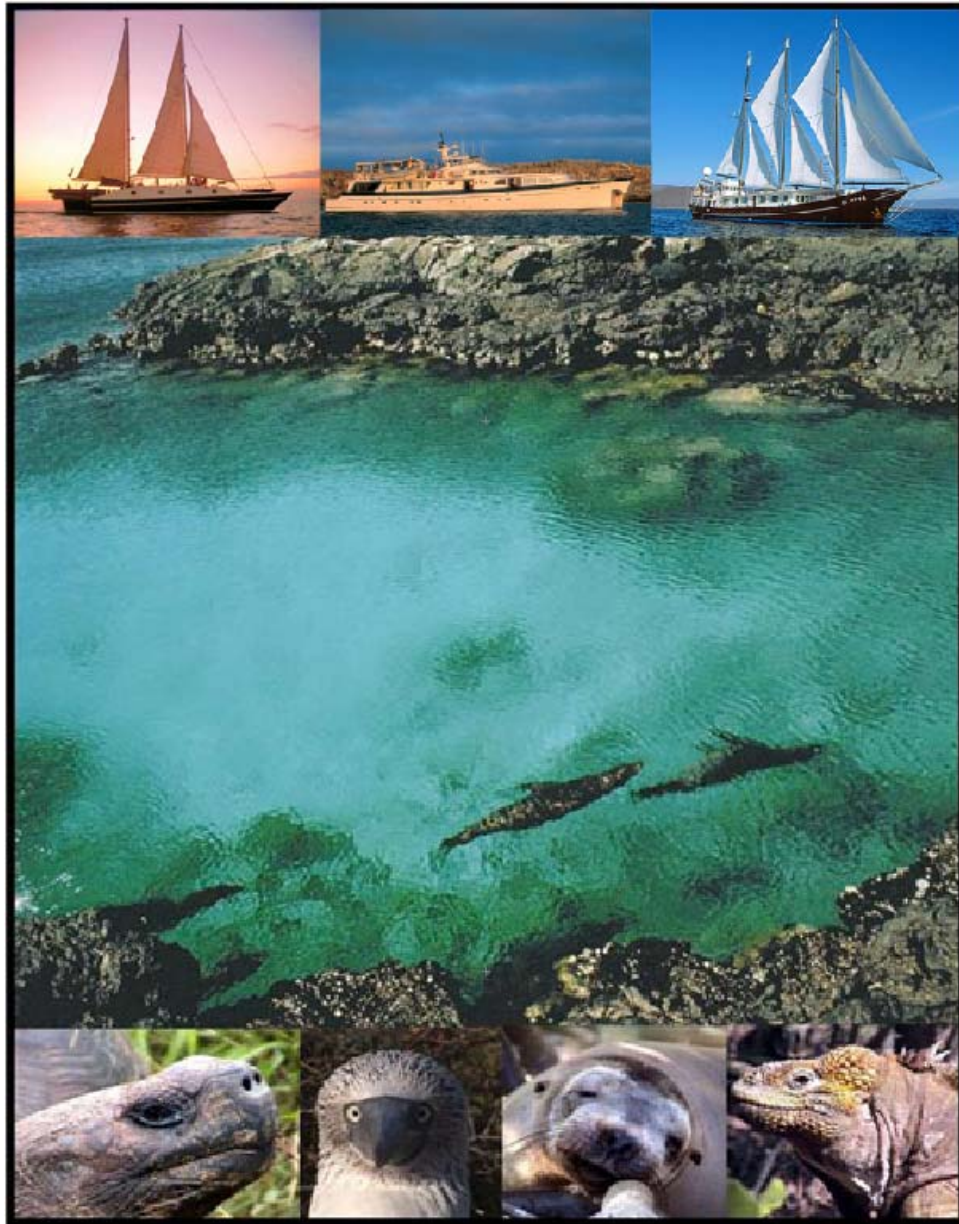


Preparing for Your Trip to The Galápagos Islands & Ecuador



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THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TO VISIT THE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

Our goal is to ensure that your visit to the Galápagos is one of the happiest and most meaningful experiences of your life. We've learned that the way to experience the magic of the Galápagos Islands and Ecuador is through direct first hand participation. We help you to achieve this in ways that invite you to interact with diverse ecosystems, ancient cultures and indigenous peoples. We are there with you to offer knowledge, guidance and share insights aimed at opening understanding. Both the Galápagos and mainland Ecuador are such unique and extraordinary places, we know your heart and mind will be captured as ours once were and always remain.

To get the most from your experience we want to ensure you are well prepared for your upcoming voyage. This document is aimed at doing just that—it addresses the documents, clothing and equipment you will need to bring, and shows you how to make sure that your itinerary and air tickets are “shipshape,” as well as steps to follow to enjoy a healthy stay.

Before you rush out to shop for your trip, we recommend you take a moment to read through this information in a place you find most conducive to a thorough study. This material has been designed to make sure you are prepared to have the trip of a lifetime and a personal voyage of discovery in the Galápagos and Ecuador.



TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Your first step in preparing for your trip is to make sure you have all your travel documents in order.

Passport

Citizens of the United States and Canada are required to present a valid passport when entering Ecuador. If you don't have a passport we recommend that you apply for one immediately as it can take some time to obtain one. Expedited documents can be quite costly. If you already have a valid passport, be sure to check that your passport is valid for at least **6 months from the date you plan to enter Ecuador**, as you will not be allowed to enter the country if this is not the case.

- US citizens can receive more information on obtaining passports at the US Department of State's website. Go to <http://travel.state.gov/passport/index.html>
- Canadian citizens can visit the Canadian Passport Office website: <http://www.ppt.gc.ca/>
- We also recommend Zierer Visa Service for help in obtaining passports: <http://www.zvs.com/>

Visas

Citizens of most countries including the USA and Canada can stay a maximum of 90 days without needing a visa. For more information on visas, as well as a list of countries whose citizens require a visa, visit the Embassy of Ecuador, Washington DC website at: <http://www.ecuador.org>.

- We also recommend Zierer Visa Service for help in obtaining visas: Go to <http://www.zvs.com/> or call (800) 843-9151 in the US. Zierer has worldwide offices including: New York, Washington, DC, San Francisco, Miami, Houston and London.
- Another site that lists the countries whose residents require visas to enter Ecuador is: <http://www.languagecourse.net/visa/ecuador.php3>

Make Copies

We advise you to make and retain copies of all your important travel documents including your passport and airlines tickets. Keep copies of your credit card numbers separate from your purse or wallet. If any of these become lost or stolen, having this information will make your life far easier.

ID / Proof of Citizenship - IMPORTANT!

Ecuador requires that travelers carry proof of identity on their person at all times. At times you may also be required to show proof of your citizenship while in Ecuador. Therefore, carry a photo copy of the photo page of your passport as well as some form of legal identity, such a driver's license, with you at all times while in the Ecuadorian mainland. You may also be asked to show your passport when making large purchases with traveler's checks or credit cards while in Ecuador, which is a reason to carry your passport with you. While you absolutely do need to have your passport with you to go to the Galapagos, you won't need to carry it or a copy of it with you during the natural history landings, the exception is on Santa Cruz, where you may want to carry your passport if you plan to make purchases in Puerto Ayora.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Northwest Voyageurs strongly recommends purchasing travel insurance for this adventure. Travel insurance can cover unforeseen costs or problems such as lost baggage, cancelled flights, emergency medical evacuation and the costs of canceling your trip due to illness or injury. It is important to consider purchasing your insurance within 15 days of making your reservation, as there are additional benefits included in the policy including a waiver of pre-existing medical conditions. For more information, or to purchase travel insurance, please visit:

<http://www.travelinsure.com/what/selecthigh.htm?32922>

EXTENDING YOUR STAY

Extending your stay for even a short time can render rich rewards in Ecuador and nearby Peru. Both are home to colorful and ancient indigenous cultures and some of the world's most spectacular mountains, the famous Andes that give way on their western slopes to the vast Amazon basin. You may want to arrive a day or two early to rest up for your trip to the Galápagos while taking time to explore the old colonial section of Quito. The Ecuadorian highlands are just a couple of hours outside of town and you can spend time at the world famous Indian craft market in Otavalo, as well as the surrounding highland villages. Once there, you will probably wish you had planned more time to enjoy this lush area of volcanoes, lakes and agricultural land! A stay at a local hacienda would be a holiday in itself. The hacienda system once formed the backbone of Spanish colonial agrarian society. Today many colonial villas have been converted into gracious hotels, and embody the flavor and hospitality of a region long free from Spain.



