

For the most enjoyable and rewarding experience, we ask that you use your best judgment when evaluating your health, physical condition and the appropriateness of this program for your individual condition. Please bear in mind that this program is a group experience in which your level of preparedness and ability will have an impact on the other participants.

The following information should be used only as a guideline. We recommend that you consult your local Travel Medicine provider or personal physician for medical advice on this program. Bring this document with the brochure to show to your doctor when requesting personalized medical guidance.

Medical care and facilities are readily available in Ecuador, but accessibility and standards of medical services may vary. A resident physician is available on board *La Pinta* for passengers' minor medical needs. **The prospect of illness or hospitalization while on tour should not be taken lightly.** If you have a serious medical problem or a medical condition that might be adversely affected by moderately strenuous travel, please consult your personal physician for further advice on the advisability of taking this trip.

Be sure to indicate on the enclosed **Medical Form** if you have a medical condition that might limit your participation in group activities. If in doubt, please include details so we may better understand your medical situation. Include the generic names for the medicines you take. This information is vital to help the local physician provide the best treatment if you need medical care or if you need to replace your medication.

Also be sure to indicate on your **Individual Information Form** if you have any special dietary requirements about which we should alert the ship, hotels and restaurants on our itinerary.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

At the present time, no immunizations are **required** for travel on this program; however several are **recommended** by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

For most international travel, the CDC recommends that your normal childhood vaccines be up-to-date, including tetanus, MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) and polio.

In addition, another travel-related vaccine to consider for this trip is hepatitis A. Please discuss with your doctor or travelers' health clinic whether the hepatitis A vaccine is appropriate for you. Individual recommendations depend not only on this trip's specific itinerary but also depend in part on your underlying health, medical history and personal view on vaccine risk/benefit.

- **Hepatitis A vaccine** (Havrix® or VAQTA®)  
Hepatitis A is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus, which can be transmitted through food or water and is found in many areas of the world. The CDC recommends the hepatitis A vaccine for most international travel.  
Read more at: [www.cdc.gov/NCIDOD/diseases/hepatitis/a/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/NCIDOD/diseases/hepatitis/a/index.htm)

See your doctor **at least 4 to 6 weeks before your trip** to allow time for shots to take effect. **If it is less than 6 weeks before you leave, you should still see your doctor.** It might not be too late

to get your shots or medications as well as other information about how to protect yourself from illness and injury while traveling.

### FOOD, WATER & DIGESTIVE HEALTH

Ecuador has a reputation for safe, tasty and well-prepared cuisine. Although the tap water is not considered to be safe to drink, bottled water is available everywhere. In addition, bottled or treated water is provided on all excursions and at most meals during our program.

When not dining with the group, it is prudent to take some basic precautions:

- Eat only food that is served piping hot, and avoid peeled or cut fruit sold from a market or street vendor.
- Drink only bottled water. Do *not* drink the tap water.
- Try to avoid getting untreated water in your mouth while showering.
- Clean your hands frequently and always before eating, and bring sanitizing hand wipes or lotions with you on your trip.

Traveler's diarrhea is the most common health-related travel concern. It is not unusual for travelers in Ecuador to experience one or two days of mild intestinal discomfort at some point during the tour. It is prudent to travel with a self-treatment course of antibiotics and over-the-counter anti-diarrheal medication:

- **Traveler's Diarrhea medication** (*Imodium AD*®, *Ciprofloxacin*)

You may also want to consider bringing some *Pepto Bismol*®, *Metamucil*®, *Fiberall*® or *Colace*® for regularity.

### ALTITUDE

During our stay in Quito, we will be at an elevation of 9,200 feet above sea level.

At high altitude, reduced atmospheric pressure causes the heart and lungs to work harder to compensate for the lower amount of oxygen reaching the muscles and brain. If you live at low altitudes at home, you may experience some degree of altitude sickness at these elevations. Symptoms can include headache, dizziness, fatigue, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting, and a general feeling of being unwell.

### HEAT & SUN

Temperatures during our program can be quite warm and staying hydrated is important. We will provide bottled water on all group excursions and we encourage you to drink a lot of water. Please note that certain medications, such as anti-histamines, can inhibit sweating and increase the risk of heat illness. If in doubt, discuss your medications with your travel health provider or personal physician.

**The Equatorial sun is very strong.** Take precautions to avoid overexposure to the sun during the program. Bring a sun hat with a wide brim, a scarf to protect your neck and sunglasses that

block 100% of UVB rays. A quality waterproof, long-lasting, ultraviolet A- and B-blocking sunscreen (at least SPF 30) is strongly recommended.

### MOTION SICKNESS

If you are susceptible to motion sickness on ships, you should plan to bring a supply of motion sickness preventive, such as elasticized “acupressure” bands, small electronic devices, herbal preventives (e.g. ginger supplements), over-the-counter medications or prescription medications.

### PERSONAL MEDICATIONS & MEDICAL RECORDS

You are responsible for bringing an adequate supply of your personal medications as well as medicines for common ailments such as vitamins, pain relievers, band-aids and topical antibiotic, motion sickness preventive, insect repellent and insect-bite relief products, and sunscreen and sunburn relief products. Be sure to carry all your prescription drugs in their original bottles inside your carry-on luggage. If you wear prescription glasses or contact lenses, you may want to bring an extra pair.

We recommend you carry the telephone number (ideally “back office” or cell phone) and e-mail address of your personal physician, along with an up-to-date record of known allergies and chronic medical problems so that emergency treatment, if necessary, can be carried out with minimal risk to your health. Additionally, if relevant, you may want to consider carrying a copy of a recent ECG (electrocardiogram) or other lab or imaging studies in the event you need treatment on the trip.

### TRAVEL HEALTH RESOURCES

- Your travel medicine provider and/or personal physician
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- Travel Health Online: [www.tripprep.com](http://www.tripprep.com)
- World Health Organization: [www.who.int/ith/en](http://www.who.int/ith/en)
- Public Health Agency of Canada: [www.travelhealth.gc.ca](http://www.travelhealth.gc.ca)
- International Travel Health Guide: [www.travmed.com/thg/travel\\_health\\_guide.htm](http://www.travmed.com/thg/travel_health_guide.htm)
- International Society of Travel Medicine (Travel Health Clinic Directory): [www.istm.org](http://www.istm.org)