

# SAFARI GUIDEBOOK

LUXURY CONSERVATION GALÁPAGOS SAFARI

**REWILD**  
SAFARIS<sup>SM</sup>



PREPARED FOR THE  
HOUSTON ZOO

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**Be prepared for your safari adventure to the  
Galápagos with this personal guidebook.**



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & FOUNDER

Thank you for traveling with Rewild Safaris! We have created this Safari Guidebook to assist you as you prepare for your Galápagos islands adventure. Furthermore, you will receive additional information specific to the countries you will visit. Knowing what to expect and being completely prepared are two of the most important factors that will enable you to thoroughly enjoy your explorations of the Galápagos.

Please take the time to review your Safari Guide now and be sure to let us know if you have any questions. Then, a couple of weeks before your departure, we suggest you review this again to make sure you are fully prepared for your safari.

Again, thank you. I look forward to assisting you as you prepare to explore for the Galápagos and her amazing wildlife destinations.

**Tom LaRock**  
*President and Founder*  
**Rewild Safaris**



# PREFACE

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This Safari Guide contains all the information you will need before going on your safari. It is divided into two sections:

**Section One:** *Before Departure* contains important information that you will need before you leave. Please read it now for this reason.

**Section Two:** *On Safari* contains details and reference materials that will help you during your safari. Please make sure you review it before your safari departs.

**Please contact us if you have any questions.**



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# GALÁPAGOS FACTS

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## About The Galápagos

Situated in the Pacific Ocean, around 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador, the Galápagos Islands are renowned for their extraordinary biodiversity and unique landscapes, making them a premier destination for nature lovers and adventure seekers.

Explore the diverse ecosystems of these volcanic islands, home to an array of endemic species such as the iconic giant tortoises, marine iguanas, and blue-footed boobies. Discover the pristine beaches and clear waters of Española Island, where sea lions bask in the sun, and snorkel alongside vibrant marine life in the protected bays of Santa Cruz Island. Visit the Charles Darwin Research Station to learn about ongoing conservation efforts and the incredible history that inspired Darwin's theory of evolution.

## Time Zone

The Galápagos operates on Galápagos Time (GALT), which is UTC -6:00.

## Languages

The official language of the Galápagos Islands, part of Ecuador, is Spanish. English is also widely spoken, especially in tourist areas. Greet locals in their language to break the ice.

## Seasons & Climate

**Tropical Climate:** The Galápagos Islands have a tropical climate with distinct wet and dry seasons. Temperatures are warm year-round, generally ranging from 22°C to 30°C (72°F to 86°F).

**Wet Season:** The wet season, also known as the warm season, lasts from December to May. During this period, temperatures are higher, and the islands experience frequent rain showers and lush vegetation.

**Dry Season:** The dry season, also known as the cool season, runs from June to November. This period is characterized by cooler temperatures, less rainfall, and nutrient-rich waters that attract diverse marine life.

By understanding the climate and seasons, you can better plan your visit to the Galápagos and enjoy its unique biodiversity and stunning landscapes.

# FOLLOW IN DARWIN'S STEPS

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## About The Galápagos

On September 15, 1835, Charles Darwin landed on San Cristóbal Island in the Galápagos, where he made observations that would later inspire his groundbreaking book "On the Origin of Species." Today, you can follow in Darwin's footsteps, exploring the diverse landscapes and unique wildlife of the Galápagos Islands.

Wildlife roams freely and fearlessly here, with species found nowhere else on earth, such as the Galápagos tortoise, marine and land iguanas, the flightless cormorant, and Darwin's finches. Marvel at a male frigatebird's courtship display, the blue-footed booby's spectacular dive, or the comical takeoff of a waved albatross.

Shore excursions offer hiking on ancient lava fields to encounter prehistoric reptiles, observing the courtship dance of blue-footed boobies, and exploring colorful beaches. Engage in active explorations like nature walks, sea kayaking through hidden tide pools, snorkeling with sea lions, and birding for Nazca boobies.

The underwater world of the Galápagos is equally enchanting, where cold and warm waters intermingle, providing a habitat for sea lions, sea turtles, dolphins, whales, and reef sharks.

Your journey through the Galápagos will be an unforgettable adventure, filled with stunning natural beauty and fascinating wildlife encounters.



# SECTION 1

## BEFORE DEPARTURE





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# BEFORE DEPARTURE

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**Please read this entire guide before your departure.**

*It contains important information to help you prepare for your safari. We recommend you bring this safari guide with you on safari.*

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## **Get a Passport (or Check your Passport)**

If you already have one, make sure it will remain valid for at least six months **after the date of your return** from your safari. If it doesn't, please get a new passport now. We suggest that you have at least two blank pages in your passport.



## **Talk to a Medical Professional/Travel Health Clinic**

This safari guidebook provides you with important information on the various precautions you may choose to take, but it is ultimately up to you to consult with your own medical professionals to determine your personal precautionary health measures.



## **Book International Flights To/From Home**

Rewild Safaris does not make international flight arrangements. Please consult your landing page for options for assistance with these flight arrangements.



