



NATIONAL TRAVEL
INDUSTRY AWARDS

2022 MOST OUTSTANDING
TOUR OPERATOR

Latin America Travellers Guide



chimuadventures.com



WELCOME TO SOUTH AMERICA

Finally, your Latin America journey is about to begin. If you are reading this Travellers Guide it means that you are about to set off on the adventure of a lifetime. Hosting a variety of incredulous terrains, distinct cultures, intriguing histories and hordes of wildlife, Latin America has something for everyone. Latin America is a land as beautiful as it is diverse. You will find a little bit of everything here. Latin America offers an array of opportunities from thrill-seeking to deep relaxation. Let the sights, sounds and smells of Latin America captivate you during your trip. Please read carefully through the guide as it contains some important information and helpful hints that will help you to prepare for the day-to-day activities and alert you on some things to expect while travelling in Central and South America. The first sections contain general advice that will apply to all countries you are visiting and there are specific country guides, which you can choose to read based on the destinations you are visiting. Thank you for choosing to travel with us. We hope you are as excited about your trip as we are.



Chad Carey

Chad Carey
Co-Founder of Chimu Adventures

M.A.D PROJECT

Since we started in 2004, we have been working with separate projects in Antarctica and Latin America. Now, we have pulled these all together under the banner of the Make A Difference (M.A.D.) Project, where we can directly work and promote humanitarian programs that would not otherwise have a voice. All of our projects have been thoroughly researched for their ethical and moral outcomes. We support the MAD Project so that the project itself has no overheads, every donation made is passed onto the projects it supports, in full.

If you would like to contribute or learn more about this or one of the other projects, donate, join an event or get involved, visit: madproject.org





THINK BEFORE YOU PRINT

PAPER AND PULP PRODUCTION HAS BEEN NOTED AS THE 4TH LARGEST INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTOR OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION IN THE WORLD TODAY.

As a company we care about sustainability and being environmentally accountable. We are currently striving towards using less paper and aim to become a paperless organisation.

As a way of giving back to the earth that makes who we are and what we do possible, we are highly dedicated to playing our part in minimising our impact.

For more information about our Best Practice Guide on sustainability for our organisation and our travellers please go to:

chimoadventures.com/about/bestpractices

For these reasons all documentation including your Final Travel Documentation will be sent electronically. To view your Travel Documentation including this guide simply download them to your electronic device before you depart for access during your trip. We ask our travellers that you reconsider printing any communication and documents from us.



CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

- [5 Welcome & Travel Safety Advice](#)
- [6 Covid-19 Requirements & Passports](#)
- [7 Visa Requirements](#)
- [8 Travel Insurance & General Travel Advice](#)
- [9 Health Information](#)
- [10 Health Warnings for South America](#)
- [11 South America Packing Checklist](#)
- [12 Amazon Packing Checklist](#)
- [13 Galapagos Packing Checklist](#)
- [14 Money & Tipping Guidelines](#)
- [15 Sustainability & Language](#)
- [16 Safety](#)
- [17 Photography Tips & Hints](#)

COUNTRY GUIDES

- [18 Argentina](#)
- [20 Bolivia](#)
- [22 Brazil](#)
- [24 Chile](#)
- [26 Colombia](#)
- [28 Ecuador](#)
- [30 Galapagos Islands \(Ecuador\)](#)
- [33 Peru](#)
- [35 Uruguay](#)

- 37 MEXICO & CENTRAL AMERICA**
- [38 Belize & Costa Rica](#)
- [39 Guatemala & Honduras](#)
- [40 Mexico](#)
- [41 Panama](#)





LOCAL PARTNERS WHATSAPP WELCOME

Our local on the ground partners in each country that you visit will contact you a few days before you are due to arrive via WhatsApp. They will provide you with your final day to day itinerary and you will have their contact information in the case of emergencies, or if you need assistance while you are travelling.



DOWNLOAD WHATS APP

or visit www.whatsapp.com/download

Most airports in Latin America have Wi-Fi available, so if you are not able to locate your driver or need anything while you are away this will make it simple and easy for you to get help and we can ensure that we reduce unnecessary paper use.

Please ensure that you provide us with your best mobile contact number that you will be reachable on while you will be travelling.

If you need assistance whilst you are travelling, please refer to your confirmed itinerary for the contact details of our local operators. The majority of our operators are also contactable via WhatsApp. If you need anything prior to commencing your travel arrangements, for matters regarding payment or if you wish to book additional services please contact your booking agent.

TRAVEL ADVICE AND SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Australian citizens

We recommend registering with Smartraveller to be kept up to date with the latest travel advice and safety precautions:

smartraveller.gov.au

NEW ZEALAND CITIZENS:

We recommend registering with Safe Travel be kept up to date with the latest travel advice and safety precautions:

safetravel.govt.nz/register-your-travel

UK CITIZENS

We recommend checking the FCO website for the latest travel advice and safety precautions:

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

Please monitor the travel warnings and make an informed decision about your plans based on the official Government advice.

US CITIZENS

We recommend checking the State Department website for the latest travel advice and safety precautions:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>





COVID-19 REGULATIONS

Due to the changing nature of Covid-19 and the differing regulations that individual nations enforce, we advise that you check entry requirements with the destination country embassy and with the airline you will be travelling with before departing your home country.

1. CHECK REQUIREMENTS

It is the passengers responsibility to check entry requirements embassies and airline prior to departure

2. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE CORRECT PAPERWORK

Some countries, regions and ships may have additional requirements around testing and vaccinations.

We cannot be held responsible if you do not meet these requirements or are unable to provide the required documentation to partake in any part of your itinerary.

PASSPORTS



Please ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months after the return date of your holiday, and you have sufficient blank pages for any entry/exit stamps.

 **Traveller Tip:**

Take a photo or scan the first pages of your passport and email these to yourself along with a copy of your air ticket and any other relevant travel and insurance documents.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

IMPORTANT:

Please refer to our Visa Requirements Page on our website for the most up to date information on visas and travel restrictions.

CHIMUADVENTURES.COM/TRAVEL/CHIMU-VISA-TRAVEL-INFORMATION

Be sure to also check requirements for any countries you are traveling through on the way to and from your city of embarkation.

You can also use www.iatatravelcentre.com and www.traveldoc.aero to source further information.

Be sure to also check requirements for any countries you are traveling through on the way to and from South America.

Entry Visa Required	Australia	New Zealand	USA	Canada	UK	EU	South Africa
Argentina	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Bolivia	No	No	YES	No	No	No	YES
Brazil	YES	No	YES	YES	No	No	No
Chile	YES	No	No	No	No	No	No
Colombia	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Ecuador	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Peru	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Uruguay	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Venezuela	No	No	YES	YES	No	No	No
Suriname	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Guyana	No	No	No	No	No	No	YES
French Guiana	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Costa Rica	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Cuba	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Guatemala	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Honduras	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Mexico	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Nicaragua	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Panama	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

DISCLAIMER:

If you hold a passport that is not on the list above please check if you need a visa with the relevant consulate. Visa requirements can change frequently, if in doubt please check with the consulate of the country you are travelling to. We cannot be held liable if the above information is not correct at the time you are travelling. Please see our website for the latest up to date information. Travelling without a visa may result in you being denied boarding on your departure flight and we are unlikely able to get a refund on all or the majority of any booked services. Please refer to our [terms and conditions](#) for more information.

While we will assist in every possible way to provide you with accommodation and flight details necessary to obtain any necessary visas, we are not a consular service and it is the sole responsibility of the traveller to obtain the necessary visas before departing Australia.



TRAVEL INSURANCE

TRAVEL INSURANCE IS MANDATORY ON ALL TOURS AND CRUISES BOOKED WITH CHIMU.

Please ensure the policy you purchase covers you for accidents, emergency evacuation, sickness, loss of baggage and personal belongings, as well as disruption to travel and alterations to your pre-booked travel plans due to local issues.

ENTRANCE FEES

Some countries in Latin America may charge reciprocal entrance fees or fees on arrival without warning. These are subject to change at any time and will generally be payable locally at the airport or land border crossing.

For more information, please refer to the specific country information sections (starting on page 16). Some airports also charge an airport usage fee or embarkation fee that is not included in your ticket price. All Taxes and Entrance fees are subject to change, and this is a part of travel to Latin America that you should be prepared for.

BAGGAGE ALLOWANCES

Please check with your airlines ahead of time and/or when booking flights to determine what your carry-on and checked bag allowance is as this often varies. Excess baggage fees can be very expensive. Domestic flights often have stricter baggage restrictions and some carriers do not include a checked baggage allowance on their domestic routes and will charge upon check in. Charter flights also have very strict luggage restrictions, please refer to your documentation if relevant to your booking.

Always carry your important documents and necessities (including any prescribed medication) in your carry-on luggage and a change of clothes.

FLIGHTS

In Latin America flight schedules can change sporadically and at the last minute.

There may also be a long transit time of perhaps four plus hours. It may be possible to stay at a hotel in the transit location. Please contact your destination specialist if this is an option you would like to explore.

Some domestic and international terminals are in separate buildings. When transiting please ensure you follow the signs and ask for directions if you require them. It is important to confirm if your baggage will be checked through to your final destination. Often if you are arriving from another country you will need to collect your bags and take them through customs before rechecking them if you are travelling onwards domestically. The airline will be able to verify the requirements at the time of check in.

