



Getting Ready for Your Birding Trip to Ecuador



Thank you for choosing **Ecuador Birds Tours** as your local partner for exploring Ecuador. It is a pleasure for our team to welcome you, and we look forward to showing you the very best the country has to offer.

Ecuador is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world and a top destination for birdwatching, with more than **1,640 recorded bird species**. Despite its small size,

Ecuador encompasses **four distinct regions**—the Andes, the Amazon Basin, the Pacific Slope, and the Galápagos Islands—along with countless subregions and microclimates. This extraordinary diversity makes Ecuador a true birding paradise and I am sure you will love it.

Whether you have booked a **Full-day Excursion** or a **Tailor-made Birding or Photography Birding Tour**, the following information is designed to help you prepare for a smooth, safe, and enjoyable experience in the field.

Should you have any questions at any time, please do not hesitate to contact us by email at sales@ecuadorbirdstours.com or via WhatsApp at **+593 99 373 2879**. We are always happy to assist you.

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GETTING READY FOR YOUR TOUR

1. Do I need vaccinations to travel to Ecuador?

For most travelers from the United States, Canada, and Europe, **no vaccinations are legally required** to enter Ecuador.

Requirements can change; travelers are responsible for checking entry regulations for their home country when returning.

2. Should I purchase travel insurance?

Yes. We **strongly recommend comprehensive travel insurance** covering:

- Trip cancellation/interruption, Medical emergencies, Lost or delayed baggage, etc.
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3. Have I submitted my registration form?

Once your tour is confirmed by Diego Cruz, please send us your registration form. It is important you fill in legible letters and numbers. **If your tour includes a local flight to/from Coca, Galapagos, Guayaquil, Manta or Cuenca, or other please send us a photo of your passport** as we have to purchase your flight tickets and passport is needed.

4. What documents are required to enter Ecuador?

- A **valid passport** is required
- **Passport validity: minimum 6 months beyond your return date is needed.**

Please check your dates accordingly, as we have had couple of guests that because of few days difference, they are not allowed to board the flights.

- At least **one blank passport page** is required
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5. Do I need a Tourist Visa to visit Ecuador?

Citizens of the U.S., Canada, UK, EU, Australia, and most countries may enter Ecuador **visa-free** for up to **90 days**

Travelers of other nationalities like China, India, and others should verify visa requirements with the nearest Ecuadorian consulate.

6. Do I need to download WhatsApp onto my phone?

If you don't have WhatsApp on your phone, we strongly recommend you download it, it's free and easy to use. Our communication before, during and after your tour will be mainly through this app or by email.

We will share important information about pre-arrival, during our trip monitoring or any questions that you may have.

Our 24/7 WhatsApp/Emergency Number: +593 99 373 2879

7. How much luggage can I bring?

For Amazon - Coca Flights:

For local flights to Coca City, in Aero regional or Latam Airlines, each passenger is allowed one checked bag weighing up to 23kg, and one carry-on up to 10kg.

For Galapagos Baltra and San Cristobal Flights:

For local flights to Galapagos Baltra or San Cristobal, in LATAM or Avianca, each passenger is allowed one checked bag weighing up to 23kg, and one carry-on up to 10kg, However, it will depend in your ticket's conditions.

- **Within Galapagos - Isabela to Baltra Flights:**
- For smaller flights from Isabela to Baltra, the allowance is one checked bag up to 10kg. Any excess baggage fees can be paid directly at the airline counter. Check your ticket conditions as well. *This only applies when you are doing our 8 Days Land Base Galapagos Package and you have included a return flight to Baltra Airport.*

Extra Luggage between Slopes:

If you have luggage you won't need, you can store it at our lodge, Hacienda Jimenita, free of charge before your Galapagos or Coca flights.

8. If we have any special diet requirements?

Its no problem, Ecuador Birds Tours, it's Partners and Lodges offers a varied menu, including international and local cuisines, designed to accommodate a variety of dietary needs including vegetarians, vegan, any special requests. Passengers with special dietary needs must address their requirements in our "Registration Form", before arrival.

9. Is Laundry offered at the Lodges?

Yes. Laundry service is available at the lodges. Most properties charge either per item or by weight. As a reference, an average-sized load (wash, dry, and fold) typically costs between USD 15.00 and USD 25.00. To ensure timely service, please request laundry on the day of check-in so the staff has sufficient time to complete it.

