

## **GALAPAGOS - WHAT TO BRING**

When packing for a trip to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands pack lightly!

The fewer things you bring, the more happy and enjoyable your trip will be. It is best to pack your clothes in a soft shell suitcase or duffel bag. Below are Avianca Airlines' regulations as to Luggage allowance for flights to the Galapagos Islands.

If you arrive in Ecuador via Quito, you should carry some warmer clothes. Temperatures in Quito range from the low of 9.5 °C (49 °F) during the night and up to 22 °C (72 °F) by noon.

A few packing suggestions for Galapagos:

### **SUN PROTECTION - FIRST AID:**

- Wide-brim hat
- Light cotton scarf to protect your neck
- Sunglasses
- PABA sunscreen (they say at least #15)
- Sun block. This is vital, the sun in Galapagos burns even on a cloudy day! Quito's sun also burns.
- Lip salve or ointment
- Insect repellent for the walks as some people are more susceptible to insect bites than others
- All boats carry Basic first aid, but guests should bring a supply of personal medicines.
- Dramamine (or equivalent), just in case you are prone to motion/sea sickness. It is recommended to start taking it before you embark on the boat for better results, but please consult with your pharmacist for directions.
- If you are a light sleeper bring some earplugs. Boats are much like small cities, with generators, engines, the day to day boat life activity involved and the water splashing against the hull. To those not used to ship life it may seem very distracting, and at night we do travel longer distances. Noise on boat the size of Beluga or Cachalote Explorer is unavoidable, it a part of boat-life. Insulation and steel walls keep the main engine room isolated, and noise contained, but there is always a degree of vibration.

### **MONEY & SECURITY:**

- Passport (original), please make sure that you have at least 6 months validity on your passport if not airlines usually will not let you travel to Ecuador

- Copy of passport to always keep it aside in the event you lose the original
- Passport case or pouch
- Credit cards are accepted on board both Beluga and Cachalot to pay for extras such as drinks and wetsuit rentals (we have a card reader machine that works through satellite connection when near Baltra).
- ATMs that accept international cards in Galapagos are from the local banks:
- Pichincha Bank (yellow), Banco Pacifico (blue). On Mainland Ecuador apart from Pichincha Bank and Banco Pacifico you can also go to Banco Guayaquil (purple), Banco Bolivariano (turquoise) and Banco Internacional (grey and orange).
- Ecuador's currency is the US dollar.
- A few key points about the US dollar in Ecuador:
  - In 1999 the US dollar became legal tender in Ecuador and replaced the sucre as the currency.
  - Today, only US dollar issued banknotes and coins are legal tender.
  - Ecuador now issues its own centavo monedas (cent coins): the 50-cent, 25-cent, 10-cent, 5-cent and 1-cent coin.
  - The US one dollar coin is widely used in Ecuador
  - We suggest you bring banknotes of smaller denomination such as singles, fives, tens and twenties as most venues will not accept banknotes larger than a twenty.
- Money Belt

### **CLOTHING:**

- Two pairs of walking shoes (one to keep dry, the other for wet landings - these can be those sandals that strap on).
- Sandals or flip flops. On board, we ask guests to go barefoot.
- Light cotton socks
- Shorts (a few pairs)
- One or two pairs of swimwear
- Lightweight long pants or skirt/dress
- Light short sleeve shirt
- Ling poncho, rain jacket, wind jacket
- Sweatshirts
- Long-sleeve light cotton shirt
- Light cotton pants

### **CAMERA GEAR:**

- Waterproof bag for gear, plenty of film or memory cards or tapes



- Extra batteries
- Zip Lock Bags
- Camera or video camera
- X-ray proof bag for film

