



GALAKIWI

6-day Galapagos Adventure Tour

Complete Dossier

(Starting from Santa Cruz)

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Galapagos Islands

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Introduction

A shortened version of our flagship **10-Day Galapagos Adventure Tour**, this 6-day Land Galapagos tour is jam-packed with activities, visiting three of the inhabited islands of the Galapagos archipelago. This is the perfect tour if you're looking to visit the Galapagos on a budget, are short on time, or want to combine your time in the Galapagos with a tour in Ecuador, Peru or the Amazon.

The Galapagos land tour will keep you busy, snorkeling at Kicker Rock, hiking Sierra Negra Volcano and kayaking in a bay off the coast of Isabela Island. You can expect to be immersed in the wildlife each day, while having the chance to connect with the inhabitants of the islands during your free time exploring towns like Puerto Ayora and Puerto Villamil.

Lounging sea lions, gliding rays and plenty of tropical fish and sea turtles may greet you in the water, while the lava lizards and iguanas will entertain you on land. If you're seeking a quick trip that offers a mix of adventure and culture, this is for you. Each island you visit has a historical site worth seeing to learn about the human history of the Galapagos and the importance of sustainable tourism in this fragile environment. The Interpretation Center on San Cristobal, the Breeding Center on Isabela and the Charles Darwin Station on Santa Cruz will help you gain a deeper understanding of some of the most unique Galapagos animals – giant tortoises!

Optimizing your time in the Galapagos, you can expect to visit a range of ecosystems from beachside mangroves to lush forests in the highlands. As busy as this Galapagos tour is, you'll still have enough free time for souvenir shopping and enjoying a few cold drinks by the beach. But if go-go-go is more your style, then the optional activities like diving and surfing may be of interest!

Tour Summary

Start and End:	Baltra Airport (Santa Cruz Island) to San Cristobal Island
Tour Length:	6 days/5 nights on Land
Tour Style:	Active
Comfort Level:	Standard
Sweat Factor:	Moderate
Group Size:	Max 12, Average 4
Minimum Age:	21 years old

Highlights

- Snorkel with sea turtles, playful sea lions and amazing underwater life
- Hike up an active volcano and one of the biggest calderas in the world
- Stay on the 3 inhabited islands and learn about the rich history and culture
- See the famous giant tortoises in their natural habitat
- Go kayaking at Isabela Island
- Sample some traditional Ecuadorian cuisine and meet the local Galapagueños

Itinerary Snapshot

Day	Activities	Where	Meals
Day 1	Arrive Santa Cruz, Visit Highlands, Explore Town	Santa Cruz	B L D
Day 2	Visit Tortuga Bay, Optional CDRS, Public Boat to Isabela	Isabela	B L D
Day 3	Hike Sierra Negra Volcano, Optional Isabela Bay Kayak	Isabela	B L D
Day 4	Visit Giant Tortoise Breeding Center, Fly to San Cristobal, Visit La Loberia	San Cristobal	B L D
Day 5	Snorkel Kicker Rock, Optional Bike Ride	San Cristobal	B L D
Day 6	Opt. Visit to Interpretation Center & Tijeretas, Depart San Cristobal	/	B

What is Included and Not Included?

Included in Tour Price

- 5 Nights Standard Accommodation: Private Bathroom
- *Flights to and from Galapagos
- All Land, Air, and Sea Transport in Galapagos
- Naturalist Guide Authorized by the GNP
- Sea Kayaks and Snorkeling Equipment
- Meals daily as specified in Itinerary
- Drinking Water

Not Included in Tour Price

- Airport Transfers (*Available upon request*)
- Optional Diving (*Please inquire in advance*)
- Drinks other than water (*Soda, beer, etc.*)
- Tips for Tour Leader/Naturalist Guide
- Tips for hotel staff, boat crew and drivers

Detailed Itinerary

DAY 1 Sunday	<i>Arrive Santa Cruz Visits Highlands, Explore Town</i>	B L D Santa Cruz
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This morning, you'll fly to Santa Cruz or Baltra to be exact. This little island off the coast of Santa Cruz is home to the airport. Your guide will be waiting for you and the adventure will begin right away! As you make your way to Puerto Ayora, the capital of Santa Cruz, you'll begin your first activity with a stop in the highlands to visit a private giant tortoise reserve. You'll be able to see these massive creatures in their natural habitat cooling off in a watering hole or munching away. You'll also have the chance to explore some nearby lava tunnels and gain a better appreciation of the natural forces that created these islands.

