

EXTREME



Galapagos Itinerary Trip Preparation Information

Below is valuable information which will help make your dive trip more enjoyable. If there are questions not covered below, please contact anyone at Explorer Ventures.

There are visual images and layout of the vessel online at www.explorerventures.com/galexp/



THE VESSEL

- 16 guests
- 8 air-conditioned rooms with Private bath & showers
- 110 V outlets in bath & near bed

The *M/V Humboldt Explorer* comfortably accommodates 16 passengers in 8 air-conditioned rooms, all of which have private bathroom facilities. Most rooms have twin bunks that convert to larger beds for couples, flat screen televisions and all have windows to maximize the view of the Pacific Ocean and Galapagos Archipelago. Cabins are located on the main and lower decks. The air-conditioned salon on the main deck includes dining tables, TV, VCR, CD/DVD, video library and lounge area. Sunning/viewing areas, ample seating and a jacuzzi are located on the top level.

Large camera table Recharging station

The dive deck is equipped with individual gear bins, large camera table, recharging station, air and nitrox filling stations, tank racks, and a separate fresh water rinse tank for underwater camera equipment. Diving operations are conducted from two large pangas (tenders), easily boarded from the dive deck. The *Humboldt Explorer* is also equipped with a satellite telephone for emergency calls worldwide.



DIVING CONDITIONS

- Water temps in summer average 65° F,
70° F in winter

The weather in the Galapagos has water temperatures ranging from 65 -75 degrees F from December through May and 60 – 70 (F) June through November. Water temperatures are at the higher end of the scale in both Darwin and Wolf. Air temperatures range from 75 (F) or higher in the rainy season (December-May) to the mid 60's (F) during the dry season (June – November), with nearly constant sea breezes. Currents can range from 1 to 5 knots at the sites we visit, and visibility is generally between 30 and 80 feet. Most divers are comfortable with a 7mm wetsuit June – November with a hooded vest and gloves and a minimum 5 mm wetsuit December - May. Gloves and hood are strongly recommended. Your dives will be done from the pangas with an easy backward roll into the water. After you dive, your tank will be lifted back into the panga and you will board via its stern ladders or with assistance from the side.



MINIMUM AGE RESTRICTIONS

- Under the age of 15 must dive with parent/guardian

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 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.



SAFETY STANDARDS

Dive insurance required

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 including SPG & depth gauge, time piece or dive computer with these functions.
6. Decompression diving is 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 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 be used aboard Explorer Ventures vessels.



WHAT TO BRING

Soft luggage for easy storage

Very casual attire

Packing for a liveaboard 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 supplied

Soaps supplied

Hairdryers not supplied

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

Carry-on packing

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.

Luggage weight restrictions

There is a weight limit on checked-in luggage for flights to and from Quito and/or Guayaquil to the Galapagos of 44 pounds (20 kilos). An additional fee of up to US\$1.70* per 2.2 pounds (1 kilo) to and from Quito will be charged for luggage over the limit and US\$1.50* 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 traveling together*

with a representative from Explorer Ventures at the airport are less likely to be charged additional fees.



EQUIPMENT LIST

Bring your application/liability forms Certification card

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 (recommended) *
- Wet suit – 5 mm to semi-dry .5-.7 mm *
- Hooded vest
- Gloves
- Repair kit w/ spare parts

* Available for rent on board



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 when diving from the Humboldt Explorer, and to note the policy number on their application form. See our website for further information and options on dive and travel insurance.



ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

Passport required

Passports are required for all arriving foreign nationals. If in doubt about visas, contact the Ecuadorian Consulate for specific requirements from your country.

Transfer within Galapagos are included If delayed contact 011.593.9703.1382

Transfers within the Galapagos are included in your package for same day arrivals, and you will be met at the airport by our tour operator. 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 011-593-9703-1382 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 1:00pm. 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.

Departure tax requires cash

The vessel arrives at its final destination port on Monday morning. Sunday night's dinner is in town and is not included in the price of the trip. Transportation is organized and included for transfer to the airport. There is a departure tax, payable in cash, of US\$40.80 in Quito, US\$26 in Guayaquil (both subject to change) upon leaving on a flight from either Quito or Guayaquil.

Scheduling flights

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 TAMI flight.



SAMPLE ITINERARIES

Days aboard the Explorer generally involve a 6:30 am dive followed by breakfast, a dive at 9:30, lunch at 12:00, and afternoon dives at 1:30 and 4:00 p.m.. Dinner is served at approximately 7:00pm. Under current National Parks guidelines no night dives nor land visits are allowed.

Please note that these itineraries are examples only, and will change depending on local regulation, weather and logistics at the Captain's discretion. Currently each week the itinerary includes the same islands. The order of the islands, however, is dictated by the National Parks Foundation.

