



Galapagos Humboldt Explorer FAQ

Minimum Age Restrictions

The minimum certifiable age for divers is 10 for most SCUBA certification agencies; normally, the agencies restrict 10 and 11 year olds to a maximum depth of 40 ft. Explorer Ventures Fleet therefore allows children as young as 10 years to participate in our trips, with the following restrictions:

1. All children under the age of 15 must travel and dive with their parent or guardian, unless undergoing active training with an instructor.
2. This itinerary offers no diving opportunities at depths less than 40 feet; **diving opportunities for 10 and 11 year olds are not available on this itinerary.** For this reason, a minimum age of 15 for divers is strongly suggested.
3. A parent/legal guardian will be required to sign the liability release on behalf of a child under the age of 18.

To ensure your safety, we require the following of all divers:

1. All divers must be certified as open water scuba divers by an internationally recognized certification organization.
2. All divers must be experienced divers (we recommend that you have more than 100 logged dives) and have logged at least one dive within the 6 months prior to boarding the vessel. Dives are very often at an advanced level. Currents can be very strong and often divers are required to swim against them.
3. All dives are guided by an instructor/naturalist guide and due to Galapagos National Park regulations all divers must dive with the guide at all times.
4. All divers must log in and out of the water with a member of the diving staff.
5. All divers must have a submersible console. In addition, a timepiece must be worn by at least one diver in a buddy team. Dive computers are strongly recommended.
6. Decompression and solo diving are not allowed under any conditions. The maximum allowed depth is 130' (110' on nitrox).
7. Diving activities must cease when the consumption of alcohol begins.
8. All divers must present proof of dive accident insurance per Galapagos National Park regulations.
9. All divers must also carry a DiveAlert, a surface signaling device, and an electronic beacon while diving (all available on board). Guests are responsible for all items they borrow from the vessel.
10. Please note that, due to a combination of staff and equipment logistics, insurance requirements and local diving regulations, neither rebreathers nor diver propulsion vehicles (DPVs) may not be used aboard Explorer Ventures Fleet vessels.
11. Please note that flash photography is not permitted while taking photos of wildlife. Professional photography and videos recorded for commercial purposes must be authorized by the Galapagos National Park Directorate.

Packing for a liveboard trip is much easier than packing for a land-based vacation. The climate doesn't require much more than shorts, T-shirts, and swimsuits though at sea the winds can be cold and jackets are often necessary. Soft luggage is recommended as it takes up very little space when empty. Sun screens, sunglasses, a visor, raincoat, lightweight sweater or jacket, long sleeved shirt, backpack, tevas and a hat are recommended. Guests traveling through Quito who are interested in day tours may wish to bring some items of clothing for slightly cooler temperatures and good walking shoes.

Please remember that the Galapagos Islands straddle the Equator and the sun can be very strong at times. For this reason please make sure you have sufficient strength sunscreen. In case of rough weather or if you have a tendency towards seasickness, come prepared with motion sickness medications or Transderm patches from your doctor. If you have favorite CD's or DVD's, feel free to bring them.

All linens (including sheets, comforters, bath towels, hand towels, dive towels, and wash cloths) are provided on board.

If possible, pack your regulator, dive computer, mask, a swimsuit, change of clothes, medications and toiletries in your carry-on bag. Having these few items with you will make an unexpected luggage delay far more bearable.

There is a limit on checked-in luggage for flights to and from Quito and/or Guayaquil to the Galapagos of one bag up to 50 pounds (23 kilos). An additional fee of up to US\$2.00* per 2.2 pounds (1 kilo) to and from Quito will be charged for luggage over the limit and US\$2.00* per 2.2 pounds (1 kilo) to and from Guayaquil. In addition, passengers are allowed a carry-on bag weighing no more than 17.6 pounds (8 kilos) and a personal item. All additional luggage fees must be paid in cash at flight time. *These prices could change at anytime. Groups and individuals that book hotel and transfers with Explorer Ventures will be assisted by a representative at the airport for check-in and are less likely to be charged additional fees.

What dive equipment should I bring?

The vessel provides tanks, weights, and weight belts for your use. If you prefer to rent the rest of your equipment from us, we have all of the equipment that you will need. Please indicate on your application form what equipment you will require. Otherwise, the following items are the diver's responsibility:

- Certification Card
- Diving Log Book (strongly encouraged)
- Mask
- Snorkel
- Fins
- Booties (if you wear them)
- Buoyancy Control Device (required) *
- Regulator w/alternate air source, submersible pressure and depth gauges (required)*
- Underwater time piece (required)
- Dive computer *
- Dive light
- Tank Marker Lights (required for night dives)
- Wet suit – 5 mm to 7 mm *
- Hooded vest
- Gloves
- Repair kit w/ spare parts
- Safety flag
- DiveAlert air horn for regulator

Equipment for rent on board

Most of our guests bring their own complete set of dive gear. This is the ideal situation, however, due to weight limits or additional travel plans some of our guests choose to rent gear. We strongly recommend that you bring your own mask, gloves, booties, fins, hood or hooded vest and computer. A personal wetsuit is also a good idea if you have space. Diving in Galapagos can be challenging and it is important that you are comfortable.

Do I need dive insurance?

Due to the nature of this trip and the very remote nature of the destination, all divers are required to have dive accident insurance for Galapagos trips, and to note the policy number on their application form. See our website for further information and options on dive and travel insurance.

When should I schedule my arrival and departure?

