

## PREPARING FOR ECUADOR AND THE GALÁPAGOS

Preparing and packing for a trip is part of the excitement: it is when your holiday truly begins to take shape. At the same time, it can raise questions. Rest assured: we are here to support you every step of the way.

This document brings together essential information for your journey to Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands: entry requirements, safety, health considerations, money matters, packing lists, Galápagos access procedures, and practical guidance grounded in our professional expertise and personal travel experience. It may feel extensive, but every section adds value to help you travel with confidence, and many of the recommendations apply beyond this destination.

If you see anything we should add or refine, we would be delighted to hear from you.

*This content has been prepared with the utmost care; however, it is subject to change without notice and does not imply legal responsibility.*

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### 1. Overview — Important formalities

#### Passport

Must be valid for at least six months upon entry and in good condition. Additionally, keep a good color copy stored separately.

#### Visa

Most nationalities: no visa required; tourist stamp (30/60/90 days) issued automatically upon arrival.

## 2. Formalities' checklist before traveling:

- ✓ Scan your key travel documents and save them securely in an encrypted cloud, app, or email account so you can access clear copies at any time if needed
- ✓ Do not forget essential passwords (preferably encrypted), key phone numbers, travel insurance details, family doctor information, and 24/7 credit card hotlines.
- ✓ Share your Ecuador-based travel agency's emergency contacts with trusted family or friends at home.
- ✓ Complete your online check-in.
- ✓ Have your contact details at hand for your guide, travel consultant, hotels, and your tour itinerary.
- ✓ Charge all electronic devices before departure.
- ✓ Back up your mobile phone and, if travelling with it, also your laptop or tablet.
- ✓ Label your luggage clearly. We recommend colorful, durable, and easily adjustable [luggage belts/straps](#) (on a carousel filled with nearly identical bags, they can save you time and frustration). Secure your suitcase with a (combination) lock.
- ✓ Take a photo of your suitcase.
- ★ **Tip:** Snap a picture of your checked luggage at the airline counter, ideally showing the baggage tag; this greatly simplifies identification and claims in case of delay, misrouting, or loss.

## 3. Medical condition

Your journey may take you to remote areas like the rainforest or the Galápagos Islands. We encourage you to speak with your doctor if you manage a medical condition that could influence your travel experience or that of the other guests.

## 4. Insurance

No personal insurance is included. Never travel without insurance. Strongly recommended are: health, accident, trip interruption, cancellation, repatriation, and baggage delay/loss. Bring insurance documents and emergency contacts.

## 5. Safety

Ecuador is usually a comfortable and welcoming destination for most travelers. As with trips to any major city around the world, taking a few sensible precautions helps ensure you feel confident and enjoy your stay.

- ! Carry backup copies of your passport, cards, and emergency contacts.
- ! Keep valuable, discreet, and out of sight.
- ! Use ATMs with care: protect your PIN and decline offers of help.
- ! For evening out, stay alert, watch your drinks, and carry a copy of your passport.
- ! After dark, favor taxis or ride-hailing services and stick to lively, well-lit streets.
- ! During our tours, we always recommend our guides return before nightfall for safety and comfort.
- ! Use the hotel safe and check it thoroughly before departing.

★ **Helpful trick:** put your room key or a shoe inside so you cannot forget to empty it.

## 6. Water & Food

Ecuadorian cuisine stands out for its diversity and authentic flavors, with options ranging from traditional dishes to international cuisine. Its basic ingredients include rice, potatoes, vegetables, corn, plantains, fish, chicken, and meat. Main meals, especially lunch, often include a soup as a starter.

- Give your body time to adjust to new ingredients and spices, and enjoy fresh fruit after thorough washing and peeling.
- Follow standard precautions regarding water and ice.
- Avoid drinking tap water; for brushing teeth and showering, generally it's fine.
- ★ Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly, and use disinfectant gel or wipes.

## 7. The Money

Official currency in Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands: since 2000, the US dollar (USD). Bills up to USD 20 are preferred; USD 50 and 100 bills are often refused.