You'll continue on to Puerto Ayora, and after a quick check-in, head out to explore town. Santa Cruz is the most populated of all the islands and its bustling port city is the tourist capital of Galapagos. Tonight, your guide will lead you to the Calle de los Kioskos (Kiosks Street). This little back street is closed down each night as the small stall restaurants set up table and chairs in the middle of the street for open-air dining. If you're looking for where the locals eat, look no further!

DAY 2 Monday	<i>Visit Tortuga Bay and Charles Darwin Research Station Public Boat to Isabela</i>	B L D Isabela
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This morning we'll take a short walk that ends in white sand and luscious waves. Tortuga Bay is a gorgeous beach accessible only by foot and laden with choices. Do you want to swim, sunbathe, bodysurf or do all three? A leisurely 45-minute path leads to the beach area and along the way you may spot lava lizards and birds in the surrounding trees.

Upon arrival at the first soft, white sandy beach, you'll be greeted by some perfect surf. Further along you can reach Tortuga Bay, a calm bay that is sheltered by mangroves and ideal for swimming, sometimes friendly baby sharks can be seen here too! There's a nice walk through a cactus forest, a chance to spot nesting blue-footed boobies or massive marine iguanas.

We'll head back to town in time for a quick visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station. We'll learn about the stations successes in repopulating the islands with the once endangered land iguana and several species of giant tortoise. From the collection of the eggs to the age of release, we'll observe how the giant tortoises are raised and readied for life on their own. CDRS is optional.

After lunch, we'll hop on board for our boat ride to Isabela Island – the largest island in the Archipelago. After check-in, we'll go for a stroll through the picturesque town of Puerto Villamil. Along it's white sand beach we're sure to find the perfect spot to toast in our first Isabela sunset, arguably the most beautiful of all the islands.

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DAY 3
Tuesday

Hike Sierra Negra Volcano and Volcan Chico
Optional Kayak

B L D
Isabela

Lace up your hiking boots – we’re hiking up a volcano! Sierra Negra is one of the most active volcanoes in Galapagos; its last eruption was in October 2005. As we hike to the perimeter of the caldera, we’ll be on the lookout for bird species found only in the highlands like the bright red Vermillion Flycatcher and the elusive short-eared owl. Once we reach the rim, we’ll be met with a 9km view that stretches across one of the most active calderas in the world.

We’ll continue around the rim, stopping at various lookouts along the way, en route to Volcan Chico. Volcano vents dot the landscape and colorful minerals can be found in some lava rocks. Both “aa” and “pahoehoe” lava flows have occurred here, creating an otherworldly-looking landscape. We’ll cross fields of lava and small lava tunnels until we reach a lookout that boasts breathtaking views reaching to the north of Isabela.

After enjoying a hearty sense of accomplishment, we’ll make our way back to town in early afternoon. You are free to take it easy or partake in an optional activity - a leisurely kayak around the sheltered bay area of Puerto Villamil. Galapagos penguins (the only penguin found north of the equator), sea turtles and rays frequent these shallow waters and blue-footed boobies, frigate birds and pelicans may be seen resting along the shore and in some nearby mangrove trees.

If you prefer, you also have the option to rent a bike and head to the Wall of Tears. Return to town just in time for a sunset dip before dinner.

DAY 4
Wednesday

Visit Giant Tortoise Breeding Center, Fly to San Cristobal
Visit La Loberia

B L D
San Cristobal

After breakfast, we’ll head off for a leisurely walk through a coastal lagoon. If we’re lucky, we’ll see some pink flamingos along the way! This mangrove-lined path will lead us to Isabela’s Giant Tortoise Breeding Center where we’ll see giant tortoises in all stages of development. The center has almost one thousand giant tortoises training for life on their own!

This afternoon, you’ll take an early flight to the island of San Cristobal, the oldest and eastern-most island of the Galapagos archipelago. You’ll arrive just in time for lunch before you head out for your first activity: a visit to La Loberia.

La “Loberia” is an area frequented by sea lions. In other words, it’s a sea lion hang out! There we’ll be able to watch sea lions sunbathing and vying for our attention. They play, they nap and sometimes, they pose for pictures! If you’re keen for a swim, hop on in.

On the way back to town, your guide will point out their favorite spots to dine.



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DAY 5
Thursday

Snorkel at Kicker Rock
Optional Bike Ride

B L D
San Cristobal

Today we take to the water to get a glimpse of the underwater world of Galapagos. First, we'll cruise along the coast in our boat identifying shore birds like the great frigate and famous blue-footed booby. Then we'll drop anchor for an introductory snorkel where we'll get our fins wet in search of damselfish, puffer fish, and, hopefully, curious sea lion pups.