## **Send Us a Copy of Your International Air Confirmations** *(as soon as you receive them)*

We need to provide your flights details to our team in the Galápagos to coordinate all your arrangements. Send to [inquiry@rewildsafaris.com](mailto:inquiry@rewildsafaris.com)



# BEFORE DEPARTURE

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## Mandatory Online Affidavit of Goods

As part of efforts to implement cleaner and more efficient policies, the Galapagos National Park Administration has introduced a mandatory online Affidavit of Goods.

This new requirement can be completed starting 48 hours before arrival in the Galapagos Islands.

The goal of this initiative is to strengthen control measures for the islands while reducing the environmental impact of traditional paperwork.

### What You Need to Know:

Travelers must complete the affidavit online via [declaracion.abgalapagos.gob.ec](https://declaracion.abgalapagos.gob.ec)

Required information includes personal details (e.g., name, passport number) and a detailed declaration of goods being transported.

Upon arrival, our guides will also assist and guide you through the form completion process if needed.

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# PASSPORT

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**Please visit the U.S. State Department's website for complete information.**

**[http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)**

If you have a passport, make sure that it will remain valid for at least **six months after the date of your return** from your safari. **Your airline may have been instructed to not let you board your flight if this requirement is not met.**

If you have changed your name (are newly married, for instance) be sure that we have your name as it appears on your passport. Your safari arrangements must be confirmed using your passport name. Please note that, if a name change is required, the airlines and other providers of services will charge a fee, which will be added to your safari balance.

If you have a passport that has expired within the last 15 years, or one that will not remain valid for at least six months after the date of your return home, you will need to renew it. Renewal requires an application, two passport photos, your latest passport, and payment of the renewal fee.

If you are getting a U.S. passport for the first time, or if your old one expired more than 15 years ago, you will need to provide proof of citizenship, proof of identity and two 2"x2" photos. For complete details, please visit this website:

**[http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first\\_830.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_830.html)**

Ecuador does not require citizens of the United States to obtain a travel visa for entry.

Please ensure you have **at least two blank visa pages** in your passport per country visited on your itinerary for the travel visas and entry/exit stamps you may obtain. Endorsement pages cannot be counted as visa pages. If you do not have the minimum of blank pages, we strongly recommend you obtain a new passport.

You may use a professional passport/visa service to assist you with any passport-related transaction. An additional fee will be charged by the passport/visa service. You may use any service you wish. We have found The Travel Documents Company (<https://www.traveldocs.com/>) to be highly effective in providing personalized assistance with passport and visa services.

# PASSPORT

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Passport agencies of the U.S. Department of State are located in several cities and there are over 7,000 locations which accept passport applications throughout the U.S. Please visit this website to locate one near you: <http://iafdb.travel.state.gov/>

If you require expedited service, we strongly recommend you use a professional passport/visa service. If you apply for expedited service directly to the State Department, be sure to specify your departure date on your application. This is very important: passports are processed by the State Department in the order of departure date. Application forms that simply arrive by overnight services do not receive expedited treatment. The State Department charges an additional fee to expedite the processing of your passport.

Loss or theft of a valid passport is a serious matter and should be reported in writing immediately to Passport Services, Department of State, Washington, D.C., or to the nearest passport agency. If you are abroad, it should be reported to the nearest U.S. consulate or embassy. We strongly suggest you make a photocopy of your passport and carry the photocopy with you, separate from your passport. In case of loss, this will help expedite the paperwork for obtaining a new one.

In addition, **we require that you provide Rewild Safaris with a copy of the photo page of your passport, so we may book your hotel and transportation reservations in the Galápagos.**

**If you experience any problem in obtaining a passport, please call us and we'll assist you.**

**Make sure you have enough blank pages in your passport for entry and departure stamps when traveling.** Blank amendment or endorsement pages cannot be used for entry and departure stamps.

**Ensure your passport is valid for at least six months from your date of entry.**

# WHAT TO BRING



## Documents

Before your departure, we will provide you with additional information that will help you on safari. Take this safari guide and other information with you. **DO NOT put any important documents in the luggage that you check through.** Always keep these items with you in your carry-on luggage. **And don't forget your passport!**

**Important:** Anyone travelling with children under 18 years will need to present an **unabridged birth certificate** at port of entry.



## Luggage

Most people tend to take too much clothing and gear on safari. Pack light and plan on taking only one medium soft-sided suitcase or duffel bag. Most travelers take a lightweight backpack to use as their carry-on and as their day pack during excursions.

**Keep one carry-on bag in your possession at all times with important items such as medications, tickets, passport, etc.**

When traveling between the islands in the Galápagos, inter-island transfers are typically by boat or ferry. It is still important to pack light. Most ferry operators and inter-island flights from the mainland to the Galápagos have luggage weight restrictions, often around 44 lbs (20 kg) including carry-ons. It is important to keep your luggage within these guidelines to avoid additional fees or complications. If your luggage exceeds the limit, you may have to pay additional baggage fees or make alternative arrangements for your extra luggage.

International airlines have varying weight allowances for your checked luggage and may charge an extra fee for more than one checked piece of luggage. Please check with your airline for their allowance. Please check with all your international airlines now to determine if your carry-on luggage meets their specific requirements.