In addition to US banknotes and coins, there are national cent coins, easily recognizable by clearly legible numbers (valid only in Ecuador).

Credit cards are widely accepted. Ideally, carry a second card as backup. Your card should never be taken away; the card reader must be visible or brought to your table. Card fees in Ecuador are high, usually included, but for larger amounts and in Galápagos, an additional 5-10% may be charged.

★ For markets, small souvenir shops, taxis, tips, etc., you will need sufficient cash.

## ATMs

Widely available. Exercise caution when withdrawing cash: ensure that no one stands too close to you (including security personnel), and do not accept assistance from third parties.

! Block lost or stolen cards immediately.

! Notify credit card providers of your travel plans to avoid cards being blocked due to unfamiliar or overseas transactions.

### 8. Tax

A 15% VAT (IVA – *Impuesto al Valor Agregado*) applies to all goods and services. In mid-range and higher restaurants and hotels, an additional 10% service charge applies (total 25%).

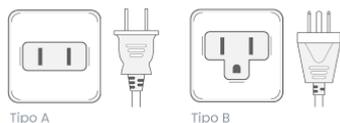
These taxes are sometimes not included in listed prices. Look for “precio incluye impuestos” (tax is included) or “no incluye IVA y servicios” (15% IVA and 10% service are not included).

### 9. Internet & Phone, Electricity

Mobile phone and charger are essential: for photos, videos, social media, and staying in touch with loved ones. Most hotels in Ecuador offer free Wi-Fi. Local SIM and eSIM cards are inexpensive.

★ **Tip:** international data plan or E-SIMs such as [Airolo](#), [Holafly](#), [Nomad](#), or similar are very practical for staying connected throughout your trip

★ Also, remember to bring all necessary charging cables and travel adapters for your camera, mobile phone, laptop, Smartwatch, Kindle, and other electronic devices. In Ecuador and on the Galapagos Islands, the same flat plug standard as in the US is used (110 V).



### 10. Sports and Adventure activities

Choose reputable, licensed local operators for activities such as canopy tours, rafting, biking, and horseback riding. Mountain and hiking tours should only be undertaken with certified local guides.

### 11. Vaccinations

Currently, no vaccinations are mandatory for travel to Ecuador. Nevertheless, we strongly advise consulting your physician well in advance of departure. Depending on your country of origin and recent travel history (ex., arrivals from Brazil during an epidemic period), a Yellow Fever vaccination may be required. In general, it is advisable to ensure that routine and travel-related immunizations are up to date, including Hepatitis A and B, Typhoid, Polio, Influenza, and eventually Rabies.

! Vaccine information may change at short notice and must always be verified before travel.

### 12. Tipping

Gratuities are always voluntary and at the discretion of each visitor. However, in Ecuador, they form part of the local tourism culture and are received with special appreciation when they reflect a positive experience. We kindly ask you to consider this local custom, particularly since tourism professionals work extended hours, including weekends and holidays, to ensure your journey is memorable.

#### ★ **Indicative guidelines for Mainland Ecuador:**

- Tour guides:
  - Families or small groups USD 15–25 per day per group/ Medium or large groups USD 10-15 per person/day
- Private drivers:
  - Families or small groups USD 10-15 per day per group/ Medium or large groups USD 2-3 per person/day
  - Airport transfer: USD 2-3 per person in the vehicle
- Hotel porters: approx. USD 1 per piece
- Upscale restaurants: 2.5–5% of the bill, preferably in cash
- Taxis: rounding up the fare is customary, or add USD 0.50-1

★ Gratuities remain voluntary and may be adjusted based on service satisfaction and group size. If outstanding, it's OK to give a little extra per person.

#### **Indicative guidelines for Galápagos cruises: Ecuador:**

- Galápagos National Park guide: USD 15–20 per person per day (more if you like and more on luxury ships)
  - Yacht/ship crew (mid-range ship): from USD 25-30 per guest per day (will be split among all crew members)
- ★ It is customary to be collected at the end of the cruise in envelopes designated for the guide and for the crew.
- ★ Values may be adjusted upward for exceptional service or on higher-category vessels. If it was outstanding, of course, it's welcome to give more.