Next, we'll continue to Kicker Rock, or Leon Dormido as it's known by the locals, to explore the final remains of a tuff cone rising over 143 meters out of the ocean. If Kicker Rock were a building, it would have almost 50 floors! Along the edge and through a channel of this drastic compact ash formation, we'll be on the hunt for sea turtles, spotted eagle rays, chocolate chip starfish, and, with any luck, a Galapagos Shark or two. Don't worry: they won't be as interested in you as you are in them!

A beautiful beach accessible only by boat will be our final stop. After lunch on board, feel free to spend your time swimming in the turquoise water or snapping photos of Kicker Rock in the distance.

We'll head back to town late afternoon and have some time to explore town. Perhaps you'll want to grab a sunset beer or cocktail by the waterfront and watch the spectacular sunset. Another optional activity is to grab a bike and explore town.

Tonight, we head to one of our favorite spots for some open air dining. It'll be a well-deserved farewell feast as this is the last night in the Enchanted Islands!

DIVING: *Occasionally, the option to dive is available. Please inquire in advance.*

DAY 6
Friday

Optional Visit to Interpretation Center & Tijeretas
Depart San Cristobal for Guayaquil or Quito.

B
San Cristobal

Today is the last day of your tour and you get to choose how you'd like to spend your morning. Squeeze in some souvenir shopping, head to the beach for one last swim or visit the Interpretation Center to learn about the history and mystery of the archipelago. This educational center explains how the islands were discovered and what makes them so special. You can learn about Charles Darwin's visit and the present day efforts to protect this amazing World Heritage site. There's a short hike to Tijeretas, a panoramic lookout over the town and Kicker Rock, for those who are interested.

This afternoon, you'll fly back to the mainland. If you are spending more time in Ecuador, you may want to book a day tour or excursion to see another part of the country.

Activity & Itinerary Disclaimer

All dossiers and itineraries are designed to be as informative as possible and are provided in good faith. Unless otherwise stated, all prices in this Dossier are in USD\$. Due to the temperament of Mother Nature and the Ecuadorian Government, itineraries may change and activities may be shifted, omitted or replaced without notice. Our goal is to give you the best possible tour with a safety-first mentality. We also must comply with all rules set forth by the national and local governments no matter how convenient or inconvenient they may be. The good news is that we rarely have to change the itinerary drastically and we are very adept at dealing with the challenges of operating in a third world country. You're in good hands!

Itinerary Notes

About Quito

Upon arrival at the international airport in Quito, you can grab a taxi and make your way to the hotel. There will be taxis waiting and the hotel will be expecting you. It should cost around \$25-30USD and you should negotiate a set price BEFORE you get in the taxi. If you have paid for an airport pick-up, a representative will be waiting for you – look for your name on a sign!

***NOTE:** Quito, like most major cities, is not without its pickpockets and purse-snatchers. Leave your valuables and passports in your room or hotel safe and only carry what you need just to be safe. See our website for safety tips.*

About Guayaquil

The same safety precautions should be taken in Guayaquil as in Quito. Guayaquil is a port town, so altitude is not a concern here. A taxi from the airport to downtown should only cost about \$6USD.

Departing Guayaquil or Quito

Your flight to Galapagos is part of the tour, however you are responsible for making your own way to the airport and completing check-in. You will not receive a paper ticket – you'll just need to show your ID at the counter. Once we know which airport you're flying from, you'll be sent additional information on how the check-in process works.

These logistics will be worked out in advance, and will not be the responsibility of the Sternberg Museum trip participants individually. We will be traveling to the airport for our departure to the Galapagos Islands as a group.

Galapagos Flight

It's about 30 minutes from Quito to Guayaquil and 1 ½ hours from Guayaquil to Galapagos. Flying from Quito, chances are that the aircraft will make a short stopover in Guayaquil to drop off and collect passengers. It's usually less than an hour. During your flight to the islands, the aircraft will be sprayed while passengers are on



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board to kill any species possibly residing in your hand luggage. Don't worry – the spray is biodegradable, not harmful to humans and recommended by the World Health Organization.

Arriving in the Galapagos (Baltra Airport)

Once you arrive in Galapagos, you'll queue up to pay your National Park Entrance Fee (\$100 cash only). There are no ATM's in the airport in Galapagos. Your guide will be waiting to pick you up just outside the airport when you arrive. After you pay your National Park fee and collect your checked luggage head outside to meet your guide. You'll begin your first activity (visiting the Santa Cruz Highlands) BEFORE checking into the hotel. Please dress appropriately or have clothes and shoes handy.

The National Park Entrance Fee (\$100) is covered in the Sternberg Museum trip fee. You will not need to cover this cost, or the \$20 transit card fee, yourself separately.

