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BEST SELLER

Volcanoes and Galapagos

ECUADOR, GALAPAGOS - TRIP CODE GPS

WILDLIFE

Why book this trip?

Discover the spectacular highlights and fascinating cultural blend of mainland Ecuador, before exploring the 'enchanted Isles' of the Galapagos. Experience this wildlife paradise from a different perspective, staying on land on Santa Cruz and Isabela islands.

- **Avenue of the Volcanoes** - Take a walk in the Cotopaxi National Park, with views to the snowcapped cone of Cotopaxi Volcano
- **Andean communities** - Visit rural villages with sublime mountain views around Otavalo
- **Galapagos Islands** - Spend one week getting up close to the remarkable wildlife of Darwin's paradise islands

- **From 2022 onwards** - Visit the Mindo Cloud Forest Reserve, a protected area that is home to a stunning array of hummingbirds and butterflies

					
INCLUDED MEALS Breakfast: 14 Lunch: 3	TRIP STAFF Explore Tour Leader Boat Crew Driver(s) Local Guide(s) Naturalist(s)	TRANSPORT Bus Boat Flight	ACCOMMODATION 1 nights comfortable hostel 9 nights comfortable hotel 4 nights comfortable lodge	TRIP PACE: Moderate	GROUP SIZE: 10 - 15

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Tumbaco, near Quito

Arrive in Tumbaco, a quiet rural neighbourhood of Quito located around 20 minutes from the airport and 45 minutes from the downtown city centre.

Ecuador's mountain capital is, at 2,850m, the second highest capital in Latin America, lying in a narrow valley at the foot of the Pichincha volcano. Arriving into the city by plane is quite spectacular as you approach over snow-capped mountains and extinct volcanoes - a window seat is recommended!

Due to the number of evening flights into Quito, your Leader plans to do the welcome meeting on the morning of day two, and will leave a message in reception with details on timings and everything else that you'll need for the day. There are no activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Quito at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into Quito's Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO), approximately a 10 minute drive from our hotel. Should you miss the meeting, your leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

The hotel is a tranquil, family property with a large garden and mountain views. If your flight arrives earlier in the day we recommend resting here and acclimatising to the altitude before the trip begins. It's approximately a 45 minute drive into downtown Quito, and the hotel can organise transport for you if you arrive early in the day and wish to visit the city.



ACCOMMODATION:
Casa Sayu (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Travel to Otavalo; explore the rural Andean surroundings and visit the local market

We'll go straight to rural Ecuador today, driving north towards the small market town of Otavalo, crossing over the equator line and stopping to commemorate this at the Quitsato Equator Monument.

Set within a fertile valley encircled by imposing sacred mountains, Otavalo is idyllically situated and is well-known for its thriving indigenous communities. This area is a real introduction into the Andean landscapes and culture that make Ecuador so special. On the outskirts, just before we reach the town, we'll visit Parque Condor, a rescue centre for injured condors, with the opportunity to witness these marvellous birds up close.

The afternoon is at your leisure. You may wish to spend some time discovering the local market. The Otavalenos are an incredibly dignified and assured people, proudly displaying their cultural traditions and ancient heritage through their handmade leather goods, wood carvings and weavings. After exploring the market, the visual majesty of the setting and colourful dress of the local communities make Otavalo a great place to sip a coca tea and watch the world pass by.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hostal Riviera Sucre (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Walk at the Laguna Cuicocha; share in rural life at indigenous highland communities

We'll drive out to the tranquil setting of Cuicocha this morning, a turquoise crater-lake located at 3,100m, approached through a wonderful landscape of alpine vegetation. We will walk on a segment of the trail that goes around the lake (an easy walk of approximately one and a half hours), and perhaps try to spot the King of the Andes - the wide-winged condors that soar high above the valleys in graceful flight.

Returning towards Otavalo, we stop at a neighbouring indigenous community, diving deep into their day-to-day activities, customs and way of life. This sharing of rural life is what makes Otavalo come alive, and we'll get a taste of this over a home cooked lunch - seasonal food will be on the menu, which could be a traditional locro de papa (potato and cheese soup), fritada (fried chunks of pork served with all types of corn), yucca or quinoa served with meat and vegetables. We'll also continue this afternoon to the village of Peguche, which is famed for its local families who make and play panpipes - a very Andean tradition. We'll get a taster of how these are made, as well as hearing a bit of this music played by the experts.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hostal Riviera Sucre (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 4 - Drive to the Mindo Cloud Forest Reserve; visit the community of Yunguilla and a hummingbird garden

We take a spectacular drive today, leaving the sparse mountain landscapes of Otavalo for the dense cloud forest on the slopes of the western Andes.

