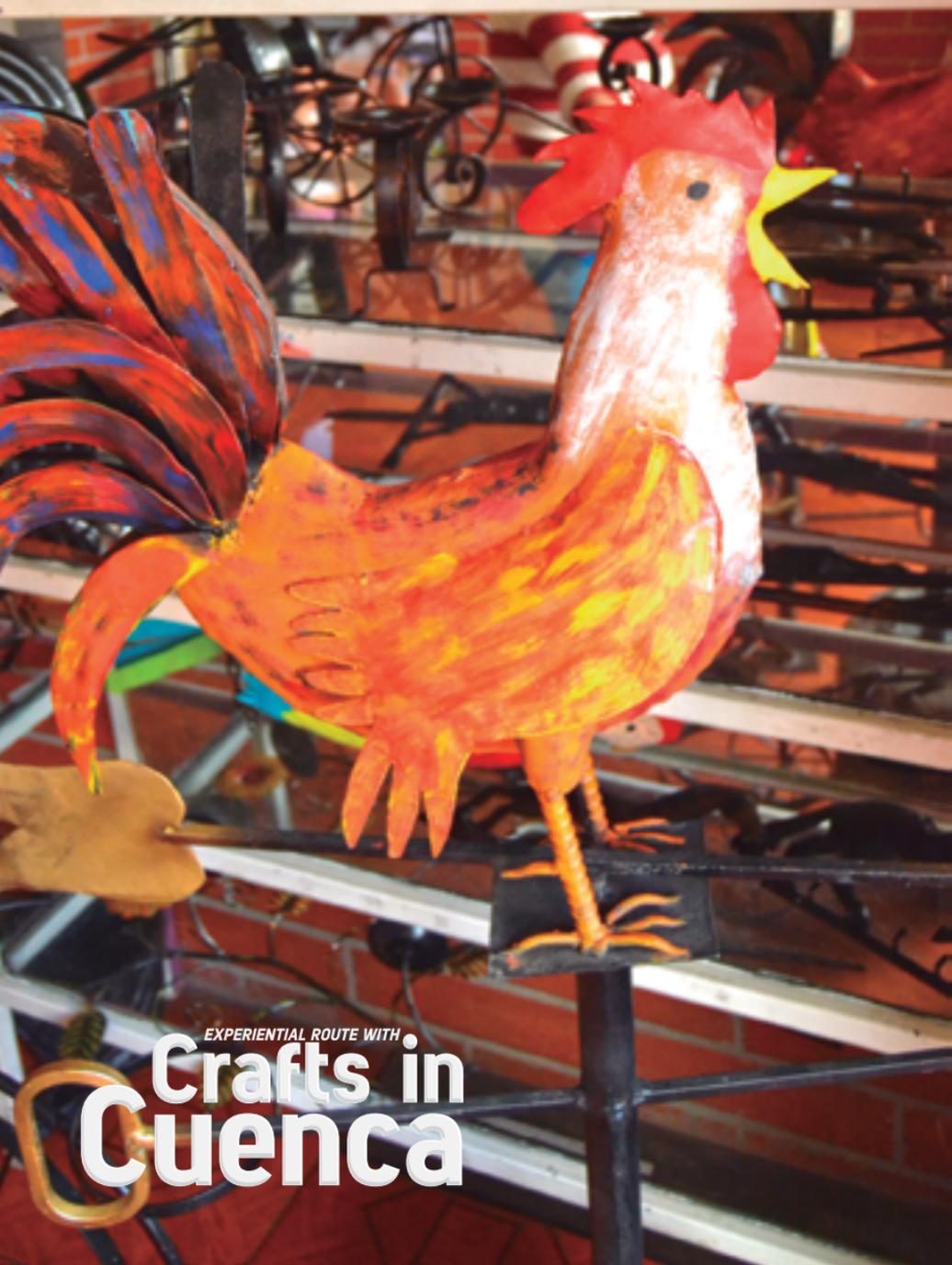
- Discover your ability as a weaver. Sign up for one of the free courses the museum offers.



