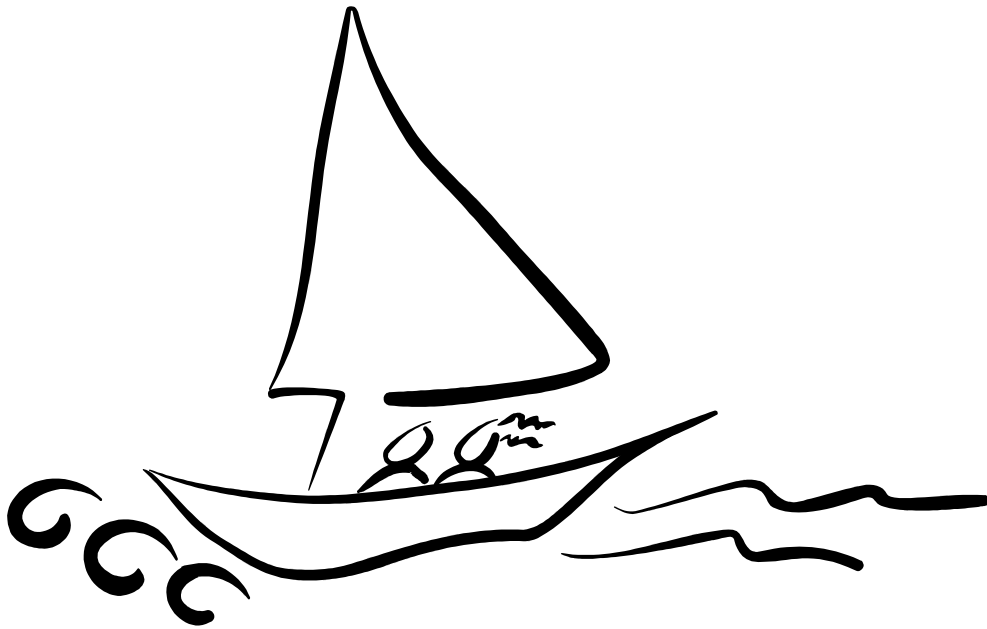


Ecuador Cruiser's Guide

(formerly Bahía de Caráquez Cruiser's Guide)



Rev E.2 – April 2010

Revision Log

Many thanks to all who have contributed over the years! For details, see [Acknowledgements](#).

Rev	Date	Who	What
Original	2003-2007	She Wolf and many others	
2008	2008	Carina	
C	Mar 2009	Soggy Paws	Re-arranged, renamed 'Bahía' Guide. Added Bahía updates.
C.1	June 2009	Soggy Paws	Minor updates on anchorages between Bahía and PLYC, PLYC fees and entry procedures
C.2	Oct 2009	Soggy Paws	Updating the Galapagos information from info received from boats visiting during 2009
C.3	Nov 2009	Soggy Paws	Updates to Customs, Immigration, and Fuel sections in Sec 2, updates to some 'Entry Procedures' in Bahía. Additional hotels in the Land Travel in Ecuador section. Additions from Sarana on Bahía to Colombia. Renamed back to Ecuador Cruiser's Guide
C.4	Dec 2009	Soggy Paws	Galapagos updates from Visions of Johana Batteries & liferafts in Bahía from Dream Caper. Sunbrella in Quito. A few updates on Cuenca
D	Jan 2010	Soggy Paws	Updates from the Galapagos
E	Feb 2010	Soggy Paws, Visions of Johanna	More updates from the Galapagos. Peru update from s/v Aliisa.
E.1	April 2010	Cynosure	Updated Puerto Amistad pricing & check-in procedure; made minor language and formatting changes.
E.2	April 2010	Cynosure	Added Galapagos info from s/v Whoosh, Peru and Callao Harbor info from s/v Precious Metal; fluffed & buffed text and format for readability.

To add updates to this guide, email the current “owner”, s/v Cynosure, at [pts -at- witanco -dot- com](mailto:pts-at-witanco-dot-com).

The current home of the official copy of this document is <http://svsoggypaws.com/files/>

If you have found it posted elsewhere, there might be an updated copy on this site.

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1 PASSAGE MAKING TO/FROM ECUADOR

The weather in Ecuador is strongly influenced by three things – the Colombian low, the Chilean high and the cold, north-setting Humboldt current.

Winds are almost always S to SW below 3° N and get stronger during the dry season, May through December.

Coming south, count on S to SW winds, 15-25 kts. and adverse current during dry season. Motor sailing is usually required to make headway. You can get a better wind angle by leaving from Costa Rica or Western Panama. During the season of northerlies in Panama (December through April), you can get a good boost out of the Gulf of Panama, and if the ITCZ is particularly far south, these favorable winds may carry you almost to Ecuador.

S to SW winds are also generally much lighter at this time of year, because the Colombian low is not as well-developed. Pass on either side of Isla Malpelo but 10-20 miles off. Staying closer to the Colombian coast when coming from the Bay of Panama may be less rough, but also subject to more convective activity off the land.

1.1 Charts

DMA 21601 Gulf of Panama Morro de Puercos to Panamá

DMA 21036 Golfo Dulce to Bahía de Paita

1.2 Other Resources

Panama Pacific Net – An SSB net that meets daily on 8143 Mhz at 1400z. Currently switching to 6230 around 1415-1420Z. Can be reached from El Salvador down to Peru, but mainly is cruisers in Panama and Ecuador. Note that Golfito is a notorious ‘black hole’, so if you have questions about Panama, start checking in and asking questions BEFORE you get to southern Costa Rica!

Southbounders Group on Yahoo – An online exchange for cruisers from Mexico's West Coast and south. http://groups.yahoo.com/group/southbound_group/

Pacific Puddlejump Group on Yahoo – An online exchange for cruisers heading from Calif, and South and Central America, into the Pacific. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pacificpuddlejump/>

Seven Seas Cruising Association Discussion Board – A discussion board used by around-the-world cruisers. Use the Destinations section to post questions about specific destinations. <http://ssca.org/phpBB3/>

Noonsite.com – The global site for cruising sailors. <http://noonsite.com/>

1.3 Passage Notes from Other Boats

1.3.1 Asylum – Early January – Panama to Bahía

The most significant weather advice Don gave us had to do with higher levels of convection between the mainland and Isla Malpelo. He strongly urged, and we followed his advice, to go OUTSIDE OF MALPELO [i.e., west of Malpelo]. When we were in that area we could see significant wx/convection activity between that island and the mainland that we weren't getting farther out and that wasn't even in the rainy season. All the boats we've talked to that have gone between Malpelo and the mainland have had yucky trips down. It's ok coming back, but not going down.

We came down in early January, and pretty much followed Don Anderson's routing advice, which of course was more wx-related than current-focused but he did mention that he'd HEARD the currents were better the farther west you go. That being said, here's what we did, and for the record, we had a FOLLOWING current the whole way! Granted, every trip is different, and different things affect currents at different times... (We'd also read an Alvah Simon article about his trip to Bahía in which he said to go out at least as far as 81W to take advantage of the current boost...)

Following is a rough outline of the path we took to get to Bahía from the Perlas in January. We left from Isla Espiritu del Santo near high tide to catch a boost south from the falling tide. The waypoints are taken from our track and show the basic two-tack contour of the trip.

1. Off Punta Mala: 07° 08.45 N / 079° 43.89 W
2. NW of Isla Malpelo (our farthest west point): 04° 08.08 N / 081° 47.15 W

Don had recommended giving Malpelo a good 10 - 12 miles of berth (less for the wx than the reports of boats being chased away if they get too close), but we came a little closer because conditions were ok and we figured if anyone came out to chase us away we'd move, but no one did.

From that second waypoint, we started to bear SSE into Bahía. It was in this area that we had a great sail, ultimately having to slow down to time our arrival for the high tide entry. It killed us to have to shorten sail when we finally were having such a wonderful sail!

Every trip is different, but the “Go West” advice proved to be very good for us.

1.3.2 Vilisar - from Mexico to Galapagos

We sailed directly from Acapulco to the Galapagos, basically SE the whole way. Winds off Mexican coast were light (we averaged 2 knots for several days) until we picked up strong NE winds that took our 35-foot wooden double-ender up to 75-130 Nm a day for a few days until we hit the Doldrums and lost the wind.

We motorsailed, dodging squalls - our first rain since February 2005 in Ensenada. Coming out the south side, we hit SE noserlies and wished we had made far more eastings earlier on. But we had wanted to be well off of the Gulf of Tehuanapec.

We motor-sailed the last 400 miles of the 1200 NM trip and did everything in 17 days. We arrived with fuel and water and two beers so never in desperate straits.

Boats we met in the Galapagos, coming from Panama (mainly Australian, Norwegians and English: very few US vessels and we are the only Canadian boat) said they had SW winds much of the way and had to motor.

1.3.3 Moira – May – From Golfito Costa Rica to Puerto Lucia

Ecuador is directly south of Costa Rica. The winds after March turn to the south and southwest. This is also affected by the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ, or “doldrums”)

North of this zone, the winds are from the north, south of this zone they are from the, in the range of 15 to 20 knots. This zone divides the oceans in the vicinity of the equator. The zone itself is an area of little winds and lots of rain, and sometimes lightning.

We were somewhat late in the season for our trip to Ecuador. By the time we started in the first week of May, the ITCZ was far north, adjacent to Costa Rica, and the winds we faced were south westerly. Larry had set us up well by leaving from Costa Rica rather than Panama because in our westerly position we did not have to change course throughout the trip, but we still ended up with winds on the nose.

After three days of this beating into confused seas, we hove to for awhile to get a rest. There were periods of what they call “confused seas,” about 12 hours long on each of two consecutive days. The seas were never very high, maybe 4-6 feet at most, but with no regularity, sort of like the surface of a cheese grater. The experience was rather like riding in a family sedan on a very bad, rutted, potholed road. Constant motion and jostling made it tough to get any rest.

One good part of the trip was that with a constant 20 knots of wind, even if close hauled, we were usually made 5 to 6 knots of speed. Our progress down the route to Ecuador was good. The current was good to us and we were not hindered by the fierce counter-currents experienced by many cruisers coming from further east.

For two days before the Equator we experienced the rains of the ITCZ. I have never seen it rain so hard. The rain came down so hard that I could hardly see two inches in front of me. Just amazing. Now this rain is not cold; rather it is warm and soft. In fact, I took one of my daily showers on the deck of the boat with a bottle of Joy and the rain from the skies. The rain poured down and came in torrents over the sails and rigging. It washed the boat free of salt and showered me nicely with lovely soft water. Once we escaped from the ITCZ, the weather improved and we began to see some blue sky, a little picture of what Ecuador would bring. We burned twice as much fuel charging the batteries on this trip as we burned to push the boat: we used about 10-15 gallons of diesel fuel for propulsion to cover the 700 miles.

All in all the passage took seven days for 700 miles, our longest passage to date. On the morning of the 8th day we could see the land and by midday we were moored in Puerto Lucía.

1.3.4 Soggy Paws – February - From Cocos Island, Costa Rica to Bahía de Caráquez

In early February 2009 Soggy Paws set out from Cocos Island, Costa Rica to “sail” to Bahía de Caráquez, Ecuador. A few days before there had been a significant ‘Gap Event’ (Papagayo winds and strong winds in the Gulf of Panama). We waited in Cocos for these to be over and then left (big mistake...we should have taken advantage of the northerly winds).

There was virtually no wind the first day, and the sea was still very lumpy. Very uncomfortable. After about 24 hours, the sea became mostly glassy and we encountered 3-6 knots of wind, mostly from the SW. The GRIB files were mostly accurate.

We chased wind and fought a 1-3 knot current on our nose for days. Didn't have enough fuel to just motor through it, so motorsailed at low RPM's to conserve fuel and get as much as possible out of the sails. Averaged 2.5 knots over the bottom over about 7 days. On the last day, just as we had resigned ourselves to another 2 days to get to Bahía, the wind came up briskly out of the NE and carried us down to Bahía overnight at about 6 knots.

The ITCZ was very inactive and we seemed to breeze (motor) right through it with very little activity.

Encountered a few fishermen with nets out at 125 miles offshore. Fortunately it was getting light. One large lancha with 3 guys and an outboard motor, met us as we approached and gestured for us to turn 90 degrees and go south around their net. They led us around the end and smiled and waved as we departed.

We didn't see hardly any shipping until about 30 miles out from Bahía, and then we were on a ‘super highway’ of ships coming and going from Panama to South America. (The AIS was invaluable to see the boats coming and going up to 25 miles away).

Did not encounter fishermen with nets close to shore (that we saw). But there was a survey ship in the area as we approached, towing a 6 mile cable. Lots of fishermen and nets just inside the ‘waiting room’ waypoint.

Emailed Puerto Amistad 3 different times to change our arrival date. They were very responsive and Carlos the pilot showed up exactly as scheduled (1 hour before the high tide)

1.3.5 Visions of Johanna – Bahía de Caracas, Ecuador to Galapagos December

Visions is a 62' sleek racer/cruiser. They made this passage in 4 days, 3 nights!

Although often known as a light air sail, we had for the most part plenty of wind. Unfortunately, the first half found us sailing 40 degree AWA's, which was uncomfortable. So we eased off and sailed 48 deg angles or so, placing us farther north than ideal.

Wind slowly came south and SE by day 3 & 4 allowing 60 plus angles. Much better. I had planned an approach to Wreck Bay from the SW corner, but ended up coming in around from the north. It is quite an approach - Kicker Rock is an awesome sight.

(More on their late 2009 experiences in the Galapagos section)

2 OFFICIALDOM

The check-in/check-out process has made some radical changes over the last few years. Here is the current state of affairs as we understand it in Mar 2009.

In 2007, as a result of worldwide 911 concerns, Ecuador instituted an electronic vessel tracking system and said that it also applied to yachts. See the reference information under DIGMER and SITRAME.

The biggest key to understanding the current situation is that how the rules are applied VARIES GREATLY FROM PORT TO PORT.

In Bahía de Caráquez, for example, arriving Feb 2009, vessels intending to stay at Puerto Amistad were told on arrival that there was no need to directly notify anyone but them. They assured us (Soggy Paws) that they would take care of all arrival notification prior to arrival, and the officialdom and paperwork after arrival.

2.1 Ports of Entry in Ecuador

At this writing (2009) four yacht clubs – Puerto Amistad (Bahía de Caráquez), Puerto Lucia (La Libertad), Salinas (Salinas) and Guayaquil (Guayaquil) were able to receive yachts. All ports of entry now require that an agent be used. Some yacht facilities have reduced agent fees for yachts.

Yachts entering at other ports or at other facilities presumably must use an agent; fees vary (one report was a quoted price of \$1000 in Esmeraldas). Yachts moving between ports in Ecuador must have an internal zarpe (domestic zarpe or national zarpe) and agent fees do apply (per Willow, leaving Puerto Lucia for Bahía de Caráquez).

Update April 2010: Puerto Amistad in Bahía de Caráquez is again operating as a recognized agent and charges \$50 for check-in and \$50 for check-out (for both national and international departures). Other fees include \$60 for the taxi that brings the officials from nearby Manta, the Port Captain's fee, etc. See the appropriate section for details.

In June 2009, the agent fee for entering Puerto Lucia on a national zarpe from Bahía, was \$185, which includes clearing in and out.

The Galapagos also has several ports of entry, covered in the Galapagos section.

2.2 DIGMER and SITRAME – Notification of Arrival

Though there was lots of discussion and wailing about this issue in 2007/2008, as of 2009, the best procedure for a yacht to follow for a planned arrival in Ecuador is to email the yacht club at the arrival port, and request that THEY notify the appropriate officials of their planned arrival. The yacht club will want to know the approximate date and time of your planned arrival, and the boat and crew particulars.

If you have onboard email, it is useful to keep the yacht club updated on your progress toward Ecuador. In Spring 2009, the ONLY communications that Soggy Paws had was with Puerto Amistad, who handled all the notifications and formalities.

If you wish to try to handle it yourself (not recommended, as the authorities tend to ignore notification emails that are not formatted exactly according to their requirements), here is some more information:

SITRAME (Sistema de Información de Tráfico Marítimo) is a computer tracking system that has been set up to oversee the movements of all maritime shipping in Ecuadorean territorial waters. It has been implemented by the Ecuadorean Navy and managed by DIGMER, the authority for the merchant navy. The area of jurisdiction is: West until 095° 23 00 W, from 01° 28' 54" N to 03° 23' 33.96" S; and, 200 NM around the Galápagos Islands.

DIGMER (Dirección General de la Marina Mercante y del Litoral) is the Ecuadorean official body responsible for SITRAME. There is information on SITRAME in Spanish and English on its website <http://www.digmer.org/>

Dirección General de la Marina Mercante y del Litoral (DIGMER)

Elizalde 101 y Malecón, Guayaquil – Ecuador

Tel: +593-4-2321602, Fax +593-4-2324714

Email: guayaquil_radio@digmer.org

2.3 How Long Can I Stay in Ecuador?

This is actually a two-part question. The first is, how long can YOU stay in Ecuador (immigration) and the second is how long can THE BOAT stay in Ecuador. These rules are changing in every South/Central American country we've been in in the last two years, so it is always advisable to ask this question again just before you arrive.

2.3.1 Immigration

Everyone is given a 90-day tourist visa on arrival. The official word on this visa is that the 90 day tourist visa is not being extended. It is 90 days in a 12 month period that begins when you first enter the country. If you leave to travel outside of Ecuador, the 90-day clock is stopped, and restarted on re-entry.

If you overstay your visa, and try to leave on a boat, you will be required to pay a \$200 fine per passport, before you will be given your clearance papers.

There are official ways to extend your visa. See <http://www.ecuador.org/nonimmigrantvisas.htm>.

2.3.1.1 Immigration Lawyers

An immigration lawyer in Quito contacted by phone in June 2009 said 'no problema'. The progression is this:

1. About 10 days before your visa expires, apply for a 12-X visa (gives you another 90 days)
2. Then apply for a 12-IX visa (gives you another 6 months, costs \$230 plus lawyer fees).

Update April 2010: A 12-IX visa gives you permission to stay in Ecuador for six months *from your first date of entry into the country*. It does *not* give you permission to stay in Ecuador for six months past the

expiration of your tourist visa. The basic idea is that a non-immigrant can stay in Ecuador for six months out of a rolling 12-month period. When the six months are up, the non-immigrant visitor must leave the country for at least six months.

Alternatively, you can apply for a residency visa instead of the 12-IX if you plan to stay longer, but you will need to show proof of income and other documentation. The process is not straightforward and is expensive. It is best to find a good lawyer to work your papers through the process if you want a Retirement visa (9-I) or an Investor's visa (9-II).

Gaby Espinosa (Quito)

Gaby Espinosa Phone: 09164592 email gabyespinosa10@hotmail.com. She will refer you to the site above for forms and details, so do your homework first.

This will cost you just in payments to the government:

\$60 (Father) for the 12-X visa and \$30 each dependent

\$230 (Father) for the 12-IX visa and \$50 each dependent

Lawyer's fee: \$200 fee for each, no discounts for multiple family members.

One cruiser I know used Gaby, and I didn't hear too much whining except about the cost.

Ecuador Foreigner Services (Quito and Otavalo)

(2009) Another source of help and advice is here: <http://ecuadorservices.com/>

This website has a lot of information on it. This is an American who recently moved here and was providing a lot of free advice and a link to an Ecuadorian lawyer friend. Now he has set up his services as a business. Seems to be a straight-shooter, but I do not know of anyone personally that has used his services.

WRIGHT, MARITZA REYNOSO DE (Guayaquil)

Another person who emailed me used this lawyer in Guayaquil, said it cost \$100 in 2009, and said she was able to get the visa backdated and avoid the fine.

Office: Edif. Torres del Norte Torre A Piso 6 of. 606

Ave. Miguel H. Alcivar Ciudadela Kennedy Norte

Guayaquil

Phones: 042 687414 (5) (6) Fax 042 687417

Speaks English and Spanish

2.3.1.2 Doing It Yourself

2009: Three sets of cruisers in Puerto Lucia successfully got 3- to 6-month extensions themselves in Guayaquil. See http://svsoggypaws.com/files/Visa_Extension_Ecuador_2009.pdf.

There are also reports that it is possible to do it in Quito, using a similar process as that described in the Guayaquil document.

It has also been done in 2009 in Manta, with the help of Tripp Martin from Puerto Amistad.

It is also possible to get a 'residencia', a resident visa, for longer stays. The exact process seems to vary from day to day and location by location, and like everything else in Ecuador, is evolving.

2.3.2 Customs

There are no laws dictating how long a yacht can remain in Ecuador. However, the Customs officials at Salinas/La Libertad (only) has sporadically tried to fine yachts large sums (10% of boat value) for staying beyond 90 days. This issue seems to be isolated to the La Libertad area. Contact Puerto Lucia Yacht Club for the latest information concerning Customs there.

Oct 2009 Update on Salinas / Puerto Lucia / La Libertad: We have been in Ecuador since February 2009, and in Salinas area (PLYC) since June. After 3 months in the Salinas area, with the help of Puerto Lucia Yacht Club and the local agent they use, we applied for and received a formal extension from Customs. We had to write a letter in Spanish requesting and justifying the extension, and submit it through our agent. This was justified on the basis of (a) work being done on the boat and (b) travel within Ecuador and South America and (c) required travel back to the U.S. This was at no additional cost, and the agent's efforts are included in the agent fee you pay for entry/exit processing.

As of November 2009, boats left for extended periods at Puerto Amistad (Bahía de Caráquez) have not had any problems staying for long periods without any additional paperwork.

2.4 Buying Fuel and Propane

For awhile in 2007 and 2008, it was difficult to buy fuel as a foreigner in Ecuador. This was in reaction to outsiders buying large quantities of fuel at nationally-subsidized prices, and selling it in other countries at a huge profit.

The current situation (Sep 2009) is this: Extranjeros (foreigners) are not allowed to purchase fuel (diesel and gasoline) at a service station pump via jerry jug. The procedures and prices to purchase fuel legally vary from port to port (and seem to still be changing). Discuss fuel purchases with the port captain or your host yacht club.

In Bahía, fuel can be purchased and delivered to your boat through Puerto Amistad at \$1.50 per gallon (Jan 2010 price). You are not supposed to be able to buy diesel yourself at the gas station.

However, some cruisers have said that if you are low key and try with your jugs at a time when there are not many people around, usually you can buy it in small quantities yourself at the gas station. This is very hit or miss and probably has a little to do with how gringo-y you appear. It is, however, technically illegal.

Propane fills are handled by Puerto Amistad, and as a side business by one of the marina workers at Puerto Lucia. Cost is around \$15 a fill.

As of March 2009, Puerto Lucia also has secured a permit to sell fuel to cruisers. Their price in September 2009 was around \$2.50 - \$3/gallon. They have good clean fuel and you can come alongside their fuel dock to take it on.

Fuel is usually available without significant problems in the Galapagos. In March 2009, you could get it through an agent, delivered to your boat, for about \$3-\$3.50/gallon. Carina (2009) successfully applied for a permit from the Port Captain in San Cristobal and bought it legally from the gas station for around \$2/gallon. There are reportedly occasional shortages (based on the arrival of the fuel barge), so if you need fuel, it is wise to stock up when you first arrive. See the Galapagos section for more information.

Bottom line is that if you are relying on having fuel available as you pass through Ecuador, you should check the current status and price for foreigners, in the location you expect to buy it.

Note that whatever the cost in Ecuador (or Panama), it is much cheaper than in French Polynesia. So it is well worth setting off for FP with as much fuel as you can carry.

3 BAHÍA DE CARÁQUEZ

3.1 Waypoints

Approach (from north): 00° 36.6' S 080° 28.2' W - this keeps you away from shoals

“Waiting Room”: 00° 35.8' S 080° 26.8' W – anchor or wait for pilot here for entry over bar.
Open roadstead but relatively calm at most times of year.

Eric from Sarana has posted a chartlet with more waypoints at

http://www.sailsarana.com/central_american_guidebook.htm

However, it's a very tricky entry and you should heed the Port Captain's requirement to use a pilot to get in, at least the first time.

3.2 Entry Procedures

There is a river bar with a lot of tidal action, reefs, and breaking waves in/near the Bahía entry. Entry or exit is only possible at high tide (WXTide32's world tides has a Rio Chone station that is accurate). Or, the Ecuadorean Navy website is here: <http://www.inocar.mil.ec/mareas/mareas.php>

A pilot is required for entry (and exit) over bar of Rio Chone.

Pre-arrange your arrival with Puerto Amistad by email (PuertoAmistadEcuador@yahoo.com) or through the help of another cruiser via the Panama Pacific SSB net (8143 USB @ 1400 Z daily).

Puerto Amistad is the official yacht agent for Bahía de Caráquez, and will handle the DIGMER SITRAME (advance notice of arrival) requirement for arriving yachts, make the pilot arrangements, and arranged for the officials for your clearance into Ecuador. As of April 2010, Puerto Amistad handles all check-in and check-out paperwork and arrangements (no do-it-yourself option), \$50 per check-in and \$50 per check-out, the same whether leaving on an international or a national zarpe.

The fee for pilots has been established by the Port Captain, and you'll pay the pilot directly. For a single boat entering, the fee is \$30. For two boats it's \$25/boat, and for three or more it's \$20/boat.

Contact Puerto Amistad on Channel 69 upon arrival at “Waiting Room” waypoint (above).

Port Captain monitors Channel 16.

The pilot will meet you in a launch at or near the ‘Waiting Room’ waypoint, and come aboard and coach you into the anchorage.

A few cruisers with shallower drafts have come and gone without a pilot. But it is a very tricky entry, with reefs and breaking waves on both sides.

Port Captain, Customs, Immigration, and Quarantine will come out to your boat for an inspection before you are allowed ashore. Most recently (Spring 2009), Puerto Amistad has been making the arrangements and sending a taxi to collect all officials in Manta, as soon as practical after your arrival. This is normally a few hours. The taxi fee is \$60, which you must pay (can split with other boats that are coming or going at the same time).

When the officials arrive from Manta, Puerto Amistad will bring them out to your boat. Fees in March 2009 were:

\$5 Health Inspection

\$20 Immigration

(plus taxi fee)

We paid this money directly to Carlos at Puerto Amistad, who then took care of the taxi and the officials.