DEPOSIT & FINAL PAYMENT

Please refer to your invoice for details of deposit and final payment. All deposits are non-refundable as per our terms and conditions. It is important to remember that failure to pay deposits or to make the final payment by the due date may result in the cancellation of your booking.



HEALTH INFORMATION

VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

We recommend that you visit your doctor or a travel clinic for current information and check if you have already been vaccinated during childhood immunizations, but as a guide we recommend the following:

- > Yellow Fever – Especially for jungle areas
- > Hepatitis – Both A and B (twinrix)
- > Typhoid
- > Diphtheria
- > Cholera
- > Rabies
- > Tetanus

PLEASE NOTE: Yellow Fever vaccination may be an entrance requirement to return to your home country or to enter/transit some destinations if you have been in a country or area with a high risk of Yellow Fever. Please refer to the CDC website for the latest information:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2024/preparing/yellow-fever-vaccine-malaria-prevention-by-country>

When travelling to jungle areas, please exercise caution and carry sufficient insect repellent and malaria protection, either medical or homeopathic remedies. It is your responsibility to have the necessary vaccinations for travel. We will not be held responsible for travel delays or refused entry into countries due to customers not having the necessary vaccinations.

The following websites give further health advice and information on travelling to Latin America:

<http://www.traveldoctor.com.au>

<http://travelvaccines.com.au/index.php/south-america>

HEALTH WARNINGS



YELLOW FEVER

What is it?

Yellow Fever is a viral illness that is spread by the bite of a mosquito. It is endemic in tropical and sub-tropical regions of Latin America, although cases of tourists contracting the disease are rare.

What do I need to do?

All travellers to the jungle regions of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, the Guianas, Paraguay, Peru, Panama and Venezuela should make sure that they have the relevant up-to-date vaccination.

It is important to carry your vaccination certificate with you on your Latin American travels, as at some airports you may be asked for evidence of vaccination upon arrival or departure and when returning to your home country from Latin America you may require to show that you are vaccinated against yellow fever. A single yellow fever vaccine is considered to confer lifetime immunity.

PLEASE NOTE:

If you are visiting the following countries in South America, you will likely be required to present a yellow fever vaccination certificate upon return to your home country. If you do not have this, you may risk being denied entry without vaccination or you may be refused boarding by the airline.

Argentina – Misiones and Corrientes Provinces

- Bolivia • Brazil • Colombia
- Ecuador including Galapagos Islands • French Guiana
- Guyana • Panama • Paraguay • Peru • Suriname
- Trinidad and Tobago • Venezuela

Please refer to this page for more information and consult your GP or a travel doctor to confirm the latest requirements:

<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/yellow-fever-fact-sheet.pdf>



ALTITUDE SICKNESS

What is it?

At heights above 2000 metres you may experience shortness of breath and a rapid heartbeat in response to the lack of oxygen in the air. These symptoms can sometimes deteriorate into altitude sickness or acute mountain sickness (AMS) with resulting headaches, loss of appetite, extreme tiredness, insomnia, dizziness and sometimes nausea. If symptoms develop, they will generally disappear after 48–72 hours.

What do I need to do?

Try to take things easy, rest and drink plenty of fluids. Do not plan any strenuous excursions or treks until you have acclimatized for a few days. You should avoid alcohol, cigarettes and heavy foods.

If symptoms become more severe and prolonged, you should quickly seek medical attention and make arrangements to descend to a lower altitude.

Altitude sickness effects everyone differently and has nothing to do with your general fitness level. If you are really worried about AMS and/or have a history with it, then please speak to your booking agent about putting more rest days into your itinerary.



HIKING

Most hikes in Latin America requires a moderate to high level of fitness, and some hikes are more strenuous than others, particularly when done at altitude, which can have a significant impact on your abilities.

What do I need to do?

Please consider your health and ensure you have adequate travel insurance that covers such activities. Speak to your doctor if you have concerns prior to travel.





SOUTH AMERICA PACKING CHECKLIST

DOCUMENTS & CURRENCY

- Passport
- Air tickets & Itinerary
- Photocopy of Passport
- Travel Insurance
- Passport photos
(often needed for identification passes & certain visas)
- Foreign currency
- Debit/credit cards

BASICS

- Underwear
- Socks
- Pyjamas
- Gym clothing (optional)
- T-shirts
- Long sleeve t-shirts
- Trousers
- Light-weight clothing
- Warm clothing
(depending on itinerary and time of year)
- Nice shirt/dress for casual dinners
- Swimsuit

TOILETRIES/ MEDICATION

- Personal/Prescription Medication
- Toothbrush, paste & floss
- Shampoo & conditioner
- Shaving essentials
- Basic first aid kit
band aids/bandages
anti-diarrhoea remedy
Panadol/aspirin
rehydration remedy
antiseptic cream/powder
sterile dressing
Eye drops
Anti-histamines
- Pocket tissues
- Deodorant
- Hairbrush & hair bands
- Face & hand cream
- Lip balm with SPF
- Sunscreen SPF50+
- Mosquito spray/insect repellent
- Nail care kit

ACCESSORIES

- Comfortable walking shoes
- Sandals
- Small Day pack
- Spare glasses/contacts
- Sunglasses/prescription sunglasses
- Hat
- Walking poles (optional)
- Travel journal & pens
- Travel pillow
- Reusable water bottle
- Security code padlock
- Small torch

TECHNOLOGY

- Laptop or iPad & charger
- External hard drive
- Camera with charger & batteries
- Phone & charger
- Binoculars
- Headphones
- Voltage adapters
- Multiplug powerboard

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Ziplock bags
- Travelling snacks
- Kindle & charger
- Tablet & charger
- Sleep eye mask
- Waterproof phone case
- Ugg boots/Slippers
- Binoculars
- Body moisturiser





AMAZON PACKING CHECKLIST

The Amazon Jungle is a huge place, and we offer multiple locations and either jungle lodges or river cruises to explore. There may be luggage restrictions on your various transports, or at your accommodation, so please ask your destination specialist to confirm any limits. Despite any limits, we recommend travelling as lightly as possible to make things easier for you, many operators and hotels will allow luggage storage while you venture into the jungle with a smaller pack.

You can expect a mix of sun and rain (sometimes quite heavy), and high humidity. The weather can change very quickly, so we recommend packing for all conditions, and never leave your accommodation without rain gear! And although it is typically quite warm in the Amazon, it can also be very cool in the evenings or when it rains. Through the wet, warmer season, temperatures can vary from 20°C at night to 31°C+ during the day. And during the colder, dry months from May to September you can experience temperatures as low as 5°C-9°C.

It's best to bring as many speciality items as you need with you from home, as you may not find what you are after locally. Especially come prepared with any prescription medication you might need. When choosing your clothes, bright colours and white are not advised. Fast drying, layered clothes are a great idea! And extra socks.

CLOTHING

- Quick drying and lightweight clothing (synthetics or cotton) **bright colours and white are not advised.**
- Long trousers
- Long sleeve tops
- Long thick socks to wear with rubber boots (boots usually provided)
- Lightweight rain jacket/poncho
- Swimsuit

CURRENCY

- Small denomination bills for incidentals and tipping.

ACCESSORIES

- Comfortable walking shoes
- Sandals
- Wide-brimmed hat
- Sunglasses
- Extra socks
- Water bottle
- Small day pack
- Headlamp/torch

TECHNOLOGY

- Camera (with zoom lens)
- Spare camera batteries
- Image storage device

TOILETRIES/ MEDICATION

- Personal/Prescription Medication
- Toiletries- please try to get biodegradable products
- Shaving essentials
- Basic first aid kit
- Deodorant
- Hairbrush & hair bands
- Face & hand cream
- Lip balm with SPF
- Sunscreen SPF50+
- Tropical strength insect repellent (with DEET 7)

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Binoculars
- Tablet & charger
- Waterproof phone case





GALAPAGOS ISLANDS PACKING CHECKLIST

The weather in the Galapagos is quite temperate all year round. In most cases you will be in the water snorkelling or swimming for a portion of the day (so two swimsuits are advised!), with the other time taken up with an island visit/walk or time to relax on the boat as you travel between islands. Some landings may include a volcano walk or over lava fields, and you may feel more comfortable in sturdy hiking shoes or boots. Otherwise, a pair of sturdy sandals are great for wet landings.

Make sure you bring all required medicines, (like prescriptions, preventative motion sickness medication, and pain killers). Since you will be outdoors a lot, have adequate sun protection, including biodegradable sunscreen and lip balm. Also bring any biodegradable toiletries that you may need while in the Galapagos, including laundry soap. It is also essential to bring your original passport with you as it is an entry requirement for the Galapagos.

As the weather is fairly warm year-round (typically between 21°C- 32°C), a light sweater will suffice for any cooler temperatures you might experience. Otherwise pack for warm weather (and humid, depending on when you are travelling), think shorts, t-shirts, light weight long sleeves, trekking pants, etc.