We'll first reach the village of Yunguilla, a tiny ecotourism project made up of around 50 families, which was set up to protect a large area of surrounding forest from loggers and coal workers. We'll discover some of the entrepreneurial spirit here from the people who pivoted away from their jobs in industry and created a sustainable community tourism project that could help repair some of that damage.

After visiting the community, we'll take a spectacular drive, dropping several thousand feet to reach the village of Mindo. Much of this cloud forest area has been set aside as a nature reserve, playing home to over 400 species of bird, as well as some amazing flowers and plant life, beautiful waterfalls and pristine forest. In the afternoon we'll visit a hummingbird garden, catching some of the iridescent colours of the many hummingbird species that feed here.



ACCOMMODATION:

Biohostal (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hostel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Explore the cloud forest on foot; visit a chocolate producer; drive to Quito

An early start this morning gives us the best chance of spotting Mindo's bird life at a time when they are most active. We'll go deeper into the mountains towards the Mindo-Nambillo reserve, and take a 'tarabita' (cable car) up the mountainside, getting a birds-eye view of the forest.

The ride ends at a trailhead, and there are several walking possibilities here. One 20-30 minute walk takes us to a series of waterfalls, culminating in one of the area's largest drops - the Nambillo Waterfall. The longest trail takes about one hour from the trailhead to La Reina waterfall. The paths are well-maintained, predominantly downhill towards the falls and uphill on the return. Our tour leader will decide based on the weather conditions and how you're all feeling - along the way we'll see if we can spot butterflies, orchids, bromeliads and, of course, birds.

After a short time here, we'll drive to the chocolate producer at El Quetzal. Ecuador is famous for its chocolate and here you'll learn about every stage of the process from bean to bar. And, of course, you'll get to taste some of the produce!

In the late afternoon we drive to Quito, entering the downtown area of the city for the first time today.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Plaza Sucre (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Walking tour of Quito's UNESCO Heritage Old Town

Ecuador's capital is one of the best preserved colonial cities of the Americas, and a UNESCO Heritage Site with a rich blend of colonial architecture, imposing churches and busy markets. We will visit some of the main sites, including La Compania church with its elaborate gilded altars, walls and ceilings, as well as Quito's largest and oldest colonial church, the Church of San Francisco, built in 1553.

A climb to the top of nearby Cerro Panecillo affords us one of the best views across the city and the surrounding mountains, presenting us with an unparalleled vista of the encircling Andes from the viewing platform offered by the statue of the Virgen de Quito.

We'll have some time free this afternoon. You may like to visit one of the city's many museums, or discover the Old Town at your own pace, stopping for a refreshing drink of horchata and a delicious empanada. Ecuadorian food is incredibly tasty - we'll find plenty of spicy ceviches, plantain, yuca and soups or stews on the menu as we travel around.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Plaza Sucre (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Drive the Avenue of the Volcanoes to Cotopaxi National Park; walks at the Limpiopungo Lagoon

Our journey today takes us through some of the most impressive mountain scenery in the entire country, into the landscapes so aptly described by the German explorer Alexander von Humboldt as the 'Avenue of the Volcanoes'. The spectacular Cotopaxi National Park is our destination - at only two hours from Quito it is an excellent day trip out of the city and an important area for birdlife.

Ecuador's second highest mountain, Cotopaxi, is a classic volcanic cone, snow-covered and rising an imposing 5,897m from the valley floor. Hopes of seeing the cone in its full glory are always high, but to temper the enthusiasm it's important to mention that the peak is often covered by a tantalising puff of cloud!

This won't detract from our visit though - while we come for the splendour of the volcano, we'll stay for the magnificent, bleak scenery of the paramo (the high altitude Andean grasslands). We'll take time to walk around the Limpiopungo Lagoon, an easy high of 1.5 hours taking us around a shallow glacial lake that's a haven for waterfowl, hummingbirds and unexpected migratory species such as the Andean Gull and the Andean Lapwing, as well as wild horses.

We return to Tumbaco this evening, at the hotel where we joined our tour.