We strongly recommend you consider securing your checked baggage with locks approved by the U.S. Transportation Safety Administration (TSA). Additional details are available at this TSA website: <http://www.tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips>.

We recommend you place tracking device, such as an Apple AirTag, in your checked luggage so you can track the location if the baggage is misplaced.



# WHAT TO BRING

(Continued)



## Clothing

Once again, travel light. Casual wash-and-wear summer clothing is appropriate for your trip to the Galápagos Islands. The Galápagos has a tropical climate with distinct dry and wet seasons. The annual temperature ranges from 82-90°F (28-32°C).

The dry season runs from June to November, while the warm, wet season occurs from December to May. Expect tropical showers year-round, but be prepared for cooler mornings and evenings, especially in higher elevations.

During the day, wear pants, jeans, shorts, or a lightweight skirt, and lightweight, comfortable, moisture-wicking tops, preferably in khaki, tan, or other neutral colors to avoid startling animals and birds. Bring a sweater, fleece top, or summer jacket for the early mornings and evenings.

Laundry service is available at most hotels and lodges. However, laundry service may be limited on board the vessels. The staff will provide instructions for sending clothes to be washed, and they are generally returned the next day. For cultural reasons, laundry service for underwear may not be offered. Occasionally, the weather may not provide ideal drying conditions, and your pressed laundry may be returned slightly damp. We suggest carrying a small container of powdered detergent (such as Woolite) for rinsing out your more delicate items yourself.

Traditional khaki safari clothes are not required but many of our travelers tell us that dressing the part adds to the fun of their safari and simplifies the choices of what to take. Here are some websites that feature safari-type clothing, as well as other travel items:

BASS PRO SHOPS: <https://www.basspro.com>

COLUMBIA: <https://www.columbia.com>

KUIU: <https://www.kuiu.com>

PATAGONIA: <https://www.patagonia.com>

TILLEY: <http://www.tilley.com>

ORVIS: <http://www.orvis.com>

MAGELLANS: <http://www.magellans.com>

SUN PRECAUTIONS: <http://www.sunprecautions.com>

# WHAT TO BRING

(Continued)



## Footwear

Comfort is the key. Any good walking shoes are sufficient on your shore excursions but, for some travelers, the extra support provided by high top hiking shoes is beneficial. Water shoes, boat shoes, or flip flops are useful for wet landings. Women should wear low-heeled shoes rather than high heels, as the ground is uneven, and it is easy to turn an ankle.



## Headgear

We strongly recommend a wide-brimmed soft cloth hat for protection from the intense sun. It can be folded and put in a pocket or bag and is less likely to blow off than a stiffer-brimmed hat.



## Bring a Rain Jacket

Although we are usually travelling during the dry season, rainstorms can occur at any time. The lodges generally provide umbrellas if they are needed.



## Snorkeling Equipment

If you wish to snorkel, you may wish to bring your own snorkeling equipment. Wet suits are available but there is no guarantee that your size will be available.



# WHAT TO BRING

(Continued)



## Camera

Virtually everyone who wishes to take photographs on their safari uses a digital camera, mobile phone or tablet. Most people find that a digital camera with a zoom lens rated between 70 and 300mm allows them the greatest flexibility in taking wildlife photos. The zoom feature is handy for framing your photo, and the longer focal length will bring your subjects closer to you.

And, if you plan on snorkeling, consider bringing an underwater camera or a waterproof housing for your digital device. We strongly recommend that you carry your camera in a waterproof dry bag or large size heavy-duty Zip-lock type bag during your landings.

You will be able to charge your camera batteries on board the yacht, which is equipped with the standard USA 110AC/60 cycle plugs. There is no need for an electrical adapter on the yachts or in the mainland hotel.

Digital cameras store their image files on memory cards. It's easy to fill up a card when using a digital camera, so we suggest you bring more than one. Some travelers bring a dedicated hard drive to store image files, allowing the cards to be reused throughout the safari.

If you purchase new photographic equipment for your safari, please test it to ensure it functions properly. And be sure to bring extra batteries, even if your equipment uses rechargeable batteries. Batteries can run out of power while you are on a game drive, and a spare will ensure you won't miss a great photo opportunity. You will likely not be able to purchase another battery while on safari.



## Bring Binoculars

Everyone who goes on a wildlife safari should have his or her own pair of binoculars. If you don't already have some, purchasing a good pair of binoculars is a wise investment. Binoculars are an essential tool for seeing birds and smaller animals and watching animals' behaviors at a distance. Choosing the right binoculars can seem a confusing challenge. Most of our travelers have found binoculars ranging in size from 7 x 35 to 10 x 50 useful on safari.



## Electrical Outlets

The electrical system in Ecuador is the same system we use in the USA. If your equipment has a three-prong, grounded plug, be sure to bring a converter that will allow it to fit in a two-prong, ungrounded plug. There's no need to bring a hair dryer. They are provided on the yacht.