### 13. PACKING FOR ECUADOR



Packing for a trip is a special moment; it is the moment when you feel the vacation has truly begun. It may come with a lot of joy, but also with a touch of anticipation and occasional stress, and that is exactly where we step in.

We have prepared a practical set of recommendations to support your preparation. You will also find a downloadable checklist ready for use.

Rest assured, we are here to support you every step of the way.

Enjoy planning!

Ecuador offers very contrasting climates: tropical coast, humid Amazon, temperate Andes, and cold at night and at altitude. Travel light, wearing layers, and add a change of clothes to your carry-on luggage.

In high-altitude natural areas such as Cotopaxi or Quilotoa, a wool hat and scarf may even be necessary. We recommend the classic "layered look": several lightweight clothing layers that are flexible, functional, easy to combine, and adaptable to changing weather conditions.

- ★ Pack with intention, as light and practical as possible.
- ★ Your essentials will differ based on the regions you will explore within Ecuador.
- ★ As a trusty precaution, include one complete change of clothes in your carry-on in case your checked baggage is delayed, which is particularly valuable on a short Galápagos or Amazon itinerary.
- ★ Finally, and most importantly, take with you what cannot be packed: positivity, adaptability, joy, a relaxed mindset, and the spirit of discovery.

### 14. Packing list for Ecuador, also as a printable PDF

Please adapt the following list to your personal needs, and feel free to let us know if anything is missing or if you have tried-and-tested special tips to share.

#### Luggage:

Best kept practical and lightweight:

- Suitcase, duffel bag, or backpack (lockable for flights), daypack
- Rain covers for backpacks or duffel bags to keep them dry and clean at airports, in canoes, or on speedboats
- Lightweight, foldable bag to store part of your luggage at the hotel during overnight excursions
- Money belt or neck pouch for cash and passport (ideally with RFID protection)
- Small coin purse for loose change, to have it easily accessible in a daypack or jacket pocket, etc.
- Smart organizers: packing cubes for practical sorting and quick access, and/or compression or vacuum travel bags
- Small combination lock: ideal for added security without the hassle of keys
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★ Always carry a few extra plastic bags (liquid bags with a zipper) in your carry-on/hand luggage.

#### Documents:

- Passport
- Flight ticket, Travel itinerary, booking confirmations (vouchers), and contact details of your agency
- Vaccination record, Insurance documents (important: include emergency contacts)
- Optional: diving certification
- Credit card(s), cash
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★ Digitize all documents and store them in the cloud, email, and on your mobile phone.

#### Clothing:

- Warm fleece or softshell jacket
- Rain protection: rain jacket (breathable and packable), rain cape/poncho, optionally an umbrella
- Lightweight sweater or cardigan, T-shirts, shirts, blouses
- Long and/or quick-drying (trekking) trousers; depending on the destination, also shorts, optional: belt
- Thermal underwear (as a layering piece for warmth and/or as a warmer pair of pyjamas in highland hotels)

- Sufficient underwear and socks (for rain and cloud forest: good athletic socks not slipping inside rubber boots)
- Pyjama
- Swimwear
- Depending on the type of tour/accommodations, a smart casual shirt or blouse will provide added comfort during dinner
- ★ Tip: A pair of dark trekking pants is an ideal option to mix and match without adding extra weight to your luggage
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★ Our recommendation: Storing clothing in packing cubes or compression bags permits easy packing and quick access.

**Shoes:**

Often an uncertain theme and always space-consuming. Depending on your activities and itinerary, a good pair of well-worn trainers or sneakers may be sufficient for comfortable walking in cities and markets, as well as for light hikes, even on uneven natural terrain.