Finally, you must also take your paperwork to the Port Captain's office after arrival and inspection (opposite Puerto Amistad dinghy dock). There was an additional \$39 'ports' fee that we had to pay there. Save your receipts from the Port Captain fees, if you plan to go elsewhere in Ecuador (including the Galapagos). Your proof of payment of the lights and buoys fee may save you a little money at the next port.

Update April 2010: As noted above, Puerto Amistad handles all the check-in and check-out transactions, \$50 each way; you pay the Port Captain's fee, which generally runs \$30-\$40, depending on vessel tonnage, on top of that.

3.3 *Marinas in Bahía*

3.3.1 *Puerto Amistad*

Website: <http://www.puertoamistadecuador.com> Email: PuertoAmistadEcuador@yahoo.com

Tripp & Maye Martin +593-5269-3112

Puerto Amistad prices as of April 2010 are as follows (email them if you are unsure):

Monohull moorings (fore and aft tie; includes dinghy dock use) - \$300 (\$10/day) plus \$30/month (\$1/day) for on-the-water security guard

Monohull moorings (bow tie only; you have to put your own stern anchor down; includes dinghy dock use) - \$270 (\$9/day) plus \$30/month (\$1/day) for on-the-water security guard

Multi-hull moorings (free swinging, bow tie only, includes dinghy dock use) – \$330/month (\$11/day) plus \$30/month (\$1/day) for on-the-water security guard

Dinghy dock use for boats anchored outside the mooring field (includes hot showers, wi-fi, all club facilities) – \$150/month (\$3/day) plus \$30/month (\$1/day) for on-the-water security guard

Anchored and unattended boats – \$30/month (\$1/day) for on-the-water security guard

Fresh Water – Non potable water is available at dinghy dock. Potable water in water jugs can be delivered to your boat \$1.75 per 5 gallons

Clubhouse – bathrooms, showers, office, dinghy dock, restaurant and bar, book and video exchange. TV and wifi internet. Clubhouse services only (no mooring) is \$150 (same as dinghy dock fee).

Boat Services

- Diesel and gasoline delivered to boat in your jerry jugs or pumped from 65 gal. container – Nov 2009 price \$1.50/gal
- Laundry – machine wash and dry. \$0.35 per pound
- Propane – can fill US style tanks for flat fee, around \$12
- Purified Water – in 20 liter jugs, \$1.75, delivered to your boat
- Bottom Cleaning – 1 per foot, LOD
- Galapagos Permits – no longer handled by Puerto Amistad

Boat Services – Referrals Available

- Boat sitting – air out, run engine, etc., \$5 per day
- Boat washing, \$20
- Bottom Cleaning, Prop Bagging – Puerto Amistad (talk with Carlos)
- Polish stainless and hull
- Sand and varnish

3.3.2 Saiananda

This is a relatively new offering, and is unfortunately up-river of the new bridge being built across the bay, so when the bridge is complete, it will unusable by sailboats. **Update Dec 2009:** The blocking of the upriver is not planned to occur before Mar/Apr 2010 (and may be later than that). Meanwhile, Saiananda has purchased or leased a small facility just N of Muelle Uno and plans to put in moorings.

Currently has about 6 bow-and-stern moorings, upriver from Bahía. A little less expensive than Puerto Amistad, but no services ashore and it is out of town. Nice grounds on site.

They are approved do the agent paperwork required to enter into the Bahía area, and can also arrange a pilot for entry, but must all be arranged by email or phone beforehand.

Alfredo the owner speaks English. <http://www.saiananda.com/>

3.3.3 Bahía Yacht Club

Bahía Yacht Club is no longer an APPROVED host of foreign yachts (ie cannot handle boat check-in).

You can get an associate membership for \$60/month. With an associate membership, you get hot showers, pool, dinghy dock, fresh water (not potable), bathrooms. An activities room available for parties or large projects for a \$10 cleaning fee, manager Giovanni, treasurer César.

Arrangements can be made to tie your boat up to the dock for a limited time to complete projects, for additional fee. Small sailboats can tie up to the wall at extreme high tides to do bottom work.

3.4 Services in and Near Bahía, Including Manta and Portoviejo

3.4.1 ATM / Banks

Banco de Pichincha; Bolivar at Ascazubi; VISA, MasterCard, Plus, Cirrus. No access fee. ATM is outside around the corner.

Banco de Guayaquil; Bolivar at Riofrio; VISA, MasterCard, Plus, Cirrus. \$1.50 access fee.

3.4.2 Boat Services

Alternator and Starter Repair - Taller de Electricidad “Bahía”, Walter Mero. In Barrio Astillero, Av. Ibarra (past Policia building in Bahía, toward Leonidas Plaza)

Batteries: Fish/Dive in Manta carries some 4D batteries. No one has been able to find any 6V batteries in Ecuador. s/v Dream Caper was able to arrange for the purchase of Chinese-made Group 31 105AH AGM batteries from Quito, with delivery to Bahía, but they had to pay cash via a bank deposit ahead of time. www.enerpro.com.ec They dealt with Santiago Sanchez, who speaks English ssanchez@enerpro.com.ec

“Enerpro supplied cable with the batteries, but they were entirely insufficient. We wrongly assumed that since they were a solar company, they would properly size the cables. Anyone dealing with them needs to pay attention to this”

Enerpro

Gaspar de Villarroel 1179 Paris, Ed. Paris (Motores Diesel), Piso 3

Tel. (593 2) 226 1104, (593 2) 243 6812, cell (593 9) 923 8025

Quito, Ecuador

Boat Sitting: For a fee, Greg Gilliam, an American living in Canoa (T: 08-519-8507), will keep tabs on your boat and run the engine while you're away. Recommended by Puerto Amistad (and cruisers).

Canvas Repair – There is at least one upholstery shop in Bahía near Puerto Amistad. Walk toward Tia from Puerto Amistad, turn left on the street just past the Musuem. The shop is on the right about halfway up, just a garage door with pink stucco. The sign over the shop is some educational institute (probably defunct). Soggy Paws also recommends an upholsterer in Leonides Plaza that Giovanni the taxi driver took them to.

A Sunbrella-like substance is available in Quito (reported by Phil on *Cynosure* 2009): Good place in Quito for Sunbrella-like material (actually seems to be a little thicker than brand-name Sunbrella and is otherwise indistinguishable). Price 11/2009 was about \$7.25/meter; 1.5 meter width. That's about half the US price for Sunbrella. Shop has lots of other nice fabrics as well.

Europort

Alina Malo, proprietor

Isabel La Católica 687 y Madrid

Quito

tel: 222 9277, 222 9275, 255 3820 Alina's cel: 09 911 2789

fax: (593-2) 237 0456

The street Isabel La Católica is parallel to Avenida 12 Octubre and a block or two east of it. The shop is just slightly north of where the big SuperMaxi or the Swissotel are on 12 Octubre, northeast corner of La Marescal, within walking distance from, say, Amazonas y La Patria.

Here is another good fabric shop in Quito that sometimes also has Sunbrella-like stuff as well as lots of other stuff (2 locations; very helpful and friendly folks at both):

Tapices "Isabel"

Norte:

6 de Diciembre N23-57

(entre Veintimilla y Wilson) (Marescal)

Quito

Tel: 2 506 683, 2 900 080

fax: 2 523 655

tapicesisabel@andinanet

www.tapicesisabel.com

Centro:

Venezuela N220 y Bolívar (in Old Town, corner location)

Quito

Tel: 2 950 787, 2 284 321

fax: 2 284 663

orotex@andinanet.net

Carpenters – There is a good carpentry shop right up the hill (inland) from Puerto Amistad. Take the first street just toward town from P.A. and walk up the street a half a block. They made and varnished shelving for Soggy Paws, and refinished floorboards for Amigo.

Aslo, Marco & Father - Cell 094192555. Located somewhere in the Leonidas area (Taxi driver Giovanni knows where, and recommended them) Marco built some custom shelving for Soggy Paws and installed it for \$25 (2009).

Chart Copies – Manta, Ceteco on Avenue #2, between 10th and 11th Street. Can do large format chart copies.

Diesel – There is a Repsol station on the Malecon, but foreigners are prohibited from buying diesel directly. It can be delivered to the boat by Puerto Amistad The Dec 2009 price was still \$1.50/gal

delivered to your boat. It IS still possible to get 1 jug at a time yourself at the local price of about \$1.05/gal

Diesel injector repair, cleaning and adjustment: Manta. Manadiesel; Via Manta a Portoviejo, Sector la "Y". Tel. (05) 292-0907 or 292-0909. Email manadiese@interactive.net.ec. Roberto Cevallos, Technical Manager.

Dinghy Dock – Bahía Yacht Club (members and associates \$30/month); Puerto Amistad (\$100/month)

Dockage – The only possible dockage in town is at Bahía Yacht Club. They have space for one boat to tie alongside for a short period of time to complete a specific project. Ask at the yacht club, reasonable fee per day.

Fire Extinguisher Servicing – You can buy small fire extinguishers at Chavez Hardware in Bahía, and (cheaper) at the hardware store in the Paseo mall in Manta.

From Phil on s/v Cynosure: PortoViejo: Equipos Contra Incendio – Espejo 502 y 10 de Agosto 263-9537 265-0303 cel 097782795. Approx \$5 per ext for dry A-B-C type fire ext. The owner is a firefighter himself. It's a hole-in-the-wall place, no distinguishing sign that I could see. Maybe a bit of firefighting equipment visible in the shop window. Not a bad idea to call ahead to verify someone will be there, etc. He charged me (in 11/2009) an even \$5/extinguisher, for new contents and replacement gaskets and gauges where needed. Seemed like a correct price in light of what the bomberos in Bahía said things would cost and given that he also replaced a few other parts.

Any liferaft service company also services fire extinguishers. See separate section on liferafts below for contact details.

Gasoline – Repsol station on the Malecon or delivery by Puerto Amistad. In Dec 2009, it was possible to get a 5 gal jug filled yourself at the 'local' price of \$1.49. Walk up there with your empty jug, get it filled, take a tricycle taxi back to Puerto Amistad for 50 cents.

Galvanizing – There is a galvanizing place outside of Manta. Giovanni the taxi driver knows where it is and has the phone number. In Feb 2009 charge was \$1.30 per kilo for a combination of chain and anchors, plus Giovanni's delivery fee. He took 3 boats worth of chain and anchors with no problem in his pickup.

Hardware Stores – see separate subsection below.

Hoses (high pressure, high temperature), swaged fittings, **hydraulic fittings**, auto parts and supplies: Manta El Amigo; Avenida 113 y Las Acacias. Tel. (05) 292-1629. Email: elamigo@manta.ecua.net.ec. Jose Luis Cedeno, Manager. Cell phone: 09 318-7665.

Liferaft Servicing – See separate section below.

Machine Shop – Fred and son, In Leonidas area... going South of out town on main road, turn left 2 blocks before the bridge on Calle Laureles at Acuarela sign, then turn Right at 3rd dirt road. House with workshop under it is about 5 houses down the road on the right. Good machining work and welding. Giovanni taxi knows where they are.

Marine Store - Fish & Dive – Manta - Ave 106 #502 y Calle 105 Manta, Tel 2624914. As close to a marine store as you will get near Bahía. Many marine items including GPS's, watermakers, line, anchors, etc, some stainless fittings. Also a limited selection of dive gear including tanks and BC's.

Metal – Plate metal (like aluminum iron and steel) – Manta – Cedeno Mera Pedro Pablo – Matriz Shop: Los Almendros, Calle 17 s/n y Ave 22, tel 2610419, 2621242; Sucursal Shop: Ave 113 y Calle 116, tel 2923938, 2927225

Outboard Motor Repair – Manta - Almacen Actual - Yamaha Repairs, Parts & stuff. La Ensenadita, Calle 2, Manta Tel 05-2627413 Also has offices in La Libertad

Paint Store - Pinturas El Maestro - On Bolivar approximately up from the Ferry Docks. They sell all kinds of paint including bottom paint. Hempil is \$95/gal and local brand Ancla is \$62/gal (2009)

Manta: Pinturas Zambrano calle 3 y Av 5 Manta Tel 05-610183. Got stainless steel paint scrapers here. Much better store than other paint stores we stopped at in Manta.

Propane – Puerto Amistad will fill US style tanks. \$8/10 lb. Tank.

Refrigeration – See separate section below on Refrigeration.

Upholstery – Lucho in Leonidas Plaza area (Giovanni knows where they are). Go to center of Leonidas, turn right (west) on Avenida Esmereldes. House is near the end of the street on right, ask for Lucho. Upholstered a nav station chair for Soggy Paws 2009, nice job, reasonable price.

Water – city water available at Puerto Amistad or Bahía Yacht Club dinghy docks, for cooking or cleaning, but not for drinking. Puerto Amistad will deliver 20 liter purified water to boat. Purified water also available many places in town.

Welding – Auto Repuestos Chavez did a little light welding. But for better work use Fred in Leonidas. See details under Machine Shop.

3.4.3 Hardware Stores

Bahía

Auto Repuestos Chavez, just up from the Tia, Ascazubi between Malecon and Bolivar, English spoken.

Almacen el Electron: 1304 Bolivar (behind the museum); good supply of all things electrical

Carlos Delgado C – across from Chavez

J&H, next to Police behind Bus Terminal.

Manta

Hardware, hoses, building supplies, pumps, some marine equipment: Grupo Zurita; Via Manta a Portoviejo, Sector la “Y”. Tel. (05) 292-4321. Email: gerencia@grupozurita.zzn.com. Edison Zurita, General Manager. See “Boris”, who speaks good English.

Ferreteria Industrial Ludepa - Ave 106 y calle 105 esquina Tel 05262-7289

3.4.4 Refrigeration

Refrigeration Repair – Simón, in Bahía, tel. 269-0774

Refrigeration Supplies–Bahía: Small cans of refrigerant (non-resealable) available from Auto Repuestos Chavez.

Refrigeration Supplies-Manta:

Angloequatoriana Major supplier of large, resealable cans of refrigerant, as well as compressors, copper tubing, and other refrigeration/air-conditioning supplies is Angloequatoriana, with shops in Manta, Quito and Guayaquil. Manta shop is at Av. 4 de Noviembre y Calle 118 (halfway between El Paseo Mall and Migracion, on the same side as Migracion. Tel. (05) 292-1097, email anglo3@ecua.net.ec or maybe manta@angloecuadoriana.com (Nemesis said they could find no parts in this store that were 12v (trying to repair their compressor), but there was lots of tubing and refrigerant).

Comercial Jocay – Calle J-11 y Calle J-8 in Barrio Jocay. Nemesis was referred to them by Angloequatoriana, called but didn't visit. Tel 05-292-2409. Card says 'Repuestos para Refrigeracion Domestico e Industrial y de A/A Vehiculos'. Soggy Paws visited later, lots of Refrig. Supplies for 12v refrigeration.

3.4.5 Lifteraft Servicing

Setmabas <http://www.setmabas.com.ec/english/> Satellite office in Manta across from Fish n Dive (Ludepa) on Calle 105. Main office in Guayaquil. Main Office 04-221-1557, Hugo (Manager) Cell 09950-7757, speaks good English He responds to email at administrador@setmabas.com in English or management@setmabas.com. Dream Caper had their raft serviced in Manta Dec 2009 for \$200 plus whatever gear they wanted to change out. They said that though the office is in town in Manta, their repacking facility is about 4K outside the city.

Segmar also services liferafts in Manta. Gerardo Vargas can be reached by email at: gvdsegmar@trans-telco.net and at his cell 096254359. No reports from cruisers about this company.

Parfi Engineering in Guayaquil. In 2009, Soggy Paws and Elysian used Parfi in Guayaquil, traveling with liferafts via bus from La Libertad. Joffre Parfi, the son, speaks excellent English, and picked us up at the bus station in Guayaquil. www.parfi.com.ec Joffre's cell # is 09-996-2571. We watched the whole operation and selected which items needed replacing in our pack. Total cost for a 6-man raft: \$170 (we opted not to replace our slightly out-of-date flares). Parfi is certified by Viking, but can do any brand raft.

There are at least 3 other liferaft service companies in Guayaquil.

Note that all of the liferaft service companies also service fire extinguishers.

3.4.6 Communications Related Services

Internet – Puerto Amistad has free wifi for boats on their moorings or paying the dinghy dock fee. Pretty good service. Can be picked up out on the boat from dusk to dawn with a good wifi antenna. Lots of other wifi signals received on the boat, but all seem to be locked. Several wireless providers in town (for a \$40/mo fee). Also, internet cafes: Systecom, Bolivar near Aguilera, English spoken; Genesis Net, Malecon across from Repsol, English spoken, Spanish language classes. Both have local and long distance phone booths.

Long Distance Telephone – See Internet. Cheapest long distance rates.

Copies- See Internet. Many other places in town as well – look for “Copias” signs.

Cell Phones – There are two major cell providers in Ecuador, Porta and Movistar. You can walk in to any cell phone provider and buy just a sim card, if you already have a phone that will work. Porta sims were \$6 each Feb 2009. Porta-to-Porta calls for people on your ‘friends’ list are only 5 cents a minute. Non-friends on Porta are 10 cents each, and to other phones about 30 cents each.

If you have an ‘open’ cell phone that works in the US, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, or Panama, it will work in Ecuador. ATT cell phones with international roaming enabled do work within Ecuador, but you pay something like \$2-\$3 per minute.

3.4.7 Medical, Dental, and Pharmaceutical

Dentist – Doctora Berthalina Andrade de Viteri, Calle España and Esmeraldas, Leonidas Plaza. Tel. 239-9785. Take any local green/white bus to Leonidas Plaza. Pass Parque Central. Get off at the first traffic light after the park, walk down the street to the left. Go 2 blocks, turn left. Office is in the white house on the corner on your left.

Doctors:

Dr. Eduardo Rodriguez Miele: 713 Bolivar (north of Riofrio), 084-361-709; dermatologist; his wife, Sra. Sophia Pena de Rodriguez is a cosmetologist and keeps his appointment book; they live in Guayaquil and visit family every other weekend when they see patients in Bahía; both speak English

Dr. Leonardo Viteri: 214 Riofrio, Bolivar y Montufar, 2-690-429; general practitioner; recommended to us by everyone, but not inexpensive; he ordered blood work covering everything (including HIV and Hepatitis; that cost \$60), then he admitted John to a room at the clinic overnight for IV saline solution to recover from an amoeba infection (total cost \$230, including \$50 for the office exam part of the visit); we felt this was overkill and next time would do as recommended by another cruiser: go to the pharmacy for a stool sample cup; deliver the stool sample to a laboratory for analysis; return to pharmacy with results, and the pharmacist will issue the appropriate drug.

Farmacias – Sana Sana, Montúfar between Antes and Acázubi; Elianta, Bolivar near Banco de Pinchincha. I found my hard-to-find blood pressure medicine at the farmacia opposite the SuperMaxi in Manta (Farmacia Fybeca).

3.4.8 *Getting Mail and Parts*

It used to be possible in Bahía to get small parts shipped in by U.S. International Priority Mail, and avoid the duty. However as of early 2009, it became difficult to receive shipped parts in Bahía without getting 80%-100% duty. (This is consistent with the rest of Ecuador). Sometimes, for a large item that you really need, it's cheaper to fly to Miami and bring it back. Generally, Customs doesn't hassle you when flying in.

DHL - #1115 Bolivar, in front of Banco de Pichincha. Also Western Union

Fed Ex – Guacamayo Tours is agent, Bolivar at Arenas.

Post Office – Aguilera, just off Malecon.

3.4.9 *Food and Provisioning*

Frigo Don Plati: Ante just before the entrance to the mercado; small counter store where you ask for each item, but they're very helpful and will special order items for you like whole wheat tortillas, sour cream (crema agria), All Bran cereal, etc.

Frigo La Granja: Riofrio between Morales and Bolivar; butcher with refrigeration, clean.

Public Market in Bahía - On the corner of Morales and Ante; 2 floors; fruits, veggies, meat, seafood, flowers. Get there before 10am as things start shutting down. Some dry goods also available there. Saturday is the biggest day. Make sure you check upstairs, where there is a large flower section and most of the meats.

Micro Mercado Yanina - Mateus between Bolivar and Montupar. Family run small store with many U.S. style products, and items from Super Maxi in Manta

Comercial Navia – Simon Bolivar between Ante & Ascázubi, warm friendly folks, clean, good stock of basic items (tortillas in the 'frig).

Tia – A large “super market” on the corner of the Malecon a few blocks north of Puerto Amistad (Malecon and Ascazubi). Has groceries and household items.

There are several large US-style supermarkets in Manta and Puerto Viejo.

In Manta - El Paseo Mall: modern, enclosed mall, with food court on second level. Large “Mi Commisariato” supermarket, Ace Hardware store, etc. Discount store (reportedly best liquor prices) across the street from the mall. Supermaxi supermarket near new hotel area downtown.

Panaderias (from s/v Nakia 2008):

I never thought I would miss Mexican pan dulces, but it's slim pickings in Bahía. They have something they call a “cinnamon roll” but it's an airy flavorless bread rolled around the cinnamon. So far, the only thing I've gotten excited about is the pan de yucca. This is a small round “biscuit” made with flour from the yucca plant with cheese in the middle. The cookies and sweet breads are blah.

Brown door (#1726): Across the street from Puerto Amistad (not the nearby panaderia); this must be the entrance to a private residence because she is only open sometime after 4 PM to sell pan de yucca (.10 each; these are our favorite), cheese and eggs.

El Rey de Pan: Upstairs in the mercado municipal for pan de yucca only. He has two sizes and closes up when he sells out (early). We like the “brown door” (see above) better, and there's another stand up the malecon in front of the new fire station that's also very good.

Latin Pan: Riofrio at Montufar; good pan de sal and integral (wheat) rolls

Panaderia El Chonero: 911 Montufar

Panaderia Gaby: Ante across from public market

3.4.10 Personal Services

Haircuts – Naza (Maria Marlene), Rio Frio just west of Bolivar, \$2-3 each or \$4 for two. Poor reports have come back from the following: Loly's, Bolivar 809 near Checa; cutting (\$4), coloring, manicures, pedicures, facials; air-conditioned. Fanny's (on Malecon) (\$2)

Laundry – Machine wash/dry service at Puerto Amistad; Inquire at Auto Repuestos Chavez for lady who does laundry at home; Hostal Bahía B&B, 2nd floor reception (machine wash, line dry), \$3 for LARGE bag; Blancanieves Lavanderia, Intriago y Plaza (machine wash and dry).

Spanish School – Will come to Puerto Amistad for lessons. Olenka Garcia cell: 09-094-0755 or olenkaecuador@hotmail.com

3.4.11 Restaurants

If you are eating lunch, always ask for the special. They will give you a menu that has prices in the \$5-\$6 range, and not tell you about their \$1.50 lunch special, which usually includes small soup, small salad, main course, and juice.

- Hugo's – almuerzo only, set menu changes daily; clean & friendly neighborhood atmosphere and only \$1.50. 408 Riofrio & Morales (no sign). Consistently good soups and more unique segundos than other places
- Puerto Amistad – Open every day for cena except Sunday or if closed with a large party. High quality & creative but not the cheapest around. American style food at American style prices.
- D'Camaron – delicious shrimp, low prices. At the beach end of Bolivar, near the tourist office.
- Arena Pizza –. Riofrio west of Bolivar (new location as of 6/4/08); 2-692-024 (Elizabeth), 5 PM - Midnight, pizza and pasta; a little more expensive than most, but a nice ambiance and attentive service; the only problem is their difficulty with processing the checks, so look yours over carefully. Reports are of acceptable (but tomato-sauce-free) pizza
- Donatelo's Pizza - Malecon, one to two blocks south of Puerto Amistad; closed Tuesdays. Better pizza than Arena Bar but no ambiance.

- Pepitos – Bolivar & (approx. Estada). Palapa style open restaurant, opens around dusk. Great grilled meat/veggies for \$1.20 - \$1.80 per stick. Pop and beer only.
- Muelle Uno – excellent food, especially parrillada, large portions. Higher prices than other parrillada places, but good value. Inexpensive almuerzos. Watch out for ants.
- Chifa Lau – Malecon near Ascazubi; Chifa = Chinese in South America; inexpensive and plentiful fried rice and chow mein
- Tropihelado – ice cream, hamburgers, papi-pollo, salichipapas
- Big Boy Robin – Ascazubi at Malecon; open at 7 PM; cheap hamburgers
- Pollo Dorado – great roasted chicken, \$2 for a huge quarter plus sides
- Coco Bongo Hostal – Cecelio Intriago between Arenas and Checa; a bed and breakfast hotel, open to the public for breakfast and lunch. Good American-style full breakfast for \$2; Suzy, the Australian owner, has a good map of Bahía, although the street names are difficult to read.
- Café Gal: Bolivar at ? in Edificio Gal with DHL office; almuerzo
- Cevicheria Hermanacho (the “ceviche hut”): On the water just west of the beach end of Bolivar; only open until around 1 PM.
- Columbiu's: Bolivar and Ante; almuerzo
- El Mana: corner of Bolivar and Arenas; good almuerzo
- El Rey de Burrito: Hurtado at Hidalgo; Tues-Fri 1800, Sat/Sun/Hol 1300; serves Mexican food, but we haven't heard great reports about this one.
- Hazel's: T: 092312743. For pizza and ice cream delivered by pedi-cab any day of the week (try to order the day before); this is out of the home of Bill and Hazel who are good friends of Puerto Amistad.
- Ice cream: There's no premium ice cream in Bahía. There are two places, Choco Banana (Arenas between Bolivar and Malecon) and Tropihelados (Bolivar at Arenas), but their ice cream is of the ice milk variety, and the fruit flavors tend to be best. Commercial brands like Pinguino are better, especially the Dips (10 bonbons to a package; five different flavors) made by Gino's for .60/bag.
- La Herradura: Bolivar and Hidalgo; a hotel restaurant with an elegant ambiance suitable for special occasions, although the food can be hit or miss.

3.4.12 Places to Stay

If you have guests coming, and want to put them up ashore...

Coco Bongo Hostal – A backpacker place a few blocks from Puerto Amistad, run by an American and an Aussie. Nice clean rooms, inexpensive. Has two 6-person ‘bunk rooms’ and 2-3 double-rooms. Doubles are about \$20-\$30.

Bahía Hotel – Directly across from Puerto Amistad. Would be convenient, but haven't checked out the facility or price.