Santa Cruz Highlands

If it's been raining, the farm can be muddy. The lava tunnel is damp, dark and rocky. There are lights in the tunnel, but if you have a headlamp, bring it. Closed toed shoes strongly recommended and keep a rain jacket handy just in case.

Tortuga Bay

The trail to the beach is an easy walk on a nice path for about 45 minutes. Once you pass the National Park checkpoint at the entrance, there will be no bathrooms or shops to buy refreshments, so bring plenty of water and sunscreen. If you want to rent a surf or boogie board, you must rent one in town and carry the board with you. If you want to walk through the cactus forest, you'll need shoes suitable for the rocky path.

Charles Darwin Research Station

Most itineraries included a visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS); however, you're actually visiting the Breeding Center Fausto Llerena, which is where Lonesome George was until his death in 2012. One animal you can see here that you may have not seen already is the Galapagos Land Iguana. The center is also home to Super Diego, a giant tortoise originally from Española Island. Diego got his name after being rescued from the San Diego Zoo in 1977. Since his return, he's been very busy and has an estimated 1,700 offspring!

Boat Crossings (*Public Boat to Isabela*)

Residents and tourists alike use this method of transport regularly between the main inhabited islands. On the open ocean, between islands is your best chance to see whales, dolphins and sea birds. Each crossing takes about 2 hours. Less time if the sea is calm, more time if the sea is rough. Boats are usually 30-35 feet long and hold 20-30 passengers. You'll be leaving bright and early most days when the sea is usually calm but if you're prone to seasickness or not sure, bring some seasickness pills just in case.

Volcano Hike

You'll be walking 4-6 hours with frequent rest stops and a lunch break. From the National Park checkpoint, there's about a 45 minute walk uphill to the rim of the volcano. The trail around the rim has only slight up and downs with a few short steep inclines. The lava fields of Volcan Chico are uneven and rocky in areas. The path in and out is dirt: if it's been raining, it could be muddy. There's one proper bathroom at the beginning of trail. The majority of walking is on level terrain and as long as you're comfortable walking 4-6 hours, it's definitely doable.



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If you have weak ankles, use athletic braces and wear hiking boots. If you have knee trouble, bring a hiking pole or two. This is a non-technical hike.

Snorkel & Activity Gear

We take pride in having the best gear in the Galapagos Islands! Wetsuits or rash guards, fins, mask and snorkels are provided for you, as well as kayaks during scheduled activities. If you prefer to bring your own snorkel gear, please do so. If you have a new mask it should be cleaned properly and used beforehand to make sure it isn't going to fog up when you are on the hunt for that perfect underwater fish photo. If you wear glasses – YOU CANNOT WEAR YOUR GLASSES WITH A MASK. You can wear contacts or visit a dive shop before coming to Galapagos to get a corrective lens mask if necessary.

Kayaking Isabela

This is a beginner friendly kayak - no experience required. We use sit-on-top double kayaks and life vests. Be prepared for some splashes and wetness just in case. A dry bag is good piece of gear to bring along if you want to bring a non-waterproof camera.

Giant Tortoise Breeding Center

Closed toe walking shoes, a rain jacket, insect repellent, and your camera are all you'll need for this experience. The trails might be rocky and muddy, but flat.

Inter-Island Flight (*Flight to Isabela from San Cristobal*)

Flights between islands are on a 6 or 9 passenger plane. These small aircrafts fly low and offer you an amazing view of the islands from above. You'll be able to see hardened lava channels, pockets of new vegetation springing from the black abyss and the dramatic coastline with its hidden beaches. Most flights are 45 minutes or less. These planes are small and luggage space is limited. Baggage is limited to 25 pounds per person. Flights can be noisy: keep some earplugs or your iPod handy. Delays are also fairly common.

La Loberia

The walk to the Loberia is a sandy, easily traversed path. It takes 15+ minutes to walk in. Snorkeling is best done on low tide.

Kicker Rock Snorkel

If you've never snorkeled before, no worries. There will be a full briefing and a practice run in calm water. Wetsuits make you buoyant and we have a couple different flotation devices to choose from. You do need to be able to climb a short ladder back into the boat after the snorkels, but again, don't worry, the skipper will be there to help you. You'll be on the boat for approximately 6 hours. Since you'll be staying close to the coast, seasickness isn't usually an issue this day.

Diving in the Galapagos

Occasionally, the option to dive is available. Please inquire in advance. We can also arrange a diving extension for you to spend extra time in the Galapagos; this must be booked and paid for in advance. If you have never gone diving with a 5mm-7mm wetsuit, in the open water, or it's been 2 years or more since your last dive, we highly recommend a refresher course to be better prepared, as well as to ensure your safety and comfort during your dive experience. Diving in the Galapagos is not geared towards novice divers.



