

Urb. Marcavalle N-25 Cusco, Peru | [info@kuodatravel.com](mailto:info@kuodatravel.com) | Toll Free: +1 (800) 986-4150

# GET READY FOR ECUADOR



The Local  
Experience Curator

**KUODA**

# CONTENTS

<b>Entry and Exit Requirements</b> .....	3
To enter mainland Ecuador .....	3
To enter the Galapagos Islands .....	4
Passports and Visas .....	4
Other important information .....	4
<b>Packing</b> .....	5
Weather and Activities Considerations .....	5
Fashion and Dress Code .....	5
Baggage Size and Weight Restrictions .....	6
Suggested Packing List .....	6
<b>Voltage</b> .....	8
Voltage, Sockets and Plugs .....	8
<b>Money and Budgeting</b> .....	8
Exchanging Money and Using ATMs .....	8
Tipping .....	9
Budgeting .....	9
<b>Health, Safety, and Insurance</b> .....	10
Before You Go: Vaccinations, Questions for Your Doctor and Preparing for Altitude .....	10
Travel Insurance .....	10
Food and Water Precautions .....	10
Medical Care .....	11
Altitude Issues .....	11
Safety Tips .....	11
<b>Staying in Touch</b> .....	11
Internet .....	11
Your Mobile Phone .....	12
Time Zone .....	12
Calling Ecuador and Calling Home .....	12
<b>Arrival and Departure</b> .....	13
Upon Arrival .....	13
Galapagos Cruise .....	13
Airport Taxes .....	14
When it's Time to Say 'Goodbye' .....	14
<b>Cultural Considerations</b> .....	14
Language .....	14
Cultural Sensitivity .....	14

# KUODA TIPS

## Preparing for Your Trip & Answers to Other Frequently Asked Question

*We are so delighted that you've decided to travel with us and we can't wait to host you in beautiful Ecuador! In order to help you pack and prepare, we've put together this list of helpful tips. If you have any additional questions, don't hesitate to contact your Travel Designer. See you soon!*

- Your Kuoda Team

## Entry and Exit Requirements

### To enter Ecuador

#### To enter mainland Ecuador:

Upon entry, all travelers 3 years and older must provide:

- Travelers are no longer required to present COVID-19 vaccination cards or proof of a negative COVID-19 test prior to entering Ecuador.
- International travelers are still required to present a [Traveler Health Declaration](#).
- The use of masks is mandatory for fully vaccinated and not fully vaccinated visitors in:
  - Enclosed spaces with poor ventilation and where social distancing cannot be kept
  - Health establishments
  - People with respiratory diseases

Please note: Procedures may change at any time. For the latest entry guidelines to Ecuador, including exceptions, contact your closest Ecuadorian Embassy or [Consulate](#).

To receive important updates, U.S. citizens should ensure that they have registered their travel in Ecuador in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. Our alerts and messages are also posted on our website.

## To enter the Galapagos Islands:

Upon entry, all travelers 3 years and older must provide:

- As of October 20, 2022, international travelers are no longer required to present a negative COVID-19 test before entering the Galapagos Islands. In the same way, it is no longer necessary to present a vaccination card.
- A “transit control card” issued by the Government of Galapagos. Contact your travel designer for more information on this requirement.
- Personal biosecurity equipment: Mandatory mask

## Passports and Visas

- Most travelers to Ecuador do not need to obtain a visa beforehand. You must simply travel with a passport that is valid for at least six months after your departure date from Ecuador, and you will be granted a temporary tourism visa for 90 days or less.
- If you are a passport holder from one of the following countries, you must apply for an Ecuadorian visa at your nearest consulate: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, and China. Chinese citizens who are also United States Green Card holders may apply for a visa waiver, which can be done at the nearest Ecuadorian consulate. For more information please visit this [site](#).
- Important Note: If you are visiting the Galapagos Islands, each visitor will need to pay a one-time entry fee to the National Park of \$100.00. This must be paid in person upon arrival (or else we would love to have taken care of it for you!), so please make sure to have the cash at hand.