If meeting the vessel in San Cristobal, Galapagos Islands, a guide will meet you upon exiting the baggage claim area for transfer to the vessel.

Monday: San Cristobal

Guests fly to the Galapagos Islands from Mainland Ecuador, arriving in the late morning. Guests are met at the airport and taken to the vessel. Boarding the vessel after 11:00am, guests will depart for a short crossing to the channel for a check out dive and safety orientation briefing. After dinner the vessel will depart for North Seymour. Currently each week the itinerary includes the same islands. The order of the islands, however, is dictated by the National Parks Foundation and many vary weekly.

Tuesday: North Seymour

6:30, 9:30, dives.

Sightings include scalloped hammerheads. Depart for Northern Islands.

Wednesday: Darwin Island

6:30, 9:30, 11:30 and 3:00 dives.

Sightings often include hammerheads, whale sharks, eagle rays, Galapagos sharks, and silky sharks. Night at anchor

Thursday: Darwin Island

6:30, 9:30, 11:30 and 3:00 dives.

Sightings often include hammerheads, whale sharks, eagle rays, Galapagos sharks, and silky sharks. Night at anchor. The vessel will travel 2-1/2 hrs. to Wolf early Friday.

Friday: Wolf Island

6:30, 9:30, and 11:30 dives.

Sightings often include hammerheads, eagle rays, Galapagos sharks, silky sharks and occasional whale sharks.

Saturday: Cabo Marshall, Isabella

6:30, 9:30, 11:30 dives.

Sightings include giant manta rays, mobula rays, turtles, black-striped salem.

Sunday: Cousin's Rock

6:30 and 8:30 dives

This is a great macro diving with an excellent chance of seeing sea horses, sea lions, and eagle rays. Lunch will be served while transiting to Santa Cruz (3 hrs). In Santa Cruz a land trip to see the giant tortoises in the highlands and a visit to the town of Puerto Ayora.

Monday: San Cristobal

There will be an early morning trip to the beach to see sea lions and marine iguanas in their natural habitat.

Depart the vessel by 9 am. Transfer back to the airport for flight back to Quito or Guayaquil.



MEALS

Please list on the application form any dietary needs you have.

Aboard the *Humboldt Explorer*, lunch and evening meals usually consist of lots of fresh vegetables, rice, chicken, beef, pork, and fish. Breakfast is the usual fare of eggs, ham, cereal, toast, and fresh fruits. Snacks are available between dives. 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 your enjoyment of your holiday.



CURRENCY

US dollars are widely accepted

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.



ON BOARD CHARGES

Major credit cards are accepted on board

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.

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. Bills will be settled onboard on Sunday morning. ATM machines are available in Quito, Guayaquil, Puerto Ayora and San Cristobal.



COMMUNICATIONS

Vital messages may be passed to guest by calling the operations office at 1.800.322.3577

Internet access is not available aboard

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



CREW GRATUITIES

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.

PACKAGES INCLUDE

- 7 nights/8 days aboard vessel
- 3 meals daily, plus between-dive snacks
- 3 - 4 dives daily most days – total of 17-18 dives weekly
- Use of tanks, weights and belts
- All domestic alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages

PACKAGES DO NOT INCLUDE

- Airport transfers
- Hotel accommodations
- Flights to/from Galapagos
- Last evening meal (Sunday)
- Rental, instruction, nitrox and retail charges
- Crew gratuities
- Trip Cancellation & Dive Accident Insurance
- Quito/Guayaquil departure taxes
- Premium alcoholic beverages
- National Marine Park Fees
- TCT Tourist card
- Hyperbaric chamber fee
- Fuel Surcharge, if applicable

OVERVIEW

Below is a list of additional expenses not covered in base trip price.

- **Airline ticket to and from Ecuador AND flight to/from Galapagos (must be booked through Explorer Ventures for logistical reasons)**
- **Hotel accommodations**
- **Sunday evening dinner**
Between US\$15-\$25 is a good meal
- **Diving insurance (required)**
- **Rental equipment, retail items purchased aboard**
- **Nitrox US\$150 7-night itinerary or (US\$10 per fill)**
- **Crew gratuity**
Typical is between 10% and 15% for trip cost but is totally at the discretion of the guest.
- **Park Fees (US\$100), Tourist card (US\$10) & Hyperbaric fee (US\$35)**
Must be paid in cash. Subject to change.
- **Fuel surcharge**
US\$150 Subject to change.
- **Departure tax**
Between US\$26-\$41

All prices are subject to change.

Please feel free to call us if you have any questions..

Have a wonderful trip aboard the *Humboldt Explorer!*

Explorer Ventures

1.800.322.3577 • 307.235.0683 • FAX 307.235.0686

info@explorerventures.com • www.explorerventures.com

Mailing address: P.O. Box 310, Mills, WY 82644 • Physical address: 3211 Energy Lane, Ste. 201, Casper, WY 82604