3.5 Transportation in and Around Bahía

3.5.1 Eco-Taxi

The least expensive way to get around Bahía is the pedicab or "Eco-Taxi" – great for getting your mercado purchases down to the dock or laundry to and from the lavandería. \$0.25/person.

3.5.2 Taxi

Yellow taxis, \$30-35 all day. A one-way trip anywhere in town, including out to Leonidas, is \$1.

Yellow taxi as a colectivo is \$.50 per person.

Fernando's pick-up truck (\$35 all day)

Roberto's taxi, 269-0233 or 269-0037 (\$30-35 all day)

Margarita Lopez Quiroz, 239-9394 or 09-754-5374 (\$30 all day).

Giovanni Alvarado has a truck and a car, 09425-9244 (Cell, Porta) 09816-1330 (cell, Movi). He is well acquainted with all the places yachties like to go in Manta, including the galvanizing place, and will work by the trip, the hour, or the day. A trip out and back to Leonidas, and hanging out for a half an hour while we talked with the proprietor, was \$3 in 2009. Taking 3 sets of cruisers, and their chain, to the galvanizing place and then all over Manta to hardware stores and repair places for 12 hrs was \$60 in 2009.

3.5.3 Buses

Local Bus - around town and to Leonidas Plaza, \$0.18. Green and white.

Buses to and from Bahía de Caráquez

Puerto Viejo - \$2.25, 2hrs.

Manta – Change buses in Puerto Viejo, \$0.90/ 30 minutes further. (Some buses with no change required in Puerto Viejo – check at bus station for times)

Guayaquil – Ejecutivo class, reserved seats, bathroom, air-conditioned with movies, \$7, 6 hrs. Seats in front row have less legroom. Reina de Camino. 7:15, 9:30, 11:30am among others.

Quito – Reina del Camino, Ejecutivo class, air-conditioned with movies, comfy seats, 8-9hrs. day (9am, \$9, arrives about 5:10pm), or overnight. Goes through Chone (buy food and drink here) and Santo Domingo. Day bus stops for almuerzo at about 1:45pm. Driver side of bus has best view going TO Quito; right side on the return trip. Used to arrive at Terminal Terrestre in Old Town and then continues to Reina del Camino terminal in New Town. But now makes only

one stop in Quito. Since the building of two new bus terminals outside of Quito, Reina now drops you off at a parking lot located somewhere close to New Town.

3.5.4 Ferry Service to San Vicente

Passenger Ferry (Panga) – from Muelle 1, \$0.30/person

Car Ferry – passengers ride free

3.5.5 Travel Agencies

E Ceibas Tours, Bolivar and Checa, Luigi speaks English; Guacamayo Tours, Bolivar and Arenas; Bahía Dolphin Tours, Bolivar and Riofrio

3.5.6 Flying Back to the States

There are several options to fly back to the States. American Airlines flies out of Quito, and a round trip to Miami/Ft. Lauderdale was about \$320 in Mar 2009.

Spirit Airlines flies quite cheaply round trips to/from Ft. Lauderdale, Orlando and Tampa from Lima and Bogota. From Florida you can connect to Southwest Airlines for cheap flights anywhere else. Avianca or LAN are good connections to Lima or Bogota. A good booking site to check for within-South America-travel, and travel back to the States, is Costamar Travel in Peru <http://costamar.com/special.costamar>

4 LAND TRAVEL in ECUADOR

4.1 *Bahía de Caráquez and Vicinity*

4.1.1 *La Tortuga “Miguelito”*

A Galapagos tortoise brought to Bahía in 1920 and later adopted by the Escuela Fiscal de Niños Miguel Valverde on Calle Ascázubi. The kids care for the tortoise (and learn stewardship of nature as the result) and it's clear the nearly 100 year old tortoise enjoys the children. Bring fruits or veggies for Miguelito and school supplies for kids.

4.1.2 *Museo de Bahía de Caráquez*

Excellent regional museum, concentrates on local north-western Ecuador pre-Columbian cultures. On Malecon in Banco Central building. Also includes art gallery featuring local artists and exhibits which change monthly, museum shop, library, restoration and research area. \$1 entrance to museum, library free (use side door). Closed Mondays. Tour available in English (worthwhile to arrange, as exhibits are all labeled in Spanish) from Jacob Santos (museum director) or Carlos, his assistant.

4.1.3 *Chirije Archeological Site*

This site, about 15km from Bahía on the coast, is owned by Bahía Delfin Tours, who have developed a small “eco-resort” on the premises. Day trips to the small museum, archeological digs, hiking through the property and along the beach are available, as well as overnight or multi-day visits. The day trip is \$15/person, and includes transportation and a delicious lunch. Because the site is accessible only by driving along the beach, day visits are limited to 3 hours on each side of low tide. Potshards, other pre-Columbian remains, and fossils are literally everywhere. Anything found on the property must be turned in to the owners. However, anything found OFF the property, such as on the beach, are yours to keep. You need a group of 6 people minimum for the \$15 rate, altho you may be able to join another tour group if you can't find enough cruisers. Inquire at Bahía Delfin Tours or with Jacob Santos at the museum, who often acts as a guide.

4.1.4 *San Vicente*

Take panga from muelle uno (small fee) or gabarra (car ferry, free).

4.1.5 *Canoa*

A short bus trip north of San Vicente. Neat little surfer town. Nice almuerzo at Hotel Bambu.

4.1.6 *Sosote*

Local source for inexpensive tagua nut jewelry and decorative items (most \$1-\$5). Will sell loose beads as well as finished items. Shops arrayed on both sides of the road from Bahía to Puerto Viejo. Several

lunch spots; the restaurant on the left side of the road after the last tagua workshop as you go toward Puerto Viejo is clean, good selection of local dishes, TV, hammocks to sleep off your lunch, and clean bathrooms. Take bus from Bahía to Puerto Viejo but check with driver or ayudante that it passes through Sosote. On return trip, catch bus to Bahía.

4.1.7 Montecristi

See Panama hats being made by the few remaining artisans. A wide range of qualities and prices are offered.

4.1.8 Isla de Corazon

Mangrove island, bird watching. Tour with English-speaking guide through tour agencies in town, OR take public transport (ferry to San Vicente then bus) or dinghy yourself up the river to the visitor's center on the San Vicente side of the river. You will be taken by cayuca from the visitor center to the island and through the mangroves to the Frigate Bird nesting site. Local guides give tour on the island itself, but only in Spanish. There is an interpretive boardwalk through the mangroves. This trip is only possible at high tides, so check ahead before going up there.

4.1.9 Crucita

Seaside town south of Bahía known for beaches and parasailing. Hostal Voladores, Calle Principal y Nueva Loja, can arrange tandem demo rides (\$20). Also, lessons leading to certification. Contact Luis Tobar, proprietor of the hostel at 05 234 0200 and email hvoladores@hotmail.com. To get there, take a taxi for \$30 for the day or bus from Bahía to Portoviejo and then connect to local bus for the short trip to Crucita.

4.2 Banos

4.2.1 Transportation

Quito to Baños: Ejecutivo, \$3, 3-1/2 hrs. Interesting scenery – view of several volcanos, including Cotapaxi.

Latacunga to Baños: \$2, 2hr.; direct or change in Ambato

Baños to Riobamba (via Ambato): \$2, 2hr., every 2 hours or so.

4.2.2 Places to Stay

Hostal Plantas y Blanco: Martinez, near 12 de Noviembre. Rooftop terrace with cafeteria, honor bar, lounges for sunning, books and games, steam bath, laundry. Guests can use kitchen during off hours. Pleasant rooms with plants and artwork. GREAT breakfasts. Choice of shared or private bath with hot water. \$4.50-\$7.50pp. Popular. Tel 03-274-0044. Email: option3@hotmail.com

Hostal Santa Cruz: (2008) Calle 16 de Diciembre near Martinez. Pvt. Rm/ Pvt. Bath \$8.50 pp (\$5.50 shared bath) Tel. 03-274-0648. santacruzhostal@yahoo.com Fireplace in common area, games, etc. Free internet (no wi-fi) The common area can get noisy in the evenings. Friendly staff and the rooms are ok. Hot water can be inconsistent. Has a kitchen available for cooking.

Residencia Hostal (name not known) across from Santa Cruz upstairs (NOT the one above Restaurant Good). Nice room with shared bath \$4; also furnished apartment on top floor, spacious, 2 bedrooms, kitchen, living/dining room, bathroom, \$25/day.

Hostal El Oro: Calle Ambato y Mera, Tel: 740-513. \$4 pp. Small room with private bath, hot water, full breakfast included, and really nice owners.

Hostal Isla de Baños: Haflants 1-31, Tel: 740-609, \$8 pp, continental breakfast, nice double room, knowledgeable owner.

Hotel Santa Clara: \$36dbl.

Hostal de Leon, \$5 pp, TV, private bath, a little bit away from the center, fair price

Hostal Timara – (2008) Pedro Vicente Maldonada y Luis A Martinez. Tel: (03) 274-0599. Pvt. Rm/ Pvt. Bath \$8pp (\$4.50 shared bath). Basic, comfortable rooms. Kitchen w/ fridge for storage; shared bathrooms are setup so only 4 rooms share a bathroom. Nice courtyard w/ parrots & a tortoise. “Gringa” the owner’s dog likes to go on long hikes and is well behaved off the leash. Keep your valuables with you.

Hostal Chimenea - Luis A. Martinez y Rafael Vieira. Tel: (03) 274-2725. Lachimenea01@hotmail.com <http://www.hostalchimenea.com> Pvt. Rm/ Pvt. Bath \$7+ We didn’t stay here, but it appears to have nice rooms in a quiet location w/ courtyard (recommended by Leonidas). Free internet and wi-fi. Kitchen available for use after 11am. Breakfast available, not included in price.

Hostal Transilvania (hostal.transilvania@gmail.com)

Hotel Oro (inside rooms were a bit dark and depressing)

Jireh Hostal - kitchen, TV, looks nice (jireh_bethel@yahoo.es)

4.2.3 Places to Eat

Tienda Alex: food tienda, Calle 16 de Diciembre (across from Santa Cruz). Owner Alex speaks english. Very helpful.

Restaurant Good: to right of Tienda Alex – mixed reviews – some people had good food, others awful food and service; 2-hr. machine laundry service.

Restaurant TJ’s: to left of Alex (TJ is Alex’s brother) - excellent breakfast and free internet while waiting for meal.

Café Mariane: okay food – VERY slow service.

Casa Hood: on Martinez, tasty foods, real coffee and espresso, and old movies in English nightly. Same person owns **Café Hood**, with slightly different menu.

Café Tecuba: excellent, freshly made Mexican food.

Bella Italia: delicious Italian food and pizza, happy hour 2 for 1 drinks, including house wine.

Bar Mocambo: Alfaro between Ambato and Oriente, cable TV with ESPN for you sports fans

Quilombo: Av Montalvo and 12 de Noviembre. Argentinian restaurant whose house wine is in fact from Argentina and very drinkable. Sit near the kitchen as the chef uses a wood stove and lots of alcohol so the flames make quite a spectacle. Order a steak.

4.2.4 Things to Do

- Jungle Trip: Recommended tour agency Sixto Perez/ Conquistour Expeditions, Calle Ambato y 16 Diciembre. Wildanimal45@hotmail.com. Friendly, professional, good English. One and multi-day jungle tours. One day trip included hiking, canoing, swimming at waterfall, lunch by river, Indian village visit, for \$30pp.
- Piscina el Salado baths – short hike (about $\frac{3}{4}$ hour). Okay but crowded, even on a week day, and not very hot.
- Mountain biking on the road to Puyo. Fabulous. Take a rain jacket – even if it is sunny – as the waterfalls at Pailón del Diablo are very wet. Lots to stop and see. Cable car across at the first waterfall (\$1 each), hike down to cross the suspension bridge and hike back up. Trout restaurants (catch your own if you want) on the waterfall side (wear long pants or take bug spray for the restaurants, as ravenous little mosquitoes LOVE the trout ponds). Further down the road, the walk to Pailón del Diablo waterfalls is spectacular. Privately-owned trail at the end to goes out over the falls (\$0.50 pp) really worth it – pays for the family to maintain the trail. Have a drink at La Otra Lado, across the small suspension bridge. Many bike rental places, all \$4 to \$5, including helmets, lock, extra inner tube and pump. Among others, can rent from hostel (El Oro), Roca Mysteriosa Travel Agency. Check condition of bike (shifting, e.g.) and seat and handlebar adjustments before leaving town. Catch a bus or friendly truck for the trip back uphill.
- Basilica – “miracle” paintings.
- Waterfalls – walk around town, and visit the waterfalls there.
- View from La Virgen del Agua Santa statue above town. Trail begins one block west of hospital on Montalvo. Look for green hiking trail sign. Follow sign for one block, then turn right to the edge of the cemetery where you will see steps leading up.
- Museo de Mi Pueblito – just outside of town on the road to Puyo – walking distance. Memorabilia and local art in an old aguardiente distillery.
- Galerie Huillacuna – Ecuadorean paintings, sculpture and jewelry, Montalvo y Vieira

- Zoo San Martin – excellent small zoo with Ecuadorean animals in natural setting – condors, spectacled bears, tapirs, monkeys, etc. Buses go direct to zoo from downtown. Zoo is outside of town, just across Puente San Martin.
- Quad Runners to climb the road up Volcan Tungurahua to Pondoá - \$8-15 per hour, depending upon size. Great views. 150cc (\$10/hr) was ok for two people, up the mountain road.

4.3 Cuenca

4.3.1 Transportation

Bus between Guayaquil and Cuenca has two routes, same line. More scenic route with mountainous views and steep climb is through PARQUE NACIONAL CAJAS. Bus runs every 35-40 minutes. Ejecutivo class \$7, 3-1/2 hours.

Operazuaytur (formerly CoTours) - Buseta from Guayaquil to Cuenca is \$12 per person. Is a 10 or 12-person van leaves hourly from near the Guayaquil bus station. It is in the green-roofed building just at the end of the Terminal Terrestre on Ave Las Americas. Official Guayaquil address is: Avenida Av. las Américas y entrada Bahía Norte, Centro de negocios el Terminal bloque C, ofi.29.

From Guayaquil to Cuenca: 04-213-0205 / cell 099 341 009.

From Cuenca to Guayaquil: 07-283-9440 / 099 340 970

Riobamba to Cuenca: \$6, 6 hrs., approx. every 2 hours.

A taxi from the bus depot will take you to the town center.

4.3.2 Places to Stay

Casa Ordoñez – Mariscal Lamar 859, 07-282-3297, casaordonez@gmail.com

A little more expensive than the standard backpacker place, but gets rave reviews. Owners speak English and are very helpful. \$50/night for 'matrimonial' with private bath. Can be booked ahead and paid via internet. Fantastic place (*Soggy Paws* and *Visions* 2009). 2 blocks off the square, family run, English speaking (but local Cuenca family), great internet and TV in rooms. Good place to take those out-of-town visitors. U.S.-quality B&B at Ecuadorean prices. Book ahead, is becoming popular. <http://casa-ordonez.com>

Americano. Tamariz 1-14 y Ave. Heroes de Verdeloma. Tel. 07 283-7882 Casa of Francisco and Sandra. BRAND new room on the second floor with private bath for \$12pp. (Long) Walking distance to town. Quiet. They were helpful with bus schedules, side tours, restaurants and such.

Hostal el Monasterio, Padre Aguirre 7-24 (opposite San Francisco mercado), tel: 824-457. \$7 pp, large rooms, double beds, TV, hot water, very clean, good safe location. Dorm rooms with shared bath less. TV lobby, kitchen and lunchroom. Rooms scattered around several floors of an office building.

Posada del Angel, Gran Colombia at Toral. It is a really nice place, a restored colonial home.. Cable TV, wifi. In late 2009, rates were \$45 dbl/private bath, including breakfast, plus 22% tax! Bolívar 14-11 and Estévez de Toral (old town). Phone 07-2840695 / 02-821360

hdaniel@cue.satnet.net , reservas@hostalposadadelangel.com, posadadelangel@hotmail.com

Hostal Macondo, Tarqui 11-64 y Lamar, \$17 dbl, shared bath including tax and continental breakfast. Only a couple of rooms with private bath (\$30 dbl). Lovely old house with large garden, QUIET but still near center, rooms vary in size, but all extremely clean, well-maintained, lots of plants and artwork, shared bath was cleaned at least 4 times per day and never a problem. Safe location, friendly and helpful. Highly recommended! info@hostalmacondo.com

Hotel Atahualpa, Sucre 3-50 and Tomas Ordenez. Good hot water, quiet, TV, and big rooms.

El Cafecito Hostal/Restaurant, Vasquez 7-36. Dorm rooms \$4pp around interior courtyard, rooms with private bath \$7pp around a garden. Popular restaurant with music til 11pm each night.

Hotel Inca Real, General Torres 8-40 y Sucre \$45 dbl. (negotiated \$30/night for one week stay), cable TV, double bed, buffet breakfast included-the best. Tel: 823636 825571; email:incareal@cue.satnet.net

Villa Nova Inn, Paseo 3 de Noviembre 24-06 y Escalinatas, sector “El Barranco” 07-283-6790 <http://villanovacuenca.com> We didn't stay here, but saw it on our walk along the river. Looked like a nice place. \$45 double private bath plus 22% servicio. Wifi.

4.3.3 Places to Eat

Eucalyptus Café – Gran Colombia 9-41 (about 1 block off the square). Good quality and variety of food at reasonable prices. Sometimes live acoustic music at night. A gringo favorite.

WunderBar – for a great almuerzo. Gets noisy at night, though.

Grecia Restaurant: Gran Columbia y Aguirre – only a couple of greek items on the menu but tasty, good paella

La Lucia: looked nice, but very uneven. Service confused, some items overpriced for what you got. Pasta tasty (once it arrived).

Raymipampa: under colonnade, next to Cathedral. Large portions, good prices.

Hari Krishna: vegetarian Pizza parlor a block from Hostal El Cafecito on Jaramillo.

Moliendo Café: Colombian food, on Vazquez 6-24 y Miguel

Mama Kinua Restaurant and Cultural Center: General Torres 7-45 (San Francisco Plaza, next to Casa de la Mujer). Typical Andean food, breakfast, lunch and cultural events (open til 5:30pm)

El Cofratia de Monjes: General Torres, 2 doors south of Casa de la Mujer.

4.3.4 Things to Do

In Town:

- Cuenca City Tour on double-decker bus. \$5 pp. Leaves 3 times a day from the central square (11am 3pm 6pm weekdays, but confirm times with your hotel). No reservations necessary, just show up. Make sure they will give the tour in English (one friend got a Spanish-only bus) before you buy your ticket. Their website is useless: www.vanservice.com.ec
- Museo de las Culturas Aborigenes - Calle Larga #5-24 Between Miguel and Cueva. Exhibits of all major Ecuadorian aboriginal cultures.
- Museo de Banco Central – art and archeology, Cuenca history, Inca ruins and garden. \$3 pp
- Museo de Artes Populares – traditional native crafts and costumes
- Flower Market – in front of church of El Carmen de la Asuncion
- Mercado Arenal – About a 1.5 mile hike from the center of town. On Avenida las Americas a few blocks south of the river (away from centro). Huge local market (veggies, meat, small things, clothing, etc, no ‘artisans’.
- Barranco Panama Hat Factory: Calle Larga 10-41 between Torres and Aguirre. Museum, store, wine bar, art gallery, workshop, best prices.
- Homero Ortega Panama Hat Factory: Gil Ramirez Davalos. Good tour, larger selection of styles, but considerably higher prices than Barranco, and out of town by the bus terminal.
- Alberto Pulla Hat Factory: Tarqui near Calle Larga. An older-timer who makes the indígenas hats – all the same style, painted with sulphur to shape them, thus he has lost his voice.
- Mercado San Francisco: shop for crafts – bargain hard – get some excellent deals.
- Casa de la Mujer: Torres, between Cordoba and Sucre (near San Francisco Market) – many indoor craft booths
- New indoor Mercado: 2 stories, great fruits and veggies. Torres y Jaramillo.
- Spanish school. There are 2 that we saw flyers for: <http://www.bolivar2.com/> <http://www.sicentrospanishschool.com> We have no experience with either one.

Out of Town:

- Baños – smaller version of the town described above, 5km southwest of Cuenca; sulfurous hot springs with public pools and restaurants
- Gualaceo-Chordeleg-Sigsig – Famous for Sunday markets. Can make bus trip to all markets and return same day.
- Chordeleg: Shop the jewelry stores around the plaza – mostly gold jewelry; Joyeria El Brillante on Juan Bautista Cobos y 24 de Mayo, corner of Parque Central. Owner Carlos Lopez - specialist in gold jewelry; very friendly and speaks good English. Museum on the square is free. Las Ruinas Llaber: a mile walk from the square An unprotected archeological site, a hill with rock walls, overgrown with grass and wildflowers with a nice view of the city and of the surrounding hills.

- Principal – tiny highland town (take bus from Cuenca to Chordeleg, then another bus to Principal). Stay in Hostal Anabel (dorm rooms). Simple meals available.
- Local guides available to El Chorro de Principal Waterfall.
- Horseback ride to Los Dos Encuentras Rios \$11. Wouldn't recommend this for a large group. These were workhorses, not used to being ridden and not used to being around each other. The saddles were wooden with metal stirrups hung on rope; the bridles rope with no bit in the mouth so it was hard to make a point with the horse. Rode to a beautiful spot for a picnic. Then, hiked back to the horses and continued over hill and dale, sometimes on a rocky, muddy and precipitous trail, so narrow at times that our feet were knocked out of the stirrups. We were glad for the rubber boots we rented for 60 cents. Many times the horses slid and tripped on the wet rocks. Donkeys might have been better for this ancient trail, the path the Cañari people used before the Inca civilization
- Hike to Los Tres Lagos. Very strenuous. Beautiful spot but more of a mountain climb than a hike.
- Ingapirca Ruins – most important Inca site in Ecuador. 1km from bus stop in village of Ingapirca. Some Canar buses from Cuenca go all the way to the ruins. Don't miss the hiking trail. Guides available on site (Spanish and sometimes English) – They work for tips, or a negotiated fee.
- Alternative I: Guided tour arranged through Expediciones Apullacta (Gran Columbia 11-02 y Torres) for \$48pp (plus \$6 park fee), including English speaking guide, transportation, lunch. Guide, Juan Carlos Brito, is an independent and can also be contacted directly for tours at 09-423-0672 (cell).
- Alternative II: Leave the Riobamba to Cuenca bus in El Tambo (about 70 km north of Cuenca - ask the driver to stop near town center). Take a bus from El Tambo to Ingapirca runs from 6:50am till 13:45pm, every 15 minutes (pick the bus anywhere round the market place). Bus from Ingapirca to El Tambo runs from 6:00am till 17:00pm. The trip takes about 30 minutes. Stay overnight in Ingapirca (Hostal Ingapirca is NOT recommended. There is at least one newer hostel which looked good) or return to El Tambo to continue or return to Cuenca (no hostals in El Tambo).
- Alternative III: Leave the Riobamba to Cuenca bus in Cañar (about north 60 km of Cuenca - ask the driver to stop near town center). Stay overnight in Cañar at Hostal Ingapirca, Calle Sucre, 5.de Junio (near church), \$15 dbl with private bath, very basic, but OK for one night. Take bus to Ingapirca – same bus as described in Alternative II, which travels from Cañar to El Tambo and on to Ingapirca. The bus stop in Cañar is on Av. 24.Mayo (direction downhill) and takes about 40 minutes.
- Alternative IV: Take the Cañar bus from the Cuenca terminal. There is one that leaves at 9am that goes all the way to the ruins, and returns at 2pm (1pm weekends and holidays?) \$5 pp for round trip.
- Walk up to El Turi church on a hill on the other side of the river. Walk up Av. Fray Vicente Solano, cross Av. 24 de Mayo to the base of 450 stairs. At the top a plaza with a grand lookout over the city, a cafeteria and a tourist shop
- E. Vega Galería/Taller, Via a Turi 201 frente al PAI – ceramic workshop and showroom, in town of Turi, overlooking Cuenca. Beautiful work and reasonably priced. Sr. Vega came out to greet us. Walk up as described above. We were taken by our guide after tour of Ingapirca.

If you want some hand-holding: Check out www.terradyversa.com They do local day tours in Cuenca, but also do wider tours in Ecuador and Peru.

4.4 Guayaquil

4.4.1 Transportation

Wifi in the Bus Station: Note that the Guayaquil Terminal Terrestre has good wifi on the 3rd floor in the food court at the end of the building (near the Tenedor Oro food place). There are also wall plugs to recharge your batteries. A good relatively quiet place to hang out between buses.

Food in the Bus Station: There are 3 different food courts in the Guayaquil bus station... a big/noisy one with lots of different food places downstairs in the middle, and 2 upstairs at opposite ends of the 3rd floor, with more limited selection, but much quieter.

Guayaquil to Bahía: Reina del Camino, Ejecutivo class, \$8, movie, about 6 hours. Directo trips to Bahía leave Guayaquil at 8am and 9:45am and 11:30am. Note that they will most of the time insist that you check your backpack. The bus stops in Jipijapa and Puerto Viejo. When they stop to gas up, that is the best place to go to the bathroom (10 min stop). Guayaquil Ph # 593-4-214-0757

Another bus is Coacatur, adequate, but not as good as Reina.

Bus between Guayaquil and Cuenca has two routes, same line. More scenic route with mountainous views and steep climb is through PARQUE NACIONAL CAJAS. Bus runs every 35-40 minutes. Ejecutivo class \$7, 3-1/2 hours.

There is also a 'buseta' (12 pax mini-van) that runs direct to Cuenca hourly for \$12. See Cuenca section for details.

Taxi from Terminal Terrestre to downtown \$4 or \$5. Taxis tend to be expensive, overcharging is common.

Guayaquil to Salinas: (2009) There are two options for transport. Ruta del Sol is on the back side of the block from the Ramada Hotel on the Malecon. It was \$10 pp each way for the Trip to Puerto Lucia. It takes about 2-1/2 hours. 094-640915 cell. <http://www.rutadelsol.com.ec/#taxi>

The other option is to take a taxi to the bus station (\$3-\$5) and then take the CLP or Costa Azul bus to La Libertad, (\$4) then a taxi (\$1) to Puerto Lucia. If you are leaving from downtown Guayaquil, the cost ends up being about the same and Ruta del Sol is easier, but if you are arriving at the bus station from elsewhere, the bus is cheaper.