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# CHECKLIST - CLOTHING

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## Clothing

- ☐ Lightweight, comfortable, and moisture-wicking blend clothing in neutral colors
- ☐ 3 or 4 short or long sleeve shirts – long-sleeved is ideal for sun protection (most travelers find a total of 3 or 4 shirts to be sufficient)
- ☐ 3 or 4 pairs of light-weight, quick-drying shorts or pants that convert to shorts
- ☐ Belt
- ☐ Sleepwear
- ☐ Lightweight windbreaker/sweater/fleece (for early mornings or late evenings)
- ☐ 3 or 4 pairs of underwear and socks
- ☐ 2 Swimsuits
- ☐ Wide brimmed hat (for sun protection) - remember, you will be on the equator
- ☐ Comfortable walking shoes or light-weight hiking boots
- ☐ Flip-flops, water shoes or boat shoes

## Carry-On or On Your Person

- ☐ Passport, airline confirmations
- ☐ Credit card, cash (due to security concerns, do not use debit cards in the Galápagos)
- ☐ Medications (do not pack medications in checked luggage)
- ☐ Spare pair of prescription glasses or contact lenses if you wear them. If you wear contacts, we suggest you also bring along a pair of glasses. Eye drops.
- ☐ A copy of your eyeglass prescription in case you lose or break your glasses
- ☐ Cameras, digital memory cards, extra batteries, lens cleaning items
- ☐ Photocopy of your passport photo page (Keep this separate from your passport)
- ☐ Ear plugs, neck rest, eye shade for your overnight flights
- ☐ Spare set of underwear & socks in the unlikely event your luggage is delayed
- ☐ Something to read during your flights



# CHECKLIST - MISCELLANEOUS

## Miscellaneous Items

- ☐ Portable external battery to charge your phone
- ☐ Extra batteries for any other electronics that might need them
- ☐ Charging cables
- ☐ Toiletries
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Small flashlight
- ☐ Pre-moistened towelettes or baby wipes
- ☐ Facial tissues
- ☐ Hand sanitizer
- ☐ Non-polycarbonate plastic (or BPA free) water bottle
- ☐ Binoculars
- ☐ Sunscreen and lip balm (A minimum SPF of 30 is recommended)
- ☐ Powdered laundry detergent (for your personal delicate items)
- ☐ Transformer for converting 120 volts to 220 volts, if your appliance does not operate on dual voltage.
- ☐ Security pouch for carrying your passport and money
- ☐ At least one extra pair of glasses or contact lenses
- ☐ A copy of your eyeglass prescription in case you lose or break your glasses
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Daypack (which doubles as your carry-on luggage)
- ☐ Medications for diarrhea, colds, sunburn, upset stomach, etc.
- ☐ Basic first-aid kit (band-aids, antiseptic ointment, aspirin, etc.)
- ☐ Prescription medications you may need
- ☐ Written copy of your prescriptions with the chemical name of the medication (Keep this separate from your medications)
- ☐ Small notebook or journal and pens
- ☐ Sewing kit, rubber bands, duct tape
- ☐ Ziploc style bags
- ☐ Your favorite snacks that are not subject to heat damage (nuts, hard candies, mints, granola bars)
- ☐ TSA approved luggage locks
- ☐ Sports drink hydration tablets for staying hydrated and quickly replenishing trace elements (available at sporting goods stores)

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# MONEY

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## Currency & Credit Cards

Ecuador's official currency is the US dollar. You will have an account on the yacht for your purchases of alcoholic beverages and purchases from the on-board boutique. **US dollars, Master Card, and Visa cards are accepted. American Express and Discover cards are not accepted.**

When travelling anywhere, always keep your money and valuables with you. Never leave them in your room or leave them unattended in vehicles.

## Tipping

Tips can be a significant portion of income for the crew of the yacht. Tipping is always optional but, if you feel you have received excellent service, please consider tipping. Tipping is a personal matter and passengers are encouraged to tip an amount they find appropriate.

We suggest you consider tipping in the amount of \$30-40 per traveler per day. Gratuities are divided by the Captain among all crew members, including the naturalist-guides, although you may privately tip anyone who provides you with exceptional service..

# HEALTH

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## General Health Considerations

Before you leave for an extended vacation, especially to an international destination, we recommend you consult your physician and a professional travel clinic. **Make the doctor's appointment at least eight weeks before your departure.** You may need some prescriptions, inoculations (some of which need to be taken well before your departure), and perhaps some special advice that relates to your own physical condition. You should get a physical examination if you haven't had one recently. Discuss your itinerary and describe your planned activities with your doctor if you have any questions about your fitness.

**Let us know if you have any medical conditions requiring special care or medications.**

In addition to getting specific inoculations and drugs, it is also a good idea to bring along some general medicines. A broad-spectrum antibiotic is advisable. Be aware that some antibiotics (like tetracycline) can cause hypersensitivity to the sun. Diarrhea medicine is also advisable, as is medication for itches or rashes.

Be sure to bring enough of the prescription medicines that you are currently taking.

If you have any special condition or allergy that might require attention overseas, have your physician write a letter describing the nature of the condition and the treatment - send a copy to us and carry the letter with you. If you need medical care away from home, your temporary physician can treat you more efficiently and effectively.

If you have severe allergies that require an Epi-pen, please be sure to bring them.