CLOTHING

- T-shirts
- Shorts
- Lightweight breathable clothes
- Zip off trekking pants
- light sweater/jumper
- Two swimsuits
- Lightweight rain jacket/poncho

CURRENCY

- Small denomination bills for incidentals and tipping- USD Cash

DOCUMENTS

- Passport (requirement for entering the Galapagos)

ACCESSORIES

- Trekking sandals or closed water shoes
- Thongs/flip flops
- Comfortable shoes (Sneakers will suffice for most shore landings)
- Wide-brimmed hat
- Sunglasses
- Water bottle
- Small day pack
- Dry bag

TECHNOLOGY

- Camera (with zoom lens)
- Spare camera batteries
- Image storage device
- Underwater camera/go pro

TOILETRIES/ MEDICATION

- Personal/Prescription Medication
- Toiletries- please try to get biodegradable products
- Basic first aid kit
- Deodorant
- Hairbrush & hair bands
- Face & hand cream
- Lip balm with SPF
- Sunscreen SPF50+
- Insect repellent

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Hiking shoes/boots for volcano hikes and/or lava field walks
- Snorkel/wetsuit (these are often provided on your vessel)
- Binoculars





MONEY IN LATIN AMERICA

Haggling is a way of life in Latin America and is expected in markets and small shops. Please ask your guide for a few tips. Anything from local handicrafts to designer clothing can be bought in Latin America and is generally at a lower cost than your home country (especially in Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala and Ecuador).

Please beware when returning home (particularly Australia and New Zealand) as some handicrafts are made of wood and may contain seeds that cannot go through customs.

TIPPING GUIDELINES

A tip in Latin America is generally given to reward good service but is not mandatory. Practices vary between countries and regions. If you feel a tour guide, waiter or host has done a good job then they will greatly appreciate a little something extra.

We recommend tipping 10 percent of the bill for restaurants and US\$5-15 per day for a tour guide. In some places like Brazil, Ecuador and Mexico, a service charge will be added to the bill. However, this generally will not go to the waiting staff.

If you are taking an expedition cruise, you will be asked to tip the staff and guides. Tips are optional and you will generally be given a suggested tipping amount for the ship staff and for your guide. Some companies accept credit card and you can add tips to your room bill, but many require these to be paid in cash onboard. ATMs in areas

On many of our itineraries, we try to take customers to markets with locally made products that support the community, rather than the expensive tourist-oriented bazaars. We encourage you to haggle a little over prices. Be aware, however, that a few simple dollars for you could mean feeding a family for the artisan, and many of these people earn the minimum wage of around US\$150 per month or less.

such as the Amazon and Galapagos Islands are limited, so we suggest that you take cash with you for any onboard expenses. Generally, USD is the most widely accepted currency.

In most countries you can use your credit/debit card or a travel money card to take out cash. The exchange rates and fees will vary from country to country. If you choose to take cash we would suggest that you either take your local currency and change this when you travel or take USD. This is accepted as tender in many countries, otherwise always easily changeable. Ensure that you have unblemished notes that are free of rips and tears. If you intend to exchange currency, then larger bills will often get you the best rate.





TOURISM & SUSTAINABILITY

Remember that in a lot of the places you visit, the infrastructure may not be the same as you are used to in your home country, and locals generally use lower levels of water and electricity. As tourism increases, it places a large strain on local resources.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- > Take short showers in your hotel
- > Turn out the lights when you leave your hotel room,
- > Minimize your waste and if on a trek, make sure you bag your rubbish while you are hiking.

Also remember all ecosystems in Latin America are extremely delicate. When in rural areas please stay on the trails and don't damage or take any plants or flowers. Latin American people are proud of their culture and ancestry. Although they are now accustomed to international tourists, each area continues to maintain their identity and culture. Most Latin Americans outside of Brazil dress conservatively. Consider wearing trousers and long sleeve shirts to minimise any potential offence.

We employ local guides and work with hotels that employ people from the local community. Please be aware that our tour guides are always on hand to help our clients and are very knowledgeable. However, everything they explain should be taken with a grain of salt as local teaching methods may differ from those you're used to.



LANGUAGE

In most countries in Latin America people speak Spanish. Brazil is the main exemption to this where they speak Portuguese. There are many lessons and language guides online and in books and phone apps like Duo-Lingo can help you to pick up the basics. Most countries have their own slang and accents, similar to English speaking nations.



SAFETY

Most Latin American countries now recognise that tourism plays an important part in their economies. Governments have taken great steps in the last few years to change Latin America's poor security image, as they recognise that tourism is an important economic contributor.

Here are some helpful tips to help you minimise any security risks:

- > Travel in a group if possible.
- > Try to learn the basics in Spanish before you arrive in Latin America. Don't expect most people to speak English.
- > Keep your valuables hidden and watch your pockets, especially around busy tourist areas. We recommend avoiding wearing packs on your back and to use a money belt.
- > Avoid going on your own to remote areas or ruins.
- > Read guidebooks, blogs and check with your hotel concierge and other tourists to find out which areas are best avoided.
- > When leaving nightclubs, bars and discos late at night, take a taxi home no matter how close your hotel is. If possible, it is best to call a reputable taxi company, rather than hailing a taxi on the street.
- > Although assaults are rare, theft can be prevalent. Thieves often operate on long bus trips and on crowded streets and busy public transport and use distraction to their advantage. Be cautious and use common-sense.
- > Leave your valuables in your hotel safe when making day trips or longer tours. If you plan on going to market areas, crowded streets, fiestas etc. don't go with all your valuables. Leave them in the hotel. Try to avoid wearing expensive looking jewellery or watches and showing off expensive cameras etc.
- > When putting your bag down on the floor, to take a photo or just to sit in a café, remember to put your foot through the strap. This is the most common type of theft in Latin America.
- > Scams come in all shapes and sizes so be wise and use common sense when approached by strangers.



PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS & HINTS



LEARN HOW TO USE YOUR CAMERA!

If you have purchased a new camera or any other photographic equipment, we strongly recommend that you learn about it and how to use it before your trip.



BRING SPARES

Bring spare batteries and plenty of memory cards, as you are likely to take far more photos than you expect.



PREPARE FOR WET WEATHER

Bring a dry sac or waterproof bag to protect your camera and other equipment.



FILTERS

Use a polarising or 'warming' filter to reduce glare on the water.



ACCESSORIES

Use a longer lens length or zoom for wildlife photography and a wide lens to capture the stunning vistas..



TRIPOD

Consider bringing a tripod to capture night skies and long exposures.





ARGENTINA

Argentina is a vast country of incredibly diverse landscapes, a rich history and stunning scenery.

Located in the south of the continent, Argentina shares the inspiring region of Patagonia with Chile and has everything from glacial lakes, Pampas grassland (the traditional grazing ground of its renowned beef cattle) to the stunning Andes Mountain range. You can marvel at the iconic Iguazu Falls, an absolute must-see of the continent. The cosmopolitan capital Buenos Aires is the home of tango and has stunning architecture and world class cuisine.



MONEY

Argentina use the Argentinian Peso (ARS) and US Dollars (US) are widely used.

> Exchange bureaus (casas de cambio)

You are advised not to change money at the Money Changers located at Eziza Airport in Buenos Aires as the exchange rates are very low. Better rates of exchange are given for larger bills (US\$50 or 100 and similarly with Euros). US dollars are widely accepted in larger hotels and tourist restaurants, but please note that you will always receive change in pesos, even when you pay with US dollars.

> ATMs (cajeros automaticos) are widespread, but you are advised to carry some cash with you.

Argentina has an official and a 'blue' market rate – you will often get a better rate with cash or card, but this changes depending on the economic situation. As of 2023 the country has some economic issues and cash will give the best exchange rate, however the government has passed legislation to allow foreign card holders to access a favourable exchange rate when withdrawing funds from ATMs. Most ATMs do charge a small fee to withdraw money and the amount that you can take out is often minimal.

Additional spending money

Prices can vary between countries, cities and regions. We suggest you budget approximately US\$40-50 per day. This should be used as a rough guide for additional spending money and is based on having moderately priced lunches and dinners, as well as picking up a few souvenirs at local markets. Your actual travel costs will depend on your travel style, tastes and personal budget. Our itineraries will provide breakfast every day (excluding arrival day) and any other meals as stated in your itinerary.

COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: +54
- > Ambulance: 107
- > Police: 101

WIFI

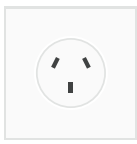
Wi-Fi is everywhere free in hotels as well as in most cafes and restaurants. You may choose to purchase a tourist SIM card, either on arrival at Ezeiza Airport or from one of the phone providers, that includes calls and mobile data. Please take your international passport with you to purchase.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

The power sockets are of type C and I. The standard voltage is 220v and the standard frequency is 50 Hz.



Type C



Type I

CLIMATE

Due to the size of Argentina there are great variations in climate, which ranges from subtropical along the north-eastern border with Brazil to sub-polar in the Tierra del Fuego region in the far south. The wet season runs from December to March when it can be uncomfortably hot and humid. In the centre, Buenos Aires has a temperate climate year-round. It can be quite hot and humid in January and February, reaching temperatures of up to 40°C. Further south in Patagonia however, the weather is extremely cold for most of the year, except for the summer months, when most people visit the region. During the winter the region is popular for skiing and snow activities.

ADDITIONAL TAX

The Argentine Immigration authority has recently stopped stamping passports on entry into Argentina. Please see the [Visa & Travel Requirements](#) page on our website to avoid paying additional tax.

There are additional tourist taxes in Buenos Aires and Bariloche of (approximately \$1-3 USD per person per night) as well as in Iguazu (approximately ARS50 or \$4 USD per person per stay) which may be charged on checkout from your hotel. These are subject to change in cost at any time.

