



Galápagos Naturalist Sailing Multi-Sport TRIP PLANNER

Congratulations! You are about to embark upon the vacation of a lifetime...R.O.A.M.'s Galápagos Naturalist Sailing & Multi-Sport Adventure.

As you plan for your trip, many questions may arise. What should I pack? What equipment will be provided? What will the weather be like?

Please use this Trip Planner as a resource for general information on your Galápagos Naturalist Sailing & Multi-Sport adventure. The information enclosed covers most everything you'll need to know before your trip. Of course, if you have questions that are not answered in this packet, we are happy to help! Just call 1-800-346-6277 in the USA or Canada or 1-209-736-4677 if outside the USA or Canada to speak with an adventure consultant, or email us at info@oars.com.

Pre-Departure Information

****Please fill out the Guest Registration form included with your confirmation email and return it to our office at least 90 days prior to your departure - this information is invaluable to us in planning your trip.****

Getting There

- Your trip begins and ends in Quito, Ecuador. You will need to arrange for your international flights. American, Delta and Continental airlines offer direct service into Quito from Miami, Atlanta and Houston respectively. We will make the arrangements for your Quito-Galápagos flights.
- For assistance in making your flight arrangements, please contact Exitto Travel. Exitto has been an airfare specialist to Latin America since 1994. With 15 years regional experience, Exitto knows Latin America intimately, along with the region's potential airfare pitfalls and how to avoid them. To obtain a quote, fill out an online request at www.exitotravel.com/affiliate/templateform.php?id=OARS or contact Exitto at info@exitotravel.com or 800-655-4053.

Please do not purchase airfare until your departure has been confirmed by the minimum number of required guests.

Rendezvous

- Upon arrival at the Quito Airport you will clear customs and then take a taxi to your hotel (approximately \$5-\$10). We will advise you of your hotel and flight arrangements to the Galápagos prior to departure.

After Your Trip

- Following your nights onboard the catamaran in the Galápagos, we will return to Quito where you will spend one final night before transferring to the airport the following morning for flights home.

What's Included?

- Skilled professional guide service
- Fully crewed sail boat with English speaking Ecuadorian naturalist
- 2 nights lodging in Quito / 7 nights lodging on catamaran (based on double occupancy)
- Meals as detailed in the itinerary
- All activities and expedition equipment as outlined in the itinerary and trip planner
- Round trip flights from Quito to Galápagos

What's Not Included?

- Transportation to and from Quito, Ecuador
- Pre- and post-trip accommodations and meals
- Meals not covered in the itinerary
- Quito airport transfers
- Galápagos National Park entrance fee US\$100 per person, US\$50 per child under 12, cash only
- Single supplement – by choice or circumstance (\$2000)
- Insurance of any kind, including travel and **mandatory** medical and evacuation insurance
- Cost of medical immunizations
- Alcohol and beverages
- Items of a personal nature (an equipment list will be provided)
- Gratuities

Equipment & Clothing

Please refer to your detailed packing list for a complete list of what to bring on your trip.

Any clothing you bring should be synthetic, quick drying, and breathable. During this sub-tropical adventure you will be exposed to sun, wind, and water. Long sleeves, long pants, and wide brimmed hats are recommended for sun protection. In general, you will need loose fitting clothes for the hotter parts of the trip and some extra layering for evenings. Keep in mind that some of what you bring may get sweaty and wet due to the humid climate. You will also encounter dust, sand, and salt, and may feel a little grubby from time to time. No fancy dress clothing is required.

Footwear

For daily wear on the boat, in the kayaks and on shore, we recommend an amphibious sport shoe or river sandals (with an ankle strap) such as those made by Teva with snap or buckle as Velcro tends to clog with the fine tropical sand. These shoes will be wet much of the time. Make sure you get good-grip, no-slip soles. Some people prefer to wear river sandals in the boat and on wet hikes, and cushioned-soled athletic shoes or lightweight boots for longer hikes. If you plan to buy footwear for the trip make sure you get it far enough in advance to break it in and wear your footwear until it's comfy—if your feet hurt you won't enjoy the trip.