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Note: If you choose to book diving, we require you to complete a dive request form and send us a copy of your certification.

Tijeretas Hike

The Tijeretas track is a loop trail of 2km/1.5miles in length. The loop takes you up and down four flights of stairs to various lookouts, one with a statue of Charles Darwin. It's a paved/sealed track and there is an extension to a beautiful beach called Punta Carola. Facilities are located at the beginning, in the Interpretation Center.

Interpretation Center

The center opens at 6AM daily so you can always stop here on your final day for an early morning visit.

Departing Galapagos

When you leave Galapagos, you need to present the stub from your INGALA paper (you filled this out on the way to Galapagos). If you lose that stub, you will have to pay \$10USD again for a new one.

Important Information

Money

CURRENCY, BILLS & ATM'S – The currency in Ecuador and the Galapagos is US Dollars. There are ATM's in San Cristobal and Santa Cruz islands (no ATMs in Floreana or Isabela), but it is best to carry cash into the islands rather than hope the ATM works. You will also want to make sure you get cash in Quito to pay your National Park Entry fee.

Travelers Checks are rarely used, and the only way to use them on the islands is to cash them at the bank during weekday hours (and pay a percentage for this service). Most, if not all stores will only accept cash and small bills at that. Make sure all your notes are less than \$100 and are in reasonably good condition – the locals and banks aren't fond of torn or tattered bills. It is advisable to let your bank know you are traveling to Ecuador before you depart home.

FEES – The fees you are responsible for paying are as follows:

\$20 INGALA FEE – CASH ONLY

This is a visitor control document used to track and moderate tourism and migration to the islands that was implemented in 2006 by the Galapagos National Park. This paperwork is purchased at the airport in Quito or Guayaquil and will need to be shown along with your passport upon entering and exiting the islands.

Part of the Sternberg Museum trip fee. We will provide cash to pay this fee when the time arrives.

\$100 PARK ENTRANCE FEE – CASH ONLY

This is payable upon entering the Galapagos. As per the National park website: 'Funds from the entry tax for tourists are used to finance the conservation of biodiversity of flora and fauna, terrestrial and marine, and benefits the local community by improving basic services, education projects, sports,



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health, environmental sanitation, environmental services and services directly related to tourists.' Learn more at the Galapagos National Park website.

Part of the Sternberg Museum trip fee. We will provide cash to pay this fee when the time arrives.

BUDGET – You are responsible for the above mentioned fees and any meals not included in the itinerary. A cheap meal in the Galapagos is \$5-7 and an expensive meal is \$12-17, with meal prices slightly lower in mainland Ecuador. An emergency stash of cash is always a good idea – we recommend at least **\$150**. All that's left is souvenir money and a tip if you choose to leave one.

TIPPING – 10% is the typical tip in restaurants and is usually included in your bill as a service charge. For drivers, helpers, and crew during your trip, \$5-10 a day is customary and included in your tour price. For your leader, \$8-12 per day per person is the norm. Tipping is in no way required and entirely at your discretion. It is however of great significance to those who have helped make your tour a success and a great way to express your appreciation for a job well done.

Group Leader & On-site Support

Your guides will have a wealth of information about the wildlife, history and culture of Ecuador. They are locals and speak excellent English.

In the Galapagos, all of our trips are lead or co-lead by a certified Galapagos Naturalist Guide. Your guides will have in-depth knowledge of the islands including the unique flora and fauna. We are truly grateful for our wonderful guides – check out our website for information about our guides.

Your Responsibilities & Fellow Travelers

Being punctual by adhering to meeting times set out by your guide is an important part of ensuring everyone gets the best travel experience. Spending many days with fellow travelers from around the world can be exciting and dynamic. At times, it can be a challenge. For the best possible trip, it is important that all passengers adhere to meeting times as a common courtesy. With a small effort on your part and some patience on behalf of your fellow travelers, we are certain that the tour will be enjoyable for all.

Travel Documents & Visas

In order to enter Ecuador, you must have a valid passport with more than 6 months validity. You may also need a visa or immunizations depending on your home country. Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up to date travel requirements. **Please talk with your family doctor or visit a travel clinic at home.** IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE PROPER TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION. It's also a good idea to have a copy of all important documents with you.

Tip: Even better is to take a picture or scan important documents in an email to yourself (passport, airline ticket, etc.).

