This guide provides information concerning accommodations, weather and other important
details to help you prepare for the program.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NOW

Here's a checklist to remind you of the things to take care of right away (if you have not done so
already):

☐ Return the following forms to Stanford Travel/Study:
  - Individual Information Form
  - Medical Form
  - Release of Liability
  - Travel Insurance Form
  - Flight, Hotel and Transfer Form

☐ Make air and transfer arrangements

☐ Submit your final payment to Travel/Study immediately, if you have not already done
so. If you paid your deposit by credit card, you will need to send us your credit card
information again, we do not keep credit card numbers on file for security reasons.

☐ Get necessary immunizations and/or medications

☐ Verify that your passport is up to date and valid for six months after you return from
your travels

A TYPICAL DAY

This is a moderately strenuous program that requires you to be in good health, fit and able to
enjoy comfortably paced walks over uneven terrain and on paths and trails which can be rocky
or slippery. Walks generally last two to three hours, and one snorkeling opportunity is usually
included each afternoon. Snorkel equipment is available for use. During the day we spend as much time as we can on the islands, often in mild to warm conditions (dry with temperatures in the mid-60°s to low 80°s F during the day, cooler during the evenings and in the highlands).

The pace of this tour is considered active. In order to make the most of what each locale has to offer, touring will be vigorous. A typical day is adventure-filled, balanced by relaxing periods cruising at sea. You will need to climb in and out of a Zodiac for shore excursions; staff will be on hand to assist. Many excursions involve wet landings, requiring stepping into knee-deep water to reach the beach from the Zodiac, followed by slow walks for a mile or two over uneven terrain that can be rocky or slippery. Please note that the La Pinta does not have an elevator on board. You should feel comfortable walking on a rocking surface.

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

A spirit of adventure and a willingness to explore new areas in an open and receptive way along with a flexible attitude will ensure your enjoyment of this program. You do not have to participate in all the scheduled activities, except when traveling to the next destination. We are sure you will be pleased with the exciting educational program provided, but we want you to be aware of the pace.

**SMOKING**

Out of consideration for other members of the group, smokers are asked to refrain from smoking in vehicles, during lectures and meals, and at other times when we are in close proximity to one another. In accordance with smoking regulations governing our international flights, smoking is not permitted in the aircraft at any time. On board the La Pinta, smoking is only allowed on the outside decks in designated areas.

**FLIGHTS**

Please note that the flights between Quito and the Galápagos Islands are included in the program, and these reservations will be made by Stanford Travel/Study for the whole group. International flights are not included.

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

Below are brief descriptions of the hotels where we will be staying during our program. For detailed information on life aboard the La Pinta, please refer to the “About La Pinta” handout included with this mailing.

**HOTEL HILTON COLON (September 9, 18 &19)**

Located in the heart of Ecuador’s capital and only 20 minutes’ drive from the airport, the Hilton Colón provides easy access to the colonial sector of the city. The hotel has a heated outdoor pool, adjacent to a gym with weight machines, sauna, steam bath and massage service. Rooms are spacious and comfortable and feature cable television, soundproof windows and individually controlled air-conditioning.

**In-room amenities:**
- hairdryer
- fridge and mini-bar
- room service
robes

Hotel services and amenities:
- business center with Internet access
- concierge services
- currency exchange
- two restaurants

WEATHER

Temperatures during our program can be variable, ranging from the mid 70s (°F) during the day in the Galápagos Islands to the high 40s in the early mornings and evenings in Quito.

Located on the Equator, the Galápagos Islands have a surprisingly cool, sub-tropical climate. The larger islands with volcanic peaks have a variety of climatic zones. The coastal areas are arid and covered with plants adapted to desert conditions. The highland areas receive moisture almost all year round, supporting lush vegetation. During our Seminar, temperatures will range from the upper 60s to mid-70s °F, with average sea temperatures around 68°F. Although it is the dry season, we will often experience a dense morning mist, called garua in Spanish, that burns off by mid-day.

Quito, nestled in a valley at an altitude of 9,000 feet and surrounded by snow-capped volcanoes, is located 15 miles south of the equator. Expect temperate days (high 60s °F), cool, crisp nights (high 40s) and occasional rain.

Since weather patterns are increasingly unpredictable, we recommend checking temperatures online at [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) or [www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com) before departure, for the most up-to-date weather information.

LUGGAGE & WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

On this program, we recommend that you limit your luggage to one suitcase not to exceed 44 pounds and one carry-on piece (in addition to a purse or handbag), which must fit under your seat or in the overhead luggage compartment. These restrictions are set by the domestic flight carriers within Ecuador for our flight from Quito to the Galápagos Islands.