#### **A FEW OTHER DETAILS:**

- For Quito, a light jacket for evenings is recommended
- Hand sanitizer, wet-naps and tissues also come in handy for long tours of Mainland Ecuador.
- Ecuador uses 110 volts and US plug points. On board all cabins have electrical US plug points 110 volts
- There is one outlet near the bridge also US plug point, but it is 220 volts
- We do provide biodegradable shampoo and soap on board
- Each cabin onboard has towels for bath use
- Beach towels are available
- Drinks are not included. Due to high taxes, duty imports plus the added logistics the prices for liquor drinks are a bit greater than Mainland Ecuador. We discourage bringing own alcohol on board, however, if you do we will add a cork fee. Below you will see our bar menu price list (this can change if taxes are raised)
- We provide purified water at all times and give each guest a water bottle they can refill at any time.
- During meals, we offer natural juice
- Complimentary coffee and tea is available at all times
- All meals are provided on board. We provide dietary needs (restrictions): vegetarian, gluten free plus any allergies you may have.
- We also provide snacks during the day
- Snorkel masks and fins are available and included in the cruise rate.
- Wetsuits are for rent, priced at US\$30 per person for the week's cruise. Wetsuit rentals are fully optional.
- Children's wetsuits, snorkel, masks and fins are available free of charge.

#### **GALAPAGOS FLIGHT INFORMATION AND TIMETABLES**

We work with Avianca Airlines Ecuador to fly our Beluga and Cachalote Explorer guests to Baltra Island Airport in the Galapagos. Baltra is our principal airport and mentioned below)

#### **FLIGHT NUMBERS & SCHEDULES FOR AVIANCA AIRLINES**



Avianca Airlines Flight # AV1632 departs from Quito (via Guayaquil) to Galapagos/Baltra

Avianca Airlines Flight # AV1633 departs from Galapagos/Baltra to Quito (via Guayaquil)

#### **QUITO-BALTRA-QUITO**

Departure from Quito at 06:50 am  
Arrival in Galapagos/Baltra at 09:20 am  
Departure from Galapagos at: 10:05 am  
Arrival in Quito at: 14:50 pm

#### **GUAYAQUIL-BALTRA-QUITO**

Departure from Guayaquil at: 8:25 am  
Arrival in Galapagos/Baltra at 09:20 am  
Departure from Galapagos at: 10:05 am  
Arrival in Quito at: 14:50 pm

#### **QUITO-BALTRA-GUAYAQUIL**

Departure from Quito at: 06:50 am  
Arrival in Galapagos/Baltra at: 09:20 am  
Departure from Galapagos: 10:05 am  
Arrival in Guayaquil at: 12:55 pm

#### **GUAYAQUIL-BALTRA-GUAYAQUIL**

Departure from Guayaquil at: 8:25 am  
Arrival in Galapagos/Baltra at 09:20 am  
Departure from Galapagos at: 10:05 am  
Arrival in Guayaquil at: 12:55 pm

#### **NOTES ON 6 DAY ITINERARIES THAT START AT SAN CRISTOBAL:**

There are only two exceptions where we use San Cristobal Island airport as the port of entry only: the 6 day itineraries of "Chatham" on Beluga and the "Hood" itinerary on Cachalote Explorer. Please consult with us for information on which airline we use for those San Cristobal inbound flights. At the end of these itineraries guests will fly out with the Avianca Airlines flight scheduled for all itineraries.

#### **INFORMATION ABOUT LUGGAGE ALLOWANCE ON AVIANCA AIRLINES ECUADOR**

Weight for checked luggage: 1 piece with a maximum weight of 23 kg (50 lbs)  
Dimensions: The total sum of the external dimensions (height + length + width) may not exceed 158 centimeters (62 inches).

Carry On Luggage: Take one carry-on baggage with a maximum weight of 10 kilos (22 lb), with exterior dimensions (length + height + width) that do not exceed 115 cm (45 inches). You may also take an additional item - personal item.

These policies may change.

For luggage we suggest a soft shell bag (duffel bag) or a semi-soft shell bag, for easier storage in your cabin on board the Beluga and the Cachalote Explorer.

## **TRANSPORTATION QUITO TO AND FROM AIRPORT**

Rates mentioned are for 2019

The ride is about 40 minutes long, the highway rarely is congested and traffic flows.