For those interested in a rainforest wildlife-viewing opportunity, Ecuador possesses some of the best eco-lodges the Amazon has to offer. You can extend your stay in the Amazon either before or after the trip. You may also want to consider a trip to Peru's Cusco Valley — the Valley of the Inca — with a trip to Machu Picchu. We can help you customize your choices and make all your arrangements. Below we list some popular options.

Otavalo Market, Highland Craft Villages & Haciendas

► *2 days 1 night, including overnight accommodations, guide, transportation, 1 breakfast, 2 lunches and 1 dinner.*

Visit the highland craft villages of *San Antonio de Ibarra*, known for its woodcrafts, *Cotacachi*, home of Ecuador's finest leather crafts, and the charming weaving village of *Peguche*. You have a variety of hacienda and spa accommodations to choose from. The second day of this extension brings us to the world famous craft market at *Otavalo* where you will have plenty of time at the open-air market. On

the return to Quito you'll visit *Cuicocha*, a crater lake where we take time to hike its shores rich in orchids and views of three nearby volcanic peaks.

Amazon Rainforest Adventure

► 4 days, 3 nights including accommodations, guides, transportation, 4 breakfasts, lunches and dinners.

Combining a trip to the Galápagos with a journey into the diverse rainforest ecosystem of the upper Amazon Basin is a dream trip for wildlife lovers. We offer stays in world-renowned lodges or you have the option of combining your Galápagos cruise with one in an Amazon riverboat. Both options are well run by friendly staff and known for great service and food. Though deep in the rainforest, accommodations are comfortable and designed with amenities including private bathrooms, hot showers and electricity. You can enjoy naturalist-guided rain forest hikes, canoe trips and bird watching. Meeting the native families of this wilderness is an experience to treasure.

Other Ecuador Options: Cuenca, Cotopaxi & Beyond...

Ecuador is rich in things to do, here are just a few.

- Visit a hummingbird lover's paradise just an hour and half from Quito in the cloud forest.
- The colonial city of Cuenca offers elegant hotels, fine dining and excellent shopping in a relaxed romantic setting beside four rivers.
- Snow capped Cotopaxi volcano lies just to the south of Quito, where the traveler can experience genuine hacienda life, with horseback riding and visits to Indian craft and livestock markets.
- Or imagine this: A romantic spa set far above the town of Baños on the flanks of the Tungurahua volcano, where you receive a series of elemental massages as plumes of ash erupt like clockwork from the top of the mountain overhead!

Peru: Cusco, the Valley of the Inca & Machu Picchu.*

► 4 days, 3 nights including accommodations, guides, transportations and all meals. Some trips may require an extra night in Lima, Peru.

You can also combine a visit to the Galápagos with a trip to Peru and the land of the Inca. Cusco, the ancient capital of the Incan Empire, offers a number of impressive sites — like Sacsayhuaman with its enormous tightly fitted stones — right above town. The trip includes an excursion to Machu Picchu where you will overnight in a nearby hotel, so you can watch the sunrise over Wayna Picchu. *4 days 3 nights including accommodations, transportations, guides and breakfast, lunch and dinner. Some trips may require an extra night in Lima, Peru.*



Keep in mind that we will be delighted to customize your extension

AIR TRAVEL ARRANGMENTS

International Air

Once you have settled on your complete itinerary for the Galápagos, including any extra days and extensions, you will be ready to book your flights. American Airlines and Continental are the two major US carriers that fly to Quito, Ecuador. American offers direct flights to Quito out of Miami, FL. Continental has direct flights from Houston, TX that fly to both Quito.

Winter Travel

The Galápagos is a year round destination that offers a great winter getaway on the equator. If you are traveling from a northern city in the winter, remember that snow storms can come in (to your home airport) and cause flight delays. We therefore highly recommend that you add at least one extra day onto the front of your trip if you are flying during the winter months in the northern hemisphere. There

is nothing worse than flying all the way to Ecuador only to have your yacht leave without you. The extra day or two is well worth the investment and will give you time to feel rested and ready for your trip of a lifetime in the Galápagos.

Flights to and from the Galápagos

Once you arrive in Quito you will need to the Galapagos to the start of your cruise and back again. To do so you will fly from Quito to the large port city of Guayaquil with a brief stopover before continuing on to the Galápagos and then back through Guayaquil to Quito on the return. Most of our flights are aboard a privately chartered Boeing 737 with some aboard a Fokker F28-4000, which is a high-performance twin-turbofan (jet) airliner, ideal for the shorter runways found in the Galapagos. Alternatively you may be flying aboard an Airbus or other Boeing jet.



Once you book your trip, your flight from Quito to the Galápagos will be arranged for you. Depending on your itinerary, we will either use ICARO or AEROGAL as noted below.

On the day of your flight to the Galápagos, our staff will meet you at your hotel, drive you to the airport, and make sure you check onto the flight to Guayaquil and the Galápagos. The flight from Quito to Guayaquil takes 45 minutes. The flight from Guayaquil to Galápagos takes 1 and ½ hours. *Note: At this time, San Cristobal airport is under construction and flights are being routed through Baltra. There is no problems, but flight times and the order of island visits may vary based upon your date of travel.*

**The Island where your trip starts and all flight schedules are subject to change without notice
All times are local. Galapagos is one hour behind mainland Ecuador.**

AEROGAL Schedule

	Airline	Departure Time	Arrival Time
Quito to Guayaquil	Aerogal 036	7:00 am	7:45 am
Guayaquil to Galapagos (Baltra)	Aerogal 036	8:30 am	9:00 am
Galapagos (Baltra) to Guayaquil	Aerogal 037	10:30 am	1:00 pm
Guayaquil to Quito	Aerogal 037	1:45 pm	2:30pm

Note on Baggage Allowance

On flights to and from Galápagos you are allowed a maximum of 20 kg or 44 lbs of luggage not including your handbag. If you exceed the weight limit expect to pay excess baggage charges of US \$2 per kg. (See more under the Luggage section below, under **Clothing & Equipment**).

Arriving & Departing

If You Are Delayed

If you are delayed en route—for example, if you miss a flight connection—please contact us immediately at 800-727-9977. If we are not available, you can also call our agents in Quito, Ecuador.

During business hours 9am to 5pm EST: (593-2) 224-6996 or 6997
After hours: (593-9)-9554-961 or (5939) 9734-893 or (5939) 9920-742

Once you reach us, our agents, or a message machine, clearly state the following:

- Your name
- The name of your group if applicable
- The air carrier and number of your *original* flight
- The air carrier and flight you will be arriving on *and* the date and time of its arrival

Arriving In Ecuador

Upon arrival you will go through immigrations first and then customs. First you'll be asked to present your passport and an arrival form (usually handed out on board your flight prior to landing). Be sure your entrance papers are officially stamped showing the number of days you are allowed to stay in the country. You'll be given a copy of the arrival form. Keep it in a safe place with your passport, as you will need it to leave the country. If it is lost you will need to fill out a new one at the airline counter when you check in for your departing flight. Next you will proceed to pick up your luggage. If you require assistance there are porters who can help you. The standard gratuity is US \$1 per bag.

Customs

According to Ecuadorian law, any person that enters the country temporarily is exempt from the payment of any customs duty. You will not be required to pay taxes or duties for your luggage, new or used articles that you will use during your trip, and portable items such as photo cameras, video cameras, laptops, radios and CD players.