- Lightweight, sturdy hiking or trekking shoes — also well broken in
- Optional: (trekking) sandals (such as Teva or Keen, etc.)
- Optional: flip-flops or shower sandals for hotel rooms, pools, saunas
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**Personal hygiene:**

- Toiletry bag, ideally water-resistant and suitable for hanging
- Shampoo, soap, and conditioner in travel size (solid versions are ideal, as they do not leak). Depending on the hotel category, these are provided as standard bathroom amenities
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss
- Cotton swabs, nail care set, tweezers
- For men: razor
- Hairbrush, comb, hair ties/clips
- Makeup (keep it minimal, only the essentials). Tip: compressed disposable wipes for makeup removal
- Facial hydration cream
- For women: sufficient menstrual hygiene products. Changes in altitude and climate can affect your cycle.
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★ Shower and bath towels: provided in most bathrooms. Tip: pack a small microfiber towel or disposable towels

★ Hair dryer: available in many accommodations

**Excellent sun protection:**

UV radiation is extremely high, even on overcast days!

- Sunglasses
- Head covering (!)
- Sunscreen and lip balm (!) with a high sun protection factor.
- After-sun care, lotion for sunburn relief
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★ A lightweight, long-sleeved shirt provides additional sun protection.

**Personal travel medical kit:**

Medications are easily available on mainland Ecuador (unlike in the Galápagos), often without a prescription; however, you should bring the following with you:

- An adequate supply of any daily medication you take, plus a copy of the doctor's prescription
- Remedies for sore throat
- Medicines for headaches, pain, fever, and colds

- Treatment for diarrhea and for constipation
- Medicines for nausea and motion sickness
- Wound-healing ointment, pain-relief cream or gel, ointment for sunburn
- Disinfectant, plasters and bandages, blister plasters, *Steri-Strips* for cuts and wounds
- Disposable gloves and face mask(s)
- Altitude sickness (requires some acclimatization. Drink plenty of fluids, avoid alcohol; aspirin may help)
- Ev. prescribed by your doctor: broad-spectrum antibiotics and, especially for ladies, medication for bladder infections
- Treatments for insect bites and itching
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**! Regular prescription medication must always be carried in your carry-on/hand luggage!**

**Miscellaneous:**

- Writing materials, journal, reading material, etc.; one pen is always kept in your hand or daypack
- Dry bags, larger and smaller plastic or fabric bags for small items, wet or dirty laundry, etc.
- Optional: sweets or small souvenirs from your home country
- Good flashlight, or even better, a headlamp, with spare batteries
- Hand sanitizer (can also be purchased inexpensively on site)
- A small bag or piece of detergent (also to buy inexpensively locally); some laundry washing can help pack lighter
- Glasses or contact lenses, spare glasses or lenses, cleaning products
- Optional: Headphones (for music and optionally noise-cancelling)
- Refillable water bottle
- Optional: pocket knife (important: never pack in carry-on/hand luggage when flying!)
- Paper tissues
- Optional: Foldable walking sticks
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★ Tip: multifunctional neck gaiter (Buff) is useful as a scarf, hat, headband, face covering, etc.

**! Disposable mask(s): always keep at least one in your carry-on or hand luggage.** We recommend always using a mask in situations of poor air quality on flights, or when coughing or flu-like symptoms are present (whether your own or within the group).

**Photography & Electronic:**

- Mobile phone and charger with adapter
- Camera
- A good cleaning kit, as everything gets really dirty
- Optional: laptop with charger, smartwatch, and its charger
- Chargers (Ecuador uses 110 V with US flat plugs), spare battery, portable battery bank
- Sufficient SD cards (you will take thousands of photos, so it's better to have some too much than one too few!)
- Tip: regularly back up your photos online (e.g., Google Photos, iCloud, Drive, etc.)
- Optional: binoculars
- Water-resistant bags for camera and accessories (!)
- Drones are prohibited in the Galápagos and in mainland national parks.
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★ E-Sims, such as [Airolo](#), [Holafly](#), [Nomad](#), or similar, are very practical for having internet access throughout your trip.