ACCOMMODATION:
Casa Sayu (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Fly to the Galapagos; view giant tortoises in the Santa Cruz highlands

The Galapagos are an isolated chain of volcanic islands supporting a distinct and unique flora and fauna, including prehistoric creatures found nowhere else on earth. Of the extraordinary animals to be found in the Galapagos many are reptiles, such as the giant tortoise, land iguana and three species of non-poisonous snake. There are also several species of turtle, which come ashore to mate. Up to three quarters of a million seabirds flock to the islands, including a third of the world's blue-footed boobies, frigate birds, pelicans, cormorants, albatross and petrels. Of all the animals in this unique landscape, perhaps the most out-of-place is the penguin. Only 35 centimetres tall, the Galapagos Penguin can be seen swimming among tropical mangroves. Offshore it is common to see dolphins, sea lions and fur seals playing in the water.

Today we fly to the island of Santa Cruz, the second largest island in the Galapagos. It also boasts the most varied of the islands' vegetation zones. We pass through the evergreen highlands, where we will have the chance to see the iconic giant tortoises, as well as visiting 'Los Gemelos', two volcanic depressions that give us a deeper understanding of the formation of the islands. In the afternoon we're at leisure to discover the island's main town, Puerto Ayora.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Deja Vu (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Lodge



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 9 - Boat to Isabela Island, overnight in Puerto Villamil

This morning we leave Santa Cruz and journey west by speed boat for approximately 2.5 hours. Our destination is nearby Isabela Island, where we will spend the next two days.

The largest of the Galapagos Islands, Isabela is formed from five volcanoes, of which two are still active. An idyllic paradise of white sand beaches and swaying palms, it is home to the second largest caldera on earth and the highest point in the archipelago. We will base ourselves here, in the small town of Puerto Villamil on the southern coast.

On arrival we will visit the Arnaldo Tupiza breeding centre, approximately a 1.5km walk from Puerto Villamil. The walk itself is a nature experience through the wetlands, where we may see heron, flamingos and many other bird species as well as iguanas, lizards, crabs and other creatures. Once in the centre we will discover the history of the famous Galapagos tortoise, including the centre's ambitious aim to restore their numbers and release them back onto the islands.



ACCOMMODATION:

Hostel Gran Tintorera (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 10 - Walk up Sierra Negra Volcano; afternoon snorkel

The beauty of staying on land during a trip to the Galapagos is having the opportunity to explore its volcanic side. The geological formation of the Galapagos lends itself to hiking, and the scenery is just as impressive as the wildlife. Today we start by taking a walk up the Sierra Negra Volcano, an immense 12 kilometre mass that dominates the southern half of the island. The walk up to the top is three hours return, presenting us with some spectacular panoramic views of the Pacific, and across to the neighbouring islands.

In the afternoon we plan to snorkel at Concha y Perla and spot some of the many marine species that the Galapagos have to offer - sea lion, iguana, turtle, ray and a diverse array of reef species might be sighted, varying throughout the year depending on the tides, the weather and the season.



ACCOMMODATION:

Hostel Gran Tintorera (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 11 - Tintoreras Islands trip; return by boat to Santa Cruz

Formed from volcanic lava flow, the tiny islets of the Tintoreras Islets are fantastic for viewing wildlife, and accessible by a short boat trip from Puerto Villamil. On land, there is an array of birdlife and an abundance of the famous marine iguanas that are endemic and unique to the Galapagos. In the water, turtles, Galapagos penguins and sea lions may be spotted swimming around.

The wildlife's complete acceptance of our presence is a testament to the incredible diversity and unique quality of the Galapagos Islands. It makes it possible to view birds, reptiles and mammals from as close as a few feet.

In the afternoon, we come back together for a boat journey back to Santa Cruz Island, where we will spend the next three nights.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Deja Vu (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Lodge



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 12 - Discover Seymour, Plazas, Bartolome or Santa Fe Island

We will be discovering one of the smaller islands of the Galapagos today, and our plan is at the mercy of the yacht schedule departing from Santa Cruz. The island visited could be either Seymour, Bartolome, Santa Fe or Plazas Island - but no matter which island we will certainly have a display of wildlife. We may see sea lions playing in the water just off shore, land iguanas strolling around their land, magnificent red-throated frigate birds, blue footed boobies, swallow-tail gulls or Galapagos penguins. We should also have some time free for snorkelling or hiking about the island.

Depending on the boat schedules, we may change around the order of activities during your days in the Galapagos, and any change in daily schedule will be fully briefed to you in country by your Tour Leader.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Deja Vu (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Lodge



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 13 - Visit Tortuga Bay; afternoon Charles Darwin Station visit

This morning we take a walk to Tortuga Bay (5km return walk) where we have the opportunity to swim at one of the most spectacular beaches of the entire chain, an important turtle nesting ground.