Daywear

Start with sunscreen, a swimsuit, shorts, and long-sleeved shirt, and then add additional layers depending on the weather.

Eveningwear

After a long active day, you may want to refresh and change into clean comfortable clothing. Soft, loose-fitting shorts or pants, t-shirts, etc. will allow you to truly relax in the evening. Many women find sarongs or cotton dresses a nice change. Evenings in Quite may be cool and a lightweight jacket can come in handy.

Sun Protection

Protecting yourself from the sun should be taken very seriously. A sun hat, sunscreen, lip balm, and sunglasses are a must. Also, it's a good idea to have a long-sleeved cotton shirt and lightweight long pants (preferably light colors) to cover up when you need a break from the sun. Women may prefer to bring a sarong or a piece of fabric to be used as a cover up. Lightweight gloves can also protect your hands. At the end of each day, you will want to have some good moisturizing lotion or cream to replenish your skin from the drying effects of the sun and water.

Cameras

Bringing the right camera equipment and film will go a long toward determining the quality of your photographs. If you're an avid photographer, we recommend bringing a good digital SLR camera that can be used on land and when aboard the catamaran. There are many great underwater digital cameras that are salt-water resistant and protected against sand.

Bring more memory card space than you think you'll need. And don't forget to pack spare camera batteries or a charger. You should be ready for mostly bright sunlight, so you may want to bring a polarizing filter. Zip-Lock plastic bags help protect your camera against sand and salt. We strongly recommend you take out a rider on your homeowner's policy to cover your camera—especially if it's fine equipment.

For Women Only

Even if you aren't anticipating your menstrual period, come prepared for it. We recommend you bring some sandwich size zip-lock bags. They can be used during the day while you are on the water or hiking and can be disposed of when you reach your overnight lodging. (o.b.® tampons are one-third the size of regular tampons, tuck discreetly into pockets and have less paper wrapping). Many women suggest bringing a small supply of baby wipes.

Packing Your Gear

We recommend traveling as light as possible! Excess baggage can be a burden to you and to support personnel. On an international flight, you are typically allowed one to two pieces of checked luggage at no additional fee but luggage restrictions are changing regularly and vary according to airline—please check with your airline to determine luggage allowance. Soft luggage or a duffel bag is required for stowing on the boat.

Extra Luggage

We recommend you take with you only what's necessary. ***On the flight from Quito to the Galápagos, you will only be allowed 44 lbs. Excess luggage may be kept at the hotel in Quito.***

Weather

You may want to check one week prior to your trip for an up-to-date weather forecast. We recommend you check the following web sites: www.wunderground.com or www.nws.noaa.gov.

There are two primary seasons during the year in the Galápagos. Each offers a good time for visiting, but the character of each season is somewhat different.

December through June is the warmer time of year, with the highs in the upper 80s to mid-90s. Although the islands receive relatively more rainfall during this time most of the lower elevations of the islands are quite arid and there is plenty of sunshine and blue skies. The sea is at its warmest, and it is usually calmer at this time of year.

The drier garua season lasts from June or July through November. The garua is mist that forms in the highlands of the islands. Ironically, the garua season provides more moisture at the upper levels of the islands than the so-called wet season. There is plenty of sunshine during the day with generally cloudless skies. Air temperatures are lower, with highs in the upper 70s. The climate at this time is affected by the strong Humboldt Current, which comes from the south. The water temperature, therefore, is at its coolest during this time, about 68 degrees Fahrenheit.