Travelers to the Galápagos Islands should be healthy, active, and reasonably fit. Those able to walk a few hours a day unassisted will fully enjoy the experience. Some excursions require more physical effort, including short steep climbs or long walks in hot weather or on uneven trails. However, most activities involve moderate effort at a leisurely pace. Entering and exiting the Zodiacs (shore excursion boats) requires sure-footedness. To maximize your enjoyment, consider doing some pre-trip exercise like walking, swimming, or biking.

## Medical Insurance

Any additional expenses resulting from medical conditions or emergencies are your responsibility. Please review the details of your travel insurance coverage and check with your insurance agent to ensure you are adequately covered while travelling overseas.

# HEALTH

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## Health Precautions for The Galápagos

There are certain health precautions that you should take for your visit. It is beyond the scope of this publication to advise you of precisely what you need as requirements change, and they vary among individuals. It is up to each traveler to consult their physician for specific advice.

You will be travelling in a part of the world where medical care is not well developed. You will often be far from any medical facility or doctor, and it could take several hours to get help. Although emergency medical evacuation services are available in the Galápagos, it is sometimes impossible to contact them immediately. Although simple first aid may be available, and there are some simple medical facilities in parks and reserves, your guides, drivers, and other personnel cannot be relied upon for any but the most basic first aid.

## Inoculations

You may need to get certain inoculations before you leave. Requirements vary from country to country. Please consult your physician or a professional travel clinic about your personal needs.

You'll find the CDC's recommendations here: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list.htm>.

Please consult your safari landing page for our recommended online health travel professionals.

## Eyeglasses & Contact Lenses

If you wear eyeglasses, take an extra pair along on the trip. If you wear contact lenses, you should take an extra pair of contacts and a backup pair of regular glasses. A copy of your eyeglass prescription will make it easy to replace your glasses if necessary.

## CPAP Machine

If you use a CPAP machine, please know that some hotels and lodges may not provide 24-hour electrical service. Portable, battery-operated CPAP machines are currently on the market, and you should consider purchasing and bringing one with you if you need your CPAP every night.

If you can only bring a CPAP that requires overnight electricity, please contact us at [inquiry@rewildsafaris.com](mailto:inquiry@rewildsafaris.com) to confirm that the hotels and lodges on your itinerary can accommodate that.



# CHECKLIST - HEALTH

## Health

- ☐ Consult your physician and/or a professional travel clinic eight weeks before your departure.
- ☐ Plan ahead and get the necessary inoculations well before your departure.
- ☐ Let Rewild Safaris know of any medical issues you may have, and carry a letter from your physician with relevant information.
- ☐ Carry your prescription medicines by hand and bring written copies of all your prescriptions if you need to replace any while on safari.
- ☐ Take some personal medications for infection, headache, upset stomach, allergies, and diarrhea. Get advice and prescriptions from your doctor.
- ☐ Take out additional medical travel insurance if your insurance advisor recommends it after reviewing your policy and your travel insurance.



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# SAFETY

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## General Risks of Travel

We make every effort to assure you a safe, healthy, and rewarding journey. Any travel, however, involves some risk. Whether you make your own arrangements or go with a group, the new and wonderful things that travel offers can be dangerous. Although such risks can be greatly minimized and will not pose a serious threat to you, no one can guarantee you the same level of safety or health that you might enjoy at home. Health and safety standards vary widely worldwide, and we have little control over local conditions or practices.

## Travel Advisory

From time to time, the U.S. State Department issues travel advisories regarding travel to and within various countries as they deem appropriate. You may review their website at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>.

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to get in touch with us to discuss them.

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# TRAVELLING TO/FROM HOME

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## Flight Information

Rewild Safaris does not make international flight arrangements. Please refer to your safari landing page for more information.

**Once you have confirmed your international flight arrangements, please provide us with a copy of your flight confirmation by send it to [inquiry@rewildsafaris.com](mailto:inquiry@rewildsafaris.com). We need this so our Rewild Safaris team can meet you when you arrive in the Galápagos.**

Consider arriving at your initial destination a day or two earlier than called for in your itinerary. The most important reason is to prevent a delayed or cancelled flight from causing you to arrive in the Galápagos after the planned start of your safari. Should this happen, we will arrange for you to catch up with the group. However, you may incur additional costs if you cannot start your safari on the day designated in your itinerary. While travel insurance may cover additional expenses, travelling early is the best way to ensure this does not happen.

We will happily arrange additional accommodations for your early arrival and confirm the price before finalizing them. We can also arrange for you to see some of the local attractions if you wish.

Domestic flights within the United States may also be delayed or cancelled. If you have to fly to an international gateway airport, we suggest you book the earliest flight on the day of your departure or consider flying a day earlier and spending the night at an airport hotel.

## Flying Departure Times

Minimum check-in time for domestic flights is 2 hours; regional and international flights is 3 hours. This applies in North America and Ecuador.

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# TRAVELLING TO/FROM HOME

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## Returning Home

**If you will be flying to your hometown upon your return, allow at least 2 1/2 to 3 hours between your international and domestic flights.** Upon returning to the United States, you must proceed through immigration, retrieve your baggage and go through customs. If you have nothing to declare, go through one of the green lines.