Once in the city proper there can be traffic during rush hour times.

The airport is about 40 km away from the city.

Free shuttle service to and from the airport is only offered by the Wyndham Airport hotel or the Garden San Jose Hotel due to their proximity to the airport.

For city hotels a separate transfer would have to be purchased.

Private transfer rates in Quito are quite high, drivers and guides charge a very high rate.

### **Examples:**

#### **PRIVATE TRANSFER WITH GUIDE**

Private transfer with English speaking guide the cost would be US \$78 per person per transfer if only two guests. The rate would go down to US \$57 per person per transfer if it were a group of 6 people. However your guide will meet you at the exit area from customs and offer you information about the city and answer any questions you may have.

#### **PRIVATE TRANSFER DRIVER ONLY**

Private transfer service with only a driver (Spanish speaking only) the costs would be US \$38 per person if only two of you, and goes down to US \$25 per person per transfer if there were 6 of you.

#### **TAXI OPTION**

Taxi hire is also another alternative and much more cost friendly. The ride to the city varies from \$25 to \$30 per ride depending on which part of Quito you are heading.

Most hotels are in the sectors of: La Mariscal, La Floresta, El Centro (Historic Colonial Quito) and La Carolina area (the modern part of the city) - the ride is roundly about \$27.

These are fixed rates. You would hire them directly at the TAXI booth right across from international arrival exit from customs. The airport is very small, you can't miss it. You pay the attendant at their kiosk/booth the taxi ride rate, they do accept credit cards. Then you will be escorted outside to your cab and driver.



This is the only taxi company available at the airport.

**The airline information provided below is only to be used as a guideline, all flights are subject to change and frequencies may vary depending on season. Thank you.**

### **AIRLINES TO QUITO**

Quito has direct flights from: Atlanta, Amsterdam, Bogota, Fort. Lauderdale, Houston, Lima, Madrid, Miami, Mexico City, Panama City, San Salvador and Santiago.

- Aeromexico 1 - 2 times a day from Mexico City
- American Airlines twice a day from Miami
- AVIANCA Airlines 1 - 2 times a day from San Salvador, Lima and Bogota
- Copa Airlines flies 2 - 3 times a day from Panama City
- Delta Air Lines daily from Atlanta
- JetBlue Airways daily from Fort Lauderdale
- Iberia 7- 10 times a week from Madrid
- KLM daily from Amsterdam
- LATAM a few times a week from Lima, Santiago (via Guayaquil you can fly to Madrid, New York).
- TAME airlines a few times a week from Lima, Bogota and Cali
- United Airlines daily from Houston

### **AIRLINES TO GUAYAQUIL**

To Guayaquil there are direct flights to: Amsterdam, Bogota, Fort. Lauderdale, Lima, Madrid, Miami, New York, Panama City, San Salvador and Santiago.

- Air Europa flies a few times a week from Madrid
- American Airlines twice a day from Miami
- AVIANCA flies from Bogota, Lima, San Salvador often daily flights to each city.
- Copa Airlines flies up to twice a day from Panama City
- JetBlue daily from Fort Lauderdale
- KLM daily from Amsterdam (via Quito)
- LATAM flies from New York, Madrid, Lima and Santiago most daily.
- TAME flies from Fort Lauderdale

## **INFORMATION ABOUT CRUISE AND BOAT LIFE**

### **THE GALAPAGOS NATIONAL PARK**

Please remember that you are visiting a National Park and are requested to follow the regulations established by the Park. The instructions you receive from your guide are intended for the preservation and conservation of this World Heritage site.

#### **The basic rules are:**

- Stay on the marked trails
- Stay with your group and guide at all times
- The following activities are prohibited within the Galapagos National Park:
  - Touching or feeding the animals
  - Taking anything from the islands
  - Littering the islands
  - Smoking on the islands
- Please avoid getting too close to the animals
- Clean the soles of your shoes before disembarking on the islands or before embarking into the panga to prevent the transportation and introduction of endemic seeds from one island to another.
- The shore visits are between 6am and 6pm.