### Other important Information

Both the Galapagos National Park Entrance Fee and the INGALA card are covered in the costs of your travels. Due to the pandemic, some of the processes have been affected, so it's not being worked the same as previously, but your guides will be on top of all and will inform of minor details so your travels will be as smooth as possible.

# Packing

## Weather and Activities Considerations

Weather in Ecuador varies greatly by region and season, so dressing for success (and comfort) means packing lots of different items!

- Andes Mountains/Volcano Alley: Weather in the Andes Mountains means strong sun, sudden rainstorms, and varying temperatures. The sun is quite strong, so make sure to prepare with sunblock and long sleeves, and the rain can start quickly and unexpectedly, so make sure to carry a waterproof jacket or poncho with you during your travels.
- The weather in Quito is consistently cool, given its high altitude. The average temperature is 66° F during the day (19° C) and about 50°f (10°c) at night. Seasons are clearly marked by the rainy season between about October and May, and the dry season between about June and September. Being on the equator, Ecuador has 12 hours of daylight year round!
- The Galapagos Islands: These spectacular islands also fall prey to the “wet” and “dry” seasons. December to June is considered the warmer and wetter season, with warmer temperatures and consistent afternoon showers. June to December brings a little cooler weather and daytime mist, and is characterized by the breeding period of many animals.
- The Amazon Jungle: Here the climate remains hot, humid and wet year round. Long pants and sleeves, to help prevent unwanted bug bites. It is recommended to wear light colors and stray away from neon colors and black clothing, as they can be an invitation to mosquitoes. You’ll want sturdy shoes that can handle a little mud!

If you plan to partake in outdoor activities (trekking, rafting, snorkeling, etc.) you’ll need to pack appropriate gear. Otherwise, you’ll be packing to accommodate the weather and sightseeing. Comfortable walking shoes are a must, along with sunscreen, insect repellent, and a waterproof layer.

## Fashion and Dress Codes in Ecuador

Overall, Ecuador is quite a casual country and you won’t encounter many dress codes during your trip. You may want to bring a nice change of clothes for your last night on the Galapagos cruise, or perhaps a nice dinner while in Quito. Flashy jewelry and accessories should be left at home, as they are a draw for pickpockets.



## Baggage Size and Weight Restrictions

Check with your international flight provider, as many flights allow two free checked bags when flying internationally to Ecuador, or up to 50 lbs. (23 kg.) of checked baggage. You will likely want to pack for greater restrictions on domestic flights within Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands, which may mean packing a bit lighter and bringing something that can serve as an overnight bag if you don't want to be subject to extra baggage fees on your domestic flights. Permitted baggage on domestic flights (you'll have all your luggage):

- Avianca (AeroGal): Checked bags are one piece of 50 lbs. (23 kg) and carry-on is 22 lbs. (10 kg)
- Latam: Checked bags are one piece of 50 lbs. (23 kg) and carry-on is 17.6 lbs. (8kg)
- TAME: Checked bags are one piece of 50 lbs. (23 kg) and carry-on is 17.6 lbs. (8kg)

Allowances depend on the category of ticket bought, so please check carefully before your travels. For most jungle lodges in Ecuador, there are no restrictions on luggage allowances on the boats.

## Suggested Packing List

Ecuador is one of the more complicated destinations for packing. The Galapagos Islands tend to be warm, but with a cooling ocean breeze. At the same time, mainland Ecuador has not just one climate, but three very different ones: sunny coast, the Amazon rainforest, and the chilly-to-cold Andean highlands. Given the wide range of conditions and activities across Ecuador, you'll receive a detailed packing list for the Ecuadorian region(s) you plan to visit. We'll send this to you after you book your once-in-a-lifetime Ecuadorian adventure tour.