10. What is the voltage in Ecuador?

Most outlets in Ecuador are standard U.S.-style two- and three-prong electric outlets with 110-120V AC (60 Hz) current.

For EU, please bring a Universal adapter.

11. What to Pack for Our Birding Tours in Ecuador?

Essential Items

- **Daypack:** A compact, lightweight daypack is a must. Weather in the highlands changes quickly, so carrying a jacket and other essentials is vital.
- **Sunscreen:** Protect your skin from the high-altitude sun.
- **Birding Cap:** *You'll receive a complimentary cap from Ecuador Birds Tours*.*
- **Sunglasses:** Essential for reducing glare while birdwatching.

- **Travel Documents & Money:** Bring your passport, credit cards, and small-denomination cash for local purchases in \$5, \$10 or \$20. Large bills are hard to get change.
- **Personal Hygiene Items:** Toothbrush, toothpaste, and other essentials.
- **Insect Repellent:** Absolutely necessary for the Amazon region and lowlands.
- **Binoculars:** High-quality binoculars are strongly recommended for birdwatching.
- **Camera:** A camera with extra batteries and memory cards is perfect for capturing memories of your trip.
- **Headlamp or Flashlight:** Bring a small, reliable headlamp or flashlight with extra batteries for nighttime exploration.

Clothing and Footwear

- **Lightweight Long Pants:** Quick-drying pants are ideal for the Amazon and cloud forests. Avoid jeans.
- **Long-Sleeved Shirts:** Quick-drying, lightweight shirts protect against sun and insects.
- **Short-Sleeved T-Shirts:** For warmer days.
- **Hiking Socks:** bring several pairs especially in the rainforest.
- **Light Windbreaker or Fleece Jacket:** Essential for cooler mornings and evenings.
- **Warm Jacket:** A must for the chilly Andes highlands.
- **Warm Hat & Gloves:** Keep these handy for early-morning birding in the Andes.
- **Bathing Suit:** For swimming if needed. Some of our lodges like Jimenita, Sachatamia, San Isidro, Ojo de Agua, Sacha Lodge, do have a swimming pool available.
- **Comfortable Walking Shoes:** Essential for trails and urban exploration.
- **Rubber Boots:** Needed for muddy trails in the jungle. Amazon lodges provide boots so there is no need to bring them, but if your size is smaller than a US women's 5 (EU 35) or larger than a US men's 12 (EU 46), we recommend bringing your own.

Optional Extras

- **Field guide for Ecuadorian birds:** We recommend **Field book of the Birds of Ecuador**, 2nd Edition, by Lelis Navarrete and Miles McMullan. You can find it in Amazon or please request one from our sales agent for \$50.00.
- **Reusable water bottles** (to reduce plastic waste).

12. Where can I see photos and updates of Ecuador Birds Tours?

If you would like to see photos and videos, updates, lodging information, and details about meals included in our tours, I highly recommend following us on our social media channels.

[Facebook Link](#), [Instagram Link](#), [Youtube Link](#) or [Trip Advisor Experiences](#)

DURING OUR BIRDING TOURS

1. For Arrival, how will I recognize my driver at the Airport?

Arrival process:

1. Disembark and proceed to immigration
2. Present passport and pass through customs
3. Collect luggage at baggage claim, if any
4. Exit into the arrival hall

Our driver will be outside customs, at the arrival hall with a sign with your name. Please make sure you provide us with your arrival flight number and flight airline so we can keep track of your flight.

If you cannot find our driver: Use WhatsApp 24/7 Customer Support at: **+593 99 373 2879**

2. Will we have local Birding Guides?

Yes, all our birding guides are local and experts **over 25 years of Experience in Birding** and will show you the best of Ecuador including History, Culture, Landscapes, Family Stories and off course Birds!!

Be sure to check our [Trip Advisor Reviews](#) and Testimonials.

3. Are there any tipping Guidelines?

Tipping is customary in Ecuador.

Suggested guidelines:

- **Private birding guide:** For Longer tours \$15–\$25 per guest per day, for full days around \$25 - \$50.
 - **Driver:** \$5–\$10 per day
 - **Hotel housekeeping:** \$5 per night
 - **Restaurant dining:** 5–10% if service was excellent
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4. Can I purchase a prepaid SIM Card for my trip?

If you want continuous internet access on your phone, **we recommend purchasing our internet package**, which includes a prepaid Claro card with 10GB of data for USD \$40.00 per card. Most restaurants, cafes, and hotels also offer free Wi-Fi, but signal strength can vary depending on the location, especially in the Amazon Basin.

If required, please request before arrival to our Tour Manager, Diego Cruz.

5. What kind of meals will I have during my tour?

The food on this trip is fresh and amazing! You will try delicious Ecuadorian and Local Organic Food.

Please check your itinerary for included and not included meals.

- **Breakfasts:** depending on the birding reserve that you will visit, you could have a boxed breakfast along the way, at the reserve or you will have breakfast at the lodge before pick up time.
- **Lunches:** depending on your itinerary, most frequently you will have during your birding tour with our restaurants partners or boxed lunch.
- **Dinners:** Depending on the lodge you are staying in that night you will have a mix of typical meals, usually it's a menu dinner that includes soup, main dish and soft drink.

For example, you will try **Traditional Soups** like Quinoa, Locro (Potato Soup with Fresh Avocado), Menestrone with Organic Vegetables and others. Other **traditional dishes** are: Empanadas, Llapingachos (cheesy potato cakes), Ceviche (sea food), Encocados (seafood in coconut sauce) and tons of fresh and exotic fruit.

We will adapt to your dietary requirements.

6. Will we have Wifi in all lodges?

Wi-Fi available in most hotels and lodges like (Hacienda Jimenita, Guaycapi Lodge, Sachatamia Lodge, Canande Lodge, Guango Lodge, San Isidro Lodge, Rio Quijos Lodge, Ama Lodge, Wild Sumaco Lodge, Limoncocha Cabins, Sevilla de Oro Hotel, Grand Hotel Lago Shushufindi, Sani Lodge, Sacha Lodge, Napo Wildlife Center Lodge, Southern Lodges and others) .

Coverage limited in remote areas or at Upper and Amazon Basin depending on the weather, reception could be weak.

7. Are ATMs easy to find?

ATMs are available at airports and in major towns, but not in rural areas. We recommend you bring sufficient small bills (\$1–\$20).

8. How can I contact my Tour Manager?

You can reach Diego Cruz, our tour manager and organizer, 24/7 via WhatsApp at +593 993732879 or by email at sales@ecuadorbirdstours.com. He will be in constant communication with our guides and staff to run a smooth birding tour for you.

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS EXTENSIONS

Important Travel Information

The Galápagos Islands are one of the most unique wildlife destinations on Earth and are strictly regulated to protect their fragile ecosystems.

Entry Requirements for Galápagos

In addition to your passport, travelers must comply with the following procedure to check in to your flight.

1. Transit Control Card (TCT)

- Mandatory for all visitors
- Cost: **USD \$20 per person**
- Purchased at the airport prior to flying to Galápagos, you must make the line and pay the \$20.00 in cash.

2. Luggage Inspection and Check in to your Airline, you only need to present your passport at the counter, if you booked your ticket with Ecuador Birds Tours.

3. Galápagos National Park Entrance Fee

- Paid in cash upon arrival
- **USD \$200** per person
- Subject to change without notice

Biosecurity Inspection

Galápagos has strict biosecurity rules:

- All luggage is inspected before departure
- No fresh fruits, vegetables, seeds, plants, or animal products are allowed
- Shoes, backpacks, and outdoor gear may be inspected and disinfected

These measures are essential to protect endemic wildlife.

You need to fill the biosafety regulations 24 hours before your flight with the QR code provided or at the airport by scanning one of the QR Codes available at the counters.

Luggage Restrictions on Domestic Flights

Typical allowances:

- **Checked luggage:** 1 piece up to 23 kg (50 lbs)
- **Carry-on:** 1 small bag up to 10 kg

Important notes:

- Excess luggage fees are common and must be paid at the airport
 - Tripods and camera equipment should be carefully packed
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For our Galapagos Extensions, do I need to bring Wetsuits or snorkel equipment?

For our **Galapagos Cruises** its INCLUDED the use of Wetsuits and Snorkel Gear like masks and fins. Please let us know the sizes before arrival.

For our **Galapagos Island Hopping**, the Wetsuit is not included. It costs \$10.00 per person per day and must be reserved prior to your arrival to Galapagos. Mask and Fins are included.

For Arrival to Galapagos, how will I recognize my driver at the Baltra or San Cristobal Airport?

- **Our driver will be outside the airport, at the arrival hall with a sign with your name or with the Cruise Name.**

If you cannot find our driver: Use WhatsApp 24/7 Customer Support at: **+593 99 373 2879**

Any other questions please let me know.

We look forward to having you with us.