



Intercultural Outreach Initiative

Galapagos – Cuba – Costa Rica

786-709-9885 (Miami office)

+593 (5) 25 29 244 (Galapagos office)

www.ioi.ngo

volunteer@ioi.ngo

GETTING TO ISABELA

Travel on the Ecuadorian Mainland

Your international flight will place you either in Quito or Guayaquil. We recommend Guayaquil for fog issues in Quito which cause delays and/or rerouting to Guayaquil. After exiting the plane, precede downstairs to the immigration counters, watch the screen flashing numbers and when it is your turn go to the corresponding desk. You will be asked to show your passport and disembarkation card, which you received on the plane; you may also be asked for proof of your round-trip travel. After picking up your bags at baggage claim, you will pass through Customs (“Aduana”); place all baggage on the scanner, you may also be asked to open your bags. Before exiting the airport you will have to turn in the ticket stubs that correspond to those on your luggage, so be sure to have them readily available (the ticketing agent usually attaches them to your airplane ticket.)

We recommend that you set up transportation to and from the airport with your hotel to ensure your safety. If your respective hotel does not offer this pick-up service, we recommend using taxis from inside the airport. It is the safest way to get around the city. Taxis are US\$5-15 in Guayaquil, depending on what hotel you stay at. Now that the airport in Quito has been moved outside the city, taxis will cost at least \$25.

NOTE: be aware that Quito has an altitude of 2850m (9350 ft) above sea level. At this altitude, even healthy, athletic individuals can become ill. Symptoms as well as recommendations for staying healthy are provided in the section on Health & Safety.

Travel from the Ecuadorian mainland to Galapagos

At the Domestic Departures (Salidas Domesticas) terminal in Quito/Guayaquil airport, you should follow the directions below.

- 1) Go to the Consejo de Gobierno office; when you get to the counter you will show your passport and you will have to pay \$20; you will receive a tourist entry card. Don't lose this paper. You will have to show it in Baltra airport, as well as when you leave the Galapagos.
- 2) Next move to the SIGGAL/ABG counter (control of introduced organisms), you will have your entire luggage checked for organic or prohibited items (such as fresh fruits and vegetables, animal products, etc.).



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- 3) Head to your respective airline counter, where you can check your luggage.

NOTE: remember that there is a **45lb** total weight allowance for luggage checked free of charge. Overweight is charged at 40 – 50 cents a lb depending on the airline. If you have booked the “direct” flight to Baltra you are allowed 2 bags each 50lbs.

Travel in Galapagos

Usually, you will fly into Baltra airport.

- 1) After exiting the plane, follow the path to the Foreigners (extranjeros) counter, which is located on the right side. Submit your \$20 INGALA card and your passport to the Galapagos National Park (GNP) personnel. Here you will have to show your transeunte visa (as part of the program we will send this to you ahead of time) or pay the \$100 National Park fee.
- 2) Then move to the far right corner of the arrivals terminal where you will wait at baggage claim. Again, have your luggage ticket stubs ready to turn in before exiting the baggage claim area.
- 3) From there, proceed to the counters of SICGAL/ABG where your hand luggage will be inspected and scanned for introduced or prohibited organisms. They will also scan your bags again before leaving the airport.

From Baltra to Isabela by ferry (*This is the most common option & is organized by IOI*):

- 4) As you exit the baggage claim area you will pay 5 dollars for the bus to the channel. Keep the ticket they give you because when you exit the airport, just outside you will see where people are waiting in line to board. You can take any bus. This will take you to the channel in about 10-15 minutes.
- 5) At the channel you will board a ferryboat or speedboat and cross from Baltra Island to Santa Cruz Island. On the ferryboat put your luggage on top and embark below. These boats cost \$1/person.
- 6) After disembarking the ferryboat you will either board another bus (CITTEG), which costs \$5/person or you can opt to take a taxi (usually white pick-up trucks) which range from \$20-25/trip. You will travel across Santa Cruz and into the main town of Puerto Ayora; the trip takes about 1 hour. Coming as a volunteer – we recommend you take the taxi to assure you make it to the boat on time! If you split the taxi with other travellers it will off course be cheaper.



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- 7) Transportation from Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz to Puerto Villamil, Isabela. Speedboats leave every day at 7am and 2pm and tickets cost \$30/person (if you are part of the program, this cost is covered for you and we will send you your ticket ahead of time). You must arrive at the dock by 1:20 to check in with your boat and get your bags checked. You will have to pay \$0.50 for a water taxi to the boat.
- 8) Once you get to Puerto Villamil, Isabela, You will have to pay \$1 for a water taxi to the dock and a \$10 dock tax fee (tax again covered as part of your volunteer/student program). You will only pay this to enter, not when you leave.

From Baltra to Isabela airborne:

You may have the option to fly directly from Baltra airport to Isabela on the island hopper plane with EMETEBE airlines. The flight departs at 12:30pm and takes about 30 mins. The cost for non-Ecuadorians is \$185 one way. IOI can help you make these arrangements but you will be required to cover these costs. Be aware that EMETEBE has more conservative weight restrictions and baggage over 25lbs will be charged at a rate of \$1.75/lb.

- BEFORE BOOKING YOUR FLIGHTS:

- If you wanted to leave Isabela and fly out to the mainland same day, make sure your flight does not leave Baltra until at least 12pm or later so you have time to get to the airport.
- **Volunteers must arrive to Isabela on a Monday and depart on Saturday or Sunday.**
- We recommend that you chose the earliest flight into Baltra for further logistics in Galapagos – **you MUST arrive by 11am if you hope to make it to Isabela same-day (Monday).**