Participants are responsible for their own overweight luggage charges, so please be aware of your luggage limits during the program as well as the restrictions for your international flight carrier.

The following are general tips for all domestic and international travel:

- Check the luggage allowance rules for the airlines you will be flying for this program, as many airlines have recently tightened their restrictions.
- Start your trip with checked luggage well under the weight limit – if you plan to make any purchases during the trip, these items will quickly increase your luggage weight...
- Leave your checked bags unlocked for your flights (or use TSA-approved locks) and carry locks with you to use while in transit during the program
- Pack a few necessities (toiletries, medications and a change of clothing for the initial activities of the program) in your carry-on bag in case your checked bag is delayed

The following are the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) restrictions and procedures for air travel and carry-on luggage. This information may change between now and the date of your departure. For the most up-to-date information and a list of frequently asked questions about these new security requirements, please visit the TSA website at: www.tsa.gov.

- Pack liquids/gels/aerosols in your checked luggage. In your carry-on, you are permitted to bring 1 quart-size, clear plastic, zip-top bag holding small (3 ounces or less) containers of liquids, gels or aerosols (Limited to one zip-top bag per traveler)
- Exceptions include: baby formula/breast milk/baby food while traveling with a small child, medications, liquids or gels for diabetics or other medical needs
- All exceptions must be declared to the Security Officer for screening
- All footwear must be removed for X-ray screening
- Pack valuables such as jewelry, cash and electronics, as well as fragile items, in your carry-on
- Avoid wearing accessories that contain metal, which will set off the metal detector
- Put all undeveloped film in your carry-on bag, because checked luggage screening equipment may damage films

**WHAT TO BRING**

The following are suggestions for clothing and other equipment to bring on the trip. For a concise summary of items recommended for this program, please refer to the enclosed Packing Checklist.

**CLOTHING**

We recommend a comfortable wardrobe that you can layer. Because of the expeditionary nature of our travels, formal dress is not required anywhere on our journey. However, you may want to bring one outfit that can be dressed up a bit for the welcome and farewell dinners (this is completely optional and at your discretion).

Shorts and sleeveless tops, especially on women, are generally not considered appropriate in the city, but are fine to wear on our excursions on the islands. Be aware, however, that long pants and sleeves provide better protection against sunburn than shorts and tank tops. Evenings can be surprisingly chilly, so bring a warm sweater or jacket.

**FOOTWEAR**

The most essential item in your travel wardrobe is a well-worn, comfortable pair of walking shoes. If you prefer more ankle support, you may choose a lightweight pair of hiking boots to
wear while walking along the rocky trails and slippery tidal areas. There are a number of boots available in the “high-top” style with rugged soles that provide ankle support and stability but are made of nylon and cotton canvas fabrics (as opposed to leather), making them lightweight and also quick-drying. Many of our excursions require wet landings, often in knee-deep water, to reach the beach from the Zodiac. Many travelers like using Teva™-type sandals or Aqua Socks™ for wet landings.

**SPECIAL EQUIPMENT**

**Snorkeling equipment** is available on board the La Pinta free of charge. If you already have a face mask and snorkel, you may prefer to bring them so you’ll be assured of a good fit. If you require a prescription mask, please plan to bring your own, as these are not available on board.

We recommend a “shorty” wetsuit (3 mm) and/or Lycra suit (often worn underneath wetsuits) for use during snorkeling excursions, as the water temperature can be relatively cool. (It usually ranges from 68 - 70°F during September). A full body Lycra suit worn under the shorty wetsuit provides additional protection from the sun. The ship has a selection of shorty wetsuits for passenger use if you do not want to bring your own. If you tend to be cold in the water you might choose to bring or rent a full body wetsuit. Please contact Stanford Travel/Study if you are interested in renting a full body wetsuit from a local dive shop in Ecuador.

Participants on past programs have also found that **walking sticks** are very helpful on uneven terrain. Both Tracks™ and Leki™ walking sticks are available in sport shops in the U.S. Look for the models that telescope into thirds and can be packed easily.

During our excursions, a **daypack** will keep your hands free and prove invaluable for carrying camera gear and film, a small towel, water bottle, sunscreen and other personal items. The sun is strong at the equator, so it is very important to bring **sunglasses** and **sunscreen** with a high SPF. Don’t forget a light, tie-on **hat** with a wide brim for sun protection on the face and neck. Visors don’t protect the top of your head, and caps and loose hats may blow off and get lost. A bandana or scarf for the back of the neck may come in handy. If you wish to swim, snorkel or use the ship’s hot tub, we suggest packing two bathing suits (one suit does not dry between outings).

Pack a collapsible umbrella and lightweight rain gear for possible inclement weather.