If you are flying to your home, look for an interline check-in counter before leaving the area. You can take your bags to this counter and transfer them to your next flight. You don't have to carry them with you to another terminal. If you leave the customs hall, you can't get back in, so do this before you leave the area.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection offers an expedited arrival program, Global Entry, that makes returning to the U.S.A. an easier and simpler process, avoiding the long lines that occur at Immigration when hundreds of travelers arrive simultaneously. The details are available here: <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/trusted-traveler-programs/global-entry>

We recommend you review the U.S. Customs Service's guidelines before you depart. You will find them at <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/us-citizens/know-before-you-go> .



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# SUGGESTED READING

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This list and its descriptions reflect our opinions on some of the best books about the Galápagos Islands and its wildlife. It is by no means a complete list of our favorites.

## Field Guides

- **"A Traveler's Guide to the Galápagos Islands"** by Barry Boyce - Hunter Pub Inc. (2004)
- **"Galápagos Wildlife"** by Horwell, David & Oxford, Pete - Bradt Travel Guides (2011)
- **"Galápagos: A Natural History Guide"** by Pierre Constant - Odyssey Illustrated Guides, Airphoto International Ltd. (2006)
- **"Wildlife of the Galápagos: Second Edition"** by Julian Fitter - Princeton University Press (2016)
- **"The Galápagos: Exploring Darwin's Tapestry "** by John Hess - (2009)
- **"Galápagos, A Natural History Guide"** by Michael Jackson - University of Calgary Press (1985)
- **"Reef Fish Identification: Galápagos"** by Humann, Paul, & DeLoach, Ned - New World Publications (2003)
- **"Galapagos: A Traveler's Introduction"** by Wayne Lynch - Firefly Books; Illustrated edition (2018)

## Miscellaneous

- **"Galápagos at the Crossroads; Pirates, Biologists, Tourists and Creationists Battle for Darwin's Cradle of Evolution"** by Carol Ann Bassett - (2009)
- **"Galápagos World's End"** by William Beebe - Dover Publications (1988)
- **"Charles Darwin, The Concise story of an extraordinary man"** by Tim Berra - Johns Hopkins University Press (2008)
- **"The Voyage of the Beagle"** by Charles Darwin - Beagle Press (2013)
- **"Darwin in Galápagos: Footsteps to a New World"** by Grant, K. Thalia & Estes, Greg - Princeton University Press (2000)
- **"Galápagos: A Natural History"** by John Kricher - Princeton University Press (2006)
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# SECTION 2

## ON SAFARI



# VALUABLES

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## Valuable Tips

One of the recurrent travel problems is losing items or having belongings stolen. Most people are not used to a nomadic way of life and don't keep track of their possessions very well while on the move.

Remember that travelers are usually conspicuous, and thieves thrive on carelessness. Here are some important points to keep in mind wherever you travel:

- **Avoid wearing flashy items** like jewelry and fancy clothes in public. It's best to leave your jewelry at home.
- You may be particularly vulnerable while standing in lines, baggage-claim areas, and crowded public places where pickpockets lurk.
- Men should not carry a wallet in their pant pockets. Women should carry bags with any flaps held toward them. Hold onto bags tightly in crowded places or leave your purse at home.
- **Do not talk to strangers on the street. Don't listen to any plea for help** or any other line you may be given. Con artists of all sorts abound, so ignore them and continue on your way. They have very convincing stories and are unbelievably good. If someone persists, ask the manager for assistance in a shop or other public place.
- **Always keep all your important items in a safe place.** Spreading valuables in different places rather than in one bag or pocket is best. It's best to keep your passport on your person at all times.
- **Always keep your carry-on bag with you while you are travelling.** Don't leave money or credit cards in your hotel room unless there is a safe. Don't leave your purse, day pack or camera bag unattended.

## Lost Luggage

It is a sad but true aspect of air travel that bags get delayed or lost. It doesn't happen often, but it does happen, and there is not much that we can do to prevent it. The hopeful note is that the odds of it happening to you are thousands to one. But if it does happen, please don't let it spoil your safari.

Fortunately, delayed bags are more common than lost bags. Our local team will help you purchase whatever you may need. **Keep your receipts for reimbursement** to take advantage of your baggage delay and loss insurance. Your travel insurance company may help locate your luggage if the airlines need help identifying its location. To help your luggage find you, we recommend **placing your home address and a tracking device, like an Apple Airtag**, to help the airlines get it to you.

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# HEALTH

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## Travel Fatigue

Air travel experts and experienced travelers have techniques for combating travel fatigue. Here are some things you should do to reduce travel fatigue:

- Get plenty of **rest the day before you leave.**
- **HYDRATE! Avoid alcohol during the flight and drink plenty of other liquids.**
- **Eat lightly during the flight.**
- Exercise. You can **get up and stretch and walk about while on the plane.** Roll your feet, rotate your head, and contract and relax your leg muscles.
- **Stretch out** if there are some unoccupied seats. Take off or loosen your shoes.
- **Use earplugs and an eye mask to sleep during your flight.** You may ask your flight attendant to let you rest when they offer meals or other services.