**15. Additional items for the Amazon:**

- Long, quick-drying trousers (no jeans; they never dry)
- Lightweight, long-sleeved cotton or trekking shirts/blouses
- Good cotton or sport socks: ideal for rubber boots (short socks slip under the heel and cause blisters)



- Lightweight rain poncho (inexpensive locally and often available to borrow in lodges)
- Swimwear
- Flashlight: ideally a headlamp, with spare batteries
- Insect repellent with tropical protection, anti-itch cream, optional: insect-repellent spray for clothing
- Waterproof protection bags for the camera and mobile phone (!)
- Plastic bags in various sizes for small items, wet laundry, etc.
- Water bottle
- Optional: Wildlife guide
- Recommended: Binoculars
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- ★ Depending on the lodge category, you may wish to bring smart casual clothing, such as a summer dress, shirt, or polo shirt for evening dinners.
- ★ Rubber boots and plastic ponchos are provided at most lodges (boots usually available up to size 45).

**A small note on our own behalf:**

♥ You are welcome to bring well-preserved clothing, toys, books in English and Spanish for kids, or school and art supplies. We work with numerous families and foundations that greatly appreciate such donations, and we are happy to take care of their distribution.

For any questions or for personal advice, we are always happy to assist you.

With warmest regards,

**Cometa Travel**

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## 16. GALAPAGOS

### 17. Passport, documents, and checklist:

- ✓ You must bring the original passport
- ✓ TCT Card for USD 20
- ✓ USD 200 in cash for National Park entrance (if not prepaid)
- ✓ Returning flight: printed or saved an E-Ticket on your phone
- ✓ **Galápagos Biosafety Sworn Declaration Form QR code:** either printed or saved on your mobile phone. Registration must be submitted up to 72 hours before your flight <https://siabg.abgalapagos.gob.ec/declaraciones/nueva> Please, take care to correctly fill in the date you will enter the Galapagos.
- ✓ Voucher and confirmations of your bookings, printed or as e-documents on your phone
- ✓ Insurance documents (it's not mandatory, but recommended to have insurance).
- ! Be at the airport at least 2 ½ hours before the scheduled flight departure!

### Money in the Galápagos:

The official currency in Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands is the US dollar.

You will need USD 200 in cash for the National Park entrance fee, as well as for additional expenses on board (e.g., drinks, wetsuit rental, tips for the crew and guide). Many souvenir shops in Puerto Ayora and at the airport accept credit cards. Cabins are equipped with small lockers for cash and valuables.

ATMs are available in the Galápagos in a few inhabited locations (but having enough cash is still important).

★ On smaller vessels, credit card payments are not possible; this option is available only on higher-category ships.

### Tipping

Gratuities are always voluntary and at the discretion of each visitor. However, in Galapagos, they form part of the local tourism culture.

### Indicative guidelines for Galápagos cruises: Ecuador:

- Galápagos National Park guide: USD 15–20 per person per day (more if you like and more on luxury ships)
- Yacht/ship crew (mid-range ship): from USD 25-30 per guest per day (will be split among all crew members)
- ★ It is customary to be collected at the end of the cruise in envelopes designated for the guide and for the crew.
- ★ Values may be adjusted upward for exceptional service or on higher-category vessels. If it was outstanding, of course, it's OK to give more.

### Insurance for the Galápagos:

Same as on the mainland, personal travel insurance is required. Never travel without a comprehensive one. Please ensure that your policy covers medical emergencies, accidents, trip cancellation, delays, hospital stays, repatriation, and baggage.

### Baggage included on flights to the Galápagos:

1 checked bag up to 23 kg plus 1 piece of carry-on/hand luggage (max. 8–10 kg) when booked through us; otherwise, according to the conditions of your ticket. Interinsular flights have lower limits.

### Communication in the Galápagos:

Due to the geographic location of the islands, there is generally no continuous mobile phone or internet connection during the cruise.

Most larger ships offer internet access via Starlink satellite, although it may be unstable or overloaded. It is best to inform family and friends in advance that you may be offline for some days.

★ Tip: eSIMs such as [Airolo](#), [Holafly](#), [Nomad](#), or similar are extremely practical for having internet throughout your trip.

### In the water:

If you are accustomed to using your own snorkel mask, you are welcome to bring it with you. Otherwise, ships provide masks, snorkels, and fins (included or available for rent, depending on the tour).