If you are traveling with friends, you may want to share **adapter plugs** or your supply of **extra batteries**.

**CAMERAS**

We will be seeing spectacular places every day, and we recommend you bring a **camera** to record your memories. There are many types of digital and film cameras available at camera and other retail stores in a range of prices. The most important factor when selecting a camera is that you be comfortable using both the camera and its accessories.

We recommend that you bring plenty of **memory cards** (with memory enough for about 75 photos per day) or **film** (plan on using an average of three rolls per day), **extra batteries** and a **battery charger**.
Keep in mind that flash photography may be prohibited in some indoor areas such as museums or religious sites. It is often forbidden to take photographs of public works like bridges, train stations, military facilities and airports. Warning signs are usually posted in these places. When taking pictures of people, you should ask permission first.

**Binoculars**

There will be many opportunities for good sightings of birds and animals on our program, and we strongly recommend you bring one pair of binoculars per person, as they are essential for wildlife viewing.

Binoculars are widely available at camera or travel supply stores in a price range of $90 to $300. When purchasing binoculars, we recommend you consider the following parameters, which are typically listed on the cover plate of the binoculars as follows:

- **Magnification** = linear power (e.g. 7x magnification is as if one were 7 times closer to the object); minimum magnification of 7x is recommended for wildlife observation

- **Objective Diameter** = how much light, in millimeters, can be gathered to form an image; diameter of x35 or x40, or at least four times greater than the magnification, is recommended for good clarity

- **Field of View** = linear (or angular) indication of how many feet in width will be seen at 1,000 yards (or how many degrees can be viewed)

Other considerations:

- Compact models (e.g. 7x20), can fit in a pocket and are very lightweight, but sacrifice brightness and field of vision and can be more difficult to use than larger models

- “Center-focus” binoculars are easier to use than “individual-focus” models

- “Armored” or rubber-coated models are generally more shock-resistant, and some are also waterproof

**Electricity**

Electricity in Ecuador and aboard the La Pinta is 110-volt, 60 Hz cycles, the same standard used in the U.S. American appliances, including electric shavers, hairdryers and battery chargers can be used at the hotel in Quito and in your cabin aboard ship.
MONEY MATTERS

The cost of this tour includes accommodations, transportation, group meals as noted in the brochure, entrance fees, and gratuities for all group activities to guides, waiters, porters, ship crew and hotel staff. You should need money only for personal expenses, meals on your own, beverages not provided at group meals and for individual purchases. Please note, however, that it is customary to tip the bartender approximately 10% to 15% of your bar tab, and these tips are not included in your Expedition cost.

Ecuador has adopted the U.S. dollar as its monetary unit, so you will not need to exchange any money during our trip. Depending on how much shopping you intend to do, we recommend that you bring approximately U.S. $200 per person to Ecuador, in small denominations ($1’s, $5’s and $10’s).

MAJOR CREDIT CARDS (VISA, MasterCard and American Express)
- Accepted in virtually all hotels, most restaurants and large shops
- Can be used in ATMs to obtain a cash advance (make sure you have a valid international PIN)
- *Obtaining a cash advance may incur high surcharges from your credit card company*

ATMs
- Readily available in Quito, but not in the Galápagos Islands
- Dispense cash in local currency (usually at an excellent exchange rate)
- Can be used with your ATM card from home, as long as you have arranged for a numerical international personal identification number (PIN) in advance
- Most banks charge a transaction fee but the rates of exchange at ATMs are often very favorable
- *Note: you may have to split off from the group on excursions in order to seek out an ATM*

TRAVELER’S CHECKS
- May not be readily accepted or easily exchanged
- Exchange rate using traveler’s checks is often much less favorable than cash or credit cards
- If you choose to bring traveler’s checks, always carry check numbers separately from the checks, along with the phone numbers to call in case of loss or theft

LOCAL GRATUITY GUIDELINES
These guidelines are for meals on your own, additional hotel nights or any other travel that is not with the group.
- If you are traveling on your own before or after the trip, it is suggested you leave $1.00 per day for housekeeping staff and $1.00 per bag for porters.
• Taxi drivers don't generally expect tips unless they go out of their way for you.
• Restaurants in this part of the world sometimes add a service charge of 10% of the total bill. It is customary to leave a small (about 2.5 – 5%) tip on top of that.

**SHOPPING**

There may be opportunities to purchase local handicrafts and souvenirs, but these will be limited in time. Please be aware that breaking off from the group to make purchases while on tour can delay the entire group. We realize such purchases support the local economy and make an important contribution to your experience, but we want you to be considerate of your fellow travelers. Shipping services and packing materials may be very limited. Since the choice to purchase items is yours, you are solely responsible for the shipping arrangements and any associated costs.