Transfers

If you or your group has arranged for a private transfer look for our transfer agent just outside of customs. They will be carrying a sign with your name or the name of your group on it. Normally, if you are arriving on a flight late at night and do not feel comfortable in a foreign country by yourself, we suggest a private transfer, which we can arrange for you. If you are taking a taxi to your hotel, we suggest you make sure that it has a running meter. You can book taxis at one of the reservation windows outside of Customs. Most of the hotels in Quito and Guayaquil are located in the city. Be sure to either obtain a price quote or negotiate the fare before getting into the vehicle.

Confirming Your Flight Home

It's a good idea to confirm your flight home with the airline you will be traveling on 48 hours prior to the flight's departure. Our staff in Ecuador will be happy to do this for you. The exception is Continental Airlines, which requires that, you, the traveler or the agent who purchased your ticket must do this. Passengers can reach Continental at the following toll free number while in Ecuador, which is in service 24/ 7: (800) 222-333.

Departing Quito

We recommend that you make plans to depart from Quito or Guayaquil no earlier than the following day you return to Quito from the cruise. This will give you at least one more night in Quito to insure that you don't miss your international flight in case of flight delays. When you check in for your flight home you will be required to pay a \$31.50 USD airport tax in cash (subject to change without notice).

More on Air

Special Requests

Make sure you advise the agent you are purchasing your ticket from of any special requests. These include your seat preference: window / aisle as well as requests for special meals such as vegetarian, kosher, low sodium or low cholesterol. Most flights to Quito/Guayaquil are non-smoking, but we advise you to check on this as well.

Use Your Passport Name

When making international airline reservations always use your name exactly as it appears on your passport. Using a nickname or another surname that does not match your passport can cause major hassles. Always make sure the name on your passport and air tickets match. Name changes are also extremely difficult to make with the airlines, so it is your interest to get everything correct at the start.

Frequent Flyer Coupons

If you plan to book flights using frequent flyer coupons you will need to make flight arrangements yourself directly with the air carrier. Make sure you reserve your flights extra early as these tickets are limited and blacked out entirely at some times of the year. It's therefore important to make sure you can secure your air tickets before placing a deposit on your Galápagos trip if you're counting on using frequent flyer coupons.

Make Sure You Let Us Know When You Are Arriving & Departing

If you are making your own air arrangements make sure you let us know your flight arrival and departure information no later than 45 days prior to your arrival. This will insure that all necessary arrangements are made for your arrival including any transfers you may request.

HEALTH & MEDICAL INFORMATION

Below you will find information to help assist you with medical preparations for your trip as well as providing tips on how to stay healthy during your travels. Keep in mind that neither we nor anyone making your trip arrangements is a medical authority. You should consult with your physician, local health officials or the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, GA. Much of the information below comes directly off the CDC website. The CDC offers an excellent section for travelers. You can access the site at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>. For travel to Ecuador and Peru access the region know as Tropical South America or go directly to <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/tropsam.htm>. The CDC also has a dial up number (888) 232-3299 where you can request a fax by following a series of prompts. Voice messages for specific disease outbreaks are available by calling (888) 232-3228.

Advise Us of Special Medical Conditions or Needs

It is important that you advise us of any medical conditions or any special medical or dietary needs you may have, well in advance of the trip. Please make sure you advise us of such information at least 60 days prior to your departure.

Physically Preparing for Your Trip

The Galápagos Islands are ideal for healthy active people of all ages looking to get out there and enjoy nature up close. While a trip to the islands can be fairly easy when it comes to activity, a basic level of fitness is in order.

The Hikes

Quito stands at roughly 9,500 feet above sea level, so a stroll along the cobblestones of its colonial section can cause shortness of breath. The better shape you are in, the more you will enjoy your trip. Though hikes in the Galápagos are evenly paced in gorgeous settings, you can expect some fairly long walks in hot weather. Having a good sense of balance and being relatively sure footed is a

requirement on this trip, as is having the capacity to walk for a least a mile unassisted. Participants should be prepared to negotiate the following:

- Enter and leave panga (typically an inflatable launch with a solid bottom) from the yacht and from the panga back to the yacht with assistance from the guide and crew.
- Make wet landings on sandy beaches with minor surf and dry landings on jetties that can have slippery rocks with the assistance of guides and crew.
- Walk over both uneven and slippery terrain, sometimes stepping from rock to rock or boulder to boulder for an extended period.
- Walk through a dimly lit lava tunnel with slippery sections and some low ceilings.
- Hike up boardwalk stairs of up to 400 steps (on Bartolome).

Of course there are plenty of strolls on pristine beaches and some easy hikes. If you think you may require assistance to do any of the above, please talk to your sales agent to discuss the trip and make sure you are physically qualified.

Other Activities

Once you arrive in the islands you will have plenty of opportunity to participate in other activities including swimming, snorkeling and sea kayaking. Our active departures offer diving. For those who enjoy horses, riding can be arranged while staying at haciendas on the mainland, which also offer excellent hiking. It's really up to you how much or little you want to participate in activities vs. relaxing. Taking up a moderate exercise program well before your trip will help insure you get the most out of your vacation. Always be sure to check with your physician when embarking on an exercise program. In addition, it's always a good idea to gain some experience in the activities you intend to participate in prior to your trip to see if you enjoy them and also to get more out of these activities during your trip. Our guides and crew will, of course, assist you as needed. Divers must have experience and will be required to have met certain diving requirements prior to the trip. If you are diving please request our pre-trip information specifically for divers and also refer to our general information.

Altitude

Because Quito is well above 9000 feet some passengers traveling from lower elevations may experience symptoms of altitude sickness, known locally as *Soroche*. This typically results in shortness of breath, nausea and headaches. In most cases the symptoms will gradually lessen and pass as one's body adjusts to the altitude, so it's a good idea to plan to take it easy for the first day or so. Resting helps as does taking over-the-counter analgesics. Staying hydrated by drinking plenty of water or tea also seems to lessen symptoms for some.

Typically the way to avoid getting altitude sickness is to ascend gradually and thereby acclimate to the higher altitude and less oxygen. If you have experienced altitude sickness at elevations below 9,000 feet in the past you may want to spend a few days acclimating in the mountains before flying to Quito. If this is not possible you may wish to avoid Quito altogether by flying in and out of Guayaquil.

Persistent high altitude sickness symptoms can worsen quickly signaling danger and the need to get to a lower elevation with more oxygen immediately. If you have high blood pressure, heart trouble or had issues with altitude sickness in the past please consult your physician before traveling to Quito.

Immunizations

Strictly speaking no inoculations are required for entry into Ecuador, though a yellow fever certificate is recommended for entry into the eastern part of the country, i.e. the Amazon Basin. The standard immunizations recommended at this time include:

- Typhoid
- Hepatitis A

- Diphtheria tetanus booster should also be up to date.

For detailed up to date information on immunizations for this region on the web visit the CDC site at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/tropsam.htm>

Yellow Fever: If you plan to visit the Ecuadorian Amazon including to a jungle lodge in the Amazon Basin this is highly recommended. For details on yellow fever on the CDC website go to:

<http://www2.ncid.cdc.gov/travel/yb/utills/ybGet.asp?section=dis&obj=yellowfever.htm>.

IMPORTANT: passengers that visit Ecuador and then go to Brazil must have a yellow fever vaccination certificate or will not be allowed to board the international flight (Brazilian regulations)

Malaria (Amazon Travelers Only)

The CDC reports that **there is no risk for Malaria in Quito, Guayaquil, the central highland tourist areas and the Galápagos**. If you plan to visit the Amazon or travel to other regions of the country not mentioned that are below 5,000 feet Malaria will be a hazard and you will want to take necessary precautions to guard against it. Specific medical approaches should be decided upon by your physician based on your medical history and travel plans.

Malaria Prophylaxis (Amazon Travelers Only)

The CDC also recommends that travelers planning to visit areas at risk for malaria in Ecuador should take a malaria prophylaxis drug. This again is a decision for you and your physician based on your travel plans and medical history including allergies. Make sure you explore the side effects of each drug with your physician. Expect to begin taking these drugs in advance of your trip to build up tolerance to the disease in your system. Therefore it is important not to wait until the last minute before seeing your doctor for a prescription.