4.4.2 Places to Stay

Iguanazu Hostal – Run by a German former backpacker. Double private bath with A/C and hot water \$48 Dec 2009. Bed in an 8-bed bunk room \$15. Claim to be walking distance to the Malecon. <http://www.iguanazuhostel.com>

Ninth of October: Recommended by s/v Mainly. Right down town. Cheaper than Hostal Wilson (which they also recommended). It is on Ave 9th of October. Big hotel. Have a breakfast room (but not included in cost of room).

Hostal Wilson: Mendiburo 209 y Cordova. 230-4221 or 091611986. Newer hostal, about 10 rooms with A/C and Cable TV. \$25 double in 2009.

Hotel Rizzo, Ballén 319, tel: 232-7140. \$20 dbl, with private bath, continental breakfast. hot water, cable TV, fan in small, interior room, double bed, good pillows and sheets, clean and comfortable, though a bit worn. Larger rooms with a/c are \$30-\$40 dbl. ASK for \$20 rooms (not always available). Near the malecón and parque Bolívar, safe to walk day and evening.

Hotel California, Urdaneta 529. \$24 dbl., hot water, private bath. Check with desk re which streets are safe for walking after dark.

Pacifico Hosteling, Escobedo 811, between Junin and Urdaneta. \$12 single, \$16 double bed, hot water, private bath, a/c, color TV. Cafeteria, laundry service, garage. Tel. 256-8093, 223-0077.

Hostal Suites Madrid, Quisquis 305 y Rumichaca. \$12/\$15 double, without/with AC, private bath, hot water, cable TV. Cafeteria. Tel. 231-4992, 230-7804.

Hostal Milenium, close to Hotel Ecuador (Moncayo), \$8pp, private bath, clean room, cable TV

Hotel Ecuahogar, Av. Ayora, Sauces 1, Mz. F-31. 04-224-5357 \$18 dbl with shared bath or \$25 dbl with private bath, hot water, continental breakfast. Discount for Hostelling International members. Near airport and terminal terrestre – handy if you are just staying over to catch a plane or bus. youthostal@telconet.net As of Dec 2009, pretty rundown and no Internet there.

Castell Hotel, Cdla Kennedy Norte, Av. Miguel H. Alcivar y Calle Ulloa (frente al Parque Japonés), (593-4)2680 190. \$48 cash dbl., includes tax, breakfast, double bed with cable TV, AC, hot water; near San Marino shopping center

Hampton Inn, Av. 9 Octubre. \$60 dbl (weekend rate), much higher weekdays, plush “American Style” hotel with all the amenities, bountiful breakfast buffet, and airport van. A couple blocks from the Malecon. Free airport pickup and delivery – and to the terminal terrestre if they aren’t busy.

Tangara Guest House, Ciudadela Bolivariana block F, house 1, Manuela Saenz. Can be booked ahead on hostelworld.com. \$50 double, plus 12% tax, cash only. Includes breakfast, private bath, hot showers, cable TV, and airport pickup.

Manso Boutique Guesthouse, Malecón 1406 y Aguirre, Guayaquil. Can be booked ahead on HostelWorld.com, \$40 double shared bath with all taxes and breakfast included. cell 097372150, reservas@manso.ec,

4.4.3 Places to Eat

Hotel Rizzo has a restaurant – somewhat pricey for what you get, but convenient

Bongo Burgers: an old-fashioned soda fountain downtown on Nueve de Octubre near Chimborazo.

Tipo Don Rico's - Escobado near 9 de Octubre

Aroma Café – inside the Gardens on Malecon 2000. typical food, coffee and deserts. noon to midnight.

4.4.4 Things to Do

- Iguana Park – Hotel Contiental, restaurant downstairs called Canoas. Open 24 hrs.
- Walk the Malecón - try the whispering wall at the rotunda, visit the botanical garden, and see the Eiffel-built crystal palace – open 7am to midnight, heavily patrolled by police, very safe and clean. Exercise area, underground shops, and restaurants both below and above, lots of locals and kids out for a stroll, particularly on weekends.
- IMAX theatre at the north end of the Malecón – several choices of IMAX films showing afternoon and evening every day
- Climb steps up Las Peñas and walk along the colonial street of Calle Numa Pompilio Llona
- Artisan's market, just past the Crystal Palace at south end of Malecon
- Tour of research ship "Orion", Navy dock on Malecon.
- MAAC (art & archeology museum), north end of Malecón, includes a theatre – this is the new home of the Banco Central Museum.
- Parque Bolívar with 50 or so land iguanas (daytime only – they sleep in trees at night
- Cathedral, on Parque Bolívar
- Parque Histórico Guayaquil – Via Samborondón, Av. Esmeraldas y Av. Central, on the island between the airport and Duran. Cab \$4-6. Can be reached by bus, but requires a change. – small zoo, reconstructions of period buildings, hacienda, campesino home. English speaking guide is part of entrance fee.
- Museo Municipal – history of Guayaquil, archeology and shrunken heads!
- Naval Museo (free) - Malecón Simon Bolivar y Clemente Ballén open 8:15 – 12:00 and 1:00 – 4:00
- Black Market (Thieves Market) - across the street from the south end of the malecón; rows and rows of booths selling electronics, CDs, T-shirts and stuff

- Shopping for Boat Parts:
 - HIVAMAR, Av. Marengo, Km 2.5 y Casilla – huge importer of bearings
 - Commercial Alarcon, 1714 Eloy Alfaro – large ferreteria, some marine items
 - Pescaequipos, 1516 Alfaro – mostly fishing gear
 - Other marine stores on Alfaro, Argentina and San Martin
 - IMPROMAC, 2014 Alfaro y Columbia – hydraulic hoses
 - Angloequatoriana de Guayaquil, Chimborazo y Argentina – refrigeration supplies
- Mall del Sol - Number 2 bus from the Malecón to the airport stop. Cross busy street and walk two blocks. Expensive stores, 99-cent store, food court, seven MOVIE theaters

4.5 Latacunga

(LAHT-ah-coong-ah)

4.5.1 Transportation

Quito to Latacunga: Bus passes Volcán Cotopaxi

Quevedo to Latacunga: Transportes Cotopaxi, \$4, 6hrs., hourly departures. Wonderful scenery; road passes through tropical forest, cloud forest, and over Paramó at 12,000'.

Latacunga to Baños: \$2, 2hrs., direct or change in Ambato

Taxi from Terminal Terrestre to town center for 4 people and luggage was \$2

4.5.2 Places to Stay

Hotel Central: entrance on Orellana, just north of Parque Vicente Leon. Shares building with Hotel Cotopaxi, whose entrance faces directly onto the Parque. \$15 dbl. Friendly owner. Breakfast \$2.

Hostal / Café Tiana- (late 2008) Guayaquil 5-32 y Quito. Tel: (03) 281-0147, tiana@tributrek.com, <http://www.hostaltiana.com> Pvt. Rm/ Shared Bath/ Breakfast \$10pp. Basic, fairly comfortable rooms. Small restaurant w/excellent food. Quaint, relaxed & quiet courtyard bldg close to restaurants, tour companies, sites. Friendly & helpful (cool) owners/staff. Rooms off 2nd fl terrace w/ shared bath down walkway (chilly night-time pee).

Hotel Cotopaxi – (late 2008) Padre Salcedo 5-61 y Sanchez de Orellana. Overlooking Plaza Leon. Tel: (03) 280-1310. Pvt. Rm/ Pvt. Bath \$8pp. Basic, comfortable rooms w/ cable tv & view of main plaza / cathedral, etc. (quieter rooms on backside of hotel). Good Italian/Pizza restaurant downstairs. Close to restaurants, tour companies, sites.

4.5.3 Places to Eat

4.5.4 Things to Do

In Town:

Out of Town:

- Sunday markets in Pujilí – colorful produce and some crafts
- Thursday market in Saquisilí – mostly local stuff
- Quilotoa circuit for the spectacular scenery and walks – there are a number of small villages that form a circle, including Saquisilí, Zumbahua, Quilotoa, Chugchilan and Sigchos. See Separate Section “Quilotoa Circuit” for details.

4.6 Loja

4.6.1 Transportation

Bus from Cuenca, 6 hours

Bus from Guayaquil, 9 hrs., Transportes Loja

4.6.2 Places to Stay

Hotel Podocarpus, Eguiguren 16-50. \$30 dbl, private bath, hot water, TV, breakfast. Comfortable and clean.

4.6.3 Places to Eat

4.6.4 Things to Do

4.7 Machala

4.7.1 Places to Stay

Oro Hotel: \$25 dbl., good bathroom, cable TV, AC, hot water. Tel. 2937569 2932408 2930783 2930032 2930034; email: orohotel@oro.satnet.net

4.8 Manta

4.8.1 Places to Eat

Bar Mama Rosa – Reyes y Perimetral, Barrio Umiña, Frente al Parque. Pizzeria y Parrillada. Tel. 05-262-6076. Email: mamarosa@latinmail.com

4.8.2 Things to Do

- Immigration: office behind Policia Nacional building, second floor (ask Guard in booth near driveway entrance). Initial entry into Bahía de Caráquez by boat (3 months) – get passport stamped and tourist card, \$15/person. As of Oct. 2004, CANNOT provide visa extensions – must go to Quito for 1 month extension.
- El Paseo Mall: modern, enclosed mall, with food court on second level. Large “Mi Commisariato” supermarket, Ace Hardware store, etc. Discount store (reportedly best liquor prices) across the street from the mall. Supermaxi supermarket near new hotel area downtown.
- Malecon: stroll along the wide, white-sand beach, studded with windbreak enclosures. Many restaurants.
- Museo de Banco Central
- Yacht Club

4.8.3 Boat Supplies and Repair

See the section on Bahía.

4.9 Montañita

Surf center of Ecuador with waves up to 3 meters!

4.9.1 Places to Stay

Hotel Las Tres Palmeras, directly at the point, \$7pp incl. breakfast, prices are negotiable during low season until December.

4.10 Otavalo

4.10.1 Transportation

Quito to Otavalo, Transportes Otavalo or Transportes Los Lagos. 2.5hrs., \$2, leaves from the downstairs part of Terminal Terrestre at frequent intervals. If you have arrived in Quito on day bus from Bahía, you may be able to catch the 5:15pm departure.

Otavalo to Quito – sit on right side of bus has best views

4.10.2 Places to Stay

Acoma Hotel: Salinas 07-57 between Ave. 31 de Octubre & Ricaurte. Newly opened. \$30 for two including continental breakfast. Discounts offered for long stays or groups. Pedro (manager) speaks English. Giftshop, Café. Tel. 06 2926 570, www.acomahotel.com

Hostal Doña Esther: Juan Montalvo 4-44 & Roca. Lovely courtyard, nice restaurant with woodfired pizza. Private baths \$30 - \$37 for two. Tel. 06 2925 381

Hotel El Indio: Sucre 12-14, right off Pancho Plaza. Very clean, very convenient, \$20 for two. Room 403 is enormous with nice balcony and view of market. (Alternative higher priced and newer Hotel El Indio Inn is attached but entrance is on Bolivar. Approx. \$40 for two.) Tel. 06 2920 060

La Luna: 4.5km south of Otavalo. Restaurant, movies, rooms with fireplace, live Andean music Saturday nights. Rooms with private bath, as well as camping, dorm and shared bath rooms. \$2-\$9pp. Guided hikes to Mojanda Lakes, can arrange horseback riding and mountain biking. Tel. 09-973-7415. Taxi to town \$3. Free pick up for stays of 2 nights or more until 6pm.

Hostal Santa Fe: Calle Roca 7-34 near G Mareno. Tel (062) 923 640. \$7pp. Hot water, TV, big rooms.

Hostal El Geranio: Ricuarte, between Morales y Colon. Tel (06) 2920-185. \$5pp, hot water, private bath, pleasant rooms, comfy beds, breakfast included. Kitchen and laundry service available, inexpensive guided tours. A real family atmosphere. Convenient to all markets and downtown.

El Valle de Amanecar: “Not Recommended”, per CHAMELEON and CABIRI

Hotel Coraza: Av. Abdon Calderon s/n y Sucre. \$26 dbl., breakfast, double bed, cable TV, nice bathroom, hot water. (593-6)2921 225

4.10.3 Places to Eat

Otavalito – Sucre. Excellent almuerzo or cena. Ecuadorian specialties (cuy with reservation).

Pizza Siciliana – Morales 5-10. A bit lacking in the crust department but lots of choices. “Folklorica” or traditional Andean music on Saturday nights; tip musicians, they are not paid.

Café Sol y Luna – Bolivar 11-10. Best fresh juice. Good organic food.

Shenandoah Pie Shop – Poncho Plaza. Big portions.

Cafeteria Bogota Plaza - a pie shop, on Sucre 12-03 near Morales. Good coffee and breakfasts

Restaurante Il de Roma – Montalvo 4-44 y Bolivar. Part of Hostal Doña Esther. Good Italian food, brick oven pizza, lovely setting off central courtyard of hostel. Mid-range prices.

Pizza Restaurant - C. Mareno, around the corner from Cafeteria Bogota, great pizza with real mozzarella cheese

4.10.4 Things to Do

In Town

- **Animal Market** – must get there early – over by 8 or 9am.
- **Saturday Markets** – THE BEST!! Walk into town early to watch setting up. Many indigenes sell at this market. Textiles, jewelry, musical instruments in the plaza and almost anything

imaginable in stalls lining streets emanating from plaza. Bartering is EXPECTED – early morning and late afternoon prices are best (tour groups come mid-day).

Out of Town

- **Parque Condor** – About 4 km from downtown Otavalo; a taxi will take you there for about \$4 and it makes a nice stroll back over country roads. A tastefully-developed refuge for raptors in spectacular setting under Vulcan Imbabura with a pair of Andean condors in residence. Joep Hendriks is the director. He will tell you the history and mission. Two free flying demonstrations occur daily. \$3.50 adults. Tel. 06 2924 429, www.parquecondor.com
- **Festivals** – Ask at your hotel about what festivals may be happening in surrounding villages. These present wonderful opportunities to experience the warmth, colors and liveliness of the local traditions. If you are lucky you'll get passed the cup of chichi, a traditional fermented corn drink.
- **Peguche Cascade** - Head out of town in a N/NE direction and veer to the right after you pass the bus terminal so that you are walking with the gum tree hill to your right. You will see the old railway track which you will walk on until it veers sharply left through the corn fields. Walk up the hill and where it T's turn right towards a German sponsored school and follow the track to the waterfall. When you come back walk up the road for about 45 minutes for a great view of the valley and Otavalo.
- **Tour to Cotacachi**, and on to Laguna de Cuicocha which is in the bowl of a crater. This is a beautiful area at 3350m and there is a hostel there for those that may want to spend a tranquil night or two. Condors can be seen in the morning and there is a well maintained walking circuit that takes in the hundreds of botanical plants as well as views of the looming Volcano Cotacachi, 4940m, and the lake. On a clear day you can see 8 of Ecuador's volcanoes from this spot. (www.lospinosdecuicocha.com or email
- Jorge@lospinosdecuicocha.com , tel 593-9-9001516).

4.11 Portoviejo

4.11.1 Transportation

Bahía to Portoviejo:	see Bahía
Portoviejo to Quevedo:	Transporte Reales Tamarindos, 12noon and 8pm, \$5, 4 hrs. Transportes Sucre, 11:45am and 5pm

4.11.2 Places to Eat

Food court in El Paseo Mall (see below)

4.11.3 Things to Do

El Paseo Mall: modern, enclosed mall, with food court on second level. Large “Hipermercado” supermarket, hardware store, department store, etc. Multiplex cinema.

4.12 Quevedo

4.12.1 Transportation

Portoviejo to Quevedo: Transporte Reales Tamarindos, \$5, 4 hrs, 12noon and 8pm,.

Transportes Sucre, 11:45am and 5pm

Quevedo to Latacunga: Transportes Cotopaxi, \$4, 6hrs., hourly.

Taxi to centro \$1

4.12.2 Places to Stay

Hotel Ejecutivo Internacional - 7 de Octubre #214 y Cuarta, \$15dbl. Color cable TV, cold water, mini-frig, a/c. Some street noise at night. Friendly. Restaurant next door for breakfast (\$1.25)

4.12.3 Places to Eat

Chifa Peking: 7 de Octubre. Good, inexpensive food

4.12.4 Things to Do

Early morning produce market along Rio Quevedo

4.13 Quilotoa Circuit

Crater Lake with spectacular scenery and walks – there are a number of small villages that form a circle, including Saquisilí, Zumbahua, Quilotoa, Chugchilan and Sigchos.

4.13.1 Transportation

Latacunga to Zumbahua and on to Chugchilan: bus, one leaves at 12noon. Or pick-up truck from Zumbahua to Chugchilan

Chugchilan to Quilatoa: private transport is about \$30. Bus leaves at 4am and arrives while still dark. At 6am, private homes and hostals may answer a knock on the door and feed you breakfast – and hot coffee!

Chugchilan to Sigchos: travel by bus on some days, or by pick-up truck (literally the “milk run” – picking up and delivering milk and propane)

4.13.2 Places to Stay

Zumbahua

Small, simple hotels (basically the home of an indigenous family).

Quilotoa

Cabanas Quilotoa: VERY basic, fireplace in room but toilet was an outhouse (3-holer).

Chugchilan (CHEW-chih-lahn) – Small village perched on edge of deep beautiful canyon at 10,560' elevation. Keep return bus schedule in mind when planning time here (i.e. Wed. has extra 5am bus, Sun. has many options)

Hostal Mama Hilda, \$10 US pp in dbl room with shared bath, inc. breakfast and dinner, clean, nice and recommended

Hostal Cloud Forest – (2008) Chugchilan Tel: (03) 281-4808. jose_cloudforest@hotmail.com, <http://www.cloudforeshostal.com> Pvt. Rm/ Pvt. Bath / B'fast & Dinner \$10pp. Basic, comfortable rooms. Friendly & helpful owners/staff. Casual, comfortable lounge w/ wood stove. Basic but tasty food – can buy lunch also. Can arrange guides, horses, & truck transportation for sites & hikes.

Black Sheep Inn -

4.13.3 Things to Do

See Crater Lake in Quilotoa; hike or rent horses. Because Quilotoa crater lays at 3800 m (12,400 feet), in the morning it is very cold and windy. So you need warm clothes and wind protection. Starting the hike at sunrise is the best time. Because of no clouds in the morning you will have a great view to the crater lake.

Hiking Directions: You start on the look out on the crater rim. First look out to the left across the crater rim for the 3rd big sandy spot. Be sure you remember on your way the sandy spot and the surrounding mountains on the crater rim, because during the walk you will pass more sandy spots than you can see from the look out. The most common mistake is to leave the crater rim too early. Then begin your hike to the left. The trail takes you on both the inside and outside of the crater rim. DO NOT descend steeply into the crater, NOR go down on the outside of the crater rim. Sometimes you will see a old rusty arrow, that shows you the way. Just before reaching the sandy spot, stay on the crater rim, climbing up steeply and then down steeply to the sandy spot (but not the way down to the lake!) For this part we hiked about 1 ½ hours, because we stopped sometimes for lookout. Some hikers do this part in 45 to 60 minutes.

At the sandy spot you will see a ROW OF EUCALYPTUS TREES coming up to the crater rim. There is also an old arrow which sometimes marks the way. If it is clear, you can see the small villages of Huayama and Chugchilan beyond, across the canyon. Here you begin your way down hill. Stay left of the eucalyptus trees and go down the field. There are many trails leading down. At some point you will walk along the road to Huayama.

From Huayama to Chugchilan is about 2 hours. Walk through Huayama to the cemetery, there left along the cemetery. Take the 3rd right trail after walking along the cemetery. This follows the top of a gully. Don't go down into the gully, follow the path above it, but you will cross it a little later. After 10-25 minutes you will reach the edge of the canyon with a great view. A tunnel-like trail leads all the way to Chugchilan. You will cross a couple of footbridges as you drop down the narrow switchback trail. Cross the river at the bottom of the canyon and go up to the right. THE REST IS A CLIMB UP TO CHUGCHILAN (about 1 hour).

In general it is easy to find the way, but remember, do not leave the crater rim before you reach the sandy spot with the eucalyptus trees!!

4.14 Quito

4.14.1 Transportation

Bahía to Quito: see Transportation section under Bahía. Sit on driver's side (left) for best view.

Quito to Bahía: Reina del Camino, Ejecutivo Bus, \$7.50, 8-9 hrs. Bahía to Quito 0900 local. Returning "ejecutivo" from Quito: 12:15 pm or 11:00 pm (overnight) from Reina del Camino's North Terminal (Manual Larrea & 18 de Sept.; tel. 02 258 5697). Comfy seats, bathroom. Returning "normal" class day bus leaves from Terminal Terrestre in old town at 10:30am. Sit on RIGHT side for best view.

From Terminal Terrestre to Mariscal Sucre Tourist Zone: take taxi (\$3-4), or take Trole (trolley) up Av 10 de Agosto. Taxi less (\$2 or less) from North Terminal to Mariscal Sucre.

4.14.2 Places to Stay

New Town (Mariscal Sucre)

In general, **Rodriguez St.** in "New Town" Mariscal Sucre has many decent hostals of varying prices and is quiet, being "semi-pedestrian".

Loro Verde – Rodriguez 2241-231. \$17 double. Spacious rooms with private bath. Breakfast extra (\$1.40 continental, \$1.70 American with eggs)

Arco del Sol Inn – Rodriguez 7-36. \$25 double. New place, comfortable rooms with private bath, hot water, TV, "American" breakfast included in price. Sitting room with cable TV and DVD player.

Hostal Quito-Antiguo – Corner of Joaquín Pinto y Juan León Mera, very clean, bright rooms, hot water. \$11 pp without laundry and breakfast. Tel. 02 547 333, uioantig@uio.satnet.net

Hostal de la Reina – Reina Victoria 836, Some nice rooms with great views (e.g. Room 11). Living room, kitchen, TV in common room., Tel. 255 1844

Hostal La Galería - Calamá 233. \$4-8 pp, nice big rooms, hot water, TV, relatively clean, safe area at night. Real backpacker-ish, though.

Hostal La Vanessa – Wilson. \$5pp, rooms dark and unattractive, smoking patio, cable TV with some English movie channels.

Magic Bean – Foch 681, above restaurant of same name, which has great coffee. Wonderful breakfast included.

L'auberge Inn, - Av. Colombia 1138, Located between old and new town, \$17 dbl. in the courtyard, private bath; highly recommended, www.ioda.net/auberge-inn.

La Casona de Mario – Andalucia 213. Attractive old house with garden. TV lounge, laundry and kitchen privileges. Shared baths.

Hostal Amazonas Inn - Joaquin Pinto 471 y Amazonas. \$20 dbl. Hot water, TV, hard beds, cafeteria and relatively handy to old town. Avoid the third floor rooms – they have no windows and no way to escape in the event of fire. Tel (593-2) 2225-723.

Casa Sol – Calama 127 – B&B with airy courtyard. Price includes breakfast. (mid-range)

Hotel Bonaventure - Amazonas 1023 y Pinto. \$25 for two double beds with cable TV, hot water (no breakfast). E-mail ecbonaventure@yahoo.com; www.hotelbonaventure.cjb.net
telefax: 250 5246/ 252 6402/ 223 3734

Old Town (the historic district)

Hotel San Francisco de Quito – Sucre 217 y Guayaquil. \$28 double. Historic old hotel in an attractive colonial building with a courtyard. Clean, comfortable, carpeted room with private bath, hot water, TV, “American” breakfast included in price. Convenient to center of old town and within walking distance of Terminal Terrestre, but secure and quiet.

Hotel Internacional Plaza del Teatro – Guayaquil N8-75 y Esmeraldas (Plaza del Teatro). \$9pp. Private bath with hot water. In a large old mansion, somewhat funky lobby but much renovation in rooms, especially elegant new bathrooms. Airy, spacious outside rooms have balconies and windows overlooking street. Interior rooms less attractive but quieter. Café on site.

Casa Bambu – (late 2008) Solano 17 58 y Av. Colombia Tel: (02) 222-6738 Pvt. Rm/ Pvt. Bath \$9pp. Basic, comfortable & bright rooms. 2 kitchens w/ dry & fridge storage shelves, including a locking locker. Terrace patios with great city views. Located between new & old town, walk to buses, restaurants, & museums. Safe & quiet area – can walk at night. **Reservation Required! (very popular)

The Secret Garden – (2009) Busy backpacker place. A good place to exchange info with other travelers and meet up with other travelers. Bar 7 restaurant upstairs with a view of the city. Great group dinner in the evenings. Breakfast available but not included. Sometimes fully booked, so book ahead. Also has an associated Spanish school, travel agency, and ranch-style ‘retreat’ in Cotapaxi.

<http://www.secretgardenquito.com> \$22/night double shared bath

Hostal Margarita 2 - Calle Rios #N12-118 y Miguel Espinoza, Sector Parque Alameda Tel: (02) 254-9806. Pvt. Rm/ Pvt. Bath \$5pp. Basic, comfortable rooms w/ cable tv (ask for outside view).

Convenience store attached to lobby which also serves basic breakfasts \$2.20. Close to Ecovia busline & old town. Sketchy area at night – not safe to walk around at night. Take taxi.

<http://www.hostalmargarita2.com>

4.14.3 Places to Eat

New Town

Bhuoos: on Rio Amazonas y Colon – nice restaurant, bacon and omelet breakfast for \$5; somewhat pricey but good Mexican food for dinner.

El Español – J L Mera & Wilson. Good Spanish delicatessen.

Flanagan's: Irish-American Bar on Calamá (newly opened). Also awful and overpriced.

Magic Bean: Foch 681 – Wonderful coffee and breakfast (bagels!). Earliest open breakfast spot.

Mango Tree Café: Foch (across from Magic Bean) – another good breakfast choice

Mama Clorinda – Reina Victoria y Calama. Good for Ecuadorian food – try the cuy (guinea pig). The special Ecuadorean teas (with booze) are really tasty.

La Sala – Reina Victoria y Calama. Ecuadorean “fusion” food. Small place, with comfy lounge in back. Good prices and “specials”, interesting food, nice ambiance.

La Boca del Lobo – Reina Victoria y Calama. Great décor, creative international cuisine. Not a budget place, but for a special night out.