Please note that the purchase of “national treasures” for export from any country is strictly illegal. We will send a U.S. Customs Information packet in your final document mailing.

**LANGUAGE**

Though Quechua and other Amerindian languages are spoken throughout the country, the official language of Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands is Spanish.

While we have bilingual guides throughout the tour, it could be beneficial to learn a little bit of Spanish or brush up on the Spanish that you do know for when you are out on your own and/or want to communicate with locals. We will also include a one-page Spanish dictionary in the final Red Journal documents to give you a few basic phrases.

**TIME DIFFERENCE**

During our program, mainland Ecuador is 2 hours ahead of Pacific Daylight Time (PDT). The Galápagos Islands are 1 hour ahead of PDT. When it is 12:00 noon in San Francisco, it is 2:00 p.m. in Quito and 1:00 p.m. in the Galápagos Islands.

You can find more information about time zones online at: [www.timeanddate.com/worldclock](http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock).

**COMMUNICATION**

A list of our hotels’ addresses and phone/fax numbers, as well as information on how to contact you aboard the *La Pinta*, will be sent in your Red Journal approximately three weeks prior to departure. Please bring a copy with you and leave the others with family, friends or business associates.

Fax service and internet access is available at our hotel. Please note that e-mail capability is available on board our ship, but you will not be able to access web-based e-mail.
If you plan to call home from Ecuador, you will save a great deal of money by bringing with you the toll-free access number for Ecuador provided you by your long-distance company. If you do not have this number, contact your phone service. The code for AT&T customers is 1-999-119 (using Adinatel) or 1-800-225-528 (using Pacifictel) and for MCI customers it is 1-999-170 (using Adinatel) or 1-800-999-170 (using Pacifictel).

Cellular service is widely available in Ecuador, but very limited in the Galápagos Islands. You may wish to call your cellular phone company to find out if and how you can use your cell phone abroad. Charges will vary depending on the destination and cellular phone provider.

**SAFETY & SECURITY**

The safety and security of all travelers is of primary importance to Stanford Travel/Study and our domestic and local operators. In the event of an emergency, our staff will do their best to look out for the safety of the group. As a service to our travelers, Stanford Travel/Study registers each individual U.S. citizen with the U.S. State Department on all our international programs. Basic information (name, date of birth and the program itinerary) is filed by our office via the State Department’s secure online registration system. This information is kept confidential and is used by the State Department to assist U.S. citizens with consular services and evacuation in case of emergency.

Before you leave home, make photocopies of important documents, such as your credit cards and the “picture” page of your passport. Put one set of copies, with two passport photos, in a safe place in your luggage and give another set of copies to your emergency contact. Should you lose your passport, these items will help you obtain a new one more easily. If you have travel insurance, bring the certificate with you and leave a copy with your emergency contact.

You can also help ensure the personal security of your belongings and those around you. To minimize the risk of loss or theft while traveling, take the same precautions you would in any major city in the U.S and carry only what you need with you:

- Leave your good watches and jewelry at home
- Leave your passport, airline tickets and credit cards in a safe deposit box or large, locked suitcase in your room whenever possible
- Insure your camera equipment and any valuables that you bring with you (e.g. your wedding ring, if you feel you must wear it at all times)
- Carry only small amounts of cash and traveler’s checks (enough for your next meal or an afternoon’s shopping) when you leave your room
- Keep your suitcase locked during transit and when it is in your room
- Be careful how you carry your camera bag or purse when in crowded areas or on city streets – have a good grip on it at all times, especially if carrying it over your shoulder, and **NEVER** leave personal items unattended

Stanford Travel/Study and our tour operators are not responsible for any lost or stolen items.
TRAVEL RESOURCES

There are a tremendous number of travel resources online. In addition to the websites listed throughout this document, we’ve included a sampling of websites that our staff find useful when preparing for a trip.

RETAIL RESOURCES FOR TRAVEL SUPPLIES

- Brookstone  www.brookstone.com
- Eagle Creek  www.eaglecreek.com
- Going in Style  www.goinginstyle.com
- Magellan’s  www.magellans.com
- REI  www.rei.com
- Travel Oasis  www.traveloasis.com
- Travel Smith  www.travelsmith.com

GENERAL TRAVEL RESOURCES

- Currency converter  www.oanda.com/convert/cheatsheet
- Customs information  www.customs.ustreas.gov/xp/cgov/travel/
- Packing tips  www.thetravelinsider.info/info/packingtips1.htm#top
- Travel Advice  hasbrouck.org/
- World time zones:  www.timeanddate.com/worldclock