Travel Insurance

Bags get lost. Flights get delayed. And the unexpected, well you get the picture. Things happen. Travel insurance is the best way to protect yourself and your investment should a misfortune occur. There are several



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to choose from and not as expensive as you may think. Between 5 and 15 dollars a day will give you peace of mind before and during your trip. **Safety is our number one priority on each and every trip. However, the destination in which we operate has limited medical facilities and is an island off the coast of a third world country. Although we don't anticipate a medical emergency, travel insurance with medical and emergency evacuation coverage is highly recommended.*

Wi-Fi & Cell Phone Service

Internet service in the Galapagos Islands can be extremely limited. Some hotels have it, some don't. If a hotel or restaurant does have Wi-Fi, sometimes it works great, sometimes it doesn't work at all – it is best to assume you will not have an Internet connection. If you're desperate to find the Internet, we can usually help as long as the satellites are up and running. Some international phones work in the Galapagos, but again, Internet services (like 3G) are very, very slow. Visiting the Galapagos Islands is a great opportunity for a digital detox!

Security

Purse-snatchers and pickpockets love to prey on the unsuspecting and obvious tourist. It is best to leave your valuables, extra cash, and passport in room or hotel safe as a precaution, especially in Quito and Guayaquil, Ecuador. Please visit website for more information.

Safety

Safety is our first and foremost concern on all of our tours. However, participation in any and all activities is at your own risk. This is an adventurous tour in nature with a variety of activities that carry their own inherent risk. Always stick with the group during scheduled activities.

Altitude Sickness

The best way to adjust to altitude is to arrive early and let your body acclimatize. If you plan to spend time in Quito or the Andes, it can take 2 days for your body to adjust before taking part in any trekking or strenuous activities. Eat many small meals and avoid alcohol. Drink plenty of water. Staying hydrated is very important at altitude. Altitude sickness may cause headaches, nausea, dizziness, vomiting, insomnia and loss of appetite. Being in "great shape" has no impact on how you'll be impacted by altitude. If you are concerned about how the altitude may affect you, talk to your doctor before departing on your trip.

Motion sickness is also a potential concern on boat rides, which there will be a few of. If you have a history of motion sickness, please plan accordingly and bring any medications you use.

Age Restrictions

We have had travelers on our tours ranging from 9 months to 90 years old. We can easily customize private tours for all ages. Our scheduled tours tend to involve activities such as biking and kayaking. We find that children aged about 8 years and older are able to appreciate these activities best. We also occasionally require medical forms to be completed by doctors for travelers with pre-existing conditions or those that may be over 65 years of age. We evaluate every trip and booking individually, so please contact us if you have any concerns.

The Sternberg Museum trip has an age 21 and over restriction for all participants. If you have any questions about this restriction, please feel free to contact the Museum at 785-639-5249.



Galapagos Weather

January to June is known as the wet season. It's the hottest time of the year, particularly February through April. The weather is more tropical and there can be sudden downpours. The heavy rain turns the islands green with vegetation. The water is warmer and the sea is calmer because there are minimal surface winds.

July to December is known as the dry season. It's slightly cooler, especially in the evenings. There can be random light mist and showers and overcast skies. The southeasterly wind picks up and the sea isn't always so calm. The water cools down as the cold, nutrient rich Humboldt Current makes its way to Galapagos.

Air temperature:

January to June Air Temperature (77-88°F, 25-31°C)

July to December Air Temperature (70-79°F, 21-26°C)

Water temperature:

July to December Water Temperature (65-75°F, 18-24°C)

January to June Water Temperature (73-77°F, 23-25°C)

Andes Weather

Weather in Quito and the Andes will be much different than what you encounter in the Galapagos. In the Andes it can get quite cool in the temperate forest climate at night. Be sure to pack layers to allow for a wide range of temperature changes from day to night.

Air Temperature:

Oct to April Andes Air Temperature (40-75°F, 4-24°C)

May to Sept Andes Air Temperature (30-70°F, 0-21°C)

Rainfall:

Oct to April Andes Rainfall (8-18 rainy days/month)

May to Sept Andes Rainfall (2-7 rainy days/month)

What to Pack

Bags

Luggage: A durable duffle bag, backpack or suitcase with wheels weighing no more than 50lbs for travel to the Galapagos. You should be able to carry your luggage from a boat, across a street and up a flight of stairs. A duffle bag will be provided by us to protect your belongings. *An ID tag is very helpful.

Daypack: You will keep this with you during all the daily activities in the Galapagos, from snorkeling to hiking around Sierra Negra. An ideal pack will be well fitted with cushioned shoulder straps and a waist strap. It should be big enough to hold a raincoat, travel towel, camera, money, sunscreen, water bottles and a packed lunch.