Le Arcate – Marginal Italian food, maybe the pizza is better. General Baquedano

Red Hot Chili Peppers – Great margaritas and fajitas. Foch 713

Reina Victoria: “British” pub - awful, and ridiculously over-priced.

Siam – Calamá ES-10. Good Thai but a bit pricey.

Texas Ranch – Mera 1140. Plentiful food, good steaks, reasonable prices, nice fireplace.

TexMex – Reina Victoria 847. Good burritos.

Xocoa – Corner of Reina Victoria & Foch. Dessert place; chocolate to die for from around the world.

Old Town

D'Camaron – Crespo and Borrero – same owner as the shrimp place in Bahía.

Tianguetz – Plaza de San Francisco, outside entrance to Monastery. Café and restaurant with both indoor and outdoor seating, and first class handcraft shop. Open for snacks and meals 9:30 to 18:30, 7 days a week.

Pizza CHQ – Espejo between Guayaquil y Flores. Good pizza and italian dishes. Mezzanine level above ovens is cosy on a cool, rainy night.

San Agustin Heladeria y Restaurante – Guayaquil 1053 y Mejia. Clean, friendly place for lunch or early supper.

4.14.4 Things to Do:

New Town

- TeleferiQo – a new upscale park and malls on the western edge of town with a fantastic gondola to 4100 m where you can do more shopping, sip espresso or wine, eat lunch or simply take off walking up the paths through the páramo. Worth every penny (\$4 adults, \$2 kids). Not to be missed; go early and bring a picnic and lots of layers of clothing. Taxi ~\$2.50 from Mariscal Sucre. Minibuses pick up outside Hotel Colon (Ave. Patria & Amazonas) \$1 pp each way.
- Migracion – Av. Amazonas 3149, upstairs – easy to obtain 90-day visa extension. Big mall with Radio Shack across the street.
- Parques: La Alameda and El Ejido – Sunday music and vendors
- Museum of the Quito Observatory – Parque Alameda. Observatory in the heart of Quito, established in 1873. Collection of old instruments, documents. Astronomical, seismological and meteorological stations. Sky viewing through main telescope evenings at 7pm. \$0.50 entry, with guide. They were thrilled to have foreign visitors!
- Museo Nacional de Banco Central – excellent archeology and art exhibits, labeled in both Spanish and English.

Shopping

- Laboratorio Técnico – Av. Republica 2063 y 10 de Agosto. Any electronic part or accessory you might need for equipment repair, etc.

Bookstores

- Libri Mundi, down a side street from Hostal Amazonas – guide books in all languages, some English language magazines
- English Bookstore – Calama & Ave 6th de Diciembre, M-Sat 10-7, Sun 11-5. Owner Mark is friendly. New & used books. www.theenglishbookstore.com

- Confederate Books – Calama & Juan Leon Mera. Used books.
- LibroExpres – Ave. Amazonas 816 & Veintimilla. Other locations throughout Quito.
www.libroexpres.com.ec

Old Town

- Old Town Colonial Architecture. Sunday is best for strolling, as traffic in center is limited to residents. Churches, government buildings, Plaza de Independencia.
- Museo de la Ciudad – Moreno 572 y Rocafuerte. History and art of Quito, with some interactive elements. Entry \$2.
- San Francisco Church and Monastery. Guided tour (in English) of museum and renovated areas of church. Furniture, paintings and sculpture dating to 16th century. Entry to museum (with guide) \$1.
- Church of La Basílica – Carchi 122 y Venezuela, at northeast end of Old Town (get off trolley at Banco Central stop), on a steep hill. Relatively new gothic style church (1884), with grand stained glass windows. It is well worth the \$2 gain entry to the towers. Climb up into the belfry, ring the bells, get a fantastic view of Quito. For those who enjoy heights!!

Out of Town

- La Mitad del Mundo – on equator, 15km north of Quito – \$1.50 per person to enter compound; monument and ethnographic museum (\$3 entry), model of colonial Quito (\$1), planetarium, Museo Cultura Solar (interesting presentation of an archeological project, donation). 9am-7pm;. Live music on Sunday. Take green bus labeled “Mitad del Mundo” from the corner of Av. America and Colon in Quito (\$0.40pp each way) – stops right in front of the compound. Okay, the French miscalculated by 300 meters, but the real story here is in the Museo Solar, which explains why this area is so important to astronomy, and how the city of Quito was laid out by the pre-Incans. Really fascinating. Plenty of restaurants and handicraft shops on site.
- Museo Solar Inti Nan – Immediately east of the “official” Mitad del Mundo and a bit difficult to find. Visit the exact site of the equator as identified by the indigenous people (and confirmed by GPS). Take a tour, blow a dart, see a shrunken head, do push-pull experiments on the equator and in both hemispheres, see a solar chronometer, watch centrifugal forces flow, etc. \$3 adults, \$2 children. Please tip guides who are paid little.
- Volcan Pululahua – 6km from Mitad del Mundo. Guided tour available for \$6pp at Mitad del Mundo gate by Community Ecotourism Information Center (comunidad_pululahua@hotmail.com). Drive to base of this extinct volcano (Reserva Geobotanica Pululahua), hike up a steep trail to the rim, overlooking 1300ft. deep caldera, where the bottom is farmed. Bilingual guide points out medicinal plants along the way and provides commentary/history. Do this in the morning, because clouds roll in from the opposite side in the afternoon, obscuring the view. Longer walks available to the northwest

side where there is cloud forest, waterfalls, etc. Calima Tours also goes here. Fernando provides extra access to private property (1.5 hours, \$8 pp); ask at the Ecuadorian restaurant in the Mitad del Mundo park.

4.14.5 Other Services

ATMs

Banco de Pinchincha – Ave 6th de Diciembre (near Garcia or Rodriquez) and also Ave. Amazonas & Cordero

Banco de Guayaquil – Ave. Amazonas & Veintmilla

Lavanderias

Ecuadorian Cleaning Lavanderia: Foch 4-272 & Amazonas

Super Lavado: Joaquin Pinto E6-32 & Reina Victoria

4.15 Riobamba

Note: Brian on s/v El Regalo reports that the train at Riobamba will be closed from March thru August, 2010 for track maintenance.

4.15.1 Transportation:

Baños via Ambato to Riobamba, \$2, 2 hours, leaves every couple of hours.

Riobamba to Cuenca, \$6, 6hrs., approx. every 2 hours.

4.15.2 Places to Stay

Hotel Tren Dorado: Carabobo 22-35 y 10 de Agosto (near train station). \$8pp, hot water, sitting rooms, café with fireplace, most rooms have twin beds. Buffet breakfast served at 5:30am on “train days”. Also a la carte breakfast and light dinners.

4.15.3 Places to Eat

Hotel Tren Dorado Café – limited menu, but tasty and reasonable. Nice fireplace.

Chifa Pekin – Borja 37-42 y Brasil. Good Chinese food, inexpensive, large portions.

El Dilirio – Primera Constituyente 28-16. Lots of atmosphere but pricey.

4.15.4 Things to Do:

In Town

- Museo de Banco Central - \$0.50pp, nice archeology exhibit, labeled in Spanish and English.

- Saturday Market – all over town. Crafts at Orozco y Colon – Salasaca weavings, woolen goods, jewelry.
- Parque 21 de Abril Observation Platform – great view of city and mountains

Out of Town

Nariz del Diablo Train - \$11pp, buy tickets the evening before and show up EARLY for best seats on top (by 6am). 6 to 7 hours from Riobamba to Sibambe and back to Alausi. Two stops (Guamote and Alausi) with bathroom facilities, plus basic toilet in one car. Rent cushion for \$1 from vendors. Dress warmly. Train leaves at 7am *Wed, Fri and Sun only*. Ride terminates in Alausi between 2 and 3pm. Buy onward bus tickets to Cuenca, Guayaquil or Quito on train or ticket counter in Alausi, to Riobamba ONLY at ticket counter in Alausi. Bus to Riobamba leaves hourly on half hour, \$2pp, 2 hours. You are no longer allowed to ride on top of the railway cars (aftermath of an accident in 2007).

4.16 Salinas (Provincia Bolívar)

4.16.1 Transportation

Guayaquil to Salinas: From bus terminal in Guayaquil, bus to Guaranda via Babahoyo, 4.5 hrs. One bus leaves at 8am, arrives Guaranda at 12:30pm. Ask directions in Guaranda for the bus or colectivo (truck with benches in the bed and plastic curtain sides) to Salinas, 1.5 hrs.

Riobamba or Ambato to Salinas: Bus to Guaranda, (2hrs. from Riobamba), then take the bus or colectivo (see above). The road from Riobamba to Guaranda passes Volcan Chimborazo and is spectacular.

4.16.2 Places to Stay

Hotel El Refugio: dorm room with 6 beds, \$5pp, toilet and hot shower down the hall. Lobby with Direct TV and fireplace, dining room, mountain views. Cozy “ski lodge” ambiance.

4.16.3 Places to Eat

Lenin's Café: English-speaking owner gives town tours.

4.16.4 Things to Do

- Tour of cheese, sausage, mushroom co-ops, chocolate and wool factories. Lenin (of restaurant fame) gives 2 hr. tour for \$3.50.
- Soccer Ball Factory
- Knitting Factory
- Market (Tuesday)
- Rent horses for rides through hills, 11,500' and higher!

4.17 Vilcabamba

Beautiful “valley of longevity” with nice sunny dry climate but not hot. A good place to have a break from your journey.

4.17.1 Transportation

Bus from Loja – frequent, about 1 hour. These stop in Vilcabamba center and then continue past the Hosteria Izhcayluma.

4.17.2 Places to Stay

Hosteria Izhcayluma: \$12 dbl with private bath, including breakfast, in a bungalow with beautiful view over the valley. About 2 km out of town Vilcabamba. It is the only hostel which lies on an hill with a great view over the valley and the mountains. Offers horse riding and hiking tours in the valley and to the waterfall. izhcayluma@yahoo.com. www.izhcayluma.com. Tel. 07-258-0895.

4.17.3 Places to Eat

4.17.4 Things to Do

- Horseback riding
- Hiking
- Tour Parque Podocarpus

5 CRUISING DESTINATIONS IN ECUADOR

5.1 *Colombian Border to Bahía*

This area offers a few good beaches and surf breaks for surfers. The southerly winds and current can make the seas rolly and choppy along most of this coastline.

If you run into any problems, the Ecuadorian Navy answers VHF 16 calls to “Reten Navel” and “Guarda Costa”. There are several outposts along this stretch of coast in Tonchique, Atacames, El Matel and Esmeraldas.

Here are some contact numbers if you have a way to dial them listed in order of priority:

Commander of Coast Guard: 04-248-3533, 04-248-0176, 04-248-0812, 04-250-1713

They also have strong relay stations that monitor VHF16.

5.1.1 *Esmeraldas*

(from Sarana) In 2008, the new requirements for using an agent to clear in anywhere in Ecuador has resulted in a few boats getting overcharged by commercial ship agents to clear their paperwork. Cruising boats stopping here for a night's rest and/or to refuel have had various experiences.

In some cases the port captain did not require full clearance to just receive fuel in a 24 hour period.

However be aware that there can be quite high port fees (\$250 and up) if the port captain requires you to check in and use a commercial agent.

Stella Maris Yacht Club

NOTE: Vessels visiting Esmeraldas in 2006 reported this marina does not yet exist.

Breakwater: 00° 51.6'N 079° 55.4'W

Still under construction at this writing (date unknown, but before 2008) but may provide a safe harbor or rest stop north of Punta Galera. This is a new development associated with a resort. The port of Esmeraldas itself is NOT considered a safe harbor, for security reasons. Breakwater is under a development of white apartment buildings. Entrance, especially at low tide, reported “iffy”, but can anchor off and dinghy ashore for diesel by jug and taxi.

Email for further info: fmestanza@mardisresearch.com

Note from Chica Bonita: We made landfall from Panama into the northern port of Esmeraldas. we were guided to anchor in the middle of a small-crowded basin, around the coast guard, port authority, and commercial fishing fleet. The Port Captain came by eventually and was very nice and friendly. We said we ere leaving off the next day again, so he did not bother with clearing us in. he did not want to be bothered with it. He took a copy of our zarpe from Panama though. We did not leave boat, we just caught up on sleep.

5.1.2 *Sua*

(from Chica Bonita) South west down the coast from Esmeraldas about 16 miles is a town called Sua (NOTE: this town is northeast of Punta Galera). We anchored here. There is a point and headland that gives protection from seas. It's totally calm and no roll. We dropped in 10 feet low tide. Sua is a beach town with lots of Ecuadorians here for the weekend. The beach and water is full of people having fun. Music plays out from the beach huts. we took our row dink ashore and was met by a local hotel proprietor who welcomed us and helped acquaint us with the town. There are many beachside restaurants with excellent seafood and bars with batidos and pina coladas.

We walked the beach a couple miles to Atacames. Same beach tourist scene but bigger. there is a section of the town inland where we bought bread, produce from Mercado, did laundry, got money from bank etc. we took the 10 minute bus ride back to Sua for a quarter.

It's a beautiful place with wonderful folks. Come Sunday afternoon the crowds are back home in Quito and it's a lazy beach town again.

(from Sarana 2008) There is a navy station nearby and sometimes they want to know what you are doing and have requested that you either check-in or clear out. Their interest is as random as their enforcement. Galera is a little more out of the way from the officials, but there is little on shore.

5.1.3 *Punta Galera*

(from Sarana) Anchor: 0° 49.457'N and 80° 02.776'W

A very nice and calm anchorage away from the traffic of Esmeraldas. This little fishing village doesn't have much to offer other than the protection of the cove and some friendly fishermen. Some swell does wrap around the point, however the wind is blocked. Give the point plenty of room upon approach.

5.1.4 *Pedernales*

(from Sarana 2008) Approach: 00°05.567'N and 080°08.470'W; anchor: 00°03.041'N and 080.04.742'W

This anchorage about 60 miles from Bahía de Caráquez is very shallow. We anchored in 13' off the point which is next to a rough fishing village about 1 mile south of the city of Pedernales. There is a port captain and a naval base in Pedernales. The anchorage is unprotected and rolly on top of being the home of violent and dangerous thugs.

We don't recommend that anyone go there as SARANA was attacked in 2008 by 5 armed men who snuck aboard the boat in the dark. After only 6 hours of being anchored around midnight, no moon, and very rough seas, they managed to row up with the engine off and two armed men snuck on board before their panga struck our side and woke us up, but it was too late. Fortunately, Nakia, a buddy boat scared them off before they hurt anyone or took many items.

There was no response from the Naval base when hailed over the radio for help.

When we contacted them later, however, the Navy was very thorough on their follow up to the crime including taking the serial numbers of the stolen GPS, waypoints, descriptions, drawings, testing our communication gear and their relay stations. Hopefully they will remain more alert.

5.1.5 Punta Ballena/Jama

(from Creola) Anchor at: S 00° 10.7 / W 080° 18.7 in about 10' at low tide, mud bottom.

(from Sarana 2008) Approach: 00°08.725' S and 080°20.492'W

Anchor: 00°10.642'S and 080°18.459'W

This point is about 40 miles from Bahía de Caráquez. There is a port captain in the town here called El Matal just up the beach by the large antennas. He might call you on the radio or stop by to check your papers. It is hit or miss if he will request you move on depending on the status of your Zarpe. The beach at El Matal is very nice and a popular tourist destination. A truck type bus runs 3 miles into the town of Jama almost every 40 minutes \$0.25, but the town doesn't offer much. The highlight of the area is the beach at El Matal and they enjoy having tourists visit their town. As you enter the bay the swell will die down. The depth is very shallow going from 33' outside the point to 10'-12' in posts. Our anchor waypoint is in 12' and is further inside then Creola's. When the southerly winds die (often at night) you might consider a flopper stopper or a stern anchor if the swell outside is big.

5.1.6 Cabo Pasado

Anchor at: 00° 21.7'S 080° 28.5'W

Can be somewhat roly. Used as an overnight before entering Bahía de Caráquez on an early high tide, or as a day trip from Bahía for those looking for clear water for snorkeling or bottom cleaning.

(from Sarana 2008) This anchorage is about 20 miles from the entrance to Bahía de Caráquez. If you are departing from here to Bahía, make sure you arrive at least 2 hours before high tide and don't forget the wind and current will probably be against you for those 20 miles. There is a nice point break here if you like to surf. Putting out a stern anchor can help stop the rolling. If you're hardcore there are some surf beach breaks that are about 5 miles NE of the anchor spot and there is rumoured to be a good little point break there as well....

5.2 Bahía to Salinas / La Libertad

5.2.1 Manta

Anchorage (from IWA)

Manta: S 00 56.301 W 080 42.986 We came in next to the breakwater and weaved our way in front of the big ships to avoid the wreck. The wreck does have a marker on it. It is quieter inside here and not so smelly from the generators. We have only used this place for one night.

Approach Waypoint: 00° 55.769 S 080° 43.156W (end of seawall)

Anchorage Waypoint: 00° 56.052 S, 080° 43.036 W

Alternate Anchorage Waypoint: 00° 56.10 S 080° 42.72W

Manta is a big city and the site of one of the largest tuna canneries in the world. It is the largest tuna fishing port in the Pacific and boasts an enormous fishing fleet. Since the small boat harbour has been filled in and there is major construction going on at the shore, the outer harbour is packed with 1) HUGE fish boats (some over 200 feet), 2) Regular sized deep sea fish boats, to which 3) Hundreds of pangas were rafted up. The U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force also have a presence here. Anchor among the fishing fleet. You may be asked to move by the harbor patrol if you appear to be anchored in an area where more boats are expected. The anchorage waypoint above was closer to the wall, among the boats. It is quite shallow - some spots about 13 or 14 feet - and very calm - so boats don't have a lot of scope out. Go in close by the end of the breakwater and you will miss all the wrecks that scatter the bay.

For services in Manta, see the Bahía services section

5.2.2 San Mateo

S 00 57.267 W 080 48.367

From Iwa: we came around the corner [from Manta] and anchored off this little town called San Mateo. S 00 57.267 W 080 48.367 we are anchored in about 18 ft. We seem to be riding very comfortable. When we look for a new spot to anchor along this South coast we look where the shrimpers and fishing boats are anchored and know that it will be a good spot and have not been wrong yet.

5.2.3 Punta Jome

S 00 58.645 W 080 50.751

From Iwa: ...we anchored just around the corner from Punta Jome about 1.36 miles away at S 00 58.645 W 080 50.751.

5.2.4 Isla de la Plata

Anchorage: 01°16.05'S 081° 03.70'W

Probably will require an overnight from Bahía because of adverse wind and current and the requirement to leave the bay only at high tide, but an easy day hop from Manta. It is a straightforward approach to anchorage off the beach, just east of Drake's Bay. Drake's Bay is conspicuous as you get close to the island as the ranger station is right in the middle; there is a narrow shelf for anchoring depth. If the tide is high, look to make sure you are between the two rock outcrops at the shoreline. There were a lot of day boats moored there so we went over to where the fishermen were. We anchored just inshore of the last mooring can, in about 17' at low tide, 22 when we got in. We stayed beam to the island all day as the wind and current shear that way. It was flat calm even though there were 10-15 kn winds and 2-3' seas in the crossing. A very comfy night.

Update from Nemesis Feb 2009: \$25 per night for a mooring, you cannot anchor. The park fee was \$20 pp per entry... good for however long you stay (day or week or whatever). \$40 for a Spanish-language guided walk at 7am or 3:30 in the afternoon. You are not supposed to walk on your own, and this is enforced. The rangers were right there as we came in, and they said there was no getting around it the fees. They saw a pod of several hundred dolphins as they entered and left the anchorage. See more info and comments on their sail blog: <http://sailblogs.com/member/nemesis/?xjMsgID=81428>

Background: The island is part of the Parque Nacional Machalilla, known as “the poor man's Galapagos,” where blue-footed boobies and frigates, circle and swirl feeding on schools of fish around the rocks. The island is steep-to, with exposed rocky protrusions covered in guano like a dusting of snow. The sea is settled and the water appears fairly clear. The temperatures however are not equatorial. Clearly we are under the influence of the cold Humboldt current that comes up from Peru. The water temperature is a brisk 67 degrees, and the air temperature about the same! You will encounter sport fisherman, tour boats, snorkelers & divers.

The Park Ranger is busy in the mornings with the day boats that come in, and he said for us to come ashore as soon as they leave - about 3:30 - and he will walk us around. This Ranger, Jorge, is alone on the island, so he welcomes the chance to talk to someone - all in Spanish, though, he speaks little English.

Regulations: (From Moira in 2006): The regulations governing yachts who wish to visit Isla de la Plata have been the subject of some conflicting reports. We spent a couple of nights there and these are the regulations as we understand them, subject to change as always.

(1) You must purchase tickets for entry to the park at park headquarters in Puerto Lopez (across the street from the mercado) _before_ you go to the island. The rangers/caretakers are within their rights to refuse you entry to the park, including the anchorage, if you arrive without them. Granted, they may not exercise those rights, but why gamble on whether you'll catch them on a bad day?

(2) The ticket price per person depends on the season, and whether you ask for entry to the mainland part of the park as well. Our off-season, island-only tickets were \$15/person. Adding the mainland park adds \$5, and I believe high-season tickets go up another \$5. Note that these prices are per entry, not per day. We stayed 3 days, 2 nights for the single entry price.

(3) At the time we visited there was one mooring ball, which we used. There were a number of fishermen's floats (bleach bottles) in one corner of the cove. The rest of the cove within the 30-45' depth is available for anchoring. The rangers told us that there is no prohibition against anchoring. If you choose to use the mooring float, we found that the trick was to hang it on very short scope (taut) from the end of our bowsprit. If you give it room to roam, it will bang the side of your hull as wind and current swirl in the anchorage.

(4) If you go ashore and wish to take either of the trails, you will be required to hire a guide (\$25/group of any size). The two trails are the Machete Point trail (3 hours, easier) and the Esclarea Point trail (4 hours, more strenuous). There is a lot of stair-climbing on either route, including 160 stairs up to the point where the two trails diverge. Our guide spoke only Spanish, but at a speed and with a vocabulary

that I could keep up with. We found our guide's commentary helpful and informative, but if you have no Spanish, you'll profit less. Part of their job is to prevent tourists from molesting the piqueros (boobies) that have nested in the middle of the trails.

If you have seen Isla Isabela in Mexico, this is a very similar experience, though the fauna is somewhat different, and the geology is less frankly volcanic. We saw blue-footed and masked boobies, one albatross chick (seemingly the size of an easy chair), turtles, large unidentified tropical fish, chivas (the Ecuadorean Army comes over from time to time to get target practice and harvest some meat), one snake, some small lizards, and a number of wildflowers on the Machete Point trail. Visitors who take the Escalara Point trail may see tropicbirds and red-footed boobies in addition to some of the others.

5.2.5 Puerto Cayo

S 01° 21.666/ W 080°44.847

5.2.6 El Islote

S 01° 22.495 / W 080°45.649

Iwa comments: It is a beautiful little spot. S 01 22 W 080 45 we tucked in east of the islote to get more protection from the prevailing swell. Worth a stop on the way to Manta it breaks up the mileage to Manta from Isla Salango.

5.2.7 Los Frailes/Machalilla

Approach Waypoint : 01° 29.13'S 080° 48.5'W

Anchorage: 01° 29.62'S 080° 47.74'W

From IWA: S 01 28.856 W 080 46.700

Los Frailes proved to be a big open bay with a long sandy beach with dramatic rocky cliffs at each end. Parque Machalilla protects the last bit of virgin tropical dry forest remaining on Ecuador's coast and the long caramel beach appears to be a popular vacation spot.

Approach perpendicular to beach, avoiding the SW side where a sand bar nearly breaks at low tide. The water is much warmer here; hikes into park, although there may be a \$20 entry fee.

From IWA: This was also a great place to anchor. There is a nice town and a beautiful beach. The water is very clean and clear. Don't go too close to the beach as there is a shelf and shallows very fast. We anchored in 19 feet. Sandy bottom. We took the dinghy to shore and the fishermen helped us bring the dinghy ashore. Everyone is so friendly. There are little *tiendas* that have the basics. A *panaderia* with nice rolls. The fishermen bring their catch at first light to sell and take to market on the beach. I am sure you can buy some from them. We did not buy fish but managed to score some nice big prawns from a fellow that came by the restaurant we had drinks at for a good price. This is a great place to stay for a while. We stayed for 2 days. Not long enough. There is a Port Captain here. He came out in his panga

and visited Icarian but not us. He just wanted to check their papers and asked them if we were with them and asked if we were coming ashore. He gave them a nice fish for dinner. He was very friendly.

5.2.8 Puerto Lopez

(from Libre) - S 01°33.468 / W 080°48.970

(From Willow) - 01° 33.5' / 80° 49.1'

Dropped the hook in 40' again outside the fleet of smaller vessels. Did not really look around for a better spot to anchor as all seemed good bottom. Again, super friendly people. When I got to the beach a bunch of kids came up to say hello. They did not ask for anything as was the norm up in Mexico, just wanted to sit in our little boat and laugh. I asked them to keep my boat safe and a good thing to. As I was headed back to the skiff after some food and shopping I saw my crew bailing the boat out. I guess I did not pull it far enough up the beach and a bigger wave crashed over the stern and took it off the beach. They hauled it back up and were just finishing cleaning out the sand and water when I showed up. They were all telling me the story and laughing. I did give them all a tip at that point and they were psyched. Now I have my own posse of 6-10 year olds when I hit the beach. That works out fine with me, as my Spanish speaking skills are probably that of a 4 year old.

I know our dingy will be safe from now on. Lots of restaurants and little stores.

5.2.9 La Playita

(from Willow) 01° 38.8'S / 80° 50.3'W

A fantastic bay just around the point from Salango. No name for it on the chart but enclosed by Punta Mala to the south and Punta Los Piqueros to the north. We tried anchoring closer to the Punta Mala side, but it was all smooth rock and boulders so had to move around. The position above is well off shore in 35' and we had all sand. I swam around and towards the beach to see what there was to see. Was good depth way inshore, but lots of rocks on the bottom. Would be a good idea to swim around and find a sandy patch to set the hook. Punta Mala is supposedly a good point break, but the conditions are fickle and need to be just right. I was tempted to paddle into the waves breaking there, but on closer inspection realized it was shallow rocks where the wave looked good. Must need a bigger swell to break further out. Nice beach, dramatic geology. Apparently the last nesting beach for sea turtles in Ecuador.