Estimated time of the visit: 45 min.



Visit is free of charge



EXPERIENTIAL ROUTE WITH
**Crafts in
Cuenca**



The Blacksmith's Forge And Metals

Getting a close look at metal working in Cuenca brings us to an understanding of why this city is considered by many to be an unusual treasure full of surprises. It is difficult to believe that in the 21st century, in the era of globalization and massification of the most advanced industrial technologies, men and women still exist who use the forge, anvil and hammer to produce articles such as lamps, candelabra, crosses, flower pots, lanterns, shelves, hinges, latches and door handles. Their skillful hands shape raw material, transforming it into useful tools or into beautiful shapes that adorn various types of spaces, demonstrating that the art of forging and metal lives on in Cuenca, like the fire that never extinguishes in workshops and the hearts of these admirable craftsmen.



“EL HERRERO” WORKSHOP

Humberto Guerra is one of the last young craftsmen who work in this difficult but passionate trade of blacksmith. He took his first steps in his cousin's workshop when he was just fifteen, continued to work there as a laborer for 12 years, and finally decided to open his own workshop, where he dedicates himself with passion to forging wrought iron, constantly seeking innovation and excellence in his craft.

In Humberto Guerra's workshop, "El Herrero," the visitor can see the work of this tireless craftsman at close hand.

As a first step, the material to be use is selected and the design defined, which can be the result of one of the craftsman's own creations or an adaptation of models provided by the clients or obtained from specialized catalogs.

Secondly, the forge is heated using charcoal as fuel, always trying to maintain an adequate temperature for manipulating the pieces of iron. A fan or bellows is used, which fans the charcoal with oxygen, and once the necessary temperature has been reached, the piece of iron is heated until it reaches a temperature that permits it to be shaped.

The third step is pounding the hot piece on an anvil with the careful use of the hammer, as the desired object's shape will depend on its handling. The metal can be stretched, widened, thickened, folded, and bent, using special tongs. Finally, to cool the piece, it is submerged in water.

Address: Las Herrerías and Del Arupo

Telephone: 420-5131

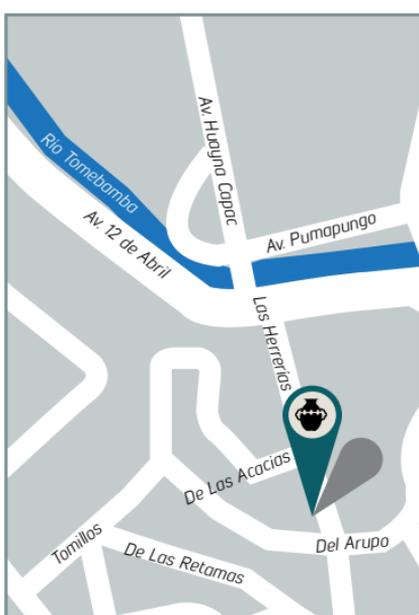
Hours: Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 20:00; Saturdays from 8:00 to 17:00



The fourth step is to give the object the desired finish. To do this different techniques can be used, such as assembling different pieces by electric welding and by enameling, painting and varnishing.

Humberto comments that various factors have placed the survival of this trade at risk in the city, among them the rise of industrial production, against which objects made by hand cannot compete. Today, for example, utilitarian objects are almost no longer made, and the craftsman who wishes to survive with his business must innovate and venture more into objects of the decorative type, such as lanterns, candelabras and crosses.

“El Herrero” is a family type business where one can see the most representative of wrought iron in Cuenca. The exhibition and sales room offers every type of decorative objects, some traditional, like the crosses, and others innovative, like the bicycle-flower pots.



Consider the following:

- Don't miss trying some of the typical delicacies that are sold along Las Herrerías Street, such as corn tortillas, humitas, tamales and others.