Packing Light

As this tour starts in Quito, packing light can be an extra challenge. Cool and even cold nights are possible in the Andes as is misty, rainy weather. Conversely, in the Galapagos days are often hot and humid. You are required to move your luggage from pier to boat to hotel, upstairs, downstairs, on the bus and off the bus several times in the Galapagos. In other words, there's a lot of moving around. We're happy to help with the hauling, but if it's unnecessary, don't bring it and save your energy.

Laundry

There will be opportunities to do laundry on the trip, to help you pack light.

Essentials

Insect repellent: This is essential. A small travel size should be sufficient.

Sun block: SPF 50+ UVA/UVB broad spectrum that is waterproof, sweat resistant, etc.

*Sunscreen on the islands and in Quito is **very** expensive. Bring a couple bottles, as you will need it frequently, especially on the Galapagos Islands. Also, if you burn easily, go for the higher SPF sunscreen. SPF 50 should be as low as you go. We'd recommend erring on the side of caution and going higher. Tans are great. Sunburns are definitely not.*

Water bottle/bladder: One 1 liter, Two 500 milliliters... However you do it, a refillable water bottle is essential in our effort to reduce waste on all our tours. Water refills will be provided.

Personal first-aid kit: Your guide will carry a first-aid kit, but it's best to bring your own. Waterproof Band-Aids, blister protection/prevention, antibiotic cream, and an astringent at a minimum. If you're prone to seasickness or not sure, bring along some seasickness tablets just in case.

Toiletries: Bring everything you may need with you, especially prescription medicines. Limited supplies and brands are available in the Galapagos. Hotels usually provide a mini bar of soap only. If you'd like a washcloth or face towel, bring that along as well.

Clothing

Raincoat: Something with a hood that keeps you dry and is breathable as it can be very hot and humid when it rains in the Galapagos Islands.

Sweater/fleece: For cooler evenings and for when you get out of the water after a swim or snorkel in the Galapagos, and for underneath your raincoat if it is cold in the Andes.

Long-sleeve shirts (1-2): Lightweight sunscreen or SPF shirts are the best for boat trips and walks.

Long sleeve rash guard: If you get cold easily in the water, bring something to go under your wetsuit. This is also added sun protection while in the water.

T-shirts/tank tops (4-5): Shirts that dry quick are recommended. Ones with SPF are even better.

Trousers (1-2): Quick dry hiking pants for the islands and a casual pair for the cooler weather in Quito.

Shorts (3-4): Quick drying, comfortable, breathable.

The Essentials: Undies, socks and something to sleep in for the week.

Swimsuits (2): Suitable for being active in the water; kayaking and snorkeling.



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Shoes: Sturdy, comfortable shoes or boots when walking over lava rocks and potentially slippery or muddy trails in the Galapagos. All shoes should be broken in prior to the trip. Hiking boots are especially recommended for those with weak ankles.

Sandals: Active sandals such as Tevas or Keens that stay on your feet and dry quickly.

Recommended

Sun hat: Baseball cap, visor, sombrero - anything to protect and shield you from the powerful sun.

Sunglasses: Any pair will do. A strap might be useful and polarized sunglasses will help cut the glare from the water in the Galapagos, but that is not a necessity. *Strongly recommended by Sternberg staff.*

Dry bags: Some things you will want to keep dry: your camera, iPod, etc. Other things you will want to keep contained - like wet swimsuits, muddy boots, & damp towels. Roll-top dry bags are great and at the very least, tough Ziploc bags.

Beach / travel towel: A small, quick dry, travel towel really comes in handy after snorkeling.

Ear Plugs: For plane rides, potentially nasally bunkmates, and the roosters that live on Isabela Island.

Camera: Plus memory cards, extra batteries and a charger. Since half the wildlife is underwater, an underwater camera or housing is recommended so you don't miss great shots of life below the surface.

Jump/Thumb Drive: This is a great little tool to share photos among group members at the trip's end.

Optional

Casual clothes: If you'd like to change into something nicer than your hiking shorts for dinner, feel free.

Snacks & drink sachets: If you need something to tide you over or prefer flavored water.

Binoculars: Optional but great for viewing wildlife of the Galapagos Islands!

Hairdryer: Only some hotels have them.

Headlamp/flashlight: Nice to have at night and in the lava tunnel on Santa Cruz Island.

Adapter plug: 110V AC system is used in Ecuador. Canadian and US plugs work fine. Be sure to check if your devices handle the entire 110-240V range (modern iPhones, iPods and computer and camera cables do). If not, you may need a converter.

Alarm clock: There's no wake-up call for the 5am departures... Just kidding - about the 5am bit. However, you will need something that gets you up on time.

iPod and/or reading material: Totally optional, but great for the plane rides, hiking inspiration and boat trips.