First a note about having a current Passport: Passports with a minimum of 6 months remaining before the expiration date are required for all arriving foreign nationals. If in doubt about visas, contact the Ecuadorian Consulate for specific requirements from your country. Transfers within the Galapagos are included in your package for same day arrivals on the island of departure for the vessel. You will be met at the airport in Galapagos by one of our tour guides. If you miss any of your flights and are not able to make it to Ecuador or the Galapagos on schedule, please contact Galasam, our Ecuadorian partner, at 011-593-99703-1382 or 011-593-99529-7471 and notify them of your updated arrival time should you have that information, and where you may be reached in the meantime. The vessel will leave port on Monday at approximately 2:00pm. Retrieving lost luggage after the vessel departs on charter is impossible. It can be retrieved when the vessel returns to port at the end of the charter.

The vessel arrives at its final destination port on Monday morning. The Sunday evening meal is on the island and is not included in the price of the trip. Transportation is organized and included for transfer to the airport. The departure tax from Quito and Guayaquil is now included in international flight prices.

Please note: Flight times, prices and the Galapagos airport of arrival are all subject to change with little or no notification, and flights often run late. We strongly encourage our guests to plan on arriving at least one and preferably two days prior to your flight to the Galapagos Islands, to ensure that your luggage is with you or to make up for any travel delays. We also recommend that guests plan on an extra night in Quito or Guayaquil upon departing Ecuador. The earliest time a guest can reliably expect to connect to another flight is 10 p.m on the last Monday of the trip. Ticket holders are required to check-in a minimum of three hours prior to flight time for all international departures, even when connecting from an Aerogal or Tame flight. If you are booking your own domestic flights, the Humboldt Explorer departs from San Cristobal (SCY), not Baltra (GPS). Passengers flying into Baltra must arrange their own transportation to San Cristobal.

What will the meals be like?

Aboard the Humboldt Explorer, lunch and evening meals usually consist of lots of salad, potatoes, rice, chicken, beef, pork, and fish. Breakfast is the usual fare of eggs, cereal, toast and fresh fruits. If you have any dietary restrictions or requests, please indicate so on your application form. Please note that specific brands of soft drinks, dressings and foods are often unavailable in the islands, and that it can be very difficult for us to find low-fat or soy products, fresh fruit, fish, and other items common elsewhere. While we will do our best to accommodate your requests, please be realistic and consider bringing some of your own

foods if the lack thereof may constitute a health risk or seriously compromise the enjoyment of your holiday.

What is the currency?

The U.S. dollar is the official currency of Ecuador; therefore, it is not necessary to purchase currency before arriving. Most major credit cards are accepted widely when shopping ashore, however, additional fees are charged in Ecuador for the use of credit cards.

Are there on board charges?

Though all meals, most beverages, transportation between islands, and much more has been taken care of with your trip payment, there are additional items which you may charge to your on board bill. These include retail items (shirts, etc.), scuba instruction, rentals, nitrox, premium alcoholic beverages, and crew gratuities.

Chamber Support Fee: US\$35 per person

Note: entry to the Galapagos Islands also requires cash payment of US\$100 entry fee, as well as the purchase of Tourist Card for US\$20 in cash

Fuel Surcharge: US\$150 per person

Crew gratuities

Incoming and outgoing telephone calls

Dive instruction

Dive gear rentals (other than tanks, weights and weight belts)

Retail sales (shirts, scuba accessories, etc.)

The bill may be paid at the end of the trip using cash, Visa, or MasterCard. American Express, traveler's checks and personal checks are not accepted on board, and we are unable to advance cash on credit card charges. Travelers checks are not accepted in Ecuador nor can they easily be changed into cash. Gratuities and onboard charges are best paid in cash. This avoids any additional Ecuadorian taxes and service fees. Credit cards are subject to the 14% VAT plus 5% in bank fees. Bills will be settled onboard on Sunday morning. ATM machines are available in Quito, Guayaquil, Puerto Ayora and San Cristobal.

Will there be a phone or communication abilities on board?

Outgoing calls may be made from the vessel via satellite phone. Please be aware that a charge is assessed for both incoming and outgoing calls.

Is crew gratuity included in the package price of the trip?

Crew gratuities are not included in your package. The crew works very hard, 7 days a week and up to 12 weeks at a stretch, providing the best possible service for our guests. The industry standard for crew gratuities on dive trips (if of course you are happy with the service which you have received) is between 10% and 15% of the package price per passenger. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.

What are the package information specifics?

Packages Include:

- Airport transfers
- 7 nights/8 days aboard vessel
- 3 meals daily, plus between-dive snacks
- 2 - 4 dives daily – total of 18-19 dives
- Use of tanks, weights, and belts
- All domestic alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages

Packages Do Not Include:

- Flight to /from Ecuador
- Hotel accommodations
- Flights to/from Galapagos
- Last evening dinner
- Rental, instruction, nitrox and retail charges
- Crew gratuities
- Trip cancellation & dive accident insurance
- Premium alcoholic beverages
- National marine park fees
- TCT tourist card
- Hyperbaric chamber fee
- Fuel surcharge
- Current Onboard Charges

What is the weather like?

For current weather conditions in the Galapagos visit [Weather in the Galapagos Islands](#) - Provided by Weather Underground

For detailed specifics on the two main seasons in the Galapagos (The Hot Season, and The Cold Season) visit our PDF on the Galapagos Seasons

<https://www.wunderground.com/weather/ec/galapagos-islands/-0.88%2C-89.51000214>

Where are the best hotels?

Quito Hotels	Guayaquil Hotels	San Cristobal Hotel
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rio Amazonas Hotel• Casa Jimenita• City Art Silberstein	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unipark Hotel• Oro Verde Hotel• Hotel Macaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Galapagos Eco Lodge• Galapagos Suites Hotel• Hotel Pelican Bay

Is Nitrox Available?

Nitrox is available for an additional charge, as long as the diver is Nitrox Certified. Please read our Nitrox page for more information.

Can I Solo Dive?

Solo diving is not permitted on this itinerary.