RECOMMENDED ARGENTINIAN CUISINE

- > Empanadas
Pastry filled with meat, cheese or mussels.
- > Asado
Barbecue of beef, pork or chicken. Argentina is a major producer of meat (especially beef), and so red meat is an extremely common part of the local diet.
- > Dulce de Leche
Similar to caramel made from sugar and milk
- > Mate
A bitter tea that is drunk very frequently in Argentina. It is a bitter infusion of the leaves of a South American shrub.
- > Wine
Argentina is also well known for its wines. Malbec is one of the country's best-known varieties and its signature red grape variety. Pinot Noir is Patagonia's iconic grape variety.

TRANSPORTATION

Do not pay taxis with high value notes such as 10,000 Pesos. Taxi drivers, especially in Buenos Aires are known for their 'fake note' scams where they very quickly switch a high value note with a fake note and tell the passenger it is fake and refuse to accept it. Please be aware of this scam and only pay with low value notes or coins when taking taxis. It is recommended the mobile taxi app 'Cabify' in Buenos Aires. Uber is used widely in the city as well.

FLIGHTS OUT OF USHUAIA

Please refer to our Antarctica Travellers Guide for information regarding flights departing Ushuaia before/after your Antarctica cruise.

We advise to book your flights out of Ushuaia after 12 midday if you are disembarking from a cruise.

LOS GLACIARES NATIONAL PARK, EL CHALTEN – ENTRANCE FEE

The Argentine government have recently introduced a new entrance fee (Oct 2024) of ARS \$300,000 Approx. 30 USD (1 day) and ARS \$450,000- Approx \$45 USD (2 days). Please note that you will be required to pay this locally if you wish to hike independently or if the fee is not included in the tour we have booked. If you are in doubt about if the entrance fee is included please check with your booking agent.



📍 Uyuni Salt Flats

BOLIVIA

Bolivia is the highest and most isolated country in South America. It has the largest percentage of indigenous people in South America and shares control of Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world, which sits on the border with Peru.

Bolivia is also home the highest city in the world La Paz, on the Andes' Altiplano. Here you can also explore the world's largest salt flats, Salar de Uyuni.



MONEY

The local unit of currency is the Boliviano (BOB).

We recommend that you travel with a supply of US dollar which are widely accepted, as well as small amounts of local currency. Use local currency for small purchases.

Dollars can be changed in foreign exchange bureaux (casas de cambio), hotels and tourist offices or on the street. Street vendors usually give a better rate but proceed with caution! Please ensure that the US dollar notes you take are crisp, new notes. It is almost impossible to change US dollar bills that have even the slightest tear or marking on them. Banks are supposed to accept them but may discount the exchange rate by 20% for notes that are not in pristine condition.

Additional spending money

Prices can vary between countries, cities and regions. We suggest you budget approximately US\$25-30 per day. This should be used as a rough guide for additional spending money and is based on having moderately priced lunches and dinners, as well as picking up a few souvenirs at local markets. Your actual travel costs will depend on your travel style, tastes and personal budget. Our itineraries will provide breakfast every day (excluding arrival day) and any other meals as stated in your itinerary.



📍 Flamingoes in the Andes

📞 COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: + 591
- > Ambulance: 118
- > Police: 110

📶 WIFI

Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly common in many hotels but can be slower than you would expect. More remote areas may not have reliable Wi-Fi and/or phone service available. You can purchase a Bolivian SIM card from local network providers that will provide call minutes and mobile data. Entel is the recommended network for the best service and coverage.

⚡ ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

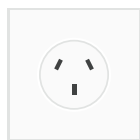
Power Sockets are type A and C. Most of Bolivia uses 220–330-volt outlets. Be aware that some old buildings in La Paz still use 110-volt outlets. Power sockets are of type C and I.



Type **A**



Type **C**



Type **I**

☀️ CLIMATE

The climate varies significantly across Bolivia depending on altitude and it is often much colder at night. The wet season runs from November to March. In the Salar de Uyuni (salt flats), the weather conditions can be extreme, from hot fierce sun during the day, to freezing temperatures at night. The temperatures typically average 20°C during the day, but during the night can fall to -25°C.

🏔️ ALTITUDE

La Paz sits at 3,640m (11,900ft) and Lake Titicaca at 3,810m (12,500ft). Please consider the effects of altitude if travelling to these areas and monitor for signs of altitude sickness.

🍴 RECOMMENDED BOLIVIAN CUISINE

Corn, potatoes and beans are the three traditional staples of Bolivian cuisine.

> Pique a lo macho

Grilled chunks of meat in a slightly spicy sauce with tomatoes and onion, served on potatoes.

> Silpancho or Milanesa

Beef pounded to a thin, plate-sized patty, served on a bed of rice and potatoes with a fried egg on top.

We recommend you drink bottled water and always avoid tap water. Some fruit juices may be mixed with unboiled water and some fruit and vegetables may be washed in it. Try to avoid eating raw vegetables and fruits that are not peeled – e.g berries as contaminants from the soil sometimes make people ill here.

🛡️ SECURITY

Never leave your bags unattended, even in a hotel foyer. Scams are quite common and there are also increasing numbers of fake police, false tourist police and ‘helpful’ tourists that you need to be wary of.

If you are approached by what appears to be a plain-clothed police officer, do not show them your passport or any valuables. If taking a taxi, ensure that the taxi is a Radio Cab with the phone number listed on a board above the cab. Uber is available in La Paz and is a safe and reliable method of getting around.

Social protest in Bolivia is very common with regular demonstrations throughout the country. These are generally peaceful, but protestors will throw stones and rocks if they become agitated. Roadblocks (bloqueos) are common and can result in long delays. It is best to avoid any such demonstration. During transport strikes do not use taxis as they are targets for rocks for not supporting the protest.



📍 Christ the Redeemer, Rio de Janeiro



Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world and offers diversity that is second to none. Cruise the remote waters of the Amazon in Brazil's north, celebrate the world's greatest carnival in bustling Rio and sip caipirinhas at Copacabana Beach. You can also see the world wonder of Iguazu Falls in the southern part of the country.



💰 MONEY

The local currency is the Brazilian Real (BRL).

ATMs are widely accessible and most accept foreign cards.

With very few exceptions, bank ATMS do not function between the hours of 10.00pm and 6.00am for security reasons. During this period cash is only available from ATMs in pharmacies, petrol stations, or convenience stores with very high withdrawal fees. The permitted withdrawal amount per card per day is generally R\$ 1,000 but this is reduced to R\$ 500 after 10.00pm. Foreign currency can be exchanged in foreign exchange offices, banks and hotels. Please note that it can be very difficult to change money on weekends.

Additional spending money

Prices can vary between countries, cities and regions. We suggest you budget approximately US\$45-55 per day. This should be used as a rough guide for additional spending money and is based on having moderately priced lunches and dinners, as well as picking up a few souvenirs at local markets. Your actual travel costs will depend on your travel style, tastes and personal budget. Our itineraries will provide breakfast every day (excluding arrival day) and any other meals as stated in your itinerary.

Please note that some hotels in Brazil, particularly in Rio de Janeiro, charge a small fee for the use of safety deposit boxes. Please enquire when you check-in to avoid unexpected charges upon check-out.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

IMPORTANT! A tourist e-visa is currently required for Australian, Canadian and United States Passport Holders to enter Brazil from 10 January 2024. It will take approximately 5 working days for a visa to be processed. It's recommended to apply at least 2 months prior to travel where possible to ensure the application is processed prior to your entry. This can be done online. Please see our [Visa & Travel Advice](#) page for the latest information on visa



COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: +55
- > Ambulance: 192
- > Police: 190

WIFI

High speed internet is available everywhere in Brazil including the beach in Rio de Janeiro. Pre-paid (pré-pago) SIM cards for mobile phones are widely available for purchase, however you need a local CPF number to activate them, so we suggest that you make use of the readily available Wi-Fi.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power Sockets are type N with standard voltage 127-220 and standard frequency 60 Hz, except in Rio de Janeiro, where 110v is most common. However, most hotels have connections for both 110 and 220v.



Type N

CLIMATE

Brazil's climate varies considerably from tropical in the north to the temperate regions south of the Tropic of Capricorn. Summer is hot, humid and wet in Brazil runs from December to March. The winter months from June to September are cooler, but mild in most regions. The Pantanal and the Amazon have their wet seasons between November and May.

LANGUAGE

The official language in Brazil is Portuguese but it does differ slightly from the Portuguese spoken in Portugal mainly due to pronunciation differences. The number of Brazilians that speak English is very low, even in tourist destinations and airports and there is a general lack of English-speaking staff in service industries throughout Brazil.

\$ ADDITIONAL TAX

There are additional tourist taxes in Iguazu Falls (approximately \$8.6BRL or \$2 USD per person per stay on the Brazilian side) which will be charged on checkout. These are subject to change.

RECOMMENDED BRAZILIAN CUISINE

Brazilian cuisine varies greatly from region to region but fresh meat and fish play an important role in the diet.

> Feijoada

This traditional dish is a must try. It is a stew that consists mainly of beans and meat, simmered with herbs and spices.

> Manioc

The most important food in all of Brazil and used in the preparation of many dishes.

> Coxinha

A thigh-shaped chicken croquette.