Other Means to Reduce the Risk of Malaria (Amazon Travelers Only)

A key means to prevention is to reduce your risk of being bitten by mosquitoes. These methods include wearing light long sleeve shirts and pants that will make it harder for a mosquito to bite you. Wearing a hat and making sure your feet and ankles are also covered will reduce your risk. Using insect repellent is also very important. Avoiding areas that are highly infested and avoiding being out at the times of day—usually at dawn or dusk—when mosquitoes are out will also help. By reducing the number of mosquito bites you directly lower your odds of being bitten by an infected mosquito.

The CDC recommends using insect repellents with DEET following these precautions:

- Always use according to label directions.
- Use only when outdoors and wash skin after coming indoors.
- Do not breathe in, swallow, or get into the eyes.
- Do not put on wounds or broken skin.
- Use a concentration of 30% to 35%.

For more details and updates on malaria on the CDC website go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/regionalmalaria/tropsam.htm>

To Stay Healthy During Your Visit

You will find that we run a very clean ship in the Galápagos. The food and drinks are clean and safe as is the ice we serve. During your stay we ask that you use the bottled water provided for brushing your teeth rather than brushing with tap water. You may, however, be exposed to other service providers and environs making it a good idea to follow the advice of the CDC for staying healthy in the region.

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water.
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes.
- Eat only thoroughly cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself.
Remember: **boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.**

- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot (unless your guide says it is ok to do so) Yes its ok to go barefoot on Galápagos beaches.

To Avoid Getting Sick

- Don't eat food purchased from street vendors.
- Don't drink beverages with ice (unless you are onboard one of our yachts).
- Don't eat dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Don't handle animals (especially monkeys, dogs, and cats), to avoid bites and serious diseases (For more information, please see the [Animal-Associated Hazards](#) on the [Making Travel Safe](#) page on the CDC website.)

Preventing Gastro-Intestinal Disorders

"Food and waterborne diseases are the number one cause of illness in travelers," according to the CDC. Following the precautions above will insure that you do not get that most common affliction: traveler's diarrhea. Even when you are in your hotel and especially when you are on your own avoid tap water for brushing your teeth, instead use purified or the bottled water which will be provided and always avoid ice except when on our yachts. As back up you may want to talk to your physician to see if they can prescribe an antibiotic that is targeted at traveler's diarrhea. There are also over the counter drugs that can help. Once again, consult your physician, who can also prescribe medications that you can turn to in case you do contract a gastro-intestinal disorder during your trip.

Your Personal Medical Kit

We carry a first aid kits aboard our yachts for emergencies. Aboard the Evolution we offer an infirmary with a full time doctor. We also strongly urge you to bring your own personal first aid kit including any prescription medications, vitamins or over the counter drugs you may require. Fill prescriptions BEFORE you leave the US. In a pinch Ecuador does have numerous pharmacies stocked with many of the over the counter and prescription products found in the US and Canada.

MONEY, CURRENCY ISSUES & FEES

On March 14, 2000, the law making the US dollar the legal tender of Ecuador was ratified. Since that date the US dollar has been adopted as the official currency of Ecuador and is accepted everywhere.

Important Notice Concerning Counterfeit US \$100 Bills:

In the summer of 2005 a large number of near perfect counterfeit US \$100 bills entered Ecuador from a neighboring country. To prevent the circulation of these bills, Ecuador's commerce and banking system has stopped accepting \$100 bills. **All passengers traveling to Ecuador are advised not to bring US \$100 bills with them because these will not be accepted, changed or cashed even at banks. Passengers are advised to carry smaller denominations of US bills instead.**

Banking Hours & ATMs

Banking hours are from 09:00 to 18:00 Monday thru Friday. ATM machines are located throughout major cities. Our guides will help you if you need assistance.

Cash, Credit Cards & Traveler's Checks

Major credit cards including Visa, MasterCard and American Express are widely accepted at restaurants, hotels and shops in tourist areas. Keep in mind that we do not accept Amex on our yachts and Amex is less accepted than other cards in the islands. Some merchants may tag on a surcharge of 6% to 10%. Using cash not only means saving this cost but sometimes avoiding taxes. To that end you can also find bank teller machines in large cities such as Quito, Guayaquil and Cuenca, which accept most major credit and ATM cards. We suggest you plan on bringing a credit card for any shopping, unforeseen expenses and emergencies. **Be sure to inform your bank that**

you plan to use your credit or debit card in Ecuador prior to travel, as they may block your card the first time you attempt to use it as a security precaution unless you've informed them in advance.

It's also a good idea to bring a fair amount of cash with you in US dollars, using smaller denominations ranging from \$1s to \$20s. It is up to you to determine your comfort level between carrying cash and travelers' checks. American Express, Visa and Citicorp are the most widely recognized traveler's checks. As with cash, US travelers' checks are recommended. We also suggest a range of denominations, so you are not caught having to cash a large travelers' check when you only need a few dollars. The smart traveler knows to keep a record of one's traveler's check number receipts separate from your checks in case they are lost or stolen. The same applies to your credit card numbers.

On Board Your Yacht & In the Galápagos

While on board our yachts you will have the opportunity to purchase alcoholic beverages from the bar as well as t-shirts, caps, artwork and other gifts in our boutiques. We accept major credit cards, travelers' checks and US dollars on board all our yachts. Please be prepared to pay the Ecuadorian sales tax of 12%. You should also expect to pay the sales tax when purchasing items and services in the port towns of Puerto Ayora and Puerto Baquerizo.

Fees

Following is the list of fees and taxes you can expect to pay during your trip. These may change without notice:

- The Galápagos National Park Entrance Fee: US\$ 100 (US \$ 50 for children under 12) is paid at Baltra or San Cristobal airport. Please be sure to carry the above amounts in cash. No credit cards or travelers checks are accepted. This can be pre-paid by making arrangements with us.
- When you check in for your flight home from Ecuador you will be required to pay a \$31.50 USD airport tax in cash (subject to change without notice). Please carry enough cash to cover this cost.

Tipping & Gratuities

We are often asked what gratuity is appropriate to leave your guide and crew while in the Galápagos. Of course the quality of service should determine the extent of any gratuity. As a recommendation, if the service received has been excellent, the suggested tipping guidelines are:

- Your guide* or dive master*: \$7 to \$15 USD per day per passenger
 - The entire crew: \$12 to \$18 USD per day per passenger
- This is only a suggestion. Tipping is a personal matter based on your discretion. For the rest of your stay we offer the following as a guideline only for excellent service:
- 10% of the bill at restaurants
 - \$0.50 per bag for porters and bell-boys at hotels and airports
 - \$1 per bag to porter at the airport when you arrive
 - Private tours in mainland Ecuador (per person):
 - US \$10 for a full day, for the guide
 - US \$ 5 for a full day, for the driver
 - US \$3 per transfer, for the guide
 - US \$1.50 per transfer, for the driver

***Note:** When you are aboard a vessel with 2 guides or dive masters we suggest that you follow the same \$7 to \$15 per day guideline (keeping in mind you may want to go toward the higher end of the scale to cover two people) and distribute the amount as you see fit between the 2 guides or dive masters.

CLIMATE & WEATHER

Though Ecuador is named for being on the equator it encompasses the snow-capped mountains of the Andes, the tropical rainforests of the Amazon and the pleasant marine climate found in the Galápagos making for a wide range of temperatures and climates. Quito can be surprisingly cool and misty with temperatures ranging from 55° to 75° Fahrenheit, but in general the highlands are usually sunny and quite hot by midday. For the extended weather forecast from the weather channel for Quito on the web, go to <http://www.weather.com/weather/local/ECXX0008>. Following are details on some of Ecuador's major climate zones:

The Andes

Temperatures in the Andean mountains range from 50° F to 70° F at elevations between 9,000 to 10,000 feet where you will find Quito. Generally speaking, the higher the elevation the cooler the temperature. It tends to be drier from June to September and wettest from January to May.

The Amazon

It's hot, humid and rains frequently, but the rain can cool things off and clear to produce some glorious skies. April thru September tends to be wettest, but the jungle is a rain making machine that can produce heavy showers by mid afternoon at other times of the years. The average year round temperature is 80° F.