- Other attractions on Las Herrerías Street are the Vulcan monument and the Chaguarchimbana House, both located at the Plaza del Herrero. (Plaza of the Blacksmith)



Estimated time of the visit: 30 min.



A voluntary contribution is suggested



METAL EMBOSSEING WORKSHOP OF CARLOS BUSTOS

Small but magical and picturesque spaces hide themselves from the sight of the great majority of locals and tourists who walk quickly without paying attention to details. The metal embossing workshop of Carlos Bustos Fernandez is one of these places.

Discovering this small locale always supposes a pleasant surprise. Everything here seems to be frozen in time: the worktable, the tools, the clippings from old newspapers, the green walls that contrast with the colorful objects that hang on them, and even the friendly face of this admirable craftsman, whose prowess and manual skill go hand in hand with his great creativity.

Don Carlos comments that his father, as well as his brother, devoted themselves to the business of tinsmithing. He, however, preferred to do something more artistic, and thus it was that he elected to work in metal embossing. His first teacher was the artist, Edgar Carrasco, who more than 40 years ago learned the techniques for treating metal and creating beautiful and innovative shapes in metal. Little by little, Carlos advanced in the perfection of his art until he decided to open his own

*Address: Coronel Talbot 7-49 between Mariscal Sucre and Presidente Cordova
Telephones: 2880360 / 288-0361
Hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 12:30 and from 14:30 to 18:30;
Saturdays from 9:00 to 12:30*



workshop. Since then he has persisted in producing beautiful objects on a daily basis, such as mirror frames, lanterns, lamps, chests, masks, figures of roosters, etc.

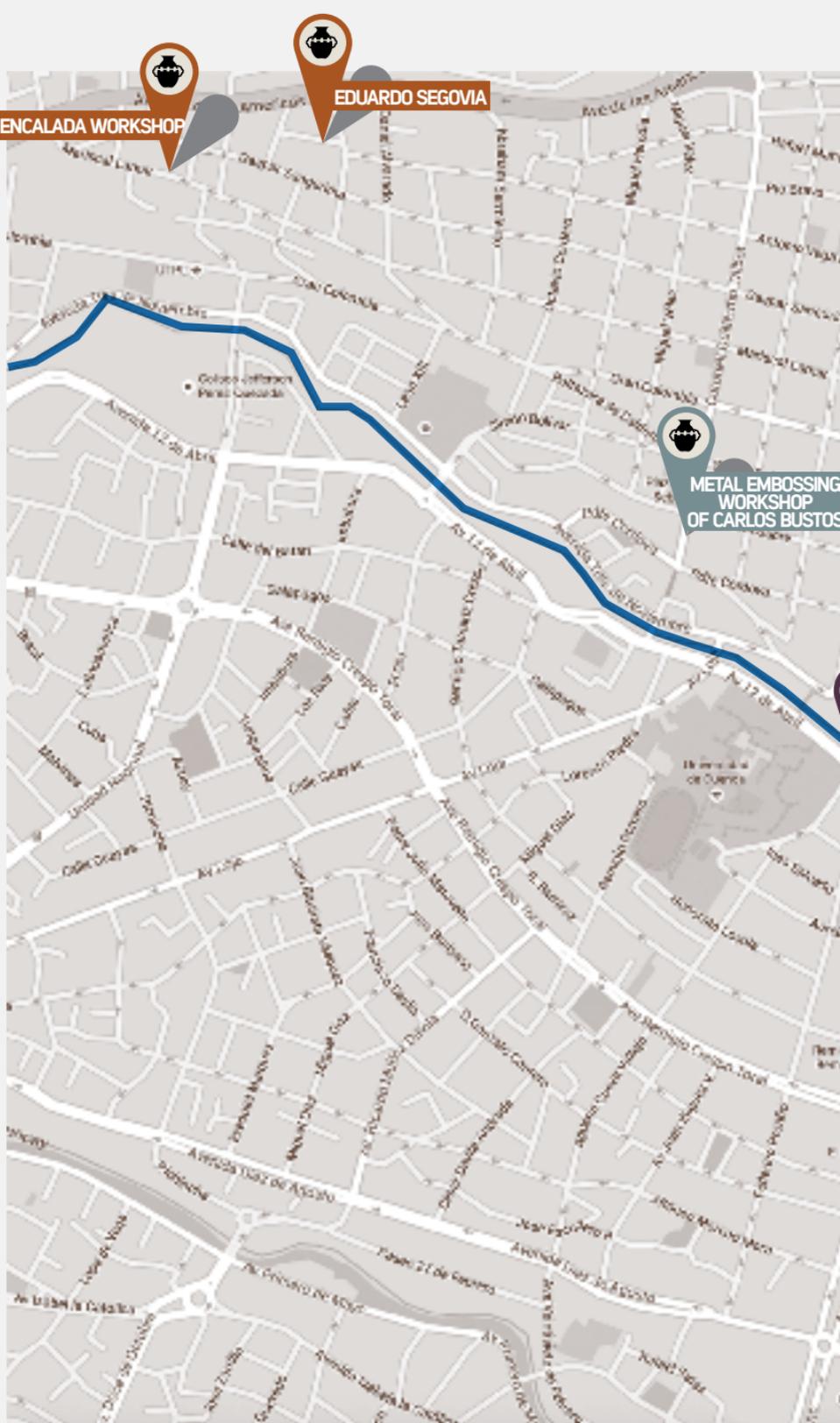
Don Carlos works in his locale using simple tools, such as rollers, brushes, nails, hammers and screwdrivers converted in embossing tools. His work is always performed with consummate patience and detail, from the time when he begins to sketch the design until he expresses it freehand in metal, which in the majority of cases is aluminum, brass or tin, as copper and bronze are too expensive now he says. The prices of each object vary according to the degree of complexity of the work. Small mirrors from \$10.00 USD can be found to large pieces at \$150.00 USD.



