Ecuador & Galápagos Islands Cruise: San Cristóbal to Santa Cruz

Pre-departure information for your tour

About the cruise ship

- An expedition ship that offers a luxurious sailing experience, the M/V Galápagos Legend brings a bit of elegance to adventure cruising. Onboard experts, trained at the Darwin Center, help you get an intimate yet environmentally safe look at the islands. Download a detailed summary of the ship's amenities and available cabins [PDF].

Passport, visa & entry requirements

- In order to enter Ecuador (and Peru on the tour extension), U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport with an expiration date extending at least six months beyond the date of reentry.
- We recommend having at least two blank passport pages for entry stamps.
- There is no visa required for U.S. or Canadian citizens.
- Upon arrival in Peru on the tour extension, you will receive an Andean Immigration card that you will need to present when visiting Machu Picchu.In order to secure your entrance to Machu Picchu, travelers are required to confirm their full passport details with Go Ahead Tours no later than 45 days prior to your departure date.
- If you are not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact each country's consulate for your specific entry requirements.
- On the tour extension, entrance tickets into Machu Picchu require full passport information. Travelers must enter these details via your online account, mobile app, or by giving the Traveler Support Team a call by your Tour Finalization Date or risk being denied entry into Machu Picchu due to scarcity of tickets and daily entrance restrictions.
- You can see the most up-to-date entry requirements for the destination(s) you'll visit on tour by going to goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements and searching the code EC1.

Tour pacing & mobility

- You will walk for at least 2 hours daily across moderately uneven terrain, including cobblestone streets, unpaved trails, and sandy paths, with some hills at high altitudes
- Travelers should be healthy enough to participate in all included walks without assistance and should be able to walk up and down steps without handrails. Adding optional excursions may increase the total amount of walking on your tour.
- You should feel comfortable managing your own baggage at times, as well as getting in and out of small boats.
- Go Ahead Tours and the Tour Director who accompanies your group are unable to provide special, individual mobility assistance to travelers on tour. The responsibility of the Tour Director is to ensure the group as a whole enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing, individualized assistance to any one traveler.
- If you have any mobility concerns or physical restrictions, please contact our Customer Experience Team.

Transportation & arrival information

- Round-trip flights booked through Go Ahead Tours arrive in and depart from Quito (or Lima on the tour extension). A representative from Go Ahead Tours will meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel. Please remain in the arrival lounge, as the representative might be escorting one of your fellow travelers to the bus at the time of your arrival.
- Transfers to and from the airport at your destination are included for travelers who have purchased their flights through Go Ahead Tours. Travelers who purchase their own flights may request airport transfers with Go Ahead Tours for an additional cost.
- Round-trip flights between Quito and the Galápagos Islands are included in the price of your tour. (The tour extension also includes flights from Quito to Lima, Lima to Cuzco and back to Lima).
- A four-night Galápagos Islands cruise and other boat rides are also included in the price of your tour.
- All other included transportation on this tour is by private motor coach.

Baggage allowance

- Please note that our travelers are limited to one checked bag and one carry-on bag per person due to storage limitations on motor coaches and other transfers, which may include train connections or flights.
- Contact your airline(s) for baggage size and weight restrictions for your flights, which may include on-tour flights in addition to your round-trip flights to and from tour. Please note that on your included on-tour flights, it may be required that your checked bag weigh less than 44 pounds and your carry-on bag weigh less than 20 pounds.
- Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage or exceed baggage size and weight restrictions. Be advised that you are responsible for any baggage fees incurred on all flights.
- Make sure you label your baggage and keep valuables, medication, and documents in your carry-on bag.
- On the tour extension in Peru, you will need a small overnight bag (such as your carry-on bag) for your stay in Machu Picchu, as most luggage will need to be stored in Cuzco.
- When visiting Machu Picchu on the tour extension, there are restrictions in place for backpacks, food, umbrellas, and camera tripods.

Clothing & packing tips

- We recommend packing lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that can be easily layered. Comfortable, casual clothing, a lightweight jacket, and a sturdy pair of walking shoes are a must for sightseeing.
- Waterproof shoes or sandals, a swimsuit, sunscreen, and insect repellent are recommended for daily activities.
- Binoculars are handy for a closer look at local wildlife and scenery.
- You may want to pack dressier attire if you plan to visit a high-end restaurant or attend a special performance.
- It is preferable not to visit churches or other religious sites with bare legs and shoulders (and entrance may be denied on this basis).
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Health

- At least 60 days prior to departure, check with your doctor or healthcare provider for the latest updates and entry requirements, or visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at cdc.gov.
- Please be aware that you will be traveling at altitudes as high as 10,000 feet above sea level. These high altitudes can sometimes cause difficulties for travelers who have heart problems or respiratory ailments. If you suffer from any of these conditions, please speak to your healthcare provider regarding any potential health risks.
- Even healthy travelers may sometimes experience altitude sickness, a temporary condition featuring symptoms of headache, fatigue, nausea, and light-headedness. Until your body acclimates to the higher altitudes, we suggest that you stay hydrated and limit your intake of caffeine and alcohol.
- There are inherent risks associated with water activities, particularly for those with preexisting medical conditions. Discuss your planned activities with your doctor or healthcare provider for the best advice on participation.
- Seasickness while on board the cruise ship is uncommon, but medication will be available if needed. If you are particularly prone to seasickness you may want to bring your own medication and take it at least 24 hours before the cruise starts.
- Take proper care with sun exposure, as the sun can be especially strong in some of the regions on this tour.
- Drink bottled water only. Refrain from ingesting tap water, including when brushing your teeth. Ice on board the cruise ship is made with purified water.
- Avoid eating fresh fruits and vegetables unless they're cooked or washed in clean water and peeled.
- If you have medication that you take daily, be sure you have enough for each day of the tour and any possible delays encountered.
- If you have dietary restrictions and/or food allergies please notify Go Ahead Tours at least 30 days prior to your departure by logging in to your account and updating your traveler info. To update this information closer to your departure date, please call our Customer Experience Team.
- You can see the most up-to-date entry requirements for the destination(s) you'll visit on tour by going to goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements and searching the code EC1.