The Coast

Very similar to the Galápagos (see below). From December to May temperatures range from the low 70's F to low 90's F. From June to November temperatures cool to the mid 60's F to the high 70's F.

The Galápagos

The Galápagos Islands have a subtropical climate regulated by the cold Humboldt Current and the warm El Niño current. December through May is the warmest time of year, with highs in the upper 80s (31 degrees Celsius). Although the islands receive slightly more rainfall during this time, the lower elevations of the islands where you will spend almost your entire trip typically offer blue skies and sunshine with occasional haze. The sea is at its warmest and is usually calmer at this time of year.



The drier garua season lasts from June through November. The garua is a mist that forms in the highlands of the islands. Ironically, the garua season provides more moisture at the upper elevations of the islands than the so-called wet season. There is plenty of sunshine during the day, but it is less intense, with cloudier skies. Air temperature is lower, with highs in the upper 70s or mid-80s (25-30 degrees Celsius). The strong Antarctic Humboldt Current, coming from the south, affects the climate at this time of year. The water temperature, therefore, is at its coolest, about 68 degrees Fahrenheit, 20 degrees Celsius. During some years the infrequent El Niño current may cause a much greater flow of warm waters, making the surface warmer and rainfall increase. Following is a chart to use as guide:

January Rainy and warm season (till May) Water and air temperatures rise until June Best underwater visibility (till March)	July / August Windiest months (force 4 - 5)
February Highest water temperature reaches 25°C / 77°F until April	August Lowest sea water temperatures (21.5°C / 71°F) Lowest air temperature (24.2°C / 75.5°F)
March / April	September / October

Preparing for your trip to the Galápagos Islands & Ecuador

Rainy season reaches its peak Sporadic tropical rains, intense sun and hot climate Air temperatures reach 31°C / 88°F	Humboldt current is strongest - strong ocean currents
May / June Beginning of the Garúa season (cool dry season till December)	December Start of the warm season

	Avg. Temp. Max / Min	Avg. Hours of Clear Skies	Avg. Sea Temp.	Avg. Rainfall
January	30 / 22 °C 86 / 72 °F	5.3	24.5 °C 76 °F	2.5 cm 1.0 in.
February	30 / 24 °C 86 / 75 °F	7.5	25 °C 77 °F	2.5 cm 1.0 in.
March	31 / 24 °C 88 / 75 °F	6.0	25 °C 77 °F	5.1 cm 2.0 in.
April	31 / 24 °C 88 / 75 °F	7.5	25 °C 77 °F	3.8 cm 1.5 in.
May	28 / 22 °C 82 / 72 °F	5.2	24.5 °C 76 °F	1.9 cm 0.75 in.
June	26 / 21 °C 79 / 70 °F	4.4	23 °C 73 °F	0.6 cm 0.25 in.
July	26 / 20 °C 79 / 68 °F	2.8	22 °C 72 °F	1.3 cm 0.50 in.
August	26 / 19 °C 79 / 66 °F	3.3	21.5 °C 71 °F	0.6 cm 0.25 in.
September	26 / 19 °C 79 / 66 °F	2.9	22 °C 72 °F	1.3 cm 0.50 in.
October	26 / 20 °C 79 / 68 °F	3.8	22.5 °C 73 °F	0.6 cm 0.25 in.
November	26 / 21 °C 79 / 70 °F	3.5	23 °C 73 °F	1.3 cm 0.50 in.
December	27 / 22 °C 81 / 72 °F	4.0	22.5 °C 73 °F	1.3 cm 0.50 in.

The Sun, Equator & Altitude

Sea breezes in the Galápagos make for a marvelous climate, but don't be fooled into lying out in the sun without full protection. What you can easily get away with in the southern United States you will pay for on the equator in the form of a painful sunburn. Please heed this advice: Always wear sun protection including a hat to shield the top of your head and face as well as sunglasses and light loose clothing. Use waterproof sunscreens with a SPF rating of at least 15, higher if you burn easily. Bring a full bottle and remember to apply it everywhere including less obvious places like the tops of your feet and ears. We also suggest bringing a bottle of high quality aloe vera gel. **All these recommendations apply to the Ecuadorian mainland** including the Amazon. Being at altitude can also contribute to terrible sunburn so please bring plenty of sunscreen.

CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT

Equipment In the Galápagos

The following equipment is available during your cruise through the Galápagos Islands:

- ❑ Snorkels, masks & fins: No Charge
- ❑ Regular Sea Kayaks: No Charge
- ❑ Clear Acrylic Sea Kayaks: No Charge



Wetsuits:

Experiencing the marvels of the marine reserve by snorkeling or diving is a major highlight of any visit to the Galápagos. We list the average temperature of the sea in the chart above. The islands are well known for their mixing of warm tropical and cold water currents. This means you can experience a wide range of temperatures even in one outing in the water. We strongly recommend the use of wetsuits to allow you not only to spend more time in the water, but to make that time more comfortable.

We currently carry wetsuits aboard the Evolution and Alta at a rental cost of \$30.00 per week. In the future we plan to extend this service to our entire fleet. In the interim period we have made arrangements with a vendor based in San Cristobal, where you will begin your tour, for our passengers to rent wetsuits. The cost is \$30.00 per week to be paid directly to the vendor at the beginning of the trip with an up front deposit, which can be paid by credit card.

Please advise your sales agent if you plan to rent wetsuits and let them know the sizes you require so this information can be passed on to the vendor. If you forget to do so, or aren't sure about wetsuits, you'll still have a chance to rent a wetsuit in San Cristobal, subject to availability, when you arrive in the islands. Also keep in mind that exact sizes are not always available and that you will be asked to try on your wetsuit to check the fit. Finally, we recommend children less than 8 years old bring their own wetsuits as these sizes can be hard to find in the Galapagos.

Luggage

It's always a good idea to travel light by bringing only what you need for your trip. Being overburdened with luggage can make transfers and travel difficult. Keep in mind that flights to and from the Galápagos limit you to a maximum of 20 kg or 44 lbs. This allowance should be more than enough for what you'll need to bring, but if you have extra items you wish to leave in Quito during your trip to the Galápagos or to the Amazon—such as items you may have acquired at Otavalo—arrangements can be made to leave extra bags at your hotel.

Following are our recommendations for luggage for this trip:

- ❑ **Daypack or Fanny pack:** This bag stays with you at all times, will most likely be your carry-on and is where you will keep such Galápagos necessities as your camera—unless you have a camera bag—sunscreen, glasses, windbreaker and other similar objects during your hikes. Some people prefer both a daypack and a small fanny pack. Because you will be the one to carry this bag(s) you'll want to keep the weight down.
- ❑ **Duffle Bag or Small Roll-On Suitcase:** In addition to your carry-on bag you should only need one duffle bag or small suitcase with built in wheels to serve as your main luggage for the trip. This can also be a carry-on but check with your airline to insure it meets specifications. Your duffle or suitcase should be well made and durable to take the punishment the airlines and traveling can dish out. It's worth spending a little more on a good piece of luggage, as it should last you for a long time. A medium size duffle or suitcase of 30" X 15" X 14" with a capacity of 110 liters or slightly larger should be sufficient. If you go for luggage with wheels take a test drive first to see how well it works and consider how the wheels may affect the structural integrity of the piece. For

those inclined toward *travel packs* make certain that there are no loose straps. A benefit of your yacht is that once you move into your cabin you won't have to move luggage for a while.

- ❑ **Spare Duffel:** Experienced travelers know that it's good to carry a spare duffel rolled up in your main luggage piece. This is not only good in case you want to leave belongings in Quito while you are in the Galápagos or Amazon, but it comes in handy for those who like to do a good deal of shopping in places like Otavalo. The Indians merchants in Otavalo know this and do a great business selling reasonably priced duffels. This is one item you may want to pick up in Ecuador.
- ❑ **Small Padlocks:** These are always a good idea when traveling and discourages anyone inclined to zip open your bag to see what they might find.
- ❑ **Plastic Bags:** Sturdy zip lock bags are great to keep important items dry while in the Galápagos or Amazon.