> Brazilian Empanadas

Pastry pies, usually with prawns or chicken.

> Churrasco

Brazilian barbeque, with grilled chicken, beef and lamb.

> Cachaça

The national alcohol of Brazil is distilled from sugar cane and the national cocktail is caipirinha made from cachaça, lime juice, sugar and ice.

> Sugar cane juice

A favourite drink among locals. The region is also known for its exotic fruits such as cupuaçú and açaí.

TRANSPORTATION

It is not a legal requirement for vehicles (transfers, taxis, buses) to stop at red lights between the hours of 10.00pm and 6.00am. This is in the interests of passenger safety, so please do not be alarmed. Uber is available in Rio and many other cities in Brazil and is a safe and cost effective way to get around. You can also use taxis, but it is suggested to ask the hotel/restaurant or bar you are at to call one for you, rather than hailing them from the street.

CARNIVAL

During Carnival due to heavy traffic and last-minute road closures there can be delays. We schedule transfers earlier to allow for more travel time during this period.





📍 Torres del Paine National Park



CHILE

Chile is one of the longest countries in the world occupying a narrow strip of land between the Pacific Ocean and the Andes. Like Argentina, its landscapes are diverse and its scenery spectacular. Easter Island is also a Chilean territory. It is extremely remote and famous for its 887 giant Moai statues carved from volcanic rock. The capital Santiago is surrounded by snow-capped peaks. The Atacama Desert in the north of Chile is the driest place on earth, with an average rainfall of less than 0.05 millimetres per year.



VISA REQUIREMENTS

IMPORTANT! A tourist or transit visa is currently required for Australian Passport Holders to enter Chile. You will need to complete an SAG declaration when entering the country. This can be done online before arrival or at the airport. Please see our [Visa & Travel Advice](#) page for the latest information on visa requirements for Chile.

TRAVELLING TO EASTER ISLAND You must fill in an online Immigration Form and provide additional information prior to visiting Easter Island. Please see our [Visa & Travel Advice](#) page for more information.

💰 MONEY

The currency in Chile is the Chilean Peso (CLP). Currencies other than the Chilean Peso are not widely accepted across Chile, but most cities have foreign exchange bureaux (casas de cambio) with reasonable rates on Euros and US dollars. Hotel and airport exchange rates tend to be lower. ATMs are widely available, but withdrawal fees vary between banks. The usual fee is 2,500CLP and the maximum withdrawal allowed is 200,000CLP. Please note if you attempt to bribe an official in Chile you are likely to be arrested.

Additional spending money

Prices can vary between countries, cities and regions.

We suggest you budget approximately US\$65-75 per day. This should be used as a rough guide for additional spending money and is based on having moderately priced lunches and dinners, as well as picking up a few souvenirs at local markets. Your actual travel costs will depend on your travel style, tastes and personal budget. Our itineraries will provide breakfast every day (excluding arrival day) and any other meals as stated in your itinerary.

📞 COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

> Country code: + 56

> Ambulance: 131

> Police: 133

📶 WIFI

Wi-Fi is common in many hotels and cafes and is generally very fast and efficient. Some mobile phone companies offer tourist SIM packages. You can purchase these from the phone carrier stores in one of the larger shopping malls, but they are not available at the airport.

⚡ ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power Sockets are type C & L with standard voltage 220 and frequency 50 Hz.



Type C



Type L

LANGUAGE

The official language spoken in Chile is Spanish, but the dialect does differ from neighbouring countries due to it being distinctively accented with the use of local slang. Several indigenous languages are spoken in Chile including Mapudungun, Quechua, Aymara, Huilliche and Rapa Nui.

☀️ CLIMATE

Chile's climate varies greatly across the country. The north of Chile has sunny, dry conditions for most of the year with temperatures reaching 35°C and above. The wet season is December to March and is hot and humid. During the winter it can get cold and occasionally snow, particularly in the desert regions and in the South.

Santiago and the Central Valley have a temperate and moderate climate. The rainy season here is between May and August. Further south in Patagonia the weather is extremely cold for most of the year, except from November to March. Most properties in this region close during the winter months.

🍴 RECOMMENDED CHILEAN CUISINE

The country is probably best known for its seafood with an immense array being caught along its vast coastline including abalones, razor clams, mussels, spider crabs, oysters, conger eels, salmon and sole.

> Pastel de choclo

A layered pie with minced beef stew, chicken, olives and hard-boiled egg topped with corn and basil and then baked.

> Empanadas fritas de queso

Deep fried Empanadas filled with cheese

> Cazuela

Seafood/chicken stew.

> Tomaticán

Thick vegetable stew.

> Sopaipilla

Flat circular deep fried 'bread' made of pumpkin and flour

> Chilean wines

Are now recognised as some of the best wines in the world.



Pastel de choclo



Empanadas fritas de queso



📍 Colourful streets of Guatapé



COLOMBIA

Colombia is a country steeped in history. Although it is well known for its notorious violent past the country is home to friendly people, a spread of historic archaeological and cultural sites, beautiful colonial buildings, small towns like Salento that are brimming with coffee plantations and beautiful white sandy beaches on the Pacific and Caribbean coasts. From the beautiful old town in the fortified city of Cartagena to the bustling capital city Bogota, cradled by the Andean mountains and home to the fascinating gold museum, Colombia will not disappoint.



💰 MONEY

The unit of currency in Colombia is the Colombian Peso (COP). ATMs are widely available in the main cities, but you are advised to only take out money during the day and where possible use the ATMs located inside banks for safety and to avoid potential muggings. Card skimming can be an issue. Most banks charge for overseas ATM withdrawals and the maximum withdrawal amount varies. ATMs often run out of money on weekends. Foreign currency bureaux (casas de cambio) are generally the best places to change money. US Dollars and Euros attract more favourable exchange rates than Pounds Sterling.

Additional spending money

Prices can vary between countries, cities and regions. **We suggest you budget approximately US\$25-35 per day.** This should be used as a rough guide for additional spending money and is based on having moderately priced lunches and dinners, as well as picking up a few souvenirs at local markets. Your actual travel costs will depend on your travel style, tastes and personal budget. Our itineraries will provide breakfast every day (excluding arrival day) and any other meals as stated in your itinerary.





📍 Cartagena

📞 COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: **+ 57**
- > National Emergency Number (24hr general line): **123**
- > Ambulance: **132**
- > Police: **112**

📶 WIFI

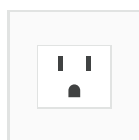
Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly common not only in most hotels but also in shopping centres, restaurants and cafes with Wi-Fi zones in major cities. You can buy a local SIM card at Bogota airport or at the official phone network stores.

⚡ ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power Sockets are type A & B with standard voltage 110 and standard frequency 60 Hz.



Type **A**



Type **B**

☁️ CLIMATE

The temperature in Colombia varies little throughout the year due to Colombia's proximity to the Equator, but it does vary with altitude. It is cooler in the upland areas and cold in the mountains and snow is not uncommon. Along the coast and in the north, the climate is warm, humid and tropical, with a wet season from May to November. Bogotá and Medellín have a spring-like climate, with cool days and crisp nights.

LANGUAGE

Spanish is the first language of Colombia and spoken by 99% of the population. Most people find the Spanish here clear and easy to understand and it is a great country to take classes in if you are eager to learn.

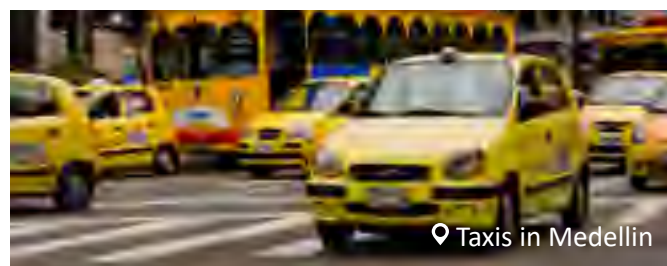
🍽️ RECOMMENDED COLOMBIAN CUISINE

Colombia's cuisine is diverse across regions. Common ingredients include rice, maize and cassava. Meat is popular and fish and seafood is abundant near the coast.

- > **Arepas**
One of the most famous Colombian dishes. Like empanadas in that they're made with either white or yellow corn tortillas, but arepas don't have any fillings.
- > **Ajiaco**
This is a type of soup made with chicken, potatoes, corn, sour cream, capers and guasca. (a locally grown herb with a distinct flavour).
- > **Buñuelos**
These are ball-shaped fritters made with a dough of white cheese curd, fried until golden brown.
- > **Bandeja Paisa**
This is a traditional dish consisting of white rice, red beans, ground beef, plantain, chorizo, morcilla, chicharron, arepa, avocado and a fried egg.
- > **Patacones**
Fried green plantains.
- > **Coffee**
Don't forget to try some famous Colombian coffee, renowned for its high quality. There are also many delicious fruit juices and smoothies on offer.

🚗 TRANSPORTATION

When taking taxis some drivers may be hesitant to use the metre or say they don't have one. If this is the case, ensure that you negotiate a price before getting in. Please ensure you use a marked legal taxi to avoid an unsafe situation. Uber is available in Colombia, but technically illegal and often more expensive than taking a taxi.