5.2.10 Salango

(from Libre) S 01°35.459 / W 080°50.898; (from Willow) 01°35.4'S / 80°50.6'W

Anchored in 25' just outside of fishing fleet to the north. Would probably be better protection in big swell to the south, but a bit crowded with big shrimpers and the like. Very peaceful spot with an awesome long beach, very small town. Beach landing is just that, a beach landing. There was no spot better than another, just depended on the swell and how badly you wanted to get ashore. I watched the locals come and go for a while before heading in, had no problems. Had a great meal at Restautante

Pelicano. The owner, Ivo, we met out at Isla Salango while he was running a dive trip. Very friendly fellow and good food, but probably not the cheapest in town. There is a cool little museum on the north end of town focusing on the history of the people in the area. It is one of the oldest settlements on the coast, super friendly people. My Spanish is improving out of necessity. Virtually no one speaks any English at all.

5.2.11 Isla Salango

Good holding in sand. Lots of pelicans & frigates. Good visibility. Village on mainland smells of fish.

From IWA in July 2006: Isla Salango: S 01 35.560 W 080 51.705 This was our favorite spot! We stayed 5 days here. There is a lovely small beach. The water was nice and clear. We had a panga come along side and sold us a nice size bass. This is a very comfortable place to anchor.

From Willow: Isla Salango - 01° 35.6'S / 80° 51.6'W

Fantastic spot on the north side of the island. Anchored in 25' although there is coral all around the spot. The bottom slopes quickly down away from the beach, so we had to get fairly close to the beach to find good depth. Centered on the white sand beach seemed to be a good spot with more sand than coral. Very cool place. Steep trail to top of island. Bonnie headed up to look at the thousands of birds making the place home. Several tourist boats with divers came out, all were very friendly.

5.2.12 Valdivia

Anchorage: S 01 57.980 W 080 44.63 This was a lovely place. There is a nice looking town with a nice looking beach. We only stayed one night because it was a bit too too rolly for us.

5.2.13 Ayangue

Willow: 01° 58.9' S / 80° 45.3' W

Soggy Paws: 01°59.01' S / 80°45.25' W

Ayangue is a small beach town about 15 miles north of Puerto Lucia. The beach was crowded with weekend sun seekers and the bay is filled with small boats on mooring or anchored. We anchored outside of the fleet and close to the north side of the entrance in about 16ft of water. Bottom was sand and the anchor stuck hard. Should have dropped a stern hook to keep us pointing into the swell entering the bay, but it was not all that bad really. Would probably not be a great spot if a really big swell was running.

(from Soggy Paws June 2009) 01°59.01' S / 80°45.25' W The beach was deserted in the middle of the week. We anchored near the south side of the entrance in about 14 ft of water, off the big wash. We could see some rocks as we scanned around with the fishfinder, but there are lots of sandy spots. The wind is blowing about 10-12 knots out of 240, so not much real protection here. 2-3 ft swell on our nose, but with the wind holding us into it, not too bad.

5.2.14 Montanita

(from Willow): 01° 49.3'S 80° 45.5W

Dramatic headland and a big party town for travelers. Also a well known surf destination in Ecuador, and there were waves.

Anchored to the south of Punta Montanita in about 30' of water. Bottom seemed like sand and good holding, but that was all the spot has going for it as an anchorage. In order to get into water shallow enough to anchor we had to be rather close to the beach break, and it was big. I did not really sleep at all that night as I listened to the wave thundering just a hundred yards away. Of course, if you are looking for waves to ride, that is the price. In the morning I paddled over to the point break to have a better look at the surf. It is a beautiful wave as far as waves go, but getting into the big and powerful realm in relation to my level of experiences. But I went anyway. I got creamed a few times, but also got some good rides. The bigger sets were downright unnerving, but managed to get out of their way before taking them on the head. Soon the local crew of surfers came out and I soon paddled back to Willow. Those guys probably ride that wave everyday and they were all over it. We got out of there to look for a calmer spot to play.

5.3 Salinas/La Libertad

5.3.1 Entry Procedures

Approach Waypoint: Buoy at 02° 12.0'S 080° 55.0'W

Anchorage (from Libre): S 02°09.284 ' / W 080°52.205' (Note from Soggy Paws, this wpt is abt 2 miles offshore in 15 mtrs of water! This is an old 'Sailing Directions' big ship anchorage. The only place that we have seen yachts at anchor is right off the beach in Salinas, off the Salinas Yacht Club..a couple of miles south of PLYC). However, we have heard that anchoring is restricted by the Port Captain, so boats wishing to anchor should call the Port Captain.

Puerto Lucia Yacht Club (PLYC) Marina breakwater: 02°12.966'S, 080°55.319'W

There is a flashing white lighthouse on the tip of the breakwater, and red and green channel markers. Behind the marina, there are three tall buildings, one with a distinct pyramid-shape top. There are shoals close inshore to the east and west of the marina entrance, so approach due south from the waypoint entrance. There is no bar to cross.

Communications: Contact the Port Captain on Channel 16, day or night, as you approach Salinas/La Libertad. Contact the PLYC on channel 19A (hours 8 am - 6 pm, daily).

Check-in: Puerto Lucia is an approved host for foreign yachts and will assist with check in. Costs to Port Captain, Customs and Immigration are borne by cruiser. Procedures have been changing continuously so email ahead to PLYC (see below) with your questions.

5.3.2 **Puerto Lucia Yacht Club:**

Phone 593-4-278-3190 Fax x402 marina @ puertolucia.com.ec

Manager, Galo Ortiz: manager@puertolucia.com.ec .

La Libertad, Guayas, Ecuador

VHF Channel 19

Sept 2008: Rates for a 40 feet LOA monohull sailboat

(**editor note:** med moor-use your own dinghy-or on the hard) are:

- 1st to 3rd month: \$479.00 per month
- 4th: \$459.00 per month (5% discount)
- 5th: \$439.00 per month and following months (10% discount)
- Travelift \$370.00 for service up and down. (**editor note:** does not include pressure wash, but can contract that from George Stewart for around \$85)
- Add 12% sales tax to all rates

(**editor note:** water and electricity are charged by usage)

- For use of the club facilities, hotel, restaurants, swimming pool, Wi-Fi, front desk concierge services, laundry at reduced rate of \$0.40 per pound (dry and folded), trash removal, there is a fee of \$5.00/day per boat, which is not applicable if you are guest in our hotel or NOT living aboard on the marina.

Rates vary depending on LOA, and are subject to change and availability.

Dogs are not welcome but cats are, and the marina guys will go on your boat to feed/water/change litter daily for \$5 per week. There are swimming beaches either side of the marina - one is private to the marina.

Marina work: Canadian George Stewart operates independently of the marina. He is very experienced with hull work, fiberglass, painting, and rigging. He can provide good workers, skilled rate: \$60 per day - varnishing, bottom paint, even Awlgrip painting for hull and/or decks. His work is excellent but can be a little pricey, so, like all boatyard work, make sure you get a good firm estimate for labor AND materials, before getting started. George can get HEMPEL bottom paint and Awlgrip paint for you, but it's cheaper to take a taxi out to the Hempel store in La Libertad, and have them deliver it. George also knows who does good welding/machining in town, and where to get various parts. He can get things shipped in from the States, but currently Customs is charging about an 80% duty and does not normally recognize 'Yacht in Transit' status.

Salinas Yacht Club does not welcome cruisers. However, it is reported that you can anchor off this yacht club in protected waters for free.

General Information: There is a US-style mall 1/2 mile from PLYC, with a big supermarket, ferretería, internet, cinema, food court and lots of shoe stores. Prices are higher than in the town of La Libertad,

which is more working-class, and where prices are about the same as Bahía. Salinas is a ritzy resort area, so prices are according, but there are nicer restaurants. The land is very flat - good for bicycles - and dusty.

There are local buses (\$.20), colectivos (\$.30), taxis (\$1-\$3), and long-distances buses to Guayaquil (\$3.40) and Quito (\$8). There is a good mercado in La Libertad. Climate is good, generally dry, not much wind, good for getting boat work done. Mosquitoes are around at dusk/dawn. There are good almuerzo and merienda restaurants within walking distance. People are friendly. The hotel marina will do your laundry, but it is expensive. In La Libertad, there is a lavandería which charges \$3 per load, wash and dry, same day, about 2 miles away (\$1 cab ride.) There are two good laundries in Salinas, \$3.60 per load, \$3 cab ride.

Note: There is a separate document called **La Libertad, Cruiser's Port Guide** that has LOTS of information about the PLYC, Salinas, and La Libertad services, and a map. The latest version is available here: <http://svsoggypaws.com/files/>

Ask at the marina for a hard copy.

5.3.3 Fuel

As of August 2009, Puerto Lucia Yacht Club has been licensed to sell diesel and gasoline at their fuel dock to international tourist sailboats and yachts. Diesel fuel costs US \$2.00/US gallon including sales tax; gasoline costs US \$2.25/US gallon including sales tax. These prices above are subject to change.

5.3.4 Other Boat Services Nearby

Note: There is a separate document called **La Libertad, Cruiser's Port Guide** that has LOTS of information about the PLYC, Salinas, and La Libertad services. The latest version is available here: <http://svsoggypaws.com/files/>

5.4 Salinas to Peruvian Border

5.4.1 Isla Santa Clara

Approach Waypoint: 03° 08.756'S; 080° 25.475'W

Waypoint would bring you within sight of islands from the Northeast. Commodore Palau (Puerto Lucia YC) suggested these islands in the Golfo de Guayaquil as another possible cruising destination. On the chart they appear as an arch of six islands from NE to SW with a seventh island to the N.

6 GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

Note: References to info from boats without specific dates are likely to be 4-5 years old (i.e., Music and She Wolf). Where we have gotten newer information, we have tried to date the new information and removed the older references. But with no newer information, we have not removed what might be useful but somewhat obsolete information.

Note that prices have risen sharply, so unless we note as 2009 or 2010 prices, don't expect to find them anywhere near what they are reported here.

6.1 General Information:

6.1.1 Navigation

MUSIC had his GPS set to WGS 84, which put him about ¼ mile South on all the electronic charts. He had a temporary anomaly with Fluxgate compass between the islands. His autopilot started to turn the boat 180°. After some investigation and power cycling all of his instruments, he was back on course. His fluxgate compass was knocked 180° off for some strange reason. Four other boats have reported similar occurrences with in a week of his experience. SHE WOLF, on the other hand, had no such problem several months later.

2009: Heard no reports from boats transiting the area in 2009 of such anomalies.

2010: Using the latest (2009) version of CM93 charts and Maxsea v10.3.2.1, there is an offset of about ¼ mile. Do not blindly go into a port, on GPS, without having waypoints from another boat (and, of course, still use normal caution even then).

6.1.2 Taking Tours

There are many so-called tour guides that will take you on any tour you want to go on. Some are licensed and do a better job than others. If you have even a little Spanish and have studied the cultural and natural history of the islands, you may get away most cheaply with a taxi driver who will tour you in Spanish. English speaking guides are more expensive. Shop around and get the best deal that you can, considering your needs and desires. Some guides monitor channel 16 and 14.

6.1.3 Provisioning

All towns have small tiendas where you can get most provisions, although it is more expensive than Ecuador and hit and miss, depending on when the supply boat was last there.

Count on prices being 2 to 3 times more than mainland Ecuador, especially in Puerto Ayora. Santa Cruz had a large Gringo type market with a good selection of US provisions and a good wine and liquor selection.

There is a very good local market just north of town in Puerto Ayora.

Several stores on all islands will sell the local Pilsener beer, if you have bottles to return. MUSIC was able to buy a case of 12 in Isabela but had to pay the deposit for the empties (total of \$20) and were unable to get the deposit refunded.

There is one small tienda in Isabela that gets fresh fruits and veggies flown in once every two weeks, and will take your order for something special if you are there at the right time (order by Friday for a Monday or Tuesday delivery). Also on Isabela a great panadería which is only open after 4pm. There are no stores on Baltra, except for a few tourist-type stalls at the airport.

6.1.4 Fuel

San Cristobal, Santa Cruz and Isabela have gas stations, where you can get gasoline and diesel. Diesel costs for international visitors (most cruisers) are now up in the \$3-4 range. (2009) Carina was able to LEGALLY buy fuel in San Cristobal for \$2.05/gallon by getting an appropriate permit from the Port Captain. (see their note under San Cristobal for details).

One boat was able to get 20 gallons of diesel - in jerry jugs - at Isla Baltra, through the port captain.

At all the above ports, there are folks who will deliver fuel to your boat, either in your own jerry jugs or in bulk containers to be siphoned into your tank, at a price.

6.1.4.1 Diesel Fuel in San Cristobal

From s/v Whoosh, April 2010: Bolivar - actually, Bolivar Jr. - constantly is underdelivering the diesel being bought by his customers here. I don't think it's an 'honesty' thing but rather a computational error. There's only one gas station here and I'm betting fuel is sold there in litros and their conversion factor is off a bit. Jack on ANTHEM paid for 45 and got 40; we ordered 58 and got 54, which is what we paid for. A small thing but yet another issue to be aware of. In our case, I showed Bolivar JR. the gauge and explained how we'd only be full if we got the full 58 gals...something ANTHEM didn't know to do.

Followup from s/v Soggy Paws: The advice might be to (a) mark your jugs as to where you want them filled and (b) know how many LITERS that is and (c) do all your transactions in LITERS. BTW we had the same problem with Carlos and filling jugs in Bahia, so you might make it a more general note about having someone else fill you by jugging.

6.1.4.2 Getting Propane in San Cristobal

From s/v Whoosh, April 2010: May differ on Santa Cruz but what we're being told here by Bolivar for San Cristobal is that one can have a North American tank refilled (the standard POL bull-nose female fitting) but they aren't equipped (or perhaps unwilling) to fill European tanks. Euro tanks are not standardized (most countries or regions have their own valves) and then there is in addition the ubiquitous Gaz cylinder (French but widely distributed in grocery stores, hardware stores etc. around Europe), so lots of 'form factors' to adapt to. So I guess this isn't surprising news.

Followup from s/v Soggy Paws: There is no place for any kind of top-up in Isabela. We ended up buying a propane fitting from the local hardware store for about \$15, “renting” a tank from the propane place, with the help of the local tienda, and then using that big tank (15 or 20 kilo) to gravity feed the fills and top-ups for several boats. We all split the cost and it worked out pretty well for all of us. To do this you need a spare pigtail for your end of the tank system.

Be aware that the gas stations MAY be out of fuel if you try to fill up right before the next tanker is due to arrive. There is also a fuel barge (which services tour boats) that can deliver large quantities.

6.1.5 Boat Parts, Repairs, and Shipping Stuff In

There is a fisherman's store in San Cristobal. Sorry we didn't go inside.

There are several well-stocked stores in Santa Cruz: Bodega Blanca is as close to a West Marine/Ace Hardware as we have seen in a year, and Electronautica has a pretty good complement of more electrical/electronic parts. There is also a hardware/auto parts/electrical store that also has a machine shop with a welder. (see Santa Cruz section for details)

There is quite a well-stocked hardware store on Isabela, too. (see Isabela section)

Note that it is VERY DIFFICULT to ship stuff into Ecuador. Though there is both a FedEx and DHL office on Santa Cruz, and UPS and FedEx will quote 2-5 day delivery to Ecuador, this only gets your parts to Guayaquil. There, they sit in Customs for 2-3 weeks, where they may be assessed an up to 80% duty. Ecuador does not recognize ‘yacht in transit’ status.

There seems to be NO WAY around the 2-3 week wait...Visions of Johanna asked the Port Captain to help expedite a critical part—because they would have to overstay their cruising permit waiting for it to arrive—and the Port Captain says they are subject to the same issue themselves. However, bringing stuff in to Ecuador in suitcases is usually painless and duty free.

A good alternative is to try to procure what you need within Ecuador. Air Freight from Quito or Guayaquil via the daily flights to the Galapagos from the mainland, is quick and inexpensive. The local repair centers can probably help you find the parts you need from mainland Ecuador.

6.1.6 Banking

San Cristobal and Santa Cruz have banks with ATMs, but you may need to go inside with a copy of your passport and ATM card, depending upon which type it is (go early to do this, as banks get very crowded and you might wait hours in line late in the day on a Monday, for example). Others were able to use Master Card/Debit Card at the ATM in Ayora (\$300 limit in this case.) s/v MUSIC did have cash wired via “Money Gram” for a 8% fee on the sending side. There is a Money Gram office on Isla Isabela, but no bank.

Take lots of cash – most places either don't take credit cards or add a hefty surcharge.

6.1.7 *Souvenir shopping*

About twice as expensive as on the mainland:

Isla San Cristobal: Many shops along the malecon where you can find a large variety of tee shirts and stuff.

Isla Santa Cruz: Many shops, some very high end, along the main road in town and some on the side streets. You can find almost anything you would want here. The Darwin gift shop is within the center itself and part of the proceeds go to the Darwin Research. The gift shop at the entrance to the area leads you to believe that they are the official store. They are not.

Isla Isabela: Very limited shopping, get your souvenirs in Santa Cruz.

Isla Baltra: There are a few vendors selling tee shirts and stuff at the airport.

6.1.8 *Telephones and Galapagos Phone Numbers*

There is cell phone service on San Cristobal and Santa Cruz. People with cell phones with international roaming can call on their own cell phone. The three primary carriers are Movistar, Porta, and Alegro, and it is possible to buy a local sim card if you wish.

In Isabella, Porta worked well from the anchorage, but Movistar does not work.

You can buy phone cards and use the cabins by various providers in all the major ports.

The country code for Ecuador is 593, and the Galapagos have an area code of 05. If dialing internationally, the number format will be 593-5-xxx-xxx. If dialing locally, drop the '593' and add a leading zero, so the number format will be 05-xxx-xxx. All land phone numbers have 6 digits plus the area code. If the number starts with 08 or 09, it is a cell phone.

6.1.9 *Internet & News*

There is supposedly free wifi available in the San Cristobal and Santa Cruz anchorages. This appears to be government-run. The SSID is REDGAL, but you may need a pretty good wifi antenna to pick it up. The service is slow, and it is filtered so that Airmail Telnet, outgoing SMTP mail, and some websites are blocked. Normal webmail like Yahoo and Gmail seem to work fine. The only 'REDGAL' SSID in Isabela doesn't seem to work.

There are many Internet cafes and cabins, and they are about \$2.00/hour, though we had a little trouble in all the towns finding a place to do wifi with our own laptop. In San Cristobal, the Mockingbird Café has good wifi, and in Santa Cruz, the El Penon restaurant (across from Banco Pacifico) also has wifi. In Isabella, we used the EasyNet Internet Café, using a cable connection for \$1.50 an hour.

News via Radio: You can get some world news in English on these frequencies at various times:

NPR/Armed Forces Radio (USA) – 5446.5, 7811.0, 8737.0, 12133.5 USB (Key West FL)

BBC (England) – 5876.0 AM (morning and maybe after dark in the evening)

6.1.10 Airports

There is a pretty good website I found about flying into the Galapagos, here:

<http://www.galapagosonline.com/predeparture/Transportation/Travel.htm>

Bottom line is that flights serving the Galapagos all connect either through Guayaquil or Quito on the mainland. It is usually necessary to spend the night one night in the connecting city before getting the onward flight to the Galapagos.

There are two airports that have flights from the mainland, Baltra and San Cristobal. Baltra is a small island on the north coast of Santa Cruz. There is overland service between Santa Cruz and the Baltra airport. You can either taxi for \$15 or taxi to the bus station, and take a bus. Allow an hour by taxi and 1:30 by bus to get from Santa Cruz to the airport at Baltra.

TAME serves the Baltra airport where the majority of the cruise boats depart from.

Aerogal serves the San Cristobal and Baltra airport.

Tame: <http://www.tame.com.ec/>

Aerogal: <http://www.aerogal.com.ec/>

There is also an airport on Isabella, and a small puddle-jumper airline that can fly you around. The airline is called Emetebe <http://www.emetebe.com.ec> The island-to-island Emetebe flights cost around \$120. Most cruisers instead use the ferry boats for \$30-\$40 each way.

6.1.11 Other Services

There are decent lavanderias in Puerto Ayora and Puerto Moreno that machine wash and dry with same day service. There are machine wash, line dry lavanderías at Puerto Villamil.

There is no sailmaker here (San Cristobal).

6.1.11.1 Electrical work (from Vilisar about San Cristobal)

Tony (an Americanised local) brought Miguel out to the boat to solicit electrical business. We needed a look at our alternator-voltage regulator-battery setup which Miguel did very competently at about \$15 an hour. He also went and fetched the replacement voltage regulator to be installed as part of the deal. We paid him \$100 all found (including \$32 for voltage regulator). He cleaned up all the contacts as well. It is hard to get a price from the outset since they dive right into the engine room and start to work. We dickered a bit at the end but were relieved to have the work done well and paid him what he asked.

6.2 Permits and Entry

Boats must proceed directly to one of the official ports of entry: Baquerizo Moreno (Wreck Bay) or Puerto Ayora (Academy Bay). These are the only ports where boats may clear in

The official cruising permit for the Galapagos islands is called an Autografo. It must be applied for approximately 2 months in advance through one of the Galapagos agents (see 'Agents' below)

The latest information is as of March 2009. Boats stopping at the Galapagos **without** a cruising permit, were being granted up to 20 days, but were restricted to the port of entry and NOT ALLOWED to travel in their boat to other ports. Many cruisers do this, and then take day tours to other islands or travel by local ferry, which is easy and not that expensive.

Boat arriving **with** a cruising permit (Autografo) arranged are given up to 30 days with the possibility of a 30 day extension and may be able visit the following inhabited ports:

- Pto. B. Moreno, Isla San Cristobal (Wreck Bay)
- Pto. Ayora, Isla Santa Cruz (Academy Bay)
- Pto. Villamil, Isla Isabela;
- Pto. Seymour, Isla Baltra; and
- Pto. Ibarra, Isla Floreana.



Note that for those using Bolivar Pesantes as their agent, his 'standard' autografo includes **only** San Cristobal, Santa Cruz, and Isabela. He flat refuses to include Floreana—apparently he has been burned in the past by cruisers not following the rules in Floreana.

Note that Wreck Bay is Puerto Baquerizo, San Cristobal, and Academy Bay is Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz. There are subsections below on each port.

Unless you have an Autografo (cruising permit), your boat is limited to 20 days in the Port you arrive and you can only anchor at this port. Also ports of entry are (for all intents and purposes) limited to Wreck Bay and Academy Bay because in these ports you will find the agents which are ALSO required. An Autografo is arranged in advance only; normally one month ahead of arrival.

Limiting a boat to one port does not of course preclude taking tours to other islands (of which there are dozens). It is the boat which cannot move.

The Capitania's in Ecuador share a common computer database. Boats entering the Galapagos are entered into this database upon arrival and a digital photo is taken. Boats that have tried to stop at Isabela in particular seeking entry with real or imagined problems have been dealt with quickly. Those with real problems have been assisted; and those with fictitious problems have been sent on their way.

6.2.1 To Autografo or Not?

When trying to decide this question in 2009 for a 2010 Galapagos visit, I emailed about 5 cruisers who went through the Galapagos in 2009 and asked them what they thought about the benefits vs the extra expense of getting the Autografo (cruising permit). Here is what they said:

s/v Mainly: In Galapagos we did get an autographo from Bolivar (\$300) and would certainly do it again. Doing the water taxis is nothing like having your boat in an anchorage. The ferry rides are long, over 2 hours, each way, from SanCristobal to Santa Cruz; then another 2 hours, each way, from San Cristobal to Isabela. We had a great time in all of the places, plus from Santa Cruz you can take short trips to uninhabited islands. Don't miss the dive at Gordon's Rock in Santa Cruz. Bolivar was pretty inventive. We had only 8 days left in Ecuador when we got to Galapagos and he magically got us another 90 days at no cost. Also knew boats that went to Floreana, just ask Bolivar if you can stop there. We spent 40 days plus in Galapagos and left for the Marquesas on May 2.

s/v Carina: If we were only going to the Galapagos once in our lifetimes, we would DEFINITELY get an Autografo because Isabela was our favorite stop. (The Galapagos penguins alone were worth the trip!) Without an Autografo it's just about impossible to go there. Yes, you can ferry over or take a trip but those we know who did so (and they did love it) spent \$400+ each for a trip (\$800+ for a couple) and only got to stay one day on each of three more islands. With our Autografo we stayed at Isabela almost three weeks and were never once bored. It's the biggest island and has the greatest diversity of galapagos (tortoises) and of course flightless cormorants (though in the remote areas) - plus penguins. We cannot imagine whisking in and out in a single day. Also, if you try to go to Isabela without an Autografo, they'll ask for a bucketload of money to get you an agent just to check you in. We heard \$250ish but I think Restless has experience with this. The anchorage is good - it's actually behind the Islas Tintoreras (sp?), which is labeled Loberia in the Piere Constant book - not where it's labeled on charts.

We know boats that went to Isabela under false pretenses (one guy faked a wrenched back) and these boats had a short and relatively unpleasant stay. The Port Captains in Ecuador share a common computer database. Boats entering the Galapagos are entered into this database upon arrival and a digital photo is taken. Boats that have tried to stop at Isabela in particular seeking entry with real or imagined problems have been dealt with quickly. Those with real problems have been assisted; and those with fictitious problems have been sent on their way.

For the record, we also loved San Cristobal. The anchorage is good, the town is pleasant and the sites bountiful (even the free ones).

Baltra isn't a draw (it overlooks the airport for Santa Cruz) and Floreana is an open roadstead (you cannot go in your own boat to Post Office Bay with or without an Autografo), so the three ports you mentioned were the only ones most visit anyway.