After lunch we will visit the nearby Charles Darwin Research Station which has been responsible for conservation projects within the islands since 1959 (the centenary of the publication of Origin of the Species). During our time here we will visit the centre to learn more about the unique collection of animal and plant life that resides here.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Deja Vu (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Lodge



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 14 - Fly to Guayaquil on the mainland

Leaving the Galapagos behind we fly to Guayaquil on the mainland, and on arrival we're free to explore at

our leisure. The largest city in Ecuador and its principal port, Guayaquil has a bustling, lively atmosphere. 20 years ago several areas of the city had a somewhat edgy reputation, but after years of regeneration, community safety drives and cultural projects, it has been transformed into a really likeable, characterful destination.

A walk down the Malecon, or seafront, is a great introduction to the city, and at the end you'll come to the old district of Las Penas. This area of cobbled streets, painted houses and cafes is full of charm, and a perfect place to sit and watch the world go by.

Please note your leader may not fly with you to Guayaquil; if not you will be met by a local representative on arrival at the airport who will give you a brief for your stay in Guayaquil.



ACCOMMODATION:
Unipark Hotel (or similar)



Grade: **Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 15 - Tour ends in Guayaquil

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Guayaquil.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Guayaquil at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Guayaquil's Jose Joaquin de Olmedo International Airport (airport code: GYE), which is approximately a 20 minute drive from our hotel.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information



Climate and country information

Ecuador

Climate

Temperature ranges are similar all year round. In the highlands: the dry season lasts from June to mid-September. November and December are partially dry. The rainy months are October and from January to May, but showers are short and mostly in the afternoons. Temperatures range from 12°C to 24°C. Nights are cold at altitude (4°C - 10°C). The Coastal Region: from December to May it is hot and wet. From June to November it is generally cool and misty with sudden light showers.

Temperatures range from 16°C to 32°C. The Amazon Area: it is humid all year round. Temperatures range from 16°C to 32°C. From April to August the rainfall is heavier. The Galapagos: On the Galapagos, the hot season is January to April with largely sunny days and the possibility of heavy showers; the cool season runs from May to December and is generally more cloudy with much cooler seas. Please note that although it is windier from July to November the sea can be rough at any time of the year. On the mainland the dry season lasts from June to October, though September can be wet.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
-5	2 Pin Flat	Roman Catholic	Spanish

Galapagos

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Kayak rental US\$30 for 2 pers.20

Snorkel equipment - Snorkel/ Mask and Fins hire - US\$10 per day plus US\$20 deposit

Clothing

Daytime clothing should be lightweight and loose fitting, but warmer clothing is needed at altitude and at sea, particularly at night, so bring something to wrap up in, including a pair of gloves, hat and scarf.

Long-sleeved lightweight clothes are useful for protection against sunburn. Bring a swimsuit, sunhat and a thick sweater or fleece. Lightweight waterproofs are essential.

Footwear

Comfortable walking boots or shoes are useful for walks around Otavalo and on the Sierra Negra volcano, while trainers or sandals are perfect for the rest of the time. Water shoes or sandals that you can

swim in are useful for wet landings and swimming around the rocky areas of the Galapagos.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of luggage and a daypack.

You will need an overnight bag for the two nights on Isabela Island, your main luggage will be stored in your hotel in Santa Cruz.

Equipment

A torch, water bottle, sunglasses, insect repellent, high factor sunscreen, beach towel, waterproof bag for camera, and motion sickness tablets / patches for the boat journeys.

Snorkel equipment is available for rent locally, but you may wish to take your own if you're a keen snorkeler.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow US\$40 for the land portion of the trip and US\$70 (\$30 for local guide and \$40 rest of staff) for the Galapagos portion of the trip for tipping.

For all non-included services and meals on your trip please tip independently at your discretion.

Local fees

There are several entry fees payable locally in the Galapagos:

1. The Galapagos Transit Control Card - US\$20. Payable before boarding the plane in Quito.
2. Entrance fee to the Galapagos - US\$100. Payable on arrival at the airport on Santa Cruz.
3. Entrance fee to Isabela - US\$10

All these local fees to visit Galapagos are subject to change.

Ecuador

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£10	£13	£1.7	£1.3

Foreign Exchange

Local currency	Recommended Currency For Exchange
US Dollar.	US Dollars are used in Ecuador.