### General list:

- Passport and flight tickets; after you've been given your tourist ticket by Ecuadorian customs, you'll need to have this and your passport at most hotels and attractions, including on treks  
\*We recommend also bringing an extra photocopy of your passport, kept in a secure location separate from the original. - Due to reduced security personnel in the general passenger areas at the airport, we recommend each passenger to keep a good eye on their luggage and their personal belongings.
- Small day bag with enough space for a camera, water bottle, snacks, and hand sanitizer. Lightweight poncho or waterproof jacket.
- Lightweight poncho or waterproof jacket.
- Basic first aid kit.
- Sun glasses
- Sanitizing hand gel (good to keep in your day pack).
- Basic toiletries (though most of your hotels will provide shampoos and soaps). Secure money belt or pouch.
- Camera, battery charger, spare battery, and plenty of memory cards.

### If you're visiting Galapagos:

- Hoodies or sweaters
- Lightweight trousers or shorts
- Jacket
- Rain jacket
- High socks
- Jeans or long sleeve pants
- Long-sleeve shirts
- Walking shoes
- Small backpack

### When trekking, add:

- Binoculars
- Long pants and long sleeve shirt made from a light-colored, breathable material
- Good water-resistant walking shoes
- Windbreaker for island air currents
- Flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- Ziploc plastic bags, to help protect spare batteries or equipment from humidity

## Voltage

### Voltage, Sockets and Plugs

Electricity in Ecuador is between 110 and 120 volts or the same as in the USA. Plugs and sockets are also the same as in the USA, with two flat prongs (occasionally you will find sockets that accept a third ground prong as well).

## Money and Budgeting

### Exchanging Money and Using ATMs

- The official currency of Ecuador is the U.S. Dollar (USD\$) as of the year 2000. The same bills as in the USA are used, while there are also coins with Ecuadorian presidents. Coins from the USA and Ecuador are accepted everywhere.
- We recommend changing money at official money exchange houses, banks, or ATMs whenever possible.
- A convenient way to obtain local currency is to use your cards at local ATMs, though they often charge you a little for each transaction. Please make sure to call your bank before your trip, to let them know you will be in Ecuador – this will avoid potential fraud scares, and ensure your card is not blocked while traveling. ATMs are readily available throughout Ecuador – even in the Galapagos!
- Though most of your costs are included in your tour package (as listed in the itinerary), you will likely want to make a few purchases for souvenirs, personal items, some meals, etc. For these, cash withdrawals of U.S. dollars can be made at the many ATMs that are readily available in larger towns and cities throughout Ecuador. Still, we recommend that all travelers carry only a small amount of US cash with them and withdraw from ATMs as needed.
- We advise travelers not to carry large amounts of cash on your person when traveling in Ecuador or any other foreign country.
- Larger stores and more upscale restaurants usually accept credit cards, which can also be brought along for emergency purposes.
- Travelers' checks can be useful, however, these are typically more difficult for vendors to process.





## Tipping

Tipping is not required, but is a welcome gesture if you feel you received excellent service.

- Your guide – \$ 20 USD per day (from your whole party, not per person).
- Your driver and/or host – \$ 10 USD per day (from your whole party, not per person)
- Your guide in the Galapagos Islands – \$10 USD (per day, per person)
- Your crew on board your Galapagos cruise – \$10 USD (per day, per person)
- Wait staff at restaurants – 10% (sometimes service is included in your bill, so check first. If tipping your waiter, make sure to give cash to them directly and not leave it on the table.)
- Bellboys – \$1 USD per piece of luggage

## Budgeting

While most charges are included in your trip cost, you will need a bit of extra cash for:

- Meals that are not included in your itinerary.
- Souvenirs.
- Taxis or other transport on your free days – this will depend on where you are. Your guides can provide estimates for costs, as it varies per city. Feel free to round up to the dollar for a very small taxi tip, but larger tips are not customary.