Footwear

- ❑ Comfortable walking or hiking shoes with good traction.
- ❑ Teva style sandals are good for hiking the island beaches and you do not have to worry if you get your feet wet. Thongs are acceptable but are not good for hiking though they are good on deck. A security strap is a good idea in the surf.

Note: The shoes you wear during landings are kept in a bin on the yacht. If you want to wear them on board the yacht we can wash the bottoms but you may want to have a light pair of deck shoes or thongs for the yacht. Bare feet are also acceptable.

Outerwear

- ❑ Wind shell (ideal for the islands) and or rain jacket or poncho with hood.
- ❑ Medium to light fleece jacket or fleece sweater (wool is fine too)
- ❑ Cotton sweat shirt
- ❑ The above are frequently needed when it gets cooler in the islands during the evenings, which is the time you will experience more breezes as we cruise to another location. Also remember that Quito can be cool and it can get downright cold if you go higher into the mountains.

Shirts & Blouses

- ❑ T-Shirts / Polo shirts / Light blouses (can be purchased along the way)
- ❑ A long sleeve shirt or blouse for cooler evenings and sun protection.
- ❑ For women wearing sleeveless attire remember your sun protection.

For Swimming

- ❑ Two swimsuits.
- ❑ Women report getting a lot of mileage out of swim suite wraps that can be worn as a dress or skirt.
- ❑ Lightweight neoprene wetsuit: This is for times when the water is colder (see above) and allows you to spend more time in the water. A less expensive substitute is long underwear made from a water resistant fiber such as capilene. You can also enquire about renting a wetsuit or body glove.
- ❑ For casual snorkeling we carry enough snorkels, masks and fins onboard all our yachts for everyone and the equipment is good. Divers should bring their own equipment to insure performance during deep dives.
- ❑ **Special Note on Children & Snorkeling:** A child snorkeling in deep water can easily breathe in water and panic, so we advise that younger and inexperienced children do not use a snorkel and instead wear goggles and hold their breath when they look into the water. We suggest parents purchase goggles for young children to better fit small faces. Children swimming in deep water looking at undersea life often cling to their parents as safety rafts so parents are advised to wear their own PDF in addition to their child wearing a PDF in such situations to insure everyone stays afloat. Children visiting the Galapagos should be very good swimmers and anyone intending to

use a snorkel and mask should practice in a pool or other safer area prior to traveling to the Galapagos. Please review our Agreement Concerning Assumption of Hazards & Risks Concerning Minor Children for more information, which is required to be signed by those bringing minors to the Galapagos.

Trousers & Skirts

- ❑ Hiking shorts.
- ❑ Lightweight full length pants either synthetic or cotton is fine and great for cooler nights in the highlands or islands
- ❑ Pair of dressier shorts
- ❑ Women may want to bring a casual dress or skirt (see below).

Head Gear

- ❑ Sun hat or cap. Wide brim hats should have chin strap in case they blow off your head. Unless you have a really thick head of hair and never burn sun visors are out.
- ❑ Bandana (great to shield your neck).
- ❑ Dark glasses with security strap (polarized lenses will help you to see more when looking in the water to spot turtles and rays). It's a good idea to bring two pairs, especially if you need prescription glasses.

Socks

- ❑ Comfortable athletic type socks for walking and hiking.

Underwear

- ❑ Regular underwear.

Casual Dressier Outfit

- ❑ Bring one set of casual clothes that are a bit dressier. These should be comfortable and are for those times you might want to appear slightly more formal. For women this can mean a casual dress or skirt. Men don't need to bring a jacket unless they wish to be more formal. During dinners aboard our yachts passengers are encouraged to wear slightly nicer attire including long pants, dress shorts or skirts for women and to forgo wearing a bathing suit to the evening meal. Of course this is just a suggestion and your choice of attire is entirely your own.

Travel Accessories

- ❑ While we do carry first aid kits on our yachts, you are responsible for bringing along your own personal medical kit including medications, especially prescription drugs, or vitamins you regularly take (fill prescriptions BEFORE you travel), including any over the counter drugs you might take such as pain relievers, motion sickness pills or indigestion tablets.
- ❑ While Galápagos waters tend toward calm, there are at least two crossings during the typical cruise. In case you are susceptible to sea sickness or if the seas do get high please bring along medication for seasickness if you are susceptible.
- ❑ Toiletry kit: Tooth paste, toothbrush, shaving kit, etc.
- ❑ Insect repellent (for those going to the Amazon see above / Galápagos travelers sensitive to bites).
- ❑ Sunscreen with SPF rating of 15 or higher (you are on the equator so bring a full bottle).
- ❑ Aloe vera gel of a high quality.
- ❑ Lip gloss with sunscreen of SPF rating of 15 or higher.
- ❑ Hand sanitizers like Purell for a quick way to keep hands clean when traveling on your own.
- ❑ That book you have wanted to read and the stationery for the letters you have wanted to write.

- ❑ Binoculars: Even though you can get up close to much of the wildlife in the Galápagos you will still want a good pair of binoculars. Water resistance is a plus. A REQUIREMENT IN THE AMAZON.
- ❑ Water resistant travel alarm watch.
- ❑ Water resistant compass.
- ❑ Small flashlight or headlamp (good for searching in your duffle and when in Amazon).
- ❑ Spanish / English pocket dictionary or electronic pocket translator.
- ❑ Batteries.

Hair dryer

- ❑ Hair dryers are available on our vessels upon request

Cameras & Videos

Photography is a highlight of any trip to the Galápagos. With the transition to digital, the best advice is to bring a camera and a format that you are familiar with and know will give you the results you are looking for. If you want to try something new, take time to become familiar with your gear before you head out on the trip. A good rule is to always bring more film or memory space than you think you will need. If you are looking for the results of those glossy catalogs, look into a high color saturation slide film or more mega pixels. While a good zoom lens can come in handy and render excellent up-close results, you probably don't need anything larger than a hand held lens that does not require a tripod in the Galápagos, and that's because it's fairly easy to get close to wildlife. However, if you are looking for professional results you may want to bring both a long lens and tripod. If you plan to visit the Amazon to get shots of wildlife a telephoto lens and tripod are musts.



The Galápagos is a great place to bring along a disposable underwater camera as well.

The Galápagos is also an excellent place to make home videos. Keep in mind that the facility for recharging on our fleet is sometimes limited, so it is a good idea to invest in some long life batteries available for most cameras. Remember to power down when you are not using your camera.

Sand and seawater are the enemies of any optical or electronic instrument. Keep this in mind when considering what to bring. A good measure to take for any photographic equipment is to bring large high quality zip lock bags with a zipper locks to keep your camera in, especially when crossing to shore. Bring a few, as they are hard to dry out or clean once wet. Whether photographing wildlife in the Galápagos or people at Otavalo, please be respectful and considerate. Your guide will advise you on the "do's and don'ts".

OTHER INFORMATION

Note on Bringing Children to the Galapagos

Passengers bringing minors on our trips are required to fill out and sign our Agreement Concerning Assumption of Hazards & Risks Concerning Minor Children. There is valuable information in this document regarding what to expect when bringing a child to the Galapagos and how to insure their safety. If you do not already have a copy of this document please request one.

Electricity

Throughout Ecuador the electrical current is 110 volts, 60 cycles, AC, which is the same standard as North America. Most outlets accommodate the same two pronged plugs used throughout the USA and Canada. All of our yachts are also 110 volts. A few of our yachts have hairdryers in every cabin.

Aboard our other yachts, hairdryers are provided upon request.

Language

The official language of Ecuador is Spanish. However, English is widely spoken at hotels, restaurants and shops. Almost everyone involved in hosting you during your stay speaks English. If you plan to set out on your own—or simply for convenience—it is good to carry an English / Spanish phrase book. Electronic stores like Radio Shack® sell pocket translators that make it simple to look up words and conjugate verbs for around US \$20.