ATM Availability

ATMs can be found in the major towns and cities for cash withdrawals in USD. Always have some cash back up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit card are widely accepted in many shops and restaurants but some may be subject to a service charge

Travellers Cheques

We do not recommend Travellers Cheques

Galapagos

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Foreign Exchange

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Boat, Flight

Accommodation notes

During this trip we stay in a range of comfortable hotels and lodges, perfectly located for exploring Ecuador's diverse nature. In Mindo, for example (from 2022 onwards), we stay a stone's throw from the Mindo Cloud Forest Reserve at a rustic but well-equipped hotel that offers great bird watching opportunities.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK citizens, check the latest Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice.

Please refer to our COVID-19 entry requirements page for any country-specific conditions of entry. Whilst we strive to update this on a regular basis we recommend you also check the FCDO website for the latest advice on entry requirements in this fast-evolving situation. Information can change at any time.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Ecuador: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. In order for your visa to be granted on arrival, you will be required to show proof of travel insurance valid for the duration of your trip. Please also ensure your passport is stamped with the T3 permit (for 30 or 90 days) on arrival in Ecuador. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate. Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry; this is a strict legal requirement from the Ecuadorean government. Without this minimum validity entry to the country will be denied.

Galapagos Islands: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

USA: (including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no

later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely be refused boarding.

You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover.

If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan since 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA and instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel.

Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. Explore's USA contact information will be listed on your final documentation which you will receive approximately 3-4 weeks before departure. If you are leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information. (Not necessary if in transit)

For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

Canada: An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

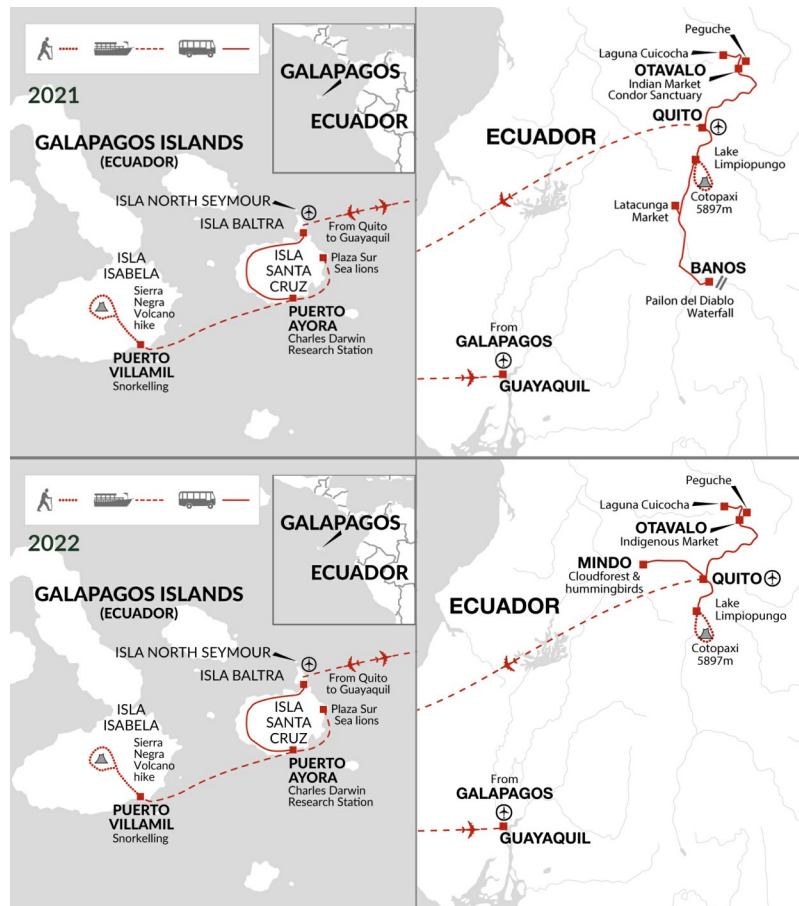
Ecuador

Vaccinations

We recommend protection against malaria, Tetanus, Infectious Hepatitis, Typhoid and Polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Yellow fever is only recommended for those travelling east of the Andes (Amazon Extension). Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Galapagos

Additional Information



Why book this trip

This tour is ideal for travellers who are interested in both culture and nature. Spend one week exploring the best of the Ecuadorian mainland and one week discovering the wildlife of the Galapagos on a land based tour. You will stay overnight on Santa Cruz and Isabela Islands and experience the Galapagos from a different perspective.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**