## Health, Safety, and Insurance

### Before You Go: Vaccinations, Questions for Your Doctor and Preparing for Altitude

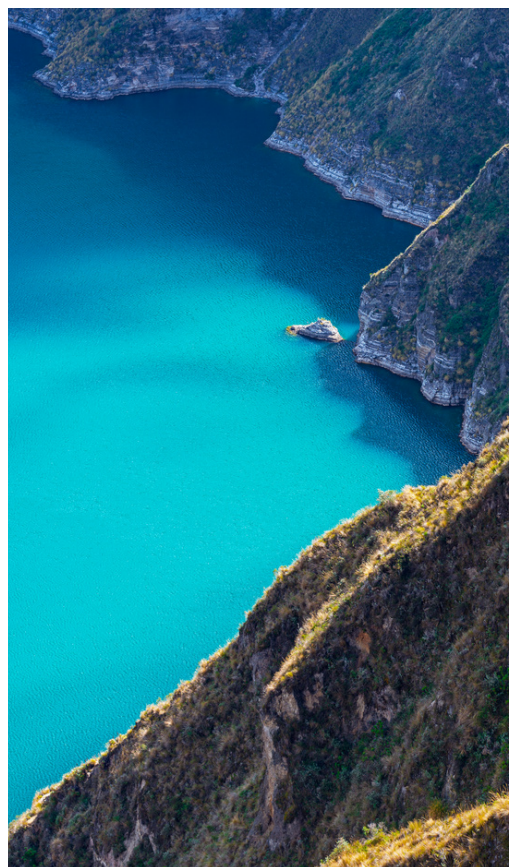
- There are no vaccinations required for entry into Ecuador, but the CDC recommends Hepatitis A and Typhoid for general travel to South America. They also recommend bringing malaria pills if you are visiting certain areas of the jungle, and the Yellow Fever vaccine if you are visiting certain affected areas. For more information, please visit this [website](#).
- We highly recommend speaking with your health care provider 4 to 6 weeks before you travel; it is even better to speak with a doctor at a travel clinic.
- If you experience an emergency while traveling in Ecuador, please dial 101 to reach the police. The number for the Tourism Police in Quito is: 02 2543-983.

### Travel Insurance

Kuoda does not include travel insurance in its trip prices, but we strongly encourage you to purchase a plan before you travel in Ecuador. This is relatively inexpensive and protects you financially from sickness abroad and cancellations due to unforeseeable events. If you are trekking, you are required to have insurance coverage. We recommend using [www.travelguard.com](http://www.travelguard.com) or you can check [www.insuremytrip.com](http://www.insuremytrip.com) for a list of options.

### Food and Water Precautions

While in Ecuador, please drink only bottled water, which is readily available in all hotels and local stores. Eat fruit that can be peeled, and stay away from raw vegetables like lettuce and tomatoes in sandwiches or salads. Make sure the prepared foods you do eat are well cooked and that meals are served hot. You may wish to bring antibiotics as a precaution.



Quito is twice as high as Denver. For many people, this high altitude will make itself felt. Common effects are headache, slight nausea, loss of appetite, trouble with sleep and lack of energy. For most people, keeping hydrated, taking Diamox (check with doctor as mentioned above), avoiding heavy meals and alcohol in the first days, taking it easy, and drinking coca tea are sufficient remedies. If any symptoms worsen, please contact your Kuoda Team as Acute Mountain Sickness, although rare, can have consequences that are more serious.

## Medical Care

In Quito, medical care is modern and safe. If you have any medical issue whatsoever, contact your Kuoda Team and they will help you find the best medical care nearest to you.

## Safety Tips

Extra caution should be taken in large cities, where petty theft is more common. Do not wear flashy jewelry or display expensive electronics – iPhones and the like make a very recognizable outline in pockets! Keep purses and bags securely closed, cab doors locked and cab windows rolled up. Use caution throughout the rest of Ecuador and always be aware of your surroundings. That said, you'll most often be with a guide who will be on the lookout for you and there is no need to be overly worried!