## Jet Lag

When you travel across time zones, your circadian rhythms (or body clock) are thrown off schedule. Fortunately, Ecuador lies within the same time zone as the central USA. For most travelers from the USA, the time zone changes will have a minimal effect.

## Traveler's Diarrhea

Traveler's diarrhea is a common malady throughout the world. When it occurs, there are two things you can do: stop it with medications or let it run its course. Several medications can usually stop it.

Some physicians argue, however, that diarrhea is nature's way of ridding the system of harmful toxins and shouldn't be stopped prematurely. You should consult your physician on whether and under what conditions you should take diarrhea medicine.

# HEALTH

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## Digestive Disorders

Stomach and intestinal upsets are common complaints wherever people travel. They range from mild discomfort to diarrhea and vomiting. The vast majority are harmless and quickly pass.

Some digestive upset is inevitable for many people. Readjustment of the body clock and exposure to new flora and minerals in the water cause part of it.

According to one study, the biggest cause of traveler's stomach upset is overindulgence in rich foods and alcohol, not bacteria in the water supply. Depending on the destination, there may be health hazards from drinking the local water or eating certain foods.

## Food & Water in Ecuador

Good sanitation, fresh foods, and good food preparation techniques keep health problems minimal while traveling within the Galápagos Islands. At the places we stay and eat, there is no need to avoid seafood, dairy products, or other foods. As a precaution, some travelers still avoid raw vegetables and salads.

However, if you venture out from your hotel on the mainland, it is recommended that you **do not eat** "street foods" and eat only cooked foods that are still hot at local restaurants.

Only drink bottled or treated drinking water throughout your safari. Bottled or treated water is also served at meals, in your accommodations and is used for making ice cubes. **Do not drink any other water at any time during your safari.**

**Always use bottled or treated water for brushing your teeth and rinsing your mouth.**

# HEALTH

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## Avoid Dehydration

During your flight, drink plenty of liquids and avoid alcohol. After you arrive, continue to drink lots of liquids. If you aren't careful, you can quickly become dehydrated. You may find you need to drink more non-alcoholic beverages than you do at home.

Sports drink hydration products mixed with bottled water may quickly help you feel refreshed if you feel dehydrated. They are readily available at stores that specialize in sports activities, as well as at online retailers.

## Respiratory Ailments

Travelling increases the risk of contracting sniffles, throat infections, and other maladies. There's not much to be done except to take something along for the symptoms.

## Sun

Don't underestimate the effects of the intense sun. It feels good, but its effects quickly accumulate. Sunburn and sun poisoning can result, and both can cause real discomfort and illness.

**Wear a wide-brimmed hat and use sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 30 whenever you are exposed to the direct rays of the sun.** If you tend to place your arm on the vehicle's door as you ride, consider wearing a long-sleeved shirt to prevent sunburn on the exposed arm. You can always roll the sleeves up if you get too warm.

Blue Lizard sunscreen was recommended by our dermatologist. Here is their website:.

**<https://bluelizardsunscreen.com/>.**

## Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in enclosed areas aboard the vessels and on the Islands. Smoking is only allowed on the yacht on the outside deck in a designated smoking area.



# HEALTH

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## Swimming & Snorkeling

**Do not swim or snorkel anywhere other than where your naturalist suggests.** Swimming pools at hotels and lodges are generally regarded as safe, although, we recommend avoiding ingesting any of the pool water. Never swim in a pond, lake, or river.

## Motion Sickness

For travelers prone to motion sickness, various methods of travel may cause significant discomfort. Travelling on a vessel may trigger motion sickness symptoms.

If you are subject to motion sickness, please review CDC's information about the prevention and treatment of motion sickness at this website: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/motion-sickness>.

## Emergency Medical Care

Should you become seriously ill or injured, you may need to leave the safari. This may mean hospitalization or taking an early flight home. You may consider purchasing travel insurance to cover any such medical emergencies. Rewild Safaris can provide you with a reference to our preferred travel insurance provider to provide you with a quote for travel insurance at your request.

Medical emergencies are extremely rare, but rest assured that, in such emergency cases, Rewild Safaris and our teams in the Galápagos will provide all the assistance we can to help you obtain the best treatment and appropriate transport back home. Be advised, however, that medical treatment and evacuation may mean that you'll have extra expenses. Please consult your insurance professional to determine if your health coverage is adequate for your situation.

## Post-Travel Health

Some diseases may not manifest themselves immediately. If you become ill after returning home, tell your doctor where you have travelled. Most people who acquire viral, bacterial, or parasitic infections abroad become ill within six weeks after returning home. However, some diseases may not manifest immediately (malaria may not cause symptoms for six months to a year after returning home). Tell your physician where you have travelled within the past 12 months.

# SAFETY & ACCIDENTS

## Keep in Mind

The places in the Galápagos we visit are generally safe. As in large cities worldwide, tourists in any city can be easily spotted by those who may wish to take advantage of them. **Do not leave your guide or group.** If you wish to leave the group, ask your guide to accompany you.

While it is true that most accidents occur in the home, where we spend most of our time, travelling away from home can certainly increase your risk of accidents. When travelling, you are in new, unfamiliar territory. You are often distracted, enthusiastic, or tired enough to make mistakes and forget the little hazards around you.