📍 Taxis in Medellín



📍 Cotopaxi Volcano

ECUADOR

From the snow-capped peaks of the Andes to the remote waters of the Amazon, awe-inspiring volcanoes, rainforests brimming with endemic wildlife, indigenous villages reflecting the country's culture to the world-famous archipelago of Galapagos Islands, Ecuador really is a once in a lifetime adventure.

Explore the UNESCO listed Old Town of the capital Quito, with its wonderful colonial architecture and perhaps pick up a famous Panama hat. The culture and scenery of the highlands is captivating, where Quichua-speaking communities retain many of their traditional customs in the shadow of snow-capped volcanoes. Ecuador has some of the highest biodiversity on the planet contained in the Amazon jungle region and the cloud forest. We have included a separate country guide with more detailed information if you are visiting the [Galapagos Islands](#).



MONEY

Ecuador uses the United States Dollar (USD) as their official currency. Foreign exchange bureaux have become few and far between. The only foreign currencies that are easy to change within the country are Euros, Peruvian soles and Colombian nuevos soles. ATMs are plentiful in major cities such as Quito or Guayaquil and in large towns. They are less common in smaller towns and more remote parts of the country, including the Galapagos Islands. The ATMs generally only recognise four-digit pins and most have a daily withdrawal limit of US\$200 per day.

Additional spending money

Prices can vary between countries, cities and regions. **We suggest you budget approximately US\$45-55 5per day.** This should be used as a rough guide for additional spending money and is based on having moderately priced lunches and dinners, as well as picking up a few souvenirs at local markets. Your actual travel costs will depend on your travel style, tastes and personal budget. Our itineraries will provide breakfast every day (excluding arrival day) and any other meals as stated in your itinerary.

COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: + **593**
- > Ambulance: **131**
- > Police: **101** Quito:**911** Guayaquil, Cuenca, Loja: **112**

WIFI

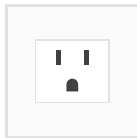
Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly common in many hotels and guesthouses, shopping malls, airports and some restaurants. Local SIM cards can be purchased at Quito International Airport or from mobile carrier's phone shops. You will need to present your passport to purchase one.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power Sockets are type A & B with standard voltage 120 and standard frequency 60 Hz.



Type **A**



Type **B**

CLIMATE

Ecuador has two main seasons: wet and dry. This varies greatly due to factors such as altitude and proximity to the coast. In the highlands, the dry season runs from June until the end of September. In the Amazon basin, it rains during most months, but August and December to March are usually the driest.

ALTITUDE

Quito is at 2,850 metres (9,350 feet). Please be mindful of the effects and symptoms of altitude sickness and take it easy on arrival.

LANGUAGE

Spanish is the most widely spoken language in Ecuador. The indigenous population also speaks Quechua.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

If you are visiting Ecuador, it is essential to obtain travel insurance before you travel and to carry documentation of this with you on your trip. Many cruises who operate trips to the Galapagos Islands require proof of insurance on embarkation.

RECOMMENDED ECUADORIAN CUISINE

The potato plays an important role in many Ecuadorian dishes, especially in the Andes and there are over 200 varieties of potato found in Ecuador. In coastal regions shellfish, shrimp and various types of fish are important ingredients for many dishes. Most Galapagos cruises serve a range of meats; however seafood will be the freshest and generally best tasting.

- > **Patacones**
Green plantains sliced and fried twice.
- > **Llapingachos**
Potato cakes stuffed with cheese, fried and served with a peanut sauce.
- > **Seco de chivo**
Goat stew generally served with rice and fried plantain.
- > **Pan de Yucca**
A widely available light bread made from the yucca plant and filled with cheese.
- > **Hornado**
Roasted pork, usually served with potato patties (llapingachos) and/or white hominy corn
- > **Ceviche**
Ecuador has its own ceviche recipes, mainly including shrimp and black conch
- > **Chontaduro**
or peach-palm, an edible palm fruit which is cooked for several hours



Patacones



Hornado



📍 Bartolome Island

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

Located 1000 kilometres west of Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands are world renowned for being the home to a vast array of fascinating species of wildlife, including lava lizards, the giant tortoise as well as red and blue-footed boobies! Many species here are endemic and only found in this region! The islands abound with marine and bird species.

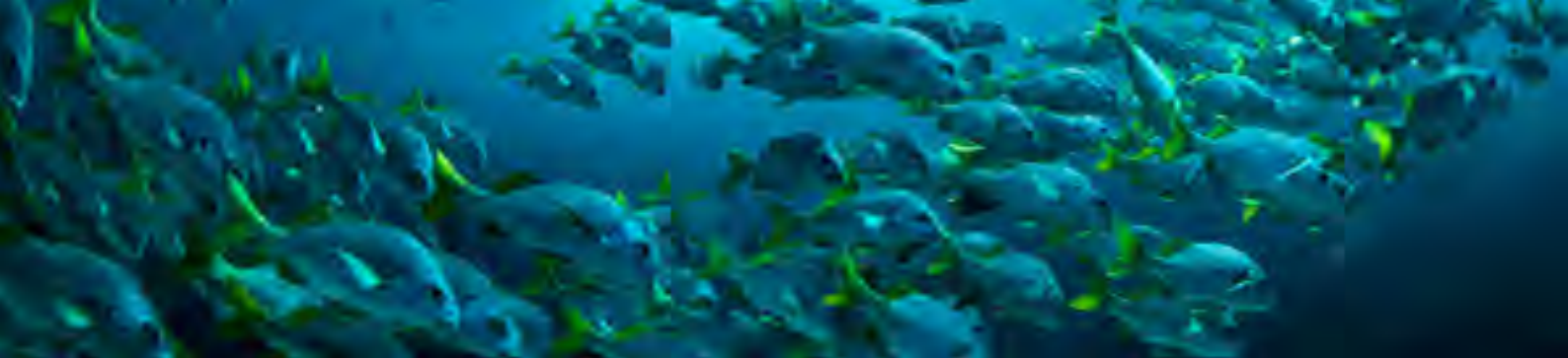
Due to the remoteness of the region most people fly to the islands. There are two main airports and regular flights are available from Quito and Guayaquil. If you are booking a cruise, we will co-ordinate your airfares and book these through the ship operator to ensure that you are booked on the correct flight to meet your vessel.

The Galapagos archipelago is made up of 19 main islands, most of which are national and marine park and access is strictly controlled to protect the natural wildlife and habitat. The islands were formed by processes resulting from volcanic and seismic activity. These processes along with the isolation of the islands resulted in the development of unusual animal life. Charles Darwin’s visit to the islands in 1835 was the inspiration for his theory of evolution by natural selection.

Starting December 1st 2024, all travellers to the Galapagos Islands must complete an online sworn declaration for prior to their flight.

[Access the online form here.](#)





CLIMATE

The Galapagos Islands have a subtropical and dry climate with comfortable temperatures year-round. The warmest months are usually from December to June (high season). Sea temperatures are higher, but it can be hot and humid from January to March. From July to November (low season) you can expect cool winds that occasionally bring with them a light misty drizzle called “garúa” and the ocean is a lot colder. Each month brings unique climate variations to the Galapagos and with-it varying wildlife viewing opportunities. The months June, July and August are also very popular as the animals tend to be more active. For divers the peak season is from July to November when whale sharks can be found at Wolf and Darwin Islands.

Month	Air Temp °C	Water Temp °C	Month	Air Temp °C	Water Temp °C
January	16-27	22-23	July	16-24	17-21
February	16-29	22-24	August	15-21	17-19
March	19-32	22-23	September	16-24	15-19
April	16-29	21-24	October	16-24	17-21
May	16-27	21-23	November	16-24	18-22
June	16-24	18-23	December	16-27	19-22

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Most newer boats have both 110-volt (USA) and 220 volt (Europe/ Australia) outlets on board, although some of the older boats will only have 110 volt outlets.

GALAPAGOS NATIONAL PARK TAX

All visitors to the Galapagos Islands are required to pay a National Park Tax of US\$200 for adults and US\$100 for children under 12 years old. This is payable in CASH ONLY on arrival and is in addition to all costs for your journey previously paid.

Please note that the fee may be subject to change. We generally include the Galapagos Transit Control Card costs in our packages, if in doubt please check your final itinerary for details of this.

LANDINGS

Dry Landings: Passengers step directly from a dinghy (known locally as a panga) to rocks or onto a dock.

Wet Landings: The dinghy will edge up to a beach, allowing you step into knee-deep water assisted by crew members and guides. Please consider if you are comfortable and physically able to do a wet landing, which also involves getting in and out of the dinghy.

SAFETY

If you are on an expedition cruise you will receive special orientation in terms of fire and other safety explanations, a procedure necessary for the unlikely event of emergency during your stay on board.

PAYMENT/TIPPING TIPPING GUIDELINES

On your Galapagos cruise, you will be asked to tip ship staff and your naturalist guide. Tips are optional, but it is suggested that you do contribute something. You will generally be given a suggested tipping amount for the ship staff and for your guide. Some companies accept credit card and you can add tips to your room bill, but many require these to be paid in cash onboard. ATMs on the islands are limited, so we suggest that you take cash with you for any onboard expenses. Generally, USD is the most widely accepted currency.

HEALTH & FITNESS

We recommend that passengers be in reasonably good physical condition as some trails are uneven or steep. Elderly or disabled people may find them difficult.

