

Galapagos Islands

Special Flight Information – *Majestic Explorer*

Current as of February 2017

We're happy to have you join us in one of the most magical dive destinations in the world! Please read through this sheet carefully, as it contains important information to help make your vacation go as smoothly as possible.

When going to the Galapagos Islands, it is necessary to fly to one of two cities in mainland Ecuador first (Quito (UIO) or Guayaquil (GYE)) and spend at least one night prior to your charter's departure. Because our vessel boards passengers on Saturdays and leaves the islands where the airports in Galapagos are located shortly thereafter, we **strongly recommend that you plan to arrive on Thursday** in Ecuador for your Saturday morning flight to Galapagos. This will help ensure that travel delays reaching Ecuador do not cause you to miss your trip. For return flights both Quito and Guayaquil have late night flights out so same day departure may be possible.

If you plan to spend more than one night on either end of your trip and/or would like to tour a bit of Ecuador, scenic Quito is the best choice. The flights to the Galapagos originate in Quito, make a stop to pick up passengers in Guayaquil, then go on to the Islands and do the reverse on the way back. We strongly recommend that you not schedule any flight departing less than 3 hours after arrival from Galapagos in either Quito or Guayaquil. International flights require check in 2.5-3 hours before flight time, as you need to clear immigration. The flight from Galapagos is often delayed and you may miss your outbound flight.

There are 3 airlines that offer daily flights to the Galapagos Islands – TAME, LAN and Avianca. All flights depart Quito or Guayaquil in the morning and return late afternoon. All three airlines have flights with departures on Saturdays, our charter departure day for *Majestic Explorer*. Please note Galapagos is one hour behind mainland Ecuador.

Galasam, our partners in Ecuador, have built up good relationships with the Ecuadorian airlines and have gained many benefits from these relationships. This means that should National Parks request an itinerary change we can easily accommodate flight changes for our guests. The airline relationships also provide additional advantages. When a group

checks in together the overweight luggage charges are often lower and sometimes waived. Ecuadorian airlines strictly enforce the overweight luggage charges noted below. Your advance payment for these tickets guarantees your space on the flights, but the seats are held in bulk by the land agents in Ecuador and the actual tickets are not issued until a week or two before the charter's departure. The price and flight schedules, which are not in the control of Explorer Ventures, can change at any time. If there is a price increase after you've paid in full, the remaining balance will be need to be collected at the airport.

Airline tickets are e-tickets and will be sent to you one to two weeks before your departure date on the *Majestic Explorer*. It is very important that we have your hotel information well before your departure should there be any changes to the flights. We would strongly encourage you to arrange the Galapagos portion of the flights through Explorer Ventures. Should you choose to book your own airline tickets to/from Galapagos, we will not be able to make changes if unforeseeable circumstances arise and you will need to make changes in your tickets.

Please note that there are two airports in Galapagos, San Cristobal (SCY) and Baltra (GPS). You will be flying to/from Baltra unless you have made other arrangements with us. If you arrive in San Cristobal you will need to take the daily ferry from San Cristobal to Puerto Ayora at 7:00 am on charter day (2.5 hours) or catch an expensive island hopper between the two islands, which has a luggage limit of only 10 kg. For this reason, please make sure your tickets are to the correct airport.

Please plan on being at the airport in Quito or Guayaquil a minimum of 2 hours before your flight's scheduled departure. Please note that before checking in for your flight to Galapagos; you need to visit the Consejo de Galapagos booth to pay \$20 for a tourist card and SICGAL, which scans your bags checking for anything that may harm the ecosystem in Galapagos. Upon your arrival in Galapagos, you will have to pay the \$100 national park fee. These amounts must be paid in cash (US dollars).

Checked Baggage weight limits: Each passenger is allowed one checked bag with a total weight not to exceed more than 23 kilograms (approx. 50 lbs.) and one carry-on bag up to 8 kilograms (approx. 17 lbs.). Overweight luggage is permitted at a cost of \$2.00 per kg.

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