### **ISLAND EXCURSIONS**

Our yachts anchor off shore at two sites per day. The sailors ferry our passengers to the landing sites in “pangas” (local expression for dinghy). These landings are either “wet” or “dry”. At wet landings you will step from the panga into the water and wade to shore. The guide and sailor are there to assist you at all landings.

Once on shore, you will follow marked trails set up by the National Park. Your guide will lead these excursions, interpreting and explaining the natural history as you walk along. The shore visits are done at a leisurely pace, allowing plenty of time to enjoy and photograph the amazing wildlife and scenery. You will spend 2 to 4 hours at each site. There is often an opportunity to swim and snorkel after the morning visit and sometimes before the afternoon excursion.

- Be sure to carry along:
  - Hat
  - Sunglasses
  - Sunscreen lotion
  - Plenty of memory capacity or film and batteries
  - Bottle of water

## **BRIEFINGS**

The guide gives the briefings in the evenings, after dinner. He/she will describe in detail the activities of the following day, talking about the animal and plants to be seen, etc.

## **ABOUT OUR YACHTS**

### **Safety**

On your first day aboard, the guide will host a welcome briefing, which includes instructions related to your security while on the yacht. Please be sure to check exactly where the life vests are located in your cabin. Memorize your way to the deck in the unlikely event of an emergency. Please make sure that your guide has answered all questions you have pertaining to your security while on board.

Life vests are provided for guests to use while riding the pangas to/from the islands and the yacht. Please wear them at all times for your safety. Please hold on firmly to the guide or crewmember's hand while embarking or disembarking because the boat ladder, panga and the rocks on shore can be wet and slippery. Be careful when walking on deck while the boat is moving.

### **Smoking on Board**

Smoking is not allowed inside the yachts. There are designated smoking areas on deck and the crew will give you an ashtray. Please do not throw the cigarette butts overboard.

### **Air Conditioning**

The yachts are fully air-conditioned.

### **Water**

There are two water-makers aboard each yacht. These provide sufficient fresh water for daily use. Nevertheless, please try to save as much water as possible. When taking a shower, please turn off the faucets while soaping and shampooing. There is a water dispenser in the saloon, in order to lessen waste in the islands we ask you to refill your small water bottle as needed.

### **Toilets**

Keep in mind that marine plumbing is not the same as in our houses and can clog easily (...very unpleasant for all...). Please throw toilet paper, preservatives, tampons, sanitary napkins, dental floss, etc. into the wastebasket provided beside the toilet. This basket will be cleaned several times a day. Thank you for your cooperation.





## **CRUISE ITINERARY**

The itineraries are set by the National Park. The only changes permitted are because of reasons beyond our control.

## **PAYMENTS ON BOARD**

We only accept American cash dollars and credit card payments for the bar bill.

## **COMMENT CARDS**

At the end of the cruise you will be given a comment card to fill out. We appreciate the time you take to fill these out. Your comments and suggestions are valuable to us; it is through these that we can improve our services.

## **TIPPING AND GRATUITIES**

This is a very sensitive matter for us. We are often asked what gratuity is appropriate to leave for the guides and crewmembers. We prefer that our guests reward our crew based on their performance. The following is just a guideline based on the average of what has been left in the past for the crew and guide, if they have performed to your expectation, and their service has been excellent: approximately US\$160 per person per week for the whole crew (to be divided between the crewmembers), and US \$40 per person per week for the guide. Therefore the total tip would be US\$200 per person.

Please understand that this is a suggestion: tipping and gratuities are a very personal and cultural matter. The above guideline may not apply to family groups. Please deposit the gratuities for the crewmembers inside the box provided for this purpose. The guide is handed his/her gratuity separately.

## **CHECK OUT**

On your last day, you will have an early morning excursion, followed by breakfast. Please bring your luggage to the main saloon as soon as possible. Make sure that you don't leave anything behind; check all drawers and closets carefully. Your guide will take care of the check in at the airport.

Happy Travels!