The local cruise operators reserve the right to refuse a passenger if someone fails to inform us of any physical disability, or who in the opinion of the company constitutes a danger to themselves, other guests, members of the crew, or to the operation of the vessel.



📍 Blue Footed Boobies, Galapagos Islands

SUSTAINABILITY & PRESERVATION

Approximately 97% of the Galapagos Islands is listed as a National Park, and only 3% is accessible by tourists. When you are visiting national park landing sites, you will travel with multilingual, naturalist guides who are trained locally to conserve the environment and licensed by the Galapagos National Park. The park is strictly regulated, there are time and number restraints for visits. Passengers must be accompanied at all times by a guide. The guides know each site intimately, and will share their knowledge during walks and hikes, as well as during slide shows and briefings if you are travelling on an expedition ship. You must not leave any rubbish or drop anything overboard while on or near the Galapagos Islands and you should take only photos and videos with you when you leave. Wildlife should never be disturbed you should ensure to keep at least two metres between you and any animals.

One of the greatest dangers to the islands is introduced species, as after evolving for thousands of years without predators, the Galapagos wildlife is not adapted to dealing with non-native species.

When travelling to the islands, please ensure that you:

- > **Do not bring any plant or animal life with you**, and always clean your footwear when travelling between islands to avoid transferring seeds.
- > **Never feed the animals** as this can be detrimental to their health and feeding behaviour.
- > **No Smoking*** and making campfires in the National Park areas is strictly forbidden.
- > **No fishing, jet skiing, submarines, water skiing or aerial tourism** these are also all strictly forbidden.

Please ensure to co-operate with your guide and other travellers to preserve the fragile and unique eco system that is the Galapagos.

* You may be able to smoke in certain areas onboard if you are travelling by expedition ship or inside of your hotel. Please check with us if you are unsure



📍 Machu Picchu

PERU

Awe-inspiring Peru is often called the “Egypt of South America” due to the large number of historical sites and ruins built by people from an array of ancient cultures, the most famous of course being Machu Picchu, the Lost City of the Incas.

Enjoy the gastronomical delights, hip galleries and museums of the capital Lima and the colonial charm of Cusco, where you also find a wide range of Incan ruins and influence. From here you can head out to the Sacred Valley and soak in the atmosphere of the colourful markets of Pisac and explore ancient ruins. Head over to Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world and the largest lake in South America, which sits on the border of Peru and Bolivia. The lake is home to the Uros people who make their homes out of the totora reeds that grow in the lake. You can also delve into the still unsolved mystery of the Nazca Lines or explore the Colca Canyon, where the majestic Andean Condors soar above.



MONEY

The local currency is the Peruvian Sol (PEN). ATMs are abundant in all major cities and most tourist areas. ATMs generally allow you to withdraw cash in either Peruvian Soles or US dollars, which are widely accepted throughout the country. Major currencies can be exchanged at banks, and foreign exchange bureaux (casas de cambio).

Do not accept torn money when exchanging funds or receiving change. You are advised not to change money on the street as counterfeits are a problem. Debit and credit cards and contactless payments are also widely accepted in most areas of Peru. You will need cash for markets and smaller locally owned shops and businesses.

Additional spending money

Prices can vary between countries, cities and regions. **We suggest you budget approximately US\$25-35 5per day.** This should be used as a rough guide for additional spending money and is based on having moderately priced lunches and dinners, as well as picking up a few souvenirs at local markets. Your actual travel costs will depend on your travel style, tastes and personal budget. Our itineraries will provide breakfast every day (excluding arrival day) and any other meals as stated in your itinerary.

COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: + 51
- > Ambulance: 117
- > Police: 105

WIFI

Most regions of Peru, even smaller rural villages have excellent internet connections. Hotels, restaurants, cafes and retailers often offer free Wi-Fi access. Local SIM cards are readily available to use for calls and mobile data. You can purchase SIM Cards at Lima International Airport, but these are often sold at inflated costs, so we suggest you purchase these from a mobile provider at their local store locations.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power sockets are type A and C. with standard voltage 220V and standard frequency is 60 Hz.



Type A



Type C

CLIMATE

The weather and climate in Peru varies greatly depending on the region. Along the Pacific coast, including Lima, there is a very temperate climate. In the high Andean climates of the areas around Cusco, Arequipa and Lake Titicaca the climate is colder with rainy summers and dry winters. Iquitos and Puerto Maldonado are in the tropical Amazon basin and are hot and humid year-round. June to September is slightly drier than average, with April being the wettest month. Often during the wet season, the Inca Trail is closed due to flooding and mud slides.

ALTITUDE

We highly recommend acclimatizing at altitude before taking strenuous treks or walks. As a guide, Cusco is at 3,400m (11,200ft), and the highest point of the Inca trail is 4,200m (13,800ft) above sea level.

RECOMMENDED PERUVIAN CUISINE

Peruvian cuisine is very diverse and combines Incan

staples and food with the cuisines that the immigrants from Europe, Africa and Asia brought with them. This has resulted in a unique fusion of flavours. The traditional staples of Peruvian cuisine are corn, potatoes, quinoa and legumes. Gastronomists around the world now rate Peruvian cuisine as the best in Latin America.

> Lomo Saltado (Saltadito)

Stir fried sliced beef, tomatoes, onion, garlic and cumin, fried French cut potatoes and accompanied with rice.

> Aji de Gallina

Chicken strips in a yellow chilli sauce served with rice.

> Empanadas

Pastry cases filled with chicken, beef or cheese.

> Ceviche

Raw fish marinated in lime juice with chilli and onion.

> Cuy

Guinea pig, a highland dish – usually roasted or barbecued.

> Papa a la huancaína (Huancayo-style potatoes)

Sliced boiled potatoes, served on a bed of lettuce with a slightly spicy cheese sauce with olives.

> Pisco Sour

The traditional spirit of Peru is Pisco, a grape brandy. The famous Pisco Sour cocktail is made from Pisco, egg white, bitters and lime juice.

Avoid drinking tap water at all times. Please note that many fruit juices may be mixed with unboiled water and some fruit may be washed in it.

LANGUAGE

Spanish is the official language of Peru but there are many indigenous languages as well including Quechua and Aymara.

TRANSPORTATION

When taking taxis please ensure they use the metre and are a licensed taxi from a reputable taxi company. If the taxi does not have a metre you should negotiate the fare before starting your ride. Uber is available in many cities and is a safe and cost efficient way to get around.

Please note that large buses are not allowed into the centre of Cusco which may result in vehicle changes being necessary on your tour.



URUGUAY

Uruguay offers cosmopolitan city life, coastal surf and beaches, colonial towns, traditional estancias (ranches) and national parks. The UNESCO town of Colonia del Sacramento is a highlight of Uruguay – one of the oldest cities in the country and full of colonial charm. The capital Montevideo is historic yet cosmopolitan. Uruguay offers a diverse experience to all who travel there.

MONEY

The unit of currency in Uruguay is the Uruguayan Peso (UYU). US dollars are commonly accepted in major tourist areas, but the exchange rates can sometimes be low and you are better off paying in pesos. In more rural areas US dollars are of limited use. Foreign currencies can be exchanged at banks or at foreign exchange bureaux that are widespread in tourist areas. ATMs are plentiful in cities and tourist regions.





COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: + 598
- > Ambulance: 105
- > Police: 911

WIFI

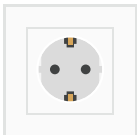
Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly available in many hotels, restaurants and cafes.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power are type C, F, I and L. The standard voltage is 230V sockets and the standard frequency is 50 Hz.



Type **C**



Type **F**



Type **I**



Type **L**

LANGUAGE

Spanish is the first language of Uruguay with Portunol or Brasilero, a mixture of Portuguese and Spanish being used on the Brazil border. Uruguayan Spanish differs slightly to Spanish in other Latin American countries and has a few modifications due to the high numbers of Italian immigrants.

RECOMMENDED CHILEAN CUISINE

The cuisine of Uruguay has Spanish and Italian influences. Beef is fundamental to the cuisine with asado, a type of barbecued beef being the national dish.

> Chivito

The most popular food item- a thick steak sandwich with ham, bacon, hard-boiled egg, cheese and tomatoes or olives for seasoning.

> Choripán

Grilled chorizo inside a small baguette-style bread. Empanada- Pastry commonly filled with ground beef (mince) or cheese.

> Milanese Rellena

Beef or chicken filled with cheese and ham, crumbed and fried.

> Pancho

The Uruguayan “hot dog” in a bun (called Pan de Viena), covered in ketchup, mayonnaise or sometimes mustard.

> Pastel de Carne

Ground beef (mince), green peppers and eggs covered in mashed potatoes.



Chivito



📍 San Cristobal Church, Mexico

MEXICO & CENTRAL AMERICA

Mexico is a diverse country, with so much to offer. Explore the capital of Mexico City with its stunning architecture and rich Spanish history, the charming colonial towns Oaxaca and San Cristobal and cities like Merida. Mexico is also home to many historic Mayan and Aztec sites including Uxmal, Palenque, Teotihuacan and Chichen Itza. Mexico's stunning coastline runs along both the Caribbean and Pacific Oceans, with Playa del Carmen and Tulum being two of the real gems.

Of course, the rest of Central America isn't to be forgotten, with many wonderful attractions such as Tikal and Antigua in Guatemala, spectacular volcanoes in Nicaragua, the rainforest of Tortuguero National Park in Costa Rica and the architectural marvel, the Panama Canal, which is the largest man-made waterway in the world and allows ships to pass from the West Coast of North America to the East Coast.