We only visited Santa Cruz by ferry and we enjoyed the Darwin Center, but didn't get to the other sites because we had only one day. By inter-island ferry the round trip is \$70 each for the day, plus hotels and restaurants were very expensive, so we wouldn't have stayed overnight anyway.

s/v Nemesis: We got our autografo and it was worth every penny and frustration we went through to get it. We ended up spending 3 weeks in the Galapagos and it was one of the highlights - it is an amazing place. We did the three ports and they were all different with lots to see and do in each. If you do decide to go ahead with the autografo just make sure that you give yourself heaps of time - 3 months wouldn't be outrageous - it will save you a lot of cash in the long run by not having to check out internationally from Bahía (Ecuador)

s/v Restless: When we left mainland Ecuador for Chile, with a stop in the Galapagos, in December of 2008, we did NOT get the Autografo. There is always such confusion in Ecuador about what you can get, where you can go, how long you can stay, we just decided to take our chances. Our understanding at the time was that if you stopped on the way to someplace else, you could get approval to stay a couple of weeks, particularly if something needed to be fixed on your boat. On the recommendation of George Stewart, we decided that Puerto Villamil on Isla Isabela was where we wanted to go. Our final destination was Valdivia, Chile, but we got our Zarpe from the Port Captain in Salinas to the Marquesas. We thought the idea of "stopping along the way" was more plausible if we were headed west rather than south and knew Chile wouldn't care what the zarpe said as long as we had one.

When we arrived in Puerto Villamil, we told the Port Captain that we had a few things that needed fixing and that we needed to order a part. All true, but nothing that would have really slowed us down for more than a day or two. The Armada (Ecuadorean Navy) sent one of their guys out to the boat to verify we actually had a problem that needed fixing. They photographed the issues and we had to write a letter requesting the stay and why. They also required us to use an agent, and check in at a cost of \$200. We were told that if we were going to stay and visit the park, that we would also need to pay the \$100 per person park fees, which we did. We also paid about \$150 in port, light, and anchoring fees to the Port Captain when we left.

We completely loved Isabela. The Island is huge with lots to see and do. The village is tiny and has very few tourists which was perfect for us.

In hindsight, we did kick ourselves a bit for not getting the Autografo. It would have been nice to be able to sail to a few other places but from what we've heard, Isabela was the most comfortable anchorage due to the protection of the reef and even it was a bit lumpy. We made great friends with several folks on the island and left our boat everyday while we explored. We actually left it overnight when we went to visit Isla Floreana with some friends via a long panga ride. No worries about safety at this port.

I think the costs we incurred would be similar for any boat visiting and you'd just add the cost of the autografo on top of that. If we had it to do again, we'd get the permit. It is such an amazing place that it really would have been tragic to get there and then not be allowed to stay.

6.2.2 Agents

All boats entering the Galapagos (or anywhere else in Ecuador) are required to use an agent.

There are a number of agents providing services for Autografos and for check-ins. They each charge different fees and the 'satisfaction' reports from cruisers **vary widely**. See notes below under each agent. The 2010 price for an Autografo seems to be around \$300-400, which also includes the agent's fees for checking in, movement within, and departure from the Galapagos.

The cost for the agent just for clearing in and out of the Galapagos, with no Autografo, is somewhere in the range of \$50-\$150. Note that there are other fees associated with clearing in and clearing out, that are not under control of the agent (park fees, port captain fees, immigration, etc). These are all in addition to the agent fee, and vary with the size of the boat. See the Fees section, below.

If you have applied for an Autografo, you will receive your copy of the permit when you check in with the agent and pay his fee, which you do on arrival. *Therefore, the agent you choose for the Autografo may determine your first port of call in the Galapagos.* You CAN arrange with your agent to check in at another port first, but they prefer that you check in at their 'home' port.

Note that if you are leaving from mainland Ecuador, you will need your autografo in hand before you can get your national zarpe. So the agent will normally ask you to pay for it ahead of time, via the 'cuenta corriente' system in Ecuador (deposit money in a branch bank to the agent's account).

See separate section on Check-In Fees, and individual boat reports, that report on fees charged. We have listed email addresses for most of the agents, so if you really want to know what you will be charged, you should email them directly. Some of the fees depend on the size of the boat (in Gross Tons from your Documentation) and some of the fees depend on the number of crew, so be specific about that, and whether you wish to have a cruising permit.

6.2.2.1 Bolivar Pesantes (Naugala) on San Cristobal / Wreck Bay / Puerto B. Moreno

The feedback from all cruisers using Bolivar to get their Autografo and/or for entry into the Galapagos has been good, however, Bolivar only speaks Spanish. If your Spanish is not good, you may want to choose an English-speaking agent.

Bolivar Pesantes, General Manager and his wife is Grace.

Email: naugala@hotmail.com

Fax: 593-5-2520846

Phone: 593-5-252-0958

Bolivar prefers 20 to 30 days notice, but may be able to get the permit more quickly.

In Sep 2009 he quoted \$300 for a 3-port Autografo and check-in PLUS the additional fees that will be required on check-in (see section on check-in fees).

Bolivar requests the following from each boat requesting an autografo:

- Color copy of the photo page of each crew member's passport
- Copy of the vessel documentation or registration
- Date of planned arrival at San Cristobal
- How long you plan to stay

Note that Bolivar can/will only get you an autografo that includes San Cristobal, Santa Cruz, and Isabela ONLY. No amount of pleading or cajoling will allow you to go to Floreana.

If you are just checking in with Bolivar, and not getting an Autografo, the agent fee is much less, but all the other fees will still apply. You will be limited to your port of arrival and 21 days. The standard Autografo time period is 45 days, which is more than enough time to see all the Galapagos.

6.2.2.2 Fernando on San Cristobal

A cruiser passing through in 2009 also reported that a guy named Fernando was doing checkins in San Cristobal, but several later reports (see Noonsite.com) indicates that he was ripping people off.

<http://www.noonsite.com/Members/sue/R2009-08-19-1>

Tel local 2521289 (int'l add +593, if that doesn't work +5935)

6.2.2.3 Ricardo Arenas (Servi Galapagos) – Puerto Ayora – Santa Cruz

Several boats have recommended Ricardo Arenas, Servi Galapagos. Ricardo@arenas.bz, or Yvonne@arenas.bz (Yvonne speaks great English and German too). +(593) 5-252-6186

Mailing address: SERVIGALAPAGOS, Charles Darwin Ave., Pelican Bay, Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz Island, Galapagos, Ecuador. In December 2009, Ricardo's price for a 5 port Autografo was \$400.

Ricardo speaks english satisfactorily, and will exchange emails in english with you. He is sometimes slow to respond – but once noticed he is responsive to your needs.

Though Ricardo is based in Santa Cruz, he has a cooperating agent in San Cristobal, so it is possible to use him and make San Cristobal your first port of call.

6.2.2.4 Peter Schiess (Galapagos Ocean Services) – Puerto Ayora - Santa Cruz

Peter Schiess, Galapagos Ocean Services, Santa Cruz, Puerto Ayora, Galapagos Ecuador

cel. +593 9477 0804, email: peter@gos.ec , web: www.gos.ec

By his website, he caters to the big yachts, but some cruisers have used him too.

This website has some good info, worth visiting just for the heck of it.

6.2.2.5 Antonio (Gala Yachts) – Isla Santa Cruz

We have a favorable report from two boats that checked in using Antonio in Feb 2009. Antonio can be found at Galayachts, go right from the water taxi dock 200 meters, across from the Pango bar.

www.galayachts.com local cell phone 099116066 e-mail antonio@galayachts.com

6.2.2.6 Johnny Romero (Yacht Gala) - Isla Santa Cruz

DO NOT USE JOHNNY ROMERO!! Repeated reports by boats in the last few years (including 2009) have had VERY VERY bad experiences with Johnny Romero. See s/v Zen and s/v Lightfoot's reports under 'Check In Fees' section for first hand accounts.

El Vagabond (2010) used Johnny Romero for their check-in. They wrote ahead and got permission from him to check in to Isabela without an autografo. His fee for this was \$150, as he still needed to handle the agent activities for their check in and check out. (this was for the standard 21-day one-port stay).

6.2.2.7 Doing it Yourself

It is *theoretically* possible to go through the permitting process yourself. However, without follow up, the chance of the permit actually being issued in a timely manner is low. Some boats have had the application letter written and faxed it to the appropriate authority 30-60 days in advance, and when nothing was heard, were able to visit the DIGMER office in Quito and get the permit issued during their stay.

As of 2009, agents are required for all boat transactions everywhere in Ecuador.

6.2.3 Arriving from Ecuador on National Zarpe:

There are two basic entry situations; either arriving from Ecuador on a National (internal) Zarpe, or arriving with an International Zarpe from either Ecuador or another country.

To check out of a port on mainland Ecuador to the Galapagos on a **National Zarpe**, you must have been issued an Autografo.

After receiving fax confirmation that a permit has been issued, the Bahía Port Captain – and presumably the one in Puerto Lucia – will then issue a National Zarpe for the Galapagos. You must still have time on your Ecuadorian visa to do this. When ready to leave the Galapagos, either return to the mainland on a new national zarpe or get an international zarpe in the islands and check out with immigration for another country.

You can get an international zarpe from Port Captains at Pto. Moreno (San Cristobal), Pto. Ayora (Santa Cruz) or Isla Baltra, but immigration offices are only in Pto. Moreno and Pto. Ayora. If checking out of Baltra, you must travel to Pto. Ayora by bus/cab to get immigration clearance.

There are no immigration offices at Isla Isabela or Isla Floreana. However, you CAN get a zarpe from the Isabela Port Captain for onward ports, you just don't clear out of Immigration.

6.2.4 Arriving from Elsewhere on an International Zarpe:

As of 2009, boats who arrive in the Galapagos from outside of Ecuador, without a cruising permit (Autografo) are checked in, their boat must stay in the port of arrival, and given 21 days.

The Bottom Line: Applying for an Autografo permit ensures a “no problema” reception in the islands and a relaxing stay of 30 or more days, with visits to multiple islands on your own boat. Several cruisers in 2009, who DID NOT get the permit, reported that they'd wished they had, once they got there.

6.2.5 Check In Fees:

Fees vary somewhat from port to port. The most expensive port is Santa Cruz. Example, in 2009, the Fumigation line item on a check-in cost \$60 in Santa Cruz and only \$35 in San Cristobal. In Santa Cruz, this costs \$60, and a guy actually comes out to your boat with stuff he injects in various corners and crevices. In San Cristobal in 2010, it cost \$35 and was just paperwork (called Inspection and Quarantine).

Here is a summary of the check-in fees for San Cristobal in 2010:

- The Port Captain fee (largely depends on the size of your boat)
- \$30 for Immigration (NOT required if coming from Ecuador Mainland)
- \$30 for Inspection and Quarantine
- \$100 for each crew member for the National Park Fee

The Port Captain fees in 2010, checking in in San Cristobal, were approximately as follows (costs given are for a 23 GT 44' Medium Displacement boat):

Lights and Buoys: 3.00 x GT	\$69
Access channel: 0.26 x GT	\$6.01

Anchorage: 2.58 x GT	\$59.53
Environmental control	\$6.02
Radio frequency	\$13.45
Reception (National arrival frm Ecuador)	\$12.07
Security	\$.80

Where “GT” means Gross Tons as defined on your Vessel documentation. We paid them in cash to our agent, who then took care of the paperwork with the Port Captain, etc. Every fee we paid was documented by a ‘factura’ (receipt).

So the total fees for 2 people on a 44’ 23GT sailboat, checking in on a national zarpe from mainland Ecuador, was \$398.88, plus agent fees.

If you are coming from mainland Ecuador, your fee structure and requirements will be a little different than those coming from Panama or elsewhere. I believe that if you have already paid the Lights and Bouy fee at another Ecuadorian port, in the current calendar year, and have the receipt, you may be able to avoid paying it again. Also, if you have recently transited the Panama Canal, and paid a Fumigation Fee, and have the paperwork to prove it, you may be able to avoid a ~\$35 ‘Fumigation’ fee.

Note that comparing what Soggy Paws paid in 2010 in San Cristobal (above) vs what Zen paid in 2009 in Santa Cruz (below), there is a significant difference.

Agent fees: For Soggy Paws in 2010, we paid \$300 to Bolivar for our Autografo (cruising permit), which INCLUDED all his agent fees for handling check-in and moving from port-to-port in the Galapagos. (Your agent must file a sail plan with the Port Captain for every movement you make in the Galapagos)

So far, in 2010, we only have one data point on agent fees for a non-autografo check-in, that was \$150 (El Vagabond, checking in to Isabela, no autografo, using Johnny Romero as agent).

Other fees in 2010. If you have an autografo and plan to move around, you will pay a small fee to leave and enter each port.

- Zarpe from San Cristobal to Santa Cruz - \$10
- Reception fee Santa Cruz - \$12.50
- Zarpe from Santa Cruz to Isabela - \$12.50
- Reception fee Isabela - \$4.01
- Zarpe from Isabela to Santa Cruz - \$4.01
- International zarpe from Isabela - ~\$15

Weekend charges: There are extra costs for the checking in/out on a weekend. The reception/zarpe fees are doubled (ie we paid \$25 each way to enter and leave Santa Cruz on a weekend). I do NOT believe that all the other fees are doubled.

It is our understanding that once you have paid the 'anchoring fee' (Fundadero) once in your port of arrival, you should NOT have to pay it again (one boat was charged this fee both clearing in and clearing out). (However, in Feb 2010, the Port Captain's computer system was down and things were very confusing. Bolivar told us that if you stay in one port for awhile, there may be an anchoring fee charged when you leave).

\$100 per Person National Park Fee: This fee is a legitimate fee, is charged by the National Park for visiting the Galapagos for every person coming to the Galapagos. It pays for all the park infrastructure, which makes the Galapagos a really nice place to visit, and preserves the Galapagos for future generations. Some agents do not seem to routinely require cruisers to go to the park office and pay their park fee. However, you SHOULD be paying it, and if you try to LEAVE the Galapagos by air, and the park fee receipt is not in your passport, you will have to pay it then. Once paid, it is good for a year.

\$200 per Day Fees for Cruising in the Park: You will hear this high dollar figure quoted occasionally. This daily fee DOES NOT apply to the average cruiser who is moving from island to island, anchoring in the major ports. It only applies to (typically) larger luxury yachts who want to actually cruise the park areas outside the major ports.

6.2.5.1 s/v Migration Report – San Cristobal - 2008

Here's the latest info we have on obtaining an Autografo in the Galapagos (permit to move among the 5 ports).

Yesterday Bolivar came aboard our boat and he had our Autografo in hand. We were quite surprised. We had been in contact with Grace Romero (Nauguala Agency) via email, but we thought the process was stalled. We had contacted many agents in late 2007 and sometimes received a response and sometimes did not. We did get a quote from Grace for \$200 and we sent our documentation via email to her. However, we did not confirm that we wanted to have her get an autografo for us until she confirmed that there were no additional fees above the \$200 (to their agency) and that we could indeed go to all 5 ports. We did not receive confirmation. However, when we arrived in San Cristobal, Galapagos, we had an email waiting saying that she needed our boat documentation for 2008 since she had our documentation that expired in December 2007. (That was because we originally sent our documents to her in 2007!). Since we were now in the Galapagos we thought it was too late for everything and didn't even respond.

Then, yesterday, Grace's husband Bolivar came aboard with our Autografo. We were shocked. I do have to say he was VERY professional. He had a friend with him who spoke perfect English and he explained everything. The cost was \$200 which is what we were quoted originally. He went with us to the Port Captain to take make sure everything was OK. Unfortunately it was late and the Captain wasn't there so we will go back today. He gave us his card and said if we have ANY problems in ANY port in the Galapagos just call his or Grace's mobile.

The Autografo allows us to stay in the Galapagos for 60 days. So, it IS possible to obtain an Autografo. Grace will need the following via email at naugala@hotmail.com:

- Boat Documentation

- Crew List
- Copies of Passports of all onboard
- Approximate arrival date (and departure if you know it)

That's what we know now. We do not know how much the fees are in each port.

We do know that you need a zarpe from each port captain and that the fees for the zarpe are not expensive (a megayacht paid \$6 for their zarpe here in San Cristobal). There are probably additional fees. We will find out when we move to another island.

NOTE: Do NOT confuse Grace Romero's Agency -- Naugala -- with Johnny Romero and his agency -- Yachtgala. It is especially confusing because Johnny Romero's email often says it is from "Naugala - Galapagos." This is NOT the email to use.

6.2.5.2 s/v Zen Report - Santa Cruz - Feb 2009

We checked in at Academy Bay Santa Cruz. It is busier and more sophisticated than I could have ever imagined. There are 24 hour water taxis, rowdy bars, restaurants, shopping, cobblestone streets and more. Last night the music blasted over the anchorage until 1am. It feels more like Nantucket than a far flung Island in the Pacific. Don't get me wrong, we are not disappointed (well, maybe a little) just surprised. It is still beautiful and we are excitedly enjoying all the wildlife and other wonders of the Galapagos.

Per the logistics: We were happy to have contacted an agent in advance of our arrival. The boats that arrived with no advance prep are being restricted from visiting any other harbors or islands (using their own boats...see more info below) during their time in the Galapagos no matter how much they are willing to pay.

Since we contacted an agent in advance we at least have the option to sail around the islands (however, see second note from Zen below). There are four inhabited ports (all on different Islands) that we are free to roam. The catch, you ask...we had to pay about \$1500 for this privilege (don't freak out until you read the rest of this email). Below is a break down of the fees. The first 4 items are fees everyone pays, no matter if you contacted an agent in advance or not.

The Cruising Permit fees are the additional fees you will pay if you want to roam the islands.

- One time Tourist fee
 - Each Adult \$100
 - Each child 12 or younger \$50
- Base Fumigation \$85
- Agent Fee \$250 (negotiable)
- One time Cruising Permit fees (see notes below on this)
 - per person \$200 (Children over two and adults)
- Passport Inspection \$50 per person

- Guide fee \$150
- Fumigation Add \$115
- Quarantine fee \$115
- Additional Agent fee \$100

With the cruising permit you get to cruise in the national park on your own boat for one day with a guide. Each additional day cruising in the National park costs \$200/person per day and \$150 per day for a guide...YIKES!

Final note: before you freak out on the additional fees for the cruising permit (like we did), keep in mind that if you plan to tour any other islands, other than the one where you are anchored, it can be expensive. We were quoted \$180 per person for a round trip tour to Isabela, one of the most beautiful islands . It includes the round trip ferry ride two nights in a hotel and a a few meals. There may even be additional fees for the tour guides when you get there. When we did the math we found that we were going to save money using the cruising permit option. Thankfully we had sent the agent our info well in advance. Otherwise you don't even have the choice.

----- Further Info from Zen a day or two later -----

I have an update on our information regarding the Galapagos. In my prior email I mentioned/ recommended our agent Johnny Romero. Based on some recent events I must tell you and anyone who is interested DO NOT USE THIS AGENT.

Yesterday I learned that he had completely misrepresented himself and, even worse, me, my family and our presence in the Galapagos to the Galapagos authorities. It is a long story and I do not want to bore you with the details. What's important is that you do not use Johnny Romero and I apologize for recommending him in the first place. We spent the last eight months believing our visit to the Galapagos was securely in the hands of an honest agent. Instead, we spent four days wasting our time working through red tape and we are still restricted to one port and we must leave within 20 days of our arrival.

Our situation has been resolved through direct contact with the Port Captains office. They were very friendly and polite and have promised to work with us to resolve our situation. We considered a couple other agents and have decided to work with Ricardo Arenas info@arenas.bz . He comes highly recommended from other yachts and the representative from the Port Authority. BTW...He speaks fluent English if that is important to any of you.

Another agent you may consider is Antonio Moriano. He was also recommended by other cruisers. I do not have his email but his phone is 099116066.

All the other information I sent in my prior email is still accurate.

6.2.5.3 s/v Geramar Report – San Cristobal – Feb 2009 – With Autografo

What some people don't seem to know that you need a “real” cruising permit (autografo), usually valid for 1 month to 6 weeks, to be allowed to visit the 5 inhabited islands on your own boat. This document

should be requested at least 1 month before getting to the Galapagos and will then be ready when you get here. Otherwise you get the 20 day/stay permit.

We used Bolivar on San Cristobal, who came highly recommended by previous visitors here, and he lives up to his reputation. He speaks little or no English, but understands the basics when put in simple terms in an email. We sent him our scanned copies of the passports and boat papers and that was all he needed, together with a rough outline of your plans and ETA.

Check in was smooth, no trouble, the fumigation issue dealt with i.e. we had had an inspection in panama - upon our arrival in Bocas, Spring 2008 - and not having the document to prove it, was not a real problem, with Bolivar on board at the time.

So if you have had the agricultural inspection and still have the papers--save them, otherwise tell them that you had such an inspection. Bring lots of copies of passports, crew lists, boat papers (immigration, port captain, customs, nat'l park, all of them just love paper - but it works).

Bolivar charged \$ 300 for his services (and is helpful on local issues). Then add \$100 per person for park fees and \$150 for the boat, misc fees and the total was \$650. There will be other minor charges moving around the islands, but a still a good deal compared to the alternatives. So, in our view, if you want to spend time in de Galapagos:

1. Come to San Cristobal: much smoother, cheaper check in than Santa Cruz and a more comfortable anchorage as well; and with the autografo in hand, you may not need to do a minicruise out of Santa Cruz to see the Galapagos on someone else's boat (and that saves you some real money)
2. Use Bolivar (and his wife, Grace) here: naugala@hotmail.com; phone +593-94205158 (local 09205158); there is another guy doing check ins here as well: fernando tel local 2521289 (int'l add +593, if that doesn't work +5935)
3. If you want to see the place, and not be stuck, do a little homework and plan ahead, and get your autografo.

Diesel fuel; the official rate is about \$ 3.50/gallon, which you get with a permit through your agent. People try to get the cheaper fuel for locals, at about \$2 by going directly to the gas station (or getting a local to do it for them). This doesn't work, is illegal, and could cost you dearly. Do the math and buy a few extra jerrycans in panama.

6.2.5.4 s/v Lightfoot Report – Panama to Santa Cruz – Feb 2009 – No Autografo

We checked into Academy Bay Santa Cruz, Galapagos. I tried to check myself in with the port captain but was told I must use an agent. If you want to cruise the 4 inhabited ports you must make arrangements with an agent a month preferably 2 months prior to your arrival and it is not cheap. s/v Deva was there a week before us. They used Johnny Romero as an agent but could not recommend him, instead they recommended Antonio Moreano at Galayachts. We went with Antonio and were verypleased with the experience.

He speaks perfect English, is extremely honest, helpful and a bargain compared to others we have heard of. Some agents will charge \$100.pp for a park fee. I don't know if this is a legit fee but he does not charge it. Other agents charge an \$80. fumigation fee-we were not. The fees he charged were all invoiced and his fee was \$70. He arranged for diesel to be delivered to the boat and told us to pay directly. The price of \$3.15 was the cheapest we heard of from any of the cruisers.

Our fees broke down as follows:

Immigration	\$ 30.00
Navy arrival	\$170.91
Navy lights and buoys (\$3/ton)	\$153.00
Navy departure	\$12.37
<u>Agent</u>	<u>\$70.00</u>
Total:	\$436.28

The Galapagos is by no ways a cheap check in (Jamaica didn't cost us a penny) but we thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Antonio can be found at Galayachts, go right from the water taxi dock 200 meters, across from the Pango bar. www.galayachts.com local cell phone 099116066 e-mail antonio@galayachts.com

6.2.5.5 s/v Lauren Grace – Panama to San Cristobal - March 2009 – No Autografo

We used Bolivar and Graciela as our agent. Glad we did. For our boat and 5 crew, the total price was \$204 USD. That's it. We were given 90 day visas for us (checking in from Panama) but the boat can only stay 20 days. That is the normal procedure. Take a ferry to the other islands for \$30 dollars per person, takes 2 hours to go to Academy Bay (Santa Cruz).

Diesel costs \$3.40 per gallon even though the locals buy it for one dollar 5 cents. It is a requirement that you use your agent to get your diesel and after hearing stories about some boats trying to slip around to get it cheaper it just isn't worth it. The officials know and see what you are doing. I will only need about 30 gals so that makes it an easier decision.

Drinking water is \$0.50 a gallon and comes in 5-gallon jugs that require a deposit of \$5. You get the deposit back as soon as you return the jugs. Again I will be using our agent because I also need a way to get the 18, 5 gal containers to my boat and he can arrange that cheap enough. They do not want us to use dinghies because of the lack of space at the dock, sea lions taking their toll on your dinghy, and it creates jobs for the water taxis.

There are water taxis and they cost \$0.50 per person one way and run from 0700 to 1900 hrs each day. The real tourist season here for yachts passing through is Feb-Mar so there are lots of water taxis and they are always around.

A case of beer is \$24, so stock up before you leave the mainland. There is a good size fruit and vegetable market in the town but haven't bought anything yet so cannot advise prices.

Today we arranged through our agent (Bolivar) for a taxi to take us to the Galaparea where we saw the huge Galapagos tortoises up close, then on to a big freshwater pond in the basin of an old volcano to watch several species of birds, had a packed lunch on a remote pristine beach while beautiful Finches and Yellow Warblers hopped about inches away. They are not afraid to come very close. Also there were a few lazy sea lions on the beach sunning and warming themselves.

Prices are not much higher than the mainland. Diesel and beer are the most drastic. There is a very modern and fast internet for \$1.80 per hour.

I can recommend San Cristobal. The anchorage has good holding but do not come in at night. Some boats at anchor are not lighted and there are several bouys out marking the reef and other shallow spots that can easily confuse a new visitor. Hope to see you soon.

6.2.5.6 s/v El Vagabond – Panama to Isabela – December 2009 – No Autografo

Technically you are not supposed to be able to check into Isabela—there is no Immigration here. But El Vagabond wanted to visit the Galapagos, without an Autografo, and had been told by friends that Isabela was the best.

So they contacted Johnny Romero by email, and arranged for him to be their agent for a non-autografo check-in to Isabela. They paid Johnny Romero \$150 in agent fees. They were given 21 days in Isabela, and paid all the normal check-in and check-out fees.

6.3 Isla San Cristobal: Puerto Baquerizo Moreno (Wreck Bay)

Entry Information: On approach, stay clear of the SE point. Come in midway between the North point of land, which has a lighthouse on it and the northernmost of 2 tall, white/yellow, lighted buoys, with a short red one in the middle. The red buoy marks a wreck or pinnacle and the waves break quite high near it, so be aware and stay clear. Also, don't come too close to the lighthouse point, as there is a big surf break there and shallow water.