Take care. And keep these tips in mind:

- Be careful when entering and leaving the yacht and the Zodiac. The landings are either wet (where one must step into water anywhere from your ankles to your knees and wade to shore) or dry (where one steps from the Zodiac directly onto the volcanic rock). Your guide and Zodiac driver will assist you with a steady hand.
- Walk carefully on board the yacht. The yacht moves with the ocean and the deck may be wet. Never run on the yacht.
- Watch your footing when walking on rough ground where there may be rocks or holes.
- Never leave the marked path while walking on the Islands.
- Never feed any wildlife.
- When swimming and snorkeling, do not stray from your group. Be sure to stay within sight of your guide.
- Don't approach any wildlife on foot without your guide.



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# COMMUNICATIONS

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## Mobile Devices

Most telecommunication providers have signals in the Galápagos Islands and passengers can use their smart phones that are activated for international calling on days when the yachts are in close range of a port.

The yacht does not offer Wi-Fi or mobile phone service.

## Emergency Contacts

You will be given contact information before your departure that we suggest you share with your family and friends. It will contain the direct phone numbers they may use if they need to contact you while you are on safari. We recommend they first call the direct numbers in the Galápagos if they need to contact you. Even with the latest technology, it can take several hours for messages to be transmitted through Rewild Safaris while you are on safari.

**RECOMMENDED:** The best method of communication with emergency contacts while on safari, as well as those back home that we have found, is the messaging app **WhatsApp**. That's often the quickest way to get emergency assistance, but also the most reliable in non-emergency situations as it works over Wi-Fi, which may be available.

# GALÁPAGOS NATIONAL PARK RULES

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The Galápagos National Park establishes and maintains nature trails and interpretive signs. Signs posted on board the yacht list the Galápagos National Park Rules & Regulations. During orientation, your guide will go over the Galápagos National Park rules, which you are required to follow.

**Visitors cannot legally go anywhere in the designated National Park area without being escorted by a licensed guide.**

During the cruise, **listen to your naturalist guide and follow all the National Park rules:**

- Please do not disturb or remove any native plant, rock, or animal on land or in the water.
- Be careful not to transport any live material or sand from one island to the next.
- Do not take any food or drink, except water, to the uninhabited islands.
- Please do not touch, pet, or feed the animals. Approaching them too closely or taking flash photography will disturb them.
- Please do not startle or chase any animal from its nesting place.
- Please do not leave any trash on the islands or throw any litter overboard.
- Please follow the marked trails at all times and do not walk out of their limits.
- Please stay with your naturalist guide, who must accompany all groups on the trails.
- Please do not buy souvenirs or objects made from native Galápagos products (except for wood) especially black coral, sea lion teeth and shells of the Galápagos tortoises.
- Do not smoke on the islands.



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# SAFARI ETHICS & ETIQUETTE

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**Adhering to the following guidelines will help everyone enjoy their safari to the fullest.**

- Your naturalis guides must follow certain rules and regulations to protect the environment, wildlife and travelers. Stiff penalties are imposed on guides who break the rules. Always follow your guide's instructions.
- Do not disturb animals in any way. Please do not make loud sounds or throw anything to attract an animal's attention.
- Do not discard litter of any kind on land or in the ocean. Besides being unsightly, litter can choke or poison animals, including birds.
- Do not pick, cut, or destroy any vegetation or remove any object from the parks and reserves, particularly bones, feathers, or other animal trophies.
- Avoid abrupt movements or loud talking that can startle or scare away wildlife.
- Never feed animals, including birds.
- Smoking is not permitted on the islands. On vessels, smoking may be permitted in designated outdoor areas.
- Many people consider having their picture taken without their approval to be highly offensive. Please do not photograph people, without obtaining the subject's necessary permission first.
- Conserve water whenever possible. It is one of the Galápagos' most precious resources.

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# MISCELLANEOUS ADVICE

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Every effort has been made to ensure your comfort and well-being, but there will be times when you may experience discomfort and annoyance. Small discomforts can become magnified when travelling, especially after a couple of long flights. **Please remember that patience and a sense of humor often serve as the most effective responses.**

**We at Rewild Safaris pride ourselves on a quiet and gentle approach to wildlife viewing.** As you explore the Galápagos Islands, always follow your naturalist guide's directions. Patience is often rewarded as you take in sights, sounds, and smells that will add to your lasting memories of the Galápagos.

The pace of your safari is not rushed, but the days may be full and active. **Please remember that shore excursions, ocean activities and other activities are all optional.** Do not feel obliged to go along with the group on a particular activity if you would rather stay and enjoy the view. In short, adjust your own pace. If you get tired, please slow down.

**Take advantage of the quiet time between activities.** Many of our travelers keep a journal of their adventures. It is also a good time to simply observe the world around you. You may not have noticed the variety of colorful birds or the scampering of small mammals around you. Catch up on that reading you've been looking forward to. Bring a sketchbook and capture your own personal vision of the sights around you. When appropriate, spend a few minutes listening to a member of the vessel's crew tell you about his or her family. Take this quiet time back with you as part of your memories of your Galápagos safari adventure!