BELIZE

MONEY

The unit of currency is the Belize Dollar (BZD) US dollars are widely accepted throughout Belize and if you carry these there is really no need to exchange them for the local currency. Change will be given in either US dollars or Belize dollars. There are ATMs in most areas that accept foreign cards.

COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

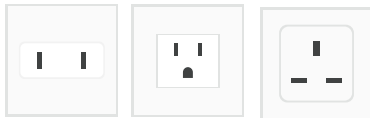
- > Country code: + 501
- > Ambulance: 90
- > Police: 911

WIFI

Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly common throughout Belize and is available in most tourist areas. You can also purchase a mobile SIM card with data and calls.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power sockets are type A, B and G. The standard voltage is 110/220v and the standard frequency is 60 Hz.



Type A Type B Type G

RECOMMENDED BELIZEAN CUISINE

Belizean cuisine is similar in many ways to Mexican and Caribbean cuisine. Barbecued chicken served with rice, beans and coleslaw is a standard Belize dish. Belizeans also make use of their abundant seafood in a variety of recipes, using conch, lobster, snapper and shrimp.

ADDITIONAL TAX

There is a departure tax. This includes a conservation tax of US\$20.00. Fees are as follows: Departing from the Belize Int'l Airport: \$55.50 USD per person +\$0.75 USD per person (Domestic Security Screening). • Departing via Land (either Guatemala or Mexico Border) or by Sea: \$20.00 USD per person. Departure fees are payable in cash (USD currency) and must be paid by all travellers including children.



COSTA RICA

MONEY

The unit of currency is the Colon (CRC). Some hotels and businesses will accept US dollars, but the exchange rate is not very favourable. There are foreign exchange bureaux and ATMs at the international airports as well as in cities and towns. Most machines only accept 4-digit PINs. Credit cards are accepted by many businesses but there is generally a surcharge and often a minimum purchase amount.

COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

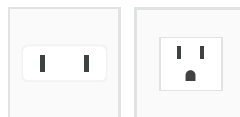
- > Country code: + 506
- > Ambulance/Police: 911

WIFI

Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly common throughout Costa Rica and is available in most tourist areas. Some hotels near and within National Parks may not have Wi-Fi or have limited services. You can also purchase a mobile SIM card with data and calls.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power sockets are type A and B. The standard voltage is 120v and the standard frequency is 60 Hz.z.



Type A Type B

RECOMMENDED COSTA RICAN CUISINE

- > **Casado**
A mix of black beans, rice, fried plantains, cheese, salad, and either fish, beef or chicken.
- > **Tamale**
A traditional dish made from corn and representative of the indigenous population.
- > **Gallo pinto**
mixture of rice, beans and onion and can be served at breakfast, lunch or dinner.
- > **Salsa Lizano**
A mild vegetable sauce with a hint of curry is the ketchup of Costa Rica.





📍 Antigua City

📍 Utila

GUATEMALA

💰 MONEY

The unit of currency is the Quetzal (GTQ). ATMs are easy to find in Guatemalan cities. Try to withdraw cash midweek as ATMs are often empty by the weekend. Most Guatemalan ATMs only accept 4-digit PINs. It is very hard to find Quetzals, the local currency, outside of Guatemala, but money-changers are plentiful. You are safer changing foreign currency at a bank to avoid scams. US dollars and credit cards are also accepted as payment by many hotels, restaurants and shops. There may be a small surcharge for using credit cards.

📞 COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: + 502
- > Medical: 1500 or 125
- > Police: 1500 or 120

📶 WIFI

Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly common throughout Guatemala and is available in most tourist areas. In some regions it may be slower than you are used to at home. You can also purchase a mobile SIM card with data and calls.

⚡ ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power sockets are type A and B. The standard voltage is 120v and the standard frequency is 60 Hz.



Type A Type B

🍴 RECOMMENDED GUATAMALAN CUISINE

The traditional foods are based on Mayan cuisine with corn, chillies and beans as the main ingredients. Guatemalan food tends to be less spicy than Mexican food, with the chillies being served separately to be added as desired. Cheese and tortillas feature quite heavily. Meat stews (caldos) and soups (sopas) are popular dishes.

HONDURAS

All visitors must fill out a check-in form online at least one week prior their arrival. This requirement has no extra cost. Pre-check-in can be done at <https://prechequeo.inm.gob.hn>

💰 MONEY

The unit of currency is the Lempira (HNL). Apart from on the Bay Islands, US dollars are not generally accepted, so you will need a supply of lempiras, although informal money changers operate in the main tourist destinations, scams are not unknown and so you are advised to use banks or ATMs. ATMs are plentiful in the larger cities as well as in the main tourist areas.

📞 COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: + 504
- > Medical: 195
- > Police: 199

📶 WIFI

Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly common throughout Honduras and is available in most tourist areas and in the Bay Islands. You can also purchase a mobile SIM card with data and calls..

⚡ ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power sockets are type A and B. The standard voltage is 120v and the standard frequency is 60 Hz.



Type A Type B

🍴 RECOMMENDED GUATAMALAN CUISINE

A typical meal usually includes rice, beans, tortillas, grilled meat such as chicken or beef and a salad and may be served with chismol, a fresh, mild salsa made from tomatoes, green peppers, onions, cilantro and lime juice.

> Baleadas

A thick flour tortilla filled with refried beans, cheese, cream and sometimes also avocado or meat.

On the Caribbean coast and in the Bay Islands, seafood dominates Honduran cuisine.



📍 Oaxaca, Mexico

MEXICO

💰 MONEY

The unit of currency is the Mexican Pesos (MXP). Debit and credit cards are accepted at most larger hotels, shops and restaurants in Mexico. ATMs are also widespread, but it is also a good idea to carry some cash, especially for markets. Be aware of your surroundings when withdrawing cash from ATMs in Mexico and try to withdraw money during the day.

📞 COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: + 52
- > Ambulance/Police: 1500 or 120

📶 WIFI

Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly common throughout Mexico. You can also purchase a mobile SIM cards with data and calls.

⚡ ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power sockets are type A and B. The standard voltage is 127v and the standard frequency is 60 Hz.



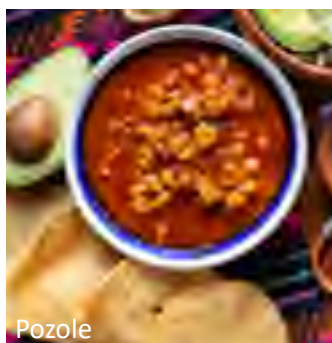
Type A



Type B



Margarita



Pozole

🍴 RECOMMENDED MEXICAN CUISINE

Mexican cuisine varies by region. The north of Mexico is known for its meat dishes. In contrast, the Oaxaca region is known for its savoury tamales and celebratory moles.

> Pozole

Broth from chicken or pork, with corn, lettuce, oregano, onions, dried ground chilli, lemon juice and radish. Pozole is a traditional pre-Columbian soup or stew

> Mole

A spicy sauce that is poured over meat. Chocolate may even be added to this rich sauce.

> Chilera

A spicy dressing made with pickled onions, peppers and other vegetables.

> Corn

is consumed in all possible forms, but most importantly as a tortilla (a thin, round pancake made from corn dough). Tortillas are also used to make tacos and quesadillas

> Tequila (of course!)

is usually served as a major ingredient in margaritas, with salt-rimmed glasses and lime juice.

ADDITIONAL TAX

The State of Quintana Roo recently established a new tax for tourists (including destinations such as Cancun, Riviera Maya, Holbox and Tulum). Tax (MXN 224, approx. USD 11pp). Passengers can make the payment through the VISITAX website (www.visitax.gob.mx) which has a simple online form and allows you to pay online. A VISITAX pass will be sent out by e-mail with a barcode. Security staff at Cancun International Airport will ensure and verify that you have paid the tax. Please be aware of scam websites for paying the tax and for completing a tourist card online, which is not required in advance.



PANAMA

MONEY

The unit of currency is the United States Dollar (US\$)/ Balboa (PAB). Panama uses the US dollar as its currency. The official name for it is the balboa, but it is the same bill. Panamanian coins are of the same value, size and metal as US coins and both are frequently used. It is very hard to use high denomination bills (US\$50 or \$100 notes) as counterfeiting is a serious problem. Many businesses will not accept any note higher than \$20. ATMs are very common in Panama.

COUNTRY DIAL CODE & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- > Country code: + 507
- > Medical: 911 or 103
- > Police: 104

WIFI

Wi-Fi is becoming increasingly common throughout Panama and is available in most tourist areas. Some hotels near and within National Parks may not have Wi-Fi or have limited services. You can also purchase a mobile SIM card with data and calls.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Power sockets are type A and B. The standard voltage is 110v and the standard frequency is 60 Hz..



Type A



Type B

RECOMMENDED PANAMANIAN CUISINE

Most dishes are served with coconut rice and native vegetables. A typical Panama meal usually includes meat, coconut rice and beans accompanied by local fruits and vegetables like yucca, squash and plantains

> Carimanola

This is a fried yucca roll stuffed with meat and boiled eggs



Carimanolas





Call 1300 720 564
www.chimuadventures.com