While most of the service people you will encounter in Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands speak fluent English, not all crewmembers aboard our vessels speak fluent English. Of course all our guides and hospitality (hotel) managers on board our yachts do, and they are available to you at any time you need them, even if you need to wake them during the night. There is a reason why not all our crew members speak English. The Galápagos are under increasing pressure due to the growth of its human population. We hope you will therefore understand that we want to support the Galapagos National Park's goal of keeping down the human population of the islands by hiring local staff, which at times may be slightly less qualified in English than those we could hire elsewhere. We have provided English classes to crew members in the past and will continue to do so, but not everyone learns as quickly as we would like. If you are having trouble communicating with a crew member or are unsure about a communication please ask your guide or other English speaking crewmember to translate.

Laundry

Most mainland hotels offer laundry service for a nominal fee provided you are staying long enough to get your clothes washed (typically at least one day). Some hotels will allow you to leave your dirty clothes to be washed while you are in the Galápagos and pick them up clean upon your return, but make special arrangements with the hotel front desk for this so your clothes are not lost.

While we do not offer laundry service aboard our yachts, we do offer laundry service on the day your yacht visits Puerto Ayora. You can arrange to have items washed and returned to the yacht at a cost of \$2.50 USD per pound (subject to change). During the evening briefing prior to coming into port, the guide will announce the service. Simply ask for one of the laundry bags and fill out the slip that comes with it describing which clothes you want washed. Place the slip and your dirty clothes into the bag and leave them on the floor of your cabin when you set out on your landing the next morning. Your clean clothes will be returned to you that evening before leaving port. Another option is to get new clean clothes by purchasing items like t-shirts and polo shirts from the boutiques aboard our yachts, when visiting Puerto Ayora or upon return to San Cristobal and the mainland. You really will not need much more than some t-shirts, shorts and your bathing suit in the islands.

Phone Service & Communications

Mainland Ecuador

It is not that difficult to make international calls from Ecuador. To make it easier you can check with your long distance company before your trip to see if they can provide you with an access number to use when placing international calls from within Ecuador. Some companies do and it makes calling home much easier. Hotel staff and guides will also be happy to assist you to make phone calls. A few mobile phone companies offer the ability to use your cell phone internationally. Check with your cell phone service provider to see if this service is available to you in Ecuador.

You can also arrange to rent a cell phone from us (subject to availability) by reserving it in advance at a cost of \$10 per day plus the cost of calls. The cell phone is prepared for direct dial for international calls. The rental of the cell phone must be paid directly in Quito.

Internet communications on the mainland are improving but very fluid. Almost all of the upscale chain hotels in Quito and Guayaquil offer the ability to connect a laptop to the internet, but don't count on a wireless connection as very few hotels offer that service. You are advised to bring an Ethernet card that permits a direct hook up. Many hotels offer high speed connections, but you can't count on that either. Most five star hotels offer the ability to hook up in your room, while other hotels may require you to visit their business center. There are internet cafes and you can even find internet hookups out in the countryside at places like Hacienda Cusin. Check with your sales agent at the time you are booking your hotel for details concerning which ones offer what type of internet service.

Galápagos

We currently offer cell phone service on board our yachts at \$4.00 per minute regardless of where you are calling. You can place both local and international calls. Simply tell the Captain, Cruise Director or your Guide that you would like to use the phone to place a call. They will advise you when and where you'll be entering a good reception area during which to place your call. For the most part, the signal is clear in many places throughout the islands with the exception of the west side of Isabela. Calls are timed and you will be asked to pay charges at the end of the cruise, along with your bar bill and any purchased items.

During your Galápagos cruise you can also call home on the day you visit Puerto Ayora where you will find an Internet café to use for checking web-based emails. Our crew and staff will be happy to assist you in passing on messages through our offices in Puerto Ayora and Quito in the case of emergencies. You can also purchase and send postcards from Puerto Ayora with the likelihood they will reach home before you do.

For Those Who Need to Reach You in an Emergency

The first step in helping someone to contact you in case of an emergency is to make sure your friend, family and employer have a copy of your complete travel itinerary. **Please make sure they have the name and number of the person you talked to in our office. Our office phone is 800-727-9977, and is the first place to call in an emergency.**

You can also provide your friends and family with the following contacts numbers in Quito. The person calling should provide your name and as much information regarding your travel itinerary as possible including flights, the name of your yacht and your land itinerary. Ask them to be as clear as possible regarding the nature of the emergency with specific instructions on how and when you should contact them:

During the land portion of your trip

During regular business hours 9am to 5pm EST:
(593-2) 224-6996 or 6997

After hours

(593-9)-9554-961 or (5939) 9734-893 or (5939) 9920-742

During the Galápagos portion of your trip

During regular business hours 9am to 5pm EST:
(593-2) 244-6996 or 6997 or Fax (593-2) 225-9305

After hours:

(5939) 9734-893 or (5939) 9920-742

Important Note on Travel by Small Yachts through the Galápagos

We offer the unique opportunity to travel by small yacht through the Galápagos archipelago, providing you with an exclusive experience only shared by your small group. We pride ourselves in providing some of the most sought after vessels in the Galápagos. Our small yacht travel comes with factors that while very normal, need mentioning:

We offer trips that encompass the full spectrum of landings the Galápagos Islands have to offer. The only way to navigate these full itineraries that encompass the outer islands is by the use of engine power. For this reason Galápagos is not a true sailing destination. While some of our yachts are rigged for sailing and do hoist sail during voyages when there is a good wind, sails on these vessels should be considered primarily for show and not navigation. On both Alta and Lammer Law we seek to hoist sails two to three times per voyage. The best time for wind in the Galápagos is during the summer months of June through September.

You will at times during your cruise hear the sound of engines; more noticeably when they are being started up for a night crossing. You may also hear the sound of waves slapping the hull depending on the condition of the sea. At times you may also hear generators or temporarily smell diesel, but not for prolonged periods. In heavier seas, which are infrequent in the Galápagos, you may experience sea sickness, especially during open ocean crossings. Please report any inconvenience you are experiencing during your voyage immediately to the Captain. Often there are solutions to any problems you may be experiencing.

Smoking Policy

Smoking is not permitted inside the yachts but is allowed in designated areas on the outside decks. Park rules forbid smoking on the islands of the Galápagos.

Time Zones

Mainland Ecuador is 5 hours behind GMT. It shares the Eastern Standard Time Zone with the US for most of the year, though Ecuador does not observe daylight savings time. The Galápagos Islands are one hour behind the mainland or 6 hours behind GMT.

While in Quito

Ecuador's capital is situated high in a lush green narrow valley in the Andes surrounded by rugged volcanic mountains. It's lively, scenic and cosmopolitan, and its 1.5 million inhabitants tend to be helpful and friendly. The old city offers excellent examples of colonial mansions, cathedrals and squares and has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Security

As with any large city, one is advised to take precautions to insure safety and security. Police patrol tourist areas regularly. Even so, you should remain alert to your surroundings and maintain a good grip on your camera and pack if you bring them along. Leave your jewelry, passport, most of your cash and all but the credit card you plan to use in your hotel lockbox. These are normal precautions for any city you are unfamiliar with. You will find Quito to be a beautiful, friendly and enjoyable place. Your guide will answer any other questions you have regarding security.

Onboard Security

We provide security lock boxes/safes in every cabin on all our vessels. In addition and as a back up, each vessel has a larger lock box under the care of the Captain. Please be sure to leave your valuables in the personal lock box in your cabin or in the one under the Captain's care for the voyage. This includes passport, cash, jewelry, etc.

Also, be sure to verify that you have your valuables in your possession when you board our vessels. On occasion we have had passengers swear they had items, such as a Gameboy or bracelet, disappear from their cabin, only to have the items turned in to us later by the Galápagos air carrier or a hotel on the mainland. One item was even found on a beach. No one benefits from false accusations, so please do your part to eliminate this possibility by checking your items when boarding our yachts and using the lock boxes provided. We will do our part to guard your security.