Cuisine

- Ecuadorian cuisine is diverse, reflecting the availability of ingredients across the country. At higher elevations, meat-based dishes are more popular, while along the coast you'll find seafood in abundance. Traditionally, meals are served with soup and rice, and many feature starches like potatoes and yucca root. Bananas and plantains are also a major Ecuadorian export, appearing in many recipes. You might try *patacones*, a fritter made with mashed plantains, which is a popular Ecuadorean side.
- On the tour extension, Peruvian cuisine reflects both the country's indigenous cultures as well as European colonial and Pacific Rim influences. Staples include grains such as quinoa, maize, and rice, as well as beans, potatoes, and meat. Ceviche, traditionally raw sea bass marinated with lime and chilies, is a national dish. Adventurous eaters may want to try *cuy*, or roasted guinea pig that's cooked over an open fire. You can also raise a toast with Peru's famous pisco, the delicious (and sour) white-grape brandy.

Electricity & air conditioning

- Ecuador operates on 120 volts and uses Types A or B plugs with two flat pins or two flat pins and one round pin, respectively.
- The cruise ship operates on 110/220 volts. Both European and American outlets are available on the vessel. The frequency is 50 Hz.
- On the tour extension, Peru operates on 220 volts and uses Types A or C plugs with two flat pins or two round pins, respectively.
- We recommend packing a universal adapter, as well as a voltage converter if you plan on using your own hairdryer or other device without a built-in converter.
- The strength of the air conditioning in some hotels in this region may not be as strong or as cool as what you might be used to in the U.S. or Canada. When air conditioning is available, it is usually regulated seasonally and controlled centrally by the hotel.
- Your hotels may provide hairdryers, irons, and other small appliances. However, these amenities cannot be guaranteed.

Connectivity

- Wi-Fi is available in most hotels, though some charges may apply. In more remote locations, internet access may be limited and is not guaranteed.
- Wi-Fi connection is accessible when anchoring in main ports. Satellite phone service is offered while at sea.
- There is no Wi-Fi on any of the motor coaches
- Please contact your mobile service provider for information on roaming charges.

Time zones

- Mainland Ecuador (and Peru on the tour extension) is five hours behind Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), the same as Eastern Time (ET). Ecuador and Peru do not observe Daylight Saving Time.
- The Galápagos Islands are six hours behind GMT, but your cruise ship will operate on Ecuador's mainland time.
- From November through March, when it's noon in New York City, it's noon in Ecuador and Lima on the tour extension. From April through October, when it's noon in New York City, it's 11am in Ecuador and 11am in Lima.

Currency

- You will use the U.S. dollar in Ecuador (plus the Peruvian sol in Peru on the tour extension).
- Please note that U.S. bills in denominations higher than $20 may not be accepted in some areas of Ecuador.
- Better rates of exchange are usually available overseas, although it's worth ordering some

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currency from your local bank to use when you first arrive.
- We strongly advise that you take debit/bank cards and credit cards, which can be used to withdraw cash at local banks as needed.
- You can use most debit/credit cards at ATMs on the international networks Cirrus and Plus, but make sure to check with your home bank about withdrawal fees.
- Inform your bank and credit card company of your travel plans so that they won't confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges.
- International banks and businesses primarily accept debit and credit cards that work with the EMV chip system. If you do not already have at least one debit or credit card with a chip in it, we strongly recommend requesting one from your bank prior to your tour.
- On your cruise ship, you may open an account at reception to pay for on-board expenses with a credit card; Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and U.S. dollars are accepted. You can select your payment method upon arrival.

Tipping

- At the conclusion of your tour, it's customary to offer your Tour Director and driver a gratuity in USD.
- We recommend tipping $8USD to $10USD per person per day for your Tour Director and the equivalent of $3USD per person per day for your driver.
- If applicable, we also recommend $2USD per local guide.
- On your cruise, tipping your waiter, busser, and cabin steward at the end of the voyage is customary if you're pleased with the service. We recommend $15USD to $20USD per traveler per day, to be divided among the crew on the cruise ship.
- Separate tips are recommended for the naturalist guides. We recommend $10USD per traveler per day.
- Tips can only be paid in cash.

Purchasing excursions on tour

- Most optional excursions will be available for purchase while you are on tour.
- Your Tour Director will only accept cash (in USD only), Visa, or MasterCard as payment for excursions.
- Please be advised that if you pay for an excursion by credit card while on tour, it may take up to three months for your card to be charged.
- Some optional excursions may only be purchased in advance. See page four of your tour itinerary for more information.

Shore excursions

- While on the ship, you'll have the opportunity to follow expert naturalists to discover the unique beauty of the Galápagos Islands. These knowledgeable guides lead excursions ranging from snorkeling to bird-watching, giving you the chance to get closer to the incredible animals that make the Galápagos their home. International travel is, by its very nature, unpredictable. We must therefore reserve the right to change this itinerary, without advance notice, to meet with local conditions at the time of travel. We appreciate your understanding. Please refer to our website for Terms & Conditions, dates, and prices.