SHE WOLF Waypoints:

Approach:	00° 53.00'S	089° 37.00'W
Entry 1:	00° 53.37	089° 37.11'W
Entry 2:	00° 53.66	089° 36.96'W
Anchorage:	00° 53.78	089° 36.80

Anchorage: Good holding sand bottom but with big rocky patches which show up from the deck in 30' clear water. On the Southern side, near the Navy buildings, it may be calmer and better protected from the S swell at some times of the year, but it is also MUCH more rocky.

Update from s/v Visions of Johanna, December 2009: Vessels are requested to anchor to the north and west quadrant of the bay, outside the zone of local boat moorings

No stern anchor required. Water taxi service for \$0.50 per person per trip, but there are only 2, call on channel 14. Driver expertise varies, and taxi “bonay” will take good care of your topsides. Call for “watertaxi Bonay” on ch 14. Also, taxis tend to approach you panga bow to your beam; we found it helpful to bottom tie two fenders side by side at your boarding area (Visions of Johanna). Port Captain is located to your right on the beach facing the anchorage. This is also a good beach to land a dinghy. HOWEVER, there are a lot of BIG sea lions around the anchorage and beach. They have no problem getting up on a swim step, or into a dinghy, so the water taxi may save you a messed up (or sunken) dink.

Information: Camara de Turismo on malecón has island maps in English and Spanish. SSCA Cruising Station is “Sharksky” Manolo and Martina. (From Visions of Johanna, Dec 2009: Sharksky (Manolo and Martina) have been great. They are very willing to assist us and plan as many trips on our own as possible, and we chose to book our guided trips through them)

Groceries: Saturday morning at a public mercado (ask a local for directions) for the best veggies. Dos Hermanos on Quito is best tienda. Marialeta Tienda one block before the market (on your left as you are walking up from the harbor) will fill orders from the mainland for veggies and gets several shipments flown in each week. The fish monger across from Wreck Bay Divers always has Wahoo (\$1.85/lb.) and other fish on occasion. Isabella butcher shop around the corner from the market seemed best to us. We found bread (\$2.00/loaf) and rolls (50 cents each) to be expensive.

Things to Do:

- **Trip to Punta Pitt**, etc. (areas of Park not accessible by road): FABULOUS! (Carina) We used Manuel Yepez and his new speedboat Sharksky. We organized this through the Camara de Tourism but the American intern, Lauren, may not be volunteering anymore when you visit, so you may need to contact Manuel directly. He speaks English and is a very competent captain. We hiked with a National Park Guide to see tortoises IN THE WILD (Galapaguera Natural), visited Punta Pitt (boobies, tropicbirds) and snorkeled here. We wandered down the coast, exploring amazing nooks and crannies and had lunch and a walk at a beach at Bahía Stephens. We moved onto snorkeling at Leon Dormido (Kicker Rock) where there are Galápagos sharks and then on to hike and snorkel at Isla Lobos. Twelve hours. For a party of 10 it was \$50 each (2006) and worth every penny. Contact: Manuel Yepez tel: 09 95 40596
- Cab tour across the islands to the tortoise conservation center, ocean view point, El Junco Lagoon (take the volcano crater rim hike, 1 hour) and La Loberia beach with seals and marine iguanas. \$50 for a cab full (Spanish speaking only). There are English-speaking tour guides who will also give this tour (for more money)
- **Interpretive Center:** (Carina) go here first. Free. Explains islands' history, geology, biology.

- Boat and scuba tours. (Visions 2009) It does not seem that there is any negotiation room for diving. I think that local rules and divemasters have a closed shop - roughly \$105-120 pp for a day trip - take it or leave it.
- Snorkeling from your own dinghy.
- Trails: (Carina) all around Punta Carola, the beautiful beach at Cao de Horno and out to Las Tijeretas where you can snorkel with sea lions. Darwin statue here as this was his first landfall and anchorage. Wonderful and free.
- Side trip to circumnavigate Kicker Rock, about 10 miles up the coast of San Cristobal. This is an incredible rock, in three pieces, rising 500' up above the water which is 400' deep all around. Boat and dive trips to here also available. (\$50pp for a snorkel trip, more for diving)
- Biking (Visions) We tried to bike up to El Junco, but stopped 4 km short as we had already done 2000' vertical, everyone was tired, and visibility was poor. We should have listened to Manolo and hired a pickup to take us and the bikes up most of the way. Great exercise, though. Manolo is storing our bikes shore-side for us so we don't have to load/unload every day.
- **Water:** (2009) Agua Purificada can be purchased for about \$2.50 per 20 L bottle. A returnable bottle deposit may be required. Agents will offer water to be delivered to your boat but expect the price to be significantly higher.

Fuel: (2009) It is now illegal for extranjeros to buy fuel at the Ecuadorian subsidized price of \$1.02 per gallon (for diesel). Agents have been offering to supply fuel; prices range from \$3.40-\$4.50 per gallon delivered to your boat. Some cruisers have purchased fuel illegally to try to avoid paying these high prices. We have heard that large fines have been levied or threatened for breaking these laws.

HOWEVER, the Capitania will issue to ANY vessel a permit to purchase fuel legally at the international price (the international price for diesel was \$2.05 per gallon on March 31, 2009). To obtain a permit (which must be used on the day it is issued) go to the Capitania and ask. He will ask to see a copy of your passport. Take the permit with you to the only filling station (gasolinera) in a taxi/truck (\$10 per hour) and they will dispense fuel and return to you a factura. Bring the factura back to the Capitania and the fuel to the *muelle de carga* and catch a water taxi to your boat. Boats requiring large amounts are pooling jerry cans and making multiple runs. Water taxis (taxis aquatico) monitor channel 14 VHF and charge \$0.50 per person, one way.

Update from s/v Visions of Johanna, December 2009: Our agent offered us diesel delivered at \$4.25/gal – then at \$3.75 when he saw my face. We eventually bought our diesel at the local gas station on Isabela with the help of a local taxi driver.

Provisioning: A reasonable selection of fruits and vegetables are available in San Cristobal. The costs are in general 25-50% higher than mainland Ecuador. Some days are better than others for selection, depending on the supply boat (twice per week). There is a public market and many other small tiendas. Dos Hermanos and Gala Market are both “larger” grocery stores though the supplies are pretty basic. The Gala Market is the only place we've found to buy hard cheese (gouda, cheddar, mozzarella). Fresh local cheese is widely available. Unrefrigerated eggs are the norm. Clos Chilean boxed wine is available

in one tienda we've found so far; hard liquor is very very expensive (Jose Cuervo Blanco Tequila \$40+). Galapagos coffee is \$10 for 13 oz in the tourist shops; one cruiser found it in bulk for \$3.50/lb.

6.4 Isla Santa Cruz: Puerto Ayora (Academy Bay)

Largest town in islands.

6.4.1 Entry and Anchoring

Entry Information: Very straightforward in terms of submerged dangers, **but anticipate electronic chart georeferencing to be off by 0.25 nm**. This observation has been made by several vessels in the past including She Wolf and Renegade. In December 2009, Visions of Johanna found similar georeference problems on C-Map Max charts dated Spring 2009, noting a 0.25-0.30 nm chart offset of approximately 020 degrees magnetic – vessel is transposed ¼ nm south (200 deg. mag) on your plotter. A common sense approach makes entry quite reasonable however as so many vessels are anchored around and outside the bay, navigable water is obvious. Keep the lighthouse on Isla Coamaño to starboard upon entry. There are several yellow mooring buoys within the anchorage and many bleach bottles marking local boat moorings, large boats may use the buoys.

Anchorage: Good holding sand bottom, but with rocky patches. Unfortunately it faces S, right where the swell comes from, so can be very bouncy. There is a lot of water taxi and tour boat traffic near the pier on the left side of the bay as you enter, so anchor to the right side of the crowd to avoid it. You will see a large orange day marker on shore to the right of the blue and white Port Captain buildings. Lining up with that seems to keep you out of most of the traffic.

Anchoring Position: 00 44.850 S 090 18.570 W, 18' mid-tide. Don't go much closer to the shore than this, as it shallows up.

Stern anchors are essential, due to the swell, as well as crowded conditions. Water taxis will set and retrieve stern anchors for you for \$2.00 each. It is very crowded when the tour ships come in on Wednesday and Saturday evenings. Also, it is very entertaining to watch as they use their dinghies as tug boats. They can anchor closer than comfortable to everyone. There is no dinghy dock, so use of the water taxis is mandatory, hail on channel 16.

6.4.2 Things to Do

- Tour the Darwin Research Station - tortoise pens where they are raising young ones, and pens with the adults that you can just walk around in. They also had land iguanas in three pens that you could walk around. Nice visitor center/museum with video presentation several times morning and afternoon. Say "hi" to Lonesome George.
- Bahía Tortuga over a great paved path. Free, no guide required. Marine iguanas, shore birds and 2 great beaches made up of fine white sand. Surfing and body surfing if you are willing to brave the currents (large warning signs on beach). In the lagoon at the second beach there were white-tipped sharks in the shallows, shade trees to picnic under, and fearless Darwin finches.

- Las Grietas, which is a fissure in the volcanic rock, again free. It is just a saltwater 'swimming hole' Rougher trail there, wear good shoes. Take a water taxi to the Hotel Finch dock and follow signs to begin the walk. Vision and Soggy Paws tried to stop for a swim on the way back at the Hotel Finch pool, they wanted us to spend \$10 pp (ie lunch) before we could make use of their nice-looking pool..
- Tour to private ranch with wild land tortoises. Many tour companies arrange this for about \$25pp or you can get a cab driver to take you, if your Spanish is up to it. Ranch owner will provide coffee/tea. This tour also usually includes a visit to a large lava tube and to the "craters" of Los Gemelos (actually huge volcanic gas bubbles that collapsed). Soggy Paws hired a taxi driver for \$10 an hour, and saw all this for \$40 (cab big enough for 4 people). Must have at least one person who speaks reasonable Spanish for this to work out.
- Scuba Iguana Divers rents full air tanks for \$6.00 per day. All of their dive tours are around \$110 for a days trip and 2 dives and includes lunch and equipment. Also recommended is Galapagos Sub-Aqua. There are a number of other dive outfits as well. Incredible hammerhead sharks, large pelagics at Gordon Rocks and Seymour sites.
- Taxi tour to Lava Tubes (Los Tuneles de Bellavista). Described in Lonely Planet, cost \$10 for round trip taxi, \$3.00 pp for the tour. Not to be missed. This same tour costs \$25 pp through the travel agents along the malecon (see Migration report below)
- Tour to North Seymour Island and Las Bachas Beach. \$75 pp for full day, including lunch and transportation. Bus across island to Santa Cruz-Baltra ferry dock, small cabin cruiser to North Seymour Island to see sea lions, blue-footed booby and frigate bird rookeries, lots of marine and land iguanas. Hot lunch aboard, then visit for snorkeling and beach-combing at beautiful white sand Las Bachas Beach. Flamingo lagoon behind beach.

6.4.3 Boat Services

Water Taxi: First, don't bother dropping your dinghy in the water here. Everyone uses water taxis. Call 'taxi aquatico' on Ch 14 VHF, or flag one down as they pass by. It costs \$.60 pp during the day and \$1pp at night (after 7pm). They will not only take you into the main water taxi dock, but also over to the docks for the hotels in the harbor.

Orientation: The main street that runs along the waterfront is Av Charles Darwin. This has mainly tourist shops, travel agencies, and restaurants. The main street that runs up away from the harbor is Avenida Baltra.

As you get off the water taxi, right in front of you on the left is a couple of restaurants and a supermarket and hardware store. Being so convenient, these tend to be a little pricier than going further into town. But this supermarket tends to carry more gourmet stuff than the town market.

Banks: The first stop was of course the ATM machines. There is an array of 3 different ATM's right on the harbor next to the supermarket. But if you need a real bank, there is a Banco Pacifico on the malecon

street a couple of blocks from the water taxi docks. The BP has 2 ATMs in its building. There is also another bank up Baltra.

Boat Parts: Puerto Ayora is surprisingly well stocked. We haven't seen a store like **Bodega Blanca** in over a year... it was a combination of West Marine and Ace Hardware (with a little bit of Home Depot thrown in). For marine parts, they had everything from a marine toilet, to marine quality line, to stainless steel rigging parts, to anchors, to watermaker parts and supplies, to electrical stuff like amp meters, etc. They also had a reasonable array of dive gear. Plus all the tools and home building supplies you would expect to find in an Ace Hardware. Bodega Blanca is half a block up from the malecon on Marchena (a few blocks beyond Banco Pacifico). Ph: 05-252-6338 Email: bodega.blanca@gmail.com

The next store was **Electronautica**, which has a lot of boating electrical stuff, including battery chargers, VHF's and GPS's, dinghy and outboard motor stuff, and a lot of computer stuff, too. They also had a very good fishing and diving section, with repair parts for dive gear that I've only ever seen in a dive shop. Electronautica is on Calle Binford, half a block up from the Banco Pacifico on the malecon, on the left. Ph: 05-2526-058 Cell: 09-1513-522 Email: jschiess@ayora.ecua.net.ec

The third stop was **Mechanica Gallardo**, which is more of an electrical / automotive type place, with an in-house machine and welding shop. I noticed that they had batteries (so did Bodega Blanca). We bought a belt for our watermaker there, and Visions had some stuff welded. We noticed that they had 8D batteries, and other sizes too (sorry no 6v). They are on Av 18 de Febrero, about halfway between Marchena and Baltra. mecanicagallardo@hotmail.com

We also saw a Setmabas office somewhere in town, which we know from Manta, they do liferaft and fire extinguisher servicing.

Laundry: Visions had their laundry done in town at the price of \$1 per kilo, which is about \$6 for a reasonable size laundry load, wash-dry-fold. We saw several laundries, but they really liked Wendy, located about 6 blocks up Ave. Baltra, just one house down the left on Ave. 18th de Febrero (across from Ferriteria Roca). that was where 18 de Febrero crosses Baltra.

Cheap Lunches: For lunch we went up Baltra away from the harbor, a couple of blocks to Charles Binford, a cross street that has a bunch of local eateries. Here, instead of the tourist lunches for \$10 pp, we got a nice 'almuerzo' (soup, main course, juice) for \$3 pp. There are a LOT of restaurants in town, mostly on the waterfront. The only other place we ate in town was at El Penon, across from Banco Pacifico. They had OK prices, decent food, and good wifi.

Internet: You can get limited internet via wifi in the harbor, if you have a good antenna. Look for the REDGAL signal. This seems to be free/open wifi. However, it is slow, and they also have a firewall that blocks Airmal Telnet, outgoing SMTP mail (but not incoming), and some websites. Access to one of our financial institutions was blocked, but others were not. In town there are a number of internet places, they are not hard to find, and usually cost around \$1.50 to \$2 an hour. We were looking for a restaurant with free wifi, and ended up at El Penon, across from Banco Pacifico on the waterfront road. They had wifi good enough for Skype, a pleasant atmosphere, decent food, and reasonable prices (for the Galapagos). There is also a table in the back that has a wall plug nearby.

Groceries: Besides the one on the waterfront, and various small tiendas scattered around, there are open air veggie stalls up Av Baltra a few blocks at the corner of 18 de Febrero. The big new supermarket is Mega Primavera a couple of blocks from the veggie stalls down 18 de Febrero, and the 'Feria' market, held on Sat and Weds, is another block down 18 de Feb. If you've come from Ecuador, be prepared for a shock at the veggie market... the quality is marginal and the prices are high. We paid \$2.50 for a head of lettuce and another \$2.50 for a head of brocolli. Apples were 3/\$1.

s/v Visions of Johanna also dug up "Galadistribution," a company that services the live-aboard cruise boats with higher quality deli-type products, including good wine and cheeses. They are located on Calle Charles Binford on the way to Bahía Tortuga. The owner is a Kiwi and speaks English. 09-744367.

6.5 Isla Isabela: Puerto Villamil

Puerto Villamil is a more protected, calm anchorage.

6.5.1 Entry and Anchoring

Entry information: As you approach Isla Isabela from the east, there is a small island to the south of Villamil in the shape of a half moon, called Isla Tortuga and a small rock to the north of it, called Roca Bura. If you approach the island in the dark, shape a course to go between the two and avoid going north of Roca Bura. There are breakers off Isla Isabela in this area and the swell picks up.

After passing Roca Bura and Tortuga, alter course to the WSW to pass south of the shoals on the outside of Villamil and then to the NW to parallel them and to intersect the inbound 029° track that is the recommended course on the electronic chart (Chart 22529). (From the ocean, two adjacent orange pyramids on shore - actually roofs of a hostel - make a good day marker.) As you come in on the 029° course, it leads off a white beacon on the beach. You will also see a green buoy just to the left in the distance. On the chart, you will also see a light on the north end of the reef that you are leaving to starboard. The light on the chart has the characteristics Fl(2+1)15s 11m 7M. This marks the entrance to the anchorage area and is also marked by red/green channel markers, as well as a new buoy that is large and yellow and marks the anchorage.

Isla Encanto's waypoints were:

S 01° 04.78 / W 090°52.72

S 00° 59.10 / W 090°59.04

S 00° 58.58 / W 090°58.95

S 00° 58.046 / W 090°58.315

Anchorage: The anchorage area is bounded by low volcanic islets, is quite calm and is a lot smaller than it looks as you enter, because it is mostly filled with submerged reefs and shoals. Reefs are above water at low tide. PEREGRINATA's anchorage position: 00°57.938'S 090°57.730'W (GPS is on WGS84) and were in 14' water at low tide. MUSIC's anchorage position was 00°57.90S, 090°57.74W, in 10' at low tide.

6.5.2 Things to Do

- **Wildlife around the anchorage.** There are sea lions that frolic around the boat and you could easily swim with them. On the small islets that surround the anchorage you can see marine iguanas, penguins and sea lions basking on the beach, as well as blue-footed boobies. In January there were also sea turtles swimming around the anchorage (sometimes mating). All the animals let you get pretty close.
- **Bike Rentals:** (Carina) \$4 for 3 hrs. at Bazar Veronica on main street just past hospital (heading west). Roads are all sand so traffic moves slowly.
- **Surfboard Rentals:** For those surfers who left their boards at home, there is a surf shop in town that rents surfboards.
- **Las Tintoreas:** This is a trail around the reef and islets surrounding the anchorage. Free. Wildlife includes penguins, turtles, marine iguanas, white tipped reef sharks, sea lions, and blue footed boobies living in a volcanic landscape. The steps are in the center opening in the reef that many fishing pangas take to the open sea –just watch them.
- **Volleyball and Iguanas at a Casa Rosada** (free): Casa Rosada is the last establishment on the beach as you walk out of town (away from the dinghy dock). In the late afternoons, locals and tourists and iguanas gather and play or watch volleyball. They have a daily two-fer happy hour special from 5pm to 7pm (grande beer 2 for \$5, for example) It's worth a beer just to watch the iguanas coming out of the surf in the late afternoon and sunning on the wall (literally wall-to-wall iguanas). They also have a book swap.
- **Tour to the volcanoes Cerro Negro and Volcan Chico.** All day trip. By truck up to the agricultural area and then by horse back for two hours past Cerro Negro crater (12km across). Leave horses huge jaboncillo tree and then hike to the very barren, moonscape like, area of Volcan Chico (45 minutes). There are several vents that had some hot gas escaping and some deep sink holes with steam. The last time this area erupted was 1979. Carina (2006) booked through Antonio Gil at the Hotel San Vicente, \$30 includes guide and lunch. Even if it is cloudy and rainy in the anchorage, it will more than likely be clear at the volcanoes. 2010 Soggy Paws: Everyone who did this trip when we were around in late Jan / early Feb complained about the mud, the rain, and not seeing much because of the clouds, so ask about conditions before you go. 2010 Visions: We used Luis as our guide (Luis Perez can be found through Danielita's Tienda, or call cell 089842690), for \$53 pp for a group of 5.
- **Concha de Perla:** Free. Just off the embarcadero is a raised walkway through ancient mangroves to a tranquil pool with a dock. Nice protected snorkeling or just a great place for a picnic.
- **Tour to the Muro de Lágrimas (Wall of Tears), Mirador and Nature Trails.** The wall was built after WWII by inmates of a penal colony. From there, go to the Mirador (overlook) and then walk along trails. We went into a large lava tube that goes under the ocean in the distance. You could hear the waves crashing onto the tube and the water dripping in. We also went to Playa del Amor, which was covered in marine iguanas. We then walked back towards town, passing two lagoons, which often have pink flamingos. Locals suggest going at 6pm when they return from

feeding although there were some there at mid-day too. You can arrange a taxi for \$12 to take you 6km to the Wall, wait, take you to the Mirador, wait, take you to the first set of trails, from which you visit the others and walk back to town. Biking is a nice option.

- **Snorkeling** in the reef area with white tipped sharks. The cost is approximately \$10 per person for two hours. You can go with your own dinghy by yourselves, too.
- **Guided kayak tour.** Hire guide from Wooden House B&B (Minino) for \$25 and \$5 each per hour for kayaks. To a little offshore island and coves along the coast. LOTS of sealife, surfing the waves! Alfredo Bolivar (Minino), ga_viye@yahoo.com, phone 05-252-9008
- **Cabo Rosa/Los Tuneles:** A number of cruisers have said 'This is the best tour in the Galapagos'. This is a 25 mile panga ride to Cabo Rosa, with a brief stop at Roca Union. Cabo Rosa (or Los Tuneles) is an unbelievable lava landscape which is negotiated by the panga driver through a series of narrow channels and arches with cactus growing on them. The collapsed lava created many tunnels and bridges that are magical. We rode around for about an hour, stopped for a snorkel excursion (wet suits advised; it's chilly!); then to a different cove for our box lunch, which we provided. LOTS of sea turtles and huge manta rays spotted offshore. Cost early 2010 was \$60 pp. You provide everything: snorkeling gear, drinks and lunch. Guide recommendations from various sources:
 - s/v Carina: Antonio Gil arranged for us to use a panguero nicknamed Cuarto de Hora (real name Dario, boat Isabela, cell 097 592 615, cuartodehora16@yahoo.es). We had been told he was the best and we were impressed with his skill. This trip is worth the cost. The tour boats don't go here because of the breakers.
 - s/v Migration, 2008: Our guide was Tito and our boat driver was Fabian. The entrance to Los Tuneles is very tricky - they negotiate breakers and rocks and shallows. Seriously exciting! Only five or six pescadors know how to get in safely. You can also contact Fabian directly on Channel 16. Call "Lancha Maria del Carmen." He has a handheld VHF. You can also call him on his mobile phone at 091 407 826.
 - s/v Soggy Paws and s/v Visions of Johanna did this trip 2010 with Fabricio for \$60 pp. Cell 080927845. He's a good guide and skillful boat driver, and speaks some English.
- **Centro de Crianza:** (Carina) Free. Follow main road west to sign (at the Iguana Crossing). Follow beautiful trail and raised walkways to tortoise rescue and breeding center. Most of the endangered species endemic to Isabela are represented here. A small gift shop sells some souvenirs.
- **Lava Tunnels** on West end of town up the beach road; there are many small beaches and lagoons along the way. These tunnels extend out to sea and can only be entered a small distance.
- **Flamingos:** (Carina) Free. We saw a solitary flamingo at mid-day in the small lagoon right in town and later a group at the bigger lagoon behind the beach. Shhh, they are shy.
- **Beach:** Free. Watch wimbrels, plovers, sanderlings, thousands of silly looking orange crabs that skitter sideways or just the amazing turquoise blue waves crashing over offshore reefs.

- **Diving:** There is a dive shop in town, Isabela Diving. (2010) The going price for a dive trip in the Galapagos seems to be around \$120 per person per day. However, Soggy Paws and Visions negotiated with Fabricio (Cell 080927845) to hire his boat for \$250 for the day, for 5 of us to dive, using all our own dive gear (and loaning him a BC and regulator too). We did 2 drift dives at Isla Tortuga, about 20 minutes by lancha from the anchorage. Fabricio was the divemaster, and he had a driver in the boat following our bubbles. Fabricio was a good divemaster and it was a good trip. Isabela Diving quoted us \$10 per tank to refill.

6.5.3 Boat Services

Water taxi: (Carina) only one, run by Ricardo; \$1 per person each way. No VHF so flag him down or call him on his cell phone: 085 564 064. From Soggy Paws 2010: There isn't enough need for a water taxi here, so we haven't seen any evidence of one operating regularly. Just take your dinghy. There are usually guide boat operators hanging out by the dock areas,

Dinghy Dock: There are 2 dinghy dock areas. When you are at anchor, hanging facing SSE (the prevailing wind direction), the town is actually behind you. There is a big pier there, but you sometimes have to thread your way through the surf to get in there, it's concrete dock, and lots of swell in there. But it is a convenient dock if you are just running in for a quick thing, or dropping someone off.

The main dinghy dock will be on your port quarter as you hang at anchor. You will see lots of lanchas there. At high to mid tide, it is possible to carefully pick your way directly from the anchorage to this dock. At lower tides you have to go out around the long way. The advice we got was to go from green boat to green boat in a $\frac{3}{4}$ circle, starting out from our anchored boat by going straight ahead. (Watch what the local boats do). With care and experience, you can make this trip ok even in the dark at low tide.

We have been advised to take our fuel hose with us each time, as this seems to be the item that goes missing (you see locals walking around town carrying their hoses, so it seems a valid concern for everyone). (This doesn't seem to be a problem in 2010, but one boat did report a missing stern anchor).

To reach town from this dock, follow the road, which bears to the left and stay left when the road branches. Town is about a 15-20 minute walk away.

Groceries: (Carina) The town is small and easy to walk around visiting various small tiendas. Fresh veggies varied in quality. Frozen chicken could be found but other meats were generally unrefrigerated. If you find something you like buy it then go on to the next store.

Water: Carina bought locally produced agua desalinada in 5 gallon jugs from Francisco (cell phone: 086 214512) and had it delivered by Ricardo. \$1.50 per 5 gallons. Francisco assured us it was desalinated water but the jugs were not sealed so we treated the water with Microdyne.

Fuel: We used jerry jugs and took a taxi to filling station (1-2 miles out of town) and a few other stops, taxi cost \$3. Diesel was \$1.03/gallon (but is likely more now that you need a permit to buy diesel as an 'extrajano'). Soggy Paws 2010 also used this method, the taxi cost us \$10/hr (we were filling several boats and had to make 2 trips).

Welding and Engine Repair: Soggy Paws had some aluminum repairs done by Pedro Pachai at