Lost, Stolen & Damaged Items

Because we offer you the above measures Northwest Voyageurs and the boat owners, are not liable for any cash or jewelry claimed to be lost or stolen, or for any personal items lost or damaged while on your trip. While we will do our best to help you find items reported as missing, it may prove almost impossible to track them down; this is especially true for cash. In addition, the maritime environment of the Galapagos is particularly damaging to electronic items, camera equipment and jewelry. If you are very concerned about having expensive items damaged it is best to simply leave them at home. You can still bring along cheaper versions that get the job done and are easily replaced, such as a drugstore watch, inexpensive CD player or throw-away camera. We strongly urge all passengers to purchase insurance to cover loss or damage to their personal items.

Places to Visit in Quito

Quito also offers some fabulous museums from ancient to modern arts. Here are a few recommendations:

Museums

Archaeological, Colonial,
Republican and Contemporary Art
Casa de la Cultura
Ave 6 de Diciembre y Patria 2565-808
Tuesday to Sunday 09:00 – 17:00

Museo de la Ciudad
Colonial Art
Garcia Moreno 572 y Rocafuerte St. 2283-882
Tuesday to Sunday 10:00 – 18:00

Guayasamin Foundation
Pre-colonial, Colonial & Modern Art
Bosmediano 543, Bellavista 2446-455
Monday to Friday 09:30 – 13:00
15:00 – 18:00

National Museum of Colonial Art
Cuenca y Mejia 2212-297
Tuesday to Friday 10:00 – 17:00
Saturday 10:00 – 14:00

San Agustin Convent
Colonial Art, Chapter Hall
Chile y Guayaquil St.
2951-001/580-263
Monday to Friday 09:00 – 12:00
15:00 – 17:00
Saturday 08:00 – 12:00

San Francisco Church & Convent
Religious Colonial Art
Benalcazar & Bolivar St
2211-124
Monday to Saturday 09:00 – 18:00
Sunday 09:00 – 13:00

La Compañía de Jesus Church
Religious Colonial Art
Garcia Moreno St.
572-976
Daily 09:00 – 11:00
16:00 – 18:00

Amazonian Museum-Abya-Yala
Material and Cultural Wealth of the
Amazon Basin
Ave 12 de Octubre 1430 y Wilson
2506 - 247
Monday to Friday 09:00 – 18:00
14:00 – 18:00

Casa de Sucre
Republican Art, Architecture, History

Venezuela y Sucre St.
2952 – 860
Tuesday to Friday 08:00 – 16:00
Saturday 08:00 – 14:00

Contemporary Art Galleries

Viteri
Orellana 973 y Whimper St.
2561 – 548
Monday to Friday 10:00 – 13:30
15:00 – 19:00
Saturday 10:00 – 13:00

Art Forum
Juan Leon Mera 870 y Wilson St.
2544 – 185
Monday to Friday 09:00 – 14:30
Saturday 09:00 – 13:00

Guayasamin Foundation
Bosmediano 543, Bellavista St.
2446 – 455
Monday to Friday 09:30 – 13:30
15:00 – 18:30

Kingman
Almagro 1550 y Pradera St.
2526 – 335
Monday to Friday 09:00 – 13:00
15:00 – 19:00

Shopping



Ecuador offers excellent prices and quality for many goods. The roses are spectacular and are a true bargain and the same can be said for leather goods. Shopping hours are from 09:00 – 13:00 and from 15:00 – 18:00, Monday – Saturday. Most stores close on Sundays, although shopping malls (centros comerciales) may be open on Sundays and later in the evenings during the week. There are Indian markets held across Ecuador throughout the week, Otavalo being the best known. Markets start very early, at around 06:00, and normally finish at around 16:00 (4 pm). Your guide can help you find other things you need. Recommended shops in Quito include:

Libri Mundi (bookshop)
Juan Leon Mera 851 St
2234-791
Monday to Friday 08:30 – 19:00
Saturday 09:00 – 18:00

Exclusive Handcraft & Jewelry Stores:
Olga Fisch
Ave Colon 260 y Camaño St.
2563-085
Monday to Friday 09:00 – 19:00
Saturday 09:00 – 13:00
15:00 – 19:00

Galería Latina
Juan León Mera y Veintimilla St.
2540-380
Monday to Friday 09:00 – 13:30
15:00 – 19:00
Saturday 10:00 – 13:30

La Bodega
Juan Leon Mera 614 y Carrion St.
2225-844
Monday to Friday 09:30 – 13:30
14:30 – 19:30
Saturday 09:30 – 13:30

Restaurants

Quito offers a rich variety of excellent places to eat. Here are some recommendations:

Bambú Bar Ecuadorian and International cuisine

Preparing for your trip to the Galápagos Islands & Ecuador

2543-107	Almagro 2213 y F Andrade
El Gupon 2540-209	Ecuadorian International Cuisine Av. Colon 260 & Caamaño
Ill Grillo 2225-531	Italian Cuisine Baquerizo 533 y D Almagro
La Ronda 2540-459	Ecuadorian and International Cuisine Belho Horizonte 400 y Almagro
La Querencia 2445-654	Ecuadorian Cuisine Eloy Alfaro 2530 y C Aldaz
La Viña 2566-033	International Isabel La Católica y Cordero
Mare Nostrum 2528—686	Seafood Foch 172 y Tamayo
Mea Culpa 2951-190	International Cuisine Independence Square, Archbishops Palace
Pavarotti 566-668	Italian Cuisine 12 de Octubre 1955 y Cordero
Rincon de Francia 2225-053	French Cuisine Roca 779 y 9 de Octubre
Tanoshi 2566-397	Japanese Cuisine Swissotel (Oro Verde Hotel) 12 de Octubre 1820 y Cordero



Recommended Reading

Guides

- ❑ A Field Guide to the Birds of Galápagos, by Michel Harris
- ❑ A Field Guide to the Fishes of Galápagos, by Godfrey Merlen
- ❑ A Guide to the birds of the Galápagos Islands, by Isabel Castro and Antonia Phillips
- ❑ Flowering Plants of the Galápagos, by Dr. Conley K. McMullen
- ❑ Galapagos Wildlife, a Visitor's Guide. David Howell & Pete Oxford
- ❑ Lonely Planet Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands, by Rob Rachowiecki (Lonely Planet Publications)
- ❑ Marine Life of the Galápagos, by Pierre Constant
- ❑ Reef Fish Identification, by Paul Humann
- ❑ Subtidal Galápagos, by James Cribb

Photography

- ❑ Galápagos, Islands Lost in Time, by Tui de Roy
- ❑ Galápagos, A Terrestrial and Marine Phenomenon, by Paul Humann
- ❑ Galápagos, Discovery on Darwin's Islands, by Steadman and Zousmer
- ❑ Galápagos, Back to Nature, by Steve Lu
- ❑ Galápagos, by Nathan Farb

Other Recommendations

- ❑ The Voyage of the Beagle, by Charles Darwin
- ❑ Charles Darwin, A Biography, by Janet Browne
- ❑ Floreana, by Margaret Wittmer
- ❑ The Beak of the Finch, by Jonathan Weiner
- ❑ The Encantadas, by Herman Melville
- ❑ The Galápagos Affair, by John Treherne
- ❑ My Father's Islands, A Galápagos Quest, by Johanna Angermeyer

Becoming a friend of the Galápagos

Many of our travelers are moved to continue their relationship with the Galápagos long after their first visit. We encourage you to support conservation of the creatures and habitats of these magical islands by joining one of the following organizations:

Charles Darwin Foundation, Inc.
100 N. Washington St., Suite 311
Falls Church, Virginia 22046
(703-538-6833)
www.darwinfoundation.org

The Nature Conservancy, Latin Division
1815 North Lynn Street
Arlington, VA 22209
(703-841-4860)
<http://nature.org>

Galápagos Conservation Trust
5 Derby Street
London W1Y 78D
Tel: 0207 629 5049 ▪ Fax: 0207 629 4149
www.gct.or

WildAid - San Francisco (Headquarters)
450 Pacific Avenue, Suite 201
San Francisco, CA 94133
Phone: (415) 834-3174 ▪ Fax: (415) 834-1759
Email: info@wildaid.org

Thank you for helping us preserve the Galápagos Islands!