Pre & Post Tour Information

Thinking about extending your stay in the Galapagos, Ecuador, or Peru? We would love to help you! [Click here to learn more about our Pre & Post Tour Activities.](#)



Additional Information

Accommodation

You can expect to stay in clean and comfortable hotels in cities and the Galapagos. Each place you visit delivers a truly fantastic experience, where you feel close to nature. With that said, most of your time will be spent outside exploring the magnificent surroundings. Usually, the only time you will be in your room is to shower and sleep! Every attempt is made to make sure your stay is comfortable and complete with hot water and air-conditioning. However, due the developmental stage of Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands, an invigorating cold shower may creep into the itinerary or you may have to sleep with a fan. This is not the norm but we like for you to know the possibilities up front. Many hotels also do not have TV's and the ones that do have very limited channels.

Food

TYPICAL MEAL EXPERIENCE – Al Fresco dining is the norm in the Galapagos and much of Ecuador. Expect open-air restaurants without air-conditioning. Breakfast usually consists of coffee or tea, juice, fresh fruit, bread with butter and jam, and eggs. This is the typical 'American Breakfast.' Lunch and Dinner usually include juice, rice or fries, fresh fish or chicken, and a small salad or soup. Vegetarians and special dietary requirements can be accommodated, however please keep in mind that the selection and availability of specialty meals is limited.

SNACKS – Snacks are not usually provided during the trip. If you need more than three square meals a day, or have any special dietary requirements, consider bringing oatmeal packets, energy bars or snacks that you like. As long as it is packaged and not capable of sprouting or growing, you should be fine to bring it into the islands. There are plenty of local snacks to sample as well.

DRINKS – We provide drinking water for the entire tour and juice at most meals. We do not provide alcoholic drinks, sodas or bottled drinks.

Travelers Against Plastic

Galakiwi supports TAP – Travelers Against Plastic. As a company we've taken the pledge to eliminate plastic waste and water bottles from our tours and office. You too can take the pledge! Be sure to bring along a refillable water bottle on your trip to the Galapagos. To minimize rubbish from our trips, we try to utilize reusable 5 gallon bottles of water 100% of the time. There will be a designated refill station at every island you can use to fill your personal water bottle. If you would like water with your meal, please bring your refillable bottle along and support us in this journey. Read more about TAP, and how you can take the pledge on our website.

Fitness & Health Requirements

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY – While you don't need to be an athlete, a reasonable degree of fitness is recommended. A four-six hour hike at altitude is the most rigorous day for the majority of people. You don't have to be an avid hiker but you do need to be comfortable walking around for that amount of time. Don't worry; we stop several times for water, rest breaks and photo opportunities.

EXPERIENCE – If you're not an experienced cyclist or snorkeler, no problem. This is not an extreme sport trip but we do enjoy experiencing places in an active fashion. The activities are designed to be fun for all and beginner friendly. Being a willing participant is most important. We'll go over all the details before each activity to make sure you're comfortable. Safety first.



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PARTICIPATION NOT REQUIRED – All the activities and events offer something new or exciting, but if you'd rather sit something out, or do your own thing for a while, by all means – it is your vacation!

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES – There are occasional opportunities to do optional activities like extra birding, kayaking, diving, biking or nature walks. We are happy to help with organizing when possible, but these activities are at your own risk and your own expense.

Transportation

We use a variety of transport in Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands –bus, taxi, private van, feet just to name a few. If you're prone to motion sickness, the windy road drives between towns in the Andes and ferry boat between islands may require you to plan ahead and take some medication.

Emergency Procedures

Active volcanoes exist in Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands, and tsunamis are always a (low) risk for the Galapagos. In the event of an evacuation, your guide will advise you of the proper procedures. In the event of an evacuation happening when the group is not together, head directly to your hotel to meet your group and guide. If that is not possible, follow instructions from the local authorities and contact our office to advise us of your whereabouts.

Emergency Contact

Our Galakiwi office and cell phone number are on the front page of this dossier, as is our email address. If any emergencies arise, which is unlikely, our Galakiwi office team will also be in Ecuador and the Galapagos during your tour. We can always be reached at info@galakiwi.com

Stay in Touch & Share Your Experiences

When your tour does come to an end and you travel onwards, or head home, we hope you've made some new friends and enjoyed your time with us! Our Social Media contact points are on the front page of this dossier, and we'd love to have you share your photos with us, don't be a stranger!

Testimonials and word of mouth is what keeps our business growing and putting smiles on travelers' faces, so help us spread the word! Don't forget to sign up for our email newsletter too, as you could win a free trip!

