

Viva!

TIPPING GUIDE

Ecuador / Galapagos





Before touching on this subject, it is convenient to give some perspective talking about the minimum wage. At the moment of writing this, Ecuador's minimum gross wage is USD 425 a month. Given the proportion of salary to expenses, any small gratuity can have a significant impact.



Most restaurants include a 10% service charge in the bill, in addition to the 12% VAT. Usually, lower to medium-end restaurants do not charge it and it is common to leave a 5-10% tip, while a 3-5% tip is common on upper-end restaurants. Tips can be left in the tip jar or, even better, handed personally to the service staff.

Spa and hotel services staff typically receive a 5-10% of the service price as a tip. It is not common for local tourists to tip the cleaning staff and their wages are usually on the low end, so it is encouraged to do so if you notice they are giving excellent service.



Tour guides in the mainland typically do not receive high wages, and it is common to tip around USD 5 per person if you are in a group plus around USD 3 to the driver, or USD 10 per day per person if you are taking private services of a guide.

As for tour guides in the Amazon, the usual numbers per person and per day are USD 10 for the naturalist guide, USD 10 for the native guide, USD 5 for the paddler, and USD 5 for staff members.

It is not usual to tip taxi drivers, although you can tip about USD 1-2 if you feel they provided excellent service or they assist you in carrying the luggage.



Tipping in the Galapagos Islands is conventional and will never be compulsory. However, it is highly implored to reward the staff's good services during your stay.

If you would like to tip a particular staff member, crew member or guide, you may give it to them personally. Alternatively, on your last day aboard, you may use the envelopes labelled "Crew" or "Guide" to put the amount you desire to leave in.

In case the second option is chosen, the amount of cash will be equally split amongst the crew members.

These are our suggested rates for tipping in the Galapagos (per person):

Mid-Range Galapagos cruise

- 4 days - USD 40-USD 50
- 5 days - USD 50-USD 70
- 8 days - USD 80-USD 120

First-Class Galapagos Cruise

- 4 days - USD 50-USD 75
- 5 days - USD 75-USD 100
- 8 days - USD 120-USD 150

The average tip has been USD 10-20 per person per day for crew members, and USD 8-10 per person per day for guides.

As mentioned before, tipping is completely personal and should be at your disposition. However, you must tip based on your experience and the quality of the services provided.