Depending on the season, the water can be pleasantly warm or quite cold. Wetsuits are loaned on board or available for rent at an additional cost.

! Recommendation: If you arrive only one or two days before your Galápagos trip, pack one set of emergency clothing and a swimsuit in your carry-on/hand luggage.

★ A lightweight, long-sleeved shirt, optionally with UV protection, provides additional sun protection.

## 18. What to pack for the Galápagos, also as a printable PDF

Because shopping choices on the islands are limited, good preparation ahead of time is essential for a smooth trip. Don't worry! The checklist below will set you up comfortably, and you can also download it as a free printable PDF. If you will also explore Quito and the Andes, or the Amazon, remember to bring clothing suited to those different climates.



**Luggage:**

Best kept practical and lightweight!

- Suitcase, duffel bag, or backpack
- Daypack, preferably light, comfortable, and waterproof
- Smart organizers: packing cubes for easy sorting and quick access, and/or vacuum travel bags
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**Clothing:**

- Lightweight and quick-dry trekking trousers, leggings
- Comfortable shorts (ideally with side pockets), summer dress
- T-shirts, lightweight and quick-dry blouses or shirts, quick-drying sportswear, tops
- A light sweater, hoodie, or fleece (especially for the dry, cool season (May/June to December)
- Lightweight waterproof jacket and/or
- Light rain cape/poncho; ideal, lighter if it is too warm for a rain jacket, and protects the backpack and camera bag at the same time (especially for the warm and wet season from January-May)
- Lightweight pajama, sufficient underwear, and socks
- Swimsuits (at least 2)
- Optional/recommended for higher category cruise: a smart casual shirt, blouse, or summer dress for evening dinners
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- ★ Long-sleeved swim shirt (rash guard) for additional sun protection or to use under wetsuits

**Shoes:**

- For excursions, good sports shoes are fine if you feel comfortable for light trekking and rougher terrain
- Optional: lightweight hiking shoes
- For beach outings or walks on trails: comfortable trekking sandals (e.g., Teva, Keen, etc.)
- On board: lightweight, non-slip slippers or flip-flops
- Optional: flip-flops for the beach
- .....
- .....

**Personal toiletries:**

- Toiletry bag, preferably water-resistant and ideally suitable for hanging
- Shampoo, soap, conditioner (solid versions are ideal as they do not leak). Most yachts provide it as bathroom amenities
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss
- Cotton swabs, nail care set, tweezers
- For men: razor
- Hairbrush, comb, hair ties/clips
- Makeup (small quantities, only the essentials). Tip: compressed disposable wipes for makeup removal
- Facial hydration cream
- For women: sufficient menstrual hygiene products. Changes in altitude and climate can affect your cycle.
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- ★ Shower and bath towels: provided in most bathrooms. Tip: Pack a small microfiber towel. Same for hair dryer.

**Excellent and enough sun protection:**

**UV radiation is extremely high, even on overcast days!**

- Sunglasses
- Head covering (!)
- Sunscreen and lip balm (!) with a high sun protection factor, after-sun care, lotion for sunburn relief
- .....

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★ A lightweight, long-sleeved shirt, ideally with UV protection, provides additional sun protection.

**Personal travel medical kit:**

- An adequate supply of any prescription medication you take and, if applicable, a copy of the doctor's prescription
- Vaccination record
- Remedies for sore throat
- Medication for headaches, pain, fever, and colds
- Treatment for diarrhea and constipation
- Medicines for nausea and motion sickness
- Wound-healing ointment, pain-relief cream or gel, ointment for sunburn
- Disinfectant, plasters and bandages, blister plasters, Steri-Strips for cuts and wounds
- If prescribed by your doctor: broad-spectrum antibiotics and, especially for ladies, medication for bladder infections
- Insect repellent and treatments for insect bites and itching (especially rainy season, January-May)
- .....
- .....

- ! Regular prescription medication must always be carried in your carry-on/hand luggage!
- ! Disposable mask(s): always keep one in your carry-on/hand luggage to use when poor air quality on flights, coughing, or flu-like symptoms (your own or within the group).