Consider the following:

-Try your ability at embossing and ask to make your own piece.





ENCALADA WORKSHOP



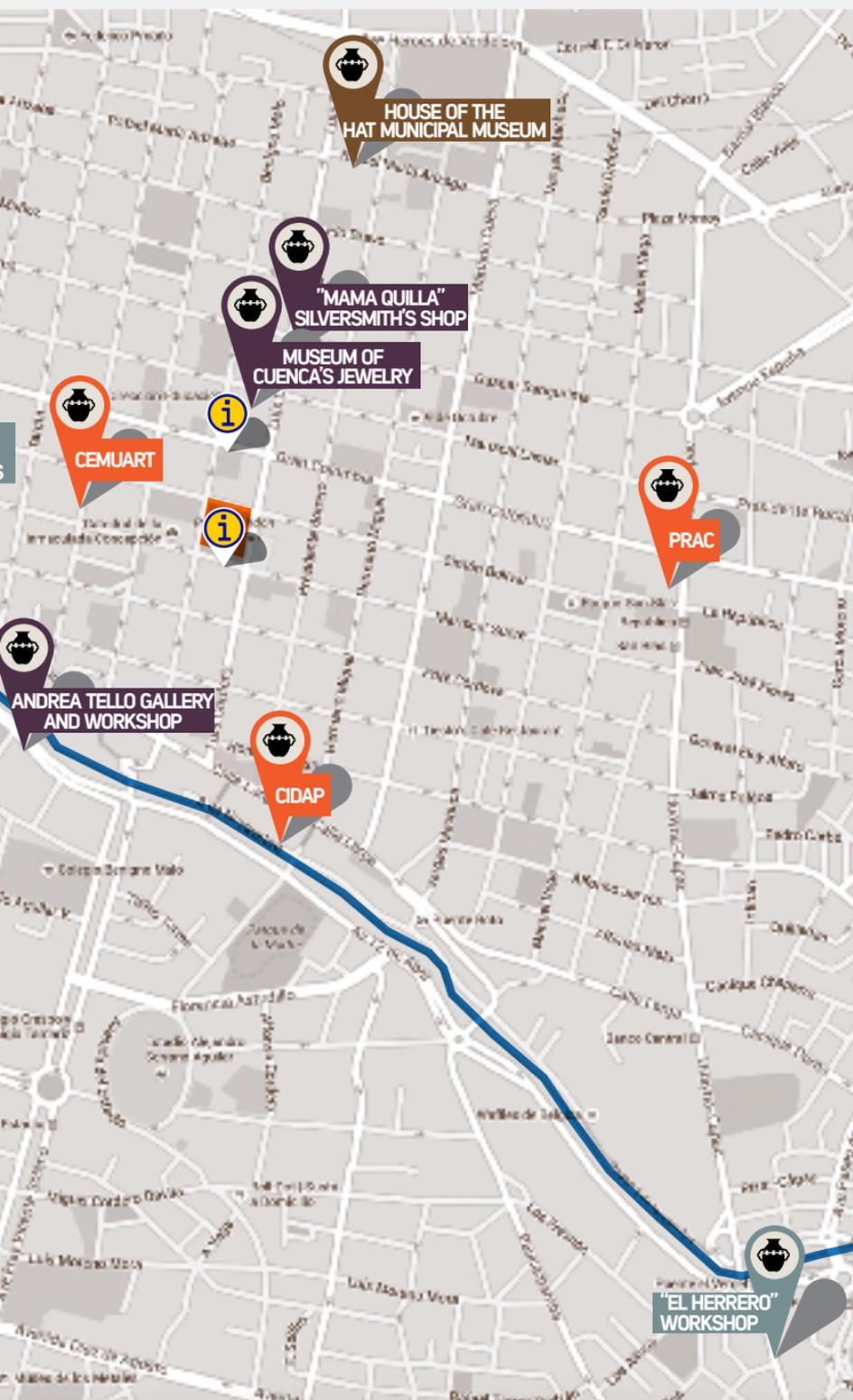
EDUARDO SEGOVIA



METAL EMBOSSED
WORKSHOP
OF CARLOS BUSTOS

EXPERIENTIAL ROUTE WITH

Crafts in Cuenca



Itur Centro

Sucre, entre Benigno Malo y Luis Cordero

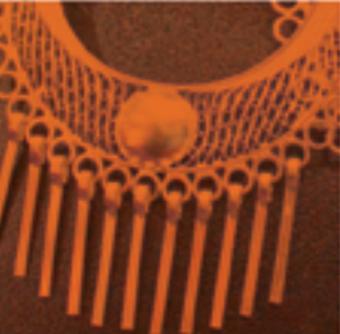
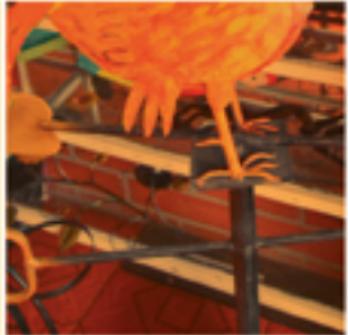
iTur Escuela Central

Gran Colombia y Benigno Malo

iTur Aeropuerto Mariscal Lamar

Av. España y Elia Liut

-  Ceramics
-  The Blacksmith's Forge And Metals
-  Jewelry
-  Toquilla Straw
-  Craft Centers





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Fundación Municipal Turismo para Cuenca

Bolívar 8-44 entre Benigno Malo y Luis Cordero

Tel: (593 7) 2 840 383/ 2832 415

E mail: info@cuenca.com.ec

www.cuencaecuador.com.ec



Visit_CuencaEc



UNESCO Awards

- Qhapac Ñan, Andean Road System, World Heritage Site
- Traditional weaving of "Toquilla Straw Hats", Intangible Heritage of Humanity
- Massif of "El Cajas", World Biosphere Reserve
- Cuenca, World Cultural Heritage Site