## Staying in Touch

### Internet

All of our hotels in Ecuador will have Wi-Fi, as well as internet-connected computers for guest use. Connectivity will be very limited if on a Galapagos cruise, but you'll be so enthralled with the wildlife you won't miss it! There are plenty of ways to connect to the Internet if you are visiting one of the three main islands – please consult with your guide as to the specifics.





## Your Mobile Phone

It may be possible to use your mobile phone in Ecuador. You will first need to check with your home provider to see if your phone will recognize the local networks. You can then buy a prepaid SIM card from one of the Ecuadorian telecommunications companies. This can often be a lengthy process and frustrating if you do not speak Spanish, so if possible, stick to communication via the internet!

## Time Zone

Mainland Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands are in two separate time zones. Mainland Ecuador is GMT - 05:00, and the Galapagos Islands are GMT - 06:00.

## Calling Ecuador and Calling Home

The telephone country code for Ecuador is +593. When dialing Ecuador from overseas, dial the country code (00593), followed by the regional code (see below), and then followed by the number. Regional codes for often-visited cities:

- 2 Quito
- 4 Guayaquil
- 7 Cuenca
- 5 Galapagos Islands

For more information regarding making calls to Ecuador, please visit this [website](#).

From within Ecuador, there are plenty of places available to make long distance calls easily. Phone cards are also available – just ask your guide to help you purchase one. In order to call home, dial the country code (e.g. 001 for United States) then the area code and number. If you are bringing a smart phone or tablet on your journey, certain apps allow you to make phone calls and send messages via Wi-Fi free. We recommend the Viber and WhatsApp apps, as well as Face Time for Apple users. Skype is also popular and allows video calls.

## Arrival and Departure

### Upon Arrival

Most flights arrive in the late evening or early in the morning. Once you have claimed your baggage and cleared customs look for our unmistakable welcome board in the arrivals lounge with your name clearly marked. Our Quito host will warmly welcome you to Ecuador, assist you with your luggage, and take you to your hotel. Please do not leave the airport terminal building unless you have made contact with them.

### Upon Arrival to Galapagos Cruise:

- Please be sure to arrive at the Airport (domestic departures) two hours in advance and check your luggage at Sicgal counter (Inspection and Quarantine System for the Galapagos) then please go to the Avianca Counter in order to check in your tickets. You will be assisted by your host in order to take the Galapagos flight.
- Passengers must pay the Galapagos National Park entrance fee of \$100 (however please mention this Entrance Fee is already paid once you arrive at Baltra airport). Then, you will be contacted by your guide at the airport (he is going to wait with a sign with the name of the cruise), and from there driven to the yacht.
- Please note that you have to carry your original passport with you (a copy is not acceptable).
- Due to reduced security personnel in the general passenger areas at the airport, we recommend each passenger to keep a good eye on their luggage and their personal belongings.
- Keep in mind that the domestic flights luggage weight limit is 23 kg (50 pounds).
- We recommend you bring along anti-seasickness pills, as well as any personal medication(s).

## Airport Taxes

All airport taxes for domestic and international flights are now included in all ticket costs. You will not need to pay additional taxes in Ecuadorian airports.

## When it's Time to Say 'Goodbye'

Your Kuoda Host will bring you to the airport, help you check in and bid you "adios!"

## Cultural Considerations

### Language

Ecuador's primary language is Spanish, though many smaller towns and villages in the Andes Mountains also speak Quechua, a native language. Luckily, you'll be with your English-speaking guide most of the time, so even if you don't speak Spanish or Quechua, you won't miss a thing!

### Cultural Sensitivity

Ecuador is a rapidly-developing country. Travel here requires patience and openness to cultural differences. You will find that most Ecuadorians are warm, friendly, and more than willing to share their culture with you. Traveling responsibly does not solely mean preserving the environment, but also respecting and supporting local communities and their customs and traditions. Traveling responsibly is also about experiencing new cultures, sharing, and learning something new. Happy travels!

*“Traveling – It Leaves You Speechless,  
Then Turns You Into a Storyteller”*

-Ibn Battuta