**Photography:**

- Camera with waterproof protection
- Plenty of memory cards and spare batteries (you will take many more photos than usual! Very much!)
- Chargers and adapters (110 V, US flat plugs), lens cleaning products
- Optional: underwater camera/GoPro — a recommended extra for snorkelers and divers
- Recommended: binoculars
- Drones: prohibited in the Galápagos and in national parks on the mainland
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- ! Flash photography is strictly prohibited on the island.
- ! Please respect the mandatory distances of 2 meters from the camera to the wildlife.
- ! A special permit from the National Park authorities is required for commercial photography.

**Miscellaneous:**

- Personal travel medical kit and any regular medication
- Remedies for seasickness: tablets, vitamin C, ginger, special patches, etc.
- Insect repellent (especially between February and June)
- Book, diary, writing materials
- Bags for dirty laundry, wet items, or waterproof protection
- Optional: small gifts or sweets from your home country for the crew
- Spare glasses or contact lenses, cleaning products
- Optional: small bag or bit of detergent for occasional hand washing; washing some clothes helps packing lighter
- Good idea, especially for hot seasons: mineral or electrolyte tablets
- Optional: Your own snorkel mask
- Water bottle
- Optional: Wildlife guide
- Optional: Foldable walking sticks
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- .....

**What you normally do not need to bring if you have booked cruises or tours:**

- × Wetsuit and snorkel equipment (except your own mask)

- ✗ Shower and bath towels, hair dryer
- ✗ Jewelry and other urban life valuables

## 19. Galápagos – FAQs

(\*) *subject to change at any time without prior notification*

- ? Does sunscreen need to be reef-safe? Not mandatory, but strongly recommended.
- ? Do I need to pay the National Park fee in cash? YES, USD 200, ideally in cash.
- ? Credit card payments: Possible on larger ships.
- ? May I bring my own alcohol on board? Generally allowed. Corkage fees from USD 10 to 25 and more per bottle (\*).
- ? Are drones allowed? No, neither in the Galápagos National Park nor in nature reserves and national parks in Ecuador.
- ? Are there luggage limits on board? None, but regulations apply to flights.
- ? Electricity on board: 24/7, 110 V, US sockets in all cabins, and, mostly, also USB sockets.
- ? What does *wet landings* mean? Usually, only your feet get wet; don't forget waterproof bags for electronics.
- ? Food restrictions: Are vegetarian, gluten-free, or other dietary requirements/allergies possible on board? Yes, it's possible (except kosher). Must be indicated on the registration form.
- ? Are there prohibited items I may not bring to the Galápagos? Yes, to protect the fragile Galápagos ecosystem, the list of prohibited items is long, but here's a short resume for tourists (\*):
  - ✗ Fresh fruit, vegetables, plants, seeds, or organic material that may contain insects or microorganisms
  - ✗ Live animals or animal products (meat, dairy, eggs), **coffee**
  - ✗ Non-native species or biological materials
  - ✗ Single-use plastics (straws, Styrofoam, etc.); no problem with zipper bags like Ziploc, etc.
  - ✗ Drones (unless authorized by the Galapagos National Park)
- ★ Chocolate, processed and packaged snacks, and cookies are allowed.
- ★ All luggage is inspected before every Galápagos flight by the Biosecurity Agency (SICGAL) to prevent illegal trade and ensure quarantine control.

## 20. Hospitality forward:

- ♥ We kindly ask you to take care when using sunscreen, after-sun products, hair dye, insect repellent, and other toiletries containing pigments, waxes, or oils, as these may permanently stain fabrics and are tough to wash out, as well as facial products with benzoyl peroxide (for acne), which can bleach textiles.
- ♥ Snorkeling equipment, fins, and wetsuits, as well as all other items borrowed during your experience, are provided for your comfort and should be handled with care and respect.

Did we forget something, or have you experienced hacks to share? Please, tell us!

For any questions or for personal advice, we are always happy to assist you.

With kind regards,

**Cometa Travel**