	Av. Air Temp F	Av. Sea Surface Temp F	Hrs sunshine	Av rainfall"	Wind Factor
Jan	70-84	74	5.3	1.5	2
Feb	74-86	76	7.5	2.1	1
Mar	74-88	76	6.0	3.0	1
Apr	72-86	76	7.5	3.0	1
May	72-82	74	5.2	2.7	2
Jun	66-78	74	4.4	2.2	2
Jul	64-76	72	2.8	1.1	3
Aug	64-74	66	3.3	0.7	4
Sep	62-76	68	2.9	0.5	4
Oct	64-77	70	3.8	0.5	3
Nov	66-78	72	3.5	0.8	3
Dec	68-80	74	4.0	1.5	2

In mainland Quito, which is about 9000 feet above sea level, the elevation greatly moderates the climate. The temperature ranges from 45 to 70 degrees, with lower temperatures from April to October. Daytime temperatures are warm and pleasant, while evenings are cool and comfortable.

Essential Travel Documents

Your Passport - If you don't have a passport, apply for one immediately because the process can be lengthy. If you do have a passport, find it and check the expiration date. **The passport must be valid for 6 months beyond your intended date of departure from Ecuador.** Make a photocopy of the photo page of your passport and carry it separately from your passport. If your passport is lost or stolen, a photocopy will help the local consulate speed up authorization for replacement.

Also check your passport for blank pages. If you do not have a least two blank pages in your passport, we recommend that you apply to have additional pages added.

Please do not pack your passport in your check-in luggage. You may be asked for your papers not only upon departure but a various times during your trip, even while checking into the hotel in Quito. If you are carrying a customs form, please keep it in a safe place at all times, perhaps in your pouch along with your other valuables. We do not recommend carrying it in the passport because you must often submit the passport at hotels, where the form can easily be lost.

Visas - Visas are not required for US or Canadian citizens to enter Ecuador. For others, please check with the Ecuadorian Consulate.

Travel and Evacuation Insurance—Travel insurance that includes medical emergency evacuation is mandatory in order for you to take part in this expedition. You must provide proof of purchase of evacuation insurance prior to the trip. Broader coverage that includes trip cancellation, trip interruption, baggage loss and medical protection is highly recommended. Information on Travel Insurance Services is included in your confirmation, however, there are many other travel insurance companies offering coverage. When selecting a policy please make sure you are very clear about what they will and will not cover. No travel insurance covers all scenarios. Proof of insurance will be required prior to your trip.

Physical Preparation

This trip is relatively moderate but hiking and snorkeling require a combination of cardiac and strength training. Jogging, swimming, and aerobic exercises will help increase endurance for the activities. Push-ups, sit-ups and other weight training exercises that increase upper and lower body strength will ensure preparedness for getting the most out of your experience. Regular exercise prior to your trip will certainly add to your enjoyment.

- **Hiking & Walking**

The hikes are moderate and allow you to get up close and personal with the magnificent wildlife in the islands. We recommend that your hiking shoes be lightweight, with sturdy soles, and that they are well worn in. If you are buying new hiking shoes for this trip, be sure to walk them in well in advance to avoid blisters during the trip.

- **Snorkeling**

Snorkeling will expose you to a new world. You may come face-to-face with baby sea lions as they dart playfully past your mask. Penguins flit by in a trail of bubbles and sea turtles glide beneath you. The ecological diversity characteristic of the Galápagos is on grand display beneath the surface of the ocean as much as it is on land. If you've never snorkeled before, you'll want to try it out here as the experience is not to be missed.

- **Sea Kayaking**

The Galápagos is a wonderful place to sea kayak as you glide over a plethora of marine life. The boats are a mix of plastic singles and a few doubles. In the last two years, the authorities have begun to regulate the areas in which we can sea kayak, so where we paddle tends to vary by the trip and park regulations. Wherever we have the opportunity, it is always exceptional!

- **Surfing**

The surfing in Galápagos is outstanding. Many of the reef breaks require good surfing skills and the waves can be up to 4 meters. However, there are also some more forgiving beach breaks that are ideal for beginners. We have both short and long boards available for the group to share. If you are interested in a “surfing only” experience, contact us and we will be delighted to customize something for you.

- **Mountain Biking**

There are a few places in the islands where we have options to bike. It's mostly mellow road or trail riding and a sweep vehicle is never too far away.

Special Considerations

Please let us know if you're having a birthday or anniversary on the trip. We'll also need to know of any medical or dietary requirements that you'd like us to consider in planning your trip (i.e. if you're a vegetarian or vegan, or if you have any food allergies). Please note this on the Guest Registration Form (be specific as to what your needs are) and return it to our office at least 90 days before your trip. If you're booking your trip less than 90 days before departure, please make sure you've discussed any special requests with our office.

During Your Trip

Medical Matters

The trip leader is responsible for the safety of all trip members and he or she may evacuate or disqualify a trip member in the field if anyone's safety is jeopardized. Please be aware that hospital facilities for serious medical problems may be far away, doctors are not always available and that evacuations can be prolonged, difficult and expensive.

- **Immunizations and Health Considerations**

Although we do not require any immunizations to participate in this adventure, it is important that you be up-to-date on several standard immunizations and that you check with your physician prior to departure. The CDC also is a good resource for recommendations pertaining to international travel immunizations. (wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/ecuador.aspx)

- **Medications**

If you are taking any prescription drugs, be certain that you bring a sufficient supply to last through the trip. Do not pack these medications in your checked luggage. You will not find common American drugs in Ecuador. If you have concerns about seasickness, we suggest that you speak with your doctor about available treatments. Scopolamine patches (prescription) or Bonine (over the counter) are common medications for preventing seasickness, while an electro-stimulator worn on the wrist can also be an effective prevention.

- **Water**

Complimentary bottled drinking water is available at the hotel in Quito. We will provide purified water while in the Galápagos. Do not drink water from the tap as it frequently contains bacteria that can cause stomach problems.

The Catamaran is equipped with a water desalinization machine to provide us with freshwater for daily use. Please limit the number and time of your daily showers, as the machine provides 200 liters of freshwater per hour, and an average shower requires 40 liters. For the same reason, we ask that you do not wash your clothes on the boat.

It is crucial that you stay hydrated while in the tropics, especially when we are hiking, biking and kayaking. Electrolyte powders make water taste better, while replacing salts and minerals lost to sweating.

- **Staying Healthy**

In hot climates, cuts and scratches can easily become infected and take a long time to heal. Prevent infection from coral cuts by immediately washing wounds with fresh water. Use an antiseptic like hydrogen peroxide and an antibacterial like Neosporin. Prickly heat, or salt/heat rash is a common ailment for tropical adventurers. It is caused by salt buildup in the sweat glands. The skin becomes soggy and small red blisters appear. At first sight of the rash, wash with fresh water and apply calamine lotion, dust with talcum or medicated powder and change clothes. Until the rash improves, avoid alcohol and

caffeine. The sun is very strong in the Galápagos. Reapply sunscreen often, and wear your hat and sunglasses.

Meal Service

Please inform us of any dietary restrictions when booking your trip.

Meals are generally served at these times (subject to change to suit the itinerary):

- Breakfast 7:00 – 7:30
- Lunch 12:00 – 12:30
- Dinner 19:00 – 19:30

Snacks will be offered between meals.

Bar Service

There are a variety of soft drinks, beer, wine and liquor available for purchase. The bartender will open a consumption card for you; please sign it every time you request a drink. Due to the fact that there is a bar on board, we ask you to not bring your own alcohol.

Cabin Service

The cabins are cleaned every morning. Towels and sheets are changed 3 times a week. Please do not bring any food or drinks into the cabins in order to avoid bad odors and bugs.

Laundry

Laundry service is available at the hotel in Quito and the occasional location in the islands. Before dropping any laundry check for turn-around times. We recommend lightweight, quick drying articles of clothing that can air dry on the boat.

Briefings

Your guide will conduct a briefing every evening after dinner. He or she will explain the following day's activities and talk about what animals and plants might be seen.

Island Excursions

Passengers will be transferred from the catamaran to the islands in a panga (dinghy). The landings may be wet or dry. Dry landings mean you step directly onto rock, while wet landings mean you step into the water and wade to shore. Your guide will tell you ahead of time what type of landing to expect. Either way, crew members will be there to assist you.

Park Guidelines

Please remember you are visiting a national park, and will be expected to follow park regulations. The instructions you receive from your guide are intended for the preservation and conservation of the Galápagos.

Basic Rules:

- Stay on marked trails
- Do not touch or feed the animals
- Do not smoke on the Islands
- Clean the soles of your shoes to avoid carrying endemic seeds from one island to another
- Take only pictures; leave only footprints

Snorkeling

Each guest will be given a mask, a snorkel and a pair of fins in an individually numbered bag to use for the duration of the trip. Please rinse your gear in freshwater after each use. Snorkelers are asked to follow these simple instructions:

- Stay with the group; look up every few minutes to check that you are still close
- Be aware of the location of the panga
- When getting on and off the panga, stay clear of the outboard motor
- Have all your gear on before getting off the panga
- Take off only your fins before re-boarding the panga

- When diving under be sure to look up before resurfacing
- If you feel more comfortable in a life vest, you are welcome to wear one

Scuba Diving

For those interested, scuba diving will be an option for an additional fee and should be arranged prior to your trip. Dives are offered at times that will not interfere with the land-based activities. Remember to bring your diving license if you plan to participate.

Boat Safety

Your guide will thoroughly explain safety procedures once you are onboard. Please be sure to check exactly where the life vests are located in your cabin. In the unlikely event that the alarm sounds, you will be expected to gather your personal documents, put on warm clothes, and bring your life vest to the lounge where the crew members will be waiting with further instructions.

Smoking On Board

There are designated smoking areas on deck. Please ask one of the crew members for an ashtray and do not throw cigarette butts into the water. Smoking on the islands is not allowed.

Toilets

Everywhere in Ecuador, including Quito, the Galápagos Islands and our catamaran, people are asked not to throw anything into the toilets, including toilet paper. A wastebasket is provided for toilet paper and it is emptied often. This may seem strange to North Americans, but please obey this rule and avoid being the cause of a backed up septic system. Thanks!

Money Matters

Ecuador uses US dollars as their currency. Travelers should bring between \$500 and \$900 for fees, tips, and other expenses. In the Galápagos Islands, you will most likely need cash as ATM machines are limited and credit cards are not widely accepted. In hotels and shops in Quito you can use credit cards to charge purchases such as food, accommodations, and clothing. American Express, Visa, and MasterCard are widely accepted.

Electricity

Ecuador is on the 110V AC system. Sockets are the standard US style, either 2 flat prongs or 2 flat prongs and a round ground. There are sockets on the catamaran for recharging batteries. In order to save power, please remember to switch off the light and A/C when not in your cabin.

Time Zones

The Galápagos Islands are in the same time zone as US Mountain Time and Quito time is the same as US Central Time. However the country does not observe Daylight Savings Time, during which Galápagos corresponds with US Central Time and Quito with US Eastern Time.

Something Voluntary

In reviewing your statement, you'll note a \$50 per person donation to the International Galápagos Tour Organizers Association (IGTOA), a non-profit association of travel companies, conservation organizations and other groups that are dedicated to a complete and lasting protection of the Galápagos Islands. One-hundred percent of these funds go directly to conservation, research and education in the Galápagos and your contribution is tax-deductible. For more information, go to www.igtoa.org/funding. This donation is voluntary and may be removed from your invoice if you choose not to participate. Please notify our office if you would prefer to delete the donation from your balance.

IGTOA has produced a series of videos that are available for travelers to the islands. These videos will help you learn more about challenges facing the Galápagos Islands and how travelers can be part of the solution by following best practices. Please view these videos before your departure! www.igtoa.org/save

Gratuities

The tipping of R.O.A.M. guides is entirely discretionary, and we feel strongly that gratuities should not be offered to them if they lead anything less than a great trip. However, we expect that our crew will do a great job in making your trip memorable and, when they do, it is not uncommon for our travelers to offer a gratuity. The guides very much appreciate it.

In this regard, we are often asked what is appropriate. As a general tipping guideline, we have found that our travelers will leave \$120-150 per person to the crew (they will share it) and another \$80-100 per person to the naturalist. If you desire, the North American R.O.A.M. guide can be tipped separately as well (similar to naturalist). Once again, tipping is entirely at your discretion and varies by culture.

Contact Information

- For more information on this or any of our over 75 rafting, sea kayaking or multi-sport adventures, please call 1-800-346-6277 in the USA or Canada or 1-209-736-4677 if outside the USA or Canada or email us at info@oars.com and one of our knowledgeable adventure consultants will be happy to help you.

A Few Important Details

Reservations & Deposit

- An \$800/person deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance is due 120 days prior to departure.

Cancellations & Refunds

- If you find it necessary to cancel your trip, notify us as soon as possible. All payments are nonrefundable and we regret that we cannot make exceptions for personal emergencies. For this reason, we strongly urge our participants to investigate trip cancellation insurance (see Insurance).

Medical

- Under most circumstances, if you are of an adventurous spirit and in reasonably good health, you should have no problem enjoying a R.O.A.M. trip. People with medical conditions, including pregnancy, should have a physician's approval before taking an adventure travel trip.

Insurance

- Although every effort is made to insure a safe trip for all, we require that you purchase medical evacuation insurance to participate in this expedition. Call Travel Insurance Services at 800-937-1387 or visit their website at www.travelinsure.com/what/imedhigh.htm?32635 for inexpensive options that cover this requirement. We also strongly recommend that you protect yourself, your belongings, and your vacation through the purchase of a short-term traveler's policy. A trip cancellation policy covers your non-refundable payments in most cases, should you have to cancel your trip at the last minute due to illness or injury, as well as including the coverage required above. Trip participants should realize that in the event of illness or injury on a river trip, evacuation could be prolonged, difficult, and expensive. Personal belongings and cameras are carried entirely at the owner's risk, and R.O.A.M. accepts no responsibility for lost, damaged, delayed, or stolen property.

Liability Waiver

- Everyone is required to sign a standard liability release before the trip, acknowledging awareness that some risks are associated with the trip. Safety is of the utmost concern on our trips. However, due to the nature of the activities, a condition of your participation is that you will sign this form before the trip begins. Anyone who refuses to sign the form will not be allowed to participate and consistent with R.O.A.M. cancellation policy, there will be no refund of the trip fees at that time.

Responsibility – An Important Notice

- ROAM Adventures Inc., R.O.A.M., Inc., Latin Tour and cooperating agencies act only in the capacity of agent for the participants in all matters relating to transportation and/or all other related travel services, and assume no responsibility however caused for injury, loss or damage to person or property in connection with any service, including but not limited to that resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, detention, annoyance, delays, and expenses arising from quarantine, strikes, theft, pilferage, force majeure, failure of any means of conveyance to arrive or depart as scheduled, civil disturbances, government restrictions or regulations, and discrepancies or change in transit over which they have no control. Reasonable changes in itinerary may be made where deemed advisable for the comfort and well-being of the participants, including cancellation due to water fluctuation, insufficient bookings (this trip requires a minimum of 2 guests), and other factors. There is risk in boating and kayaking. Rafts and kayaks do capsize. You could be swept overboard. Your guide will make every attempt to assist, but you must be strong and agile enough to "self-help" without further endangering yourself or others. We reserve the right not to accept passengers weighing more than 260 pounds or with a waist/chest size more than 56 inches. We may decide, at any time, to exclude any person or group for any reason we feel is related to safety on our trips. We are experienced at accommodating people with various disabilities. Please give us an opportunity to make you feel welcome. We need to discuss requirements ahead of time. On advancement of deposit the depositor agrees to be bound by the above recited terms and conditions. Prices and itinerary are subject to change without notice.

Latin Tour:

- Latin Tour, a partner of ROAM Adventures Inc. is the operator of this trip. These staff members are the very best and will strive to ensure your complete satisfaction.

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