

Information Manual for Volunteer, Thesis, and Internship Participants

The Galápagos Islands are situated on the equator about 1000 km from Ecuador. 97% of the islands are designated as national park while the remaining 3% are for the local populations living on the islands. The five islands inhabited by humans are San Cristobal (Capitol), Santa Cruz, Isabela, Floreana, and Baltra (naval base). The Galapagos are famously known as the scientific laboratory of Charles Darwin and his theories in evolution. The Galapagos offers a unique plethora of endemic flora and fauna. The archipelago is certainly a site to visit and currently sees over 150,000 visitors annually. The currency of the Galápagos is the USD. The following information is designed to help you better prepare for your trip down to the Galapagos and give you an idea of what you can expect while here.



Institutional Information:

FUNDAR Galapagos is a non-governmental organization with no political or religious affiliations. It was created in 2001 by ministerial agreement No. 043 of the Ministry of Environment of Ecuador. It consists of professionals from the Galapagos community with an interest in sustainability, social issues, and committed to the future of the Galapagos. FUNDAR works with the community searching for alternative paths and responsible development in the Galapagos Islands.

FUNDAR Galapagos runs educational projects aimed at changing the behavior of the population towards sustainability whether it is with development projects, strengthening the productive sectors of health or social research, as well as renewable and alternative energy.

Vision: "Galapagos, a model of harmony between humans and nature".

FUNDAR Galapagos implemented the Pajaro Brujo Reserve, located in the highlands of Santa Cruz in the small town of Santa Rosa 30 minutes north of Puerto Ayora. The Reserve consists of approximately 90 hectares and was constructed to function as a demonstration center for living sustainable "CEDEVIS".

In CEDEVIS, volunteers and thesis students have the opportunity to work in the professional areas of organic agriculture, plant production, ecological restoration, the eradication of introduced species, environmental education, investigation, etc.

The Reserve contains the following:

1. Volunteer housing with various dormitories, living room, kitchen, bathrooms, internet, telephone access, and laundry services.
2. Biology Laboratory
3. Ecological Path
(house made of bottles, labeled plants, and reforestation zone.)
4. Organic garden
5. Greenhouse/Nursery
6. Area for wild land tortoises
7. Campground (*under construction)
8. Barn (*under construction)



Travel Information

a.) Flights:

- Have you reserved your flight yet? It can be a little complicated. Hopefully this will make it easier. It is best to have your flight AT LEAST two weeks in advance, but earlier than two weeks is recommended
- Remember there are two main airports in the Galapagos: Baltra and San Cristobal. You must book a flight for arrival in BALTRA.
- There are three airlines, which travel to Baltra daily. All flights depart in the morning and can be purchased online at the following websites:
 - www.lan.com
 - www.tame.com.ec
 - www.aerogal.com.ec
- All flights depart in the morning. The general route of flight leaving from Quito consists of a stop in the city of Guayaquil, normally without a plane change. The duration from Quito to the Galapagos is approximately 3 hours including the stopover in Guayaquil.
- Galapagos is an hour less than the mainland of Ecuador (-6GMT)



b.) Special Requirements for traveling to Galapagos:

- Galapagos has a system of quarantine control, meaning you should not bring fruits, vegetables, or any organic products. A list of products which are allowed and not allowed can be found at the following website:
<http://www.sicgal.fundargalapagos.org/>
- The Galapagos has a special law, with a particular immigration regime, in order to control who is allowed to enter the islands including:



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- Permanent residents (people living in the Galapagos before 1998)
 - Temporary residents (contract of work approved by the Governing Council of the Galapagos)
 - Tourists (Less than 3 months)
 - Transient (Less than 3 months)
- As a tourist or transient, you must pay 10 US\$ in the windows of the Governing Council at the Airport. You will then receive a card entitled "Transit Control Card". Without this card you may have problems entering the Galapagos.

c.) Upon arrival at the Baltra Airport:

After disembarking the plane you will be escorted to Security where there are three rows: a) residents of the Galapagos b) domestic visitors c) foreign visitors

Take the corresponding row.

-Domestic and Foreign visitors must pass three controls:

- The Governing Council where you receive the "Transit Control Card"
- Galapagos National Park where there is a \$100 park entrance fee for foreign visitors and \$12 fee for Ecuadorian visitors.
- Agrocalidad: where your luggage will be checked for organic products.

-After these steps, you are finally in the Galapagos!!!

-There is no luggage belt so all luggage is placed on a platform where you will be able to pick it up.

d.) Transportation to Pajaro Brujo Reserve:

- You must take three means of transportation from the airport to the Reserve or Puerto Ayora:
 - A bus from the airport to Itabaca canal where you will cross a channel from Baltra to the island of Santa Cruz. In order to take this bus you must carry your own luggage, which you will place in the compartment in the bottom of the bus. The bus is free of charge (works with the airline's flight), but know there can be a lot of people so remember the general location of your bags. Remember there are two different routes going to the dock or the canal. Take the one that goes "to the channel" called "Itabaca Canal". Do **NOT** take the bus to the "Muelle".
 - Once you have arrived in Itabaca Channel, each person should get their luggage and head towards the boats or water taxis. There is a boat called "The Blower" which you can cross over to Santa Cruz for 50 cents. There are smaller water taxis for \$2 or \$3.
 - Now that you have crossed over to Santa Cruz there are three different vehicles you can take to get to Puerto Ayora:
 - Bus which costs \$1.80 (Do not buy ticket in advance, it is recommended to buy it directly on the bus)
 - Shared taxi (4 or 5 passengers) for \$4 or \$5
 - Your own taxi for \$15
 - The total time from arriving at the airport and getting to Puerto Ayora can take about an hour and a half.

Climate

Since the Galapagos Islands are located on the equator, the climate here can be a bit unusual. Although you are traveling to “island weather”, it is a good idea to be prepared for either cold and rainy or humid and sunny weather here in the Galapagos. During winter (June to November), visitors can expect a fair amount of rain with an average temperature of 22 °C (72 °F), with strong breezes. However, the weather gets much warmer in the summer months of December to May with an average temperature of 30°C (85° F) along with heavy humidity. The weather can be unpredictable so it is a good idea to be prepared for weather changes while you are here during the entire year.

Food

Typical food for the Galapagos Islands consists of mainly fresh seafood: Galapagos fish, shrimp, octopus, shellfish, and when in season, lobster. One popular dish here is ceviche, a cold soup of fish with lime, onions, tomatoes, and lots of flavor. If seafood is not your thing, Santa Cruz has many options for food including meat, vegetarian, and international food. The normal lunch consists of fish, chicken, or meat with rice, french fries, banana chips, or salad. You are going to want to try the famous Pan de chocolate (Chocolate Bread), a sweet treat from the small town of Bellavista, located between Puerto Ayora and the Reserve. In Puerto Ayora there are a number of restaurants providing local and international cuisine.



*Fish Encebollada
“Encebollado de pescado”*



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Water

Santa Cruz is not equipped with drinkable water from the faucet. For drinkable water, buying bottled water is the safest option. In Spanish it is referred to as “agua dulce”. It is important for all visitors to know not to dispose of toilet paper or other paper products in the toilet as well. All paper waste must go in the trashcan.

Health and Medical Information

In the case of suffering from an accident or illness, consult the local hospital, Hospital Republica del Ecuador, or consult a specialized doctor.

In the case of a medical emergency consult Hospital Republica del Ecuador in order to be stabilize your condition or be transferred to the continent for further medical treatment.

In either case, always notify your project supervisor and the Volunteer Program Director at FUNDAR Galapagos immediately so they are able to help assist you in making sure your stay here in the Galapagos is safe, healthy, and fun!

Transportation:

The official means of transportation in the Galapagos is by bicycle. You can purchase a bicycle here for approximately \$100 to \$150 USD in any bike shop in town.

In the Galapagos, taxis are the white trucks. You can go anywhere within the town for \$1 USD. To travel outside the Puerto Ayora to Bellavista is \$2 USD and to Santa Rosa (Pajaro Brujo Reserve) is \$7 USD.



Bank

If you need to deposit or withdrawal money, here is a list of the following banks available in the Galapagos:

- Banco del Pacifico
 - Banco de Fomento
 - Banco del Pichincha
 - Western Union
 - Banco de Guayaquil
-

Mail

- Correo del Ecuador (normal mail):
Address: Av. Charles Darwin y Manuel Julian Cobos
Phone: 05-2520373
<http://www.correosdelecuador.com.ec/pages/index.php>
- DHL (faster, more secure, however more expensive): <http://www.dhl.com.ec/es.html>

Packing List:

*If your luggage is over 20 kg, you will have to pay extra

*Remember to check the SICGAL list (link above) for products that are not prohibited to bring

1. Insect repellent
2. Towel
3. Sunscreen
4. Hat
5. Office wear (depending on you position with FUNDAR)
6. Clothes for working outdoors
7. Beach wear
8. Clothes for at night (jackets, nightlife, pants)
9. Good shoes for working outdoors
10. Sandals, crocks, tennis shoes
11. Any medicines you should need
12. Camera
13. Sunglasses
14. Snorkel (if you have one)

Leisure Time

Although Puerto Ayora is small, it offers a variety of activities and nightlife for visitors and locals. Visit the beautiful beaches at Tortuga Bay, Playa del Alemanias, or Garrapaterros to enjoy swimming, snorkeling, and surfing. There are also Bay Tours available which include a full day tour with lunch and visitation to different beaches and bays in Santa Cruz.

Other sites that draw attraction to visitors are Los Gemelos, Las Grietas, and the lava tunnels.

It is also easy to travel between islands if you would like to explore Isabela, San Cristobal, or Floreana for the weekend. You can purchase tickets at the main dock or, "Muelle", for traveling between islands.





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At night....

In the mood for fiesta?! Bongo, Café Limon, and La Panga are three hot spot discotecas worth checking out at night. Each bar offers a great mix of dancing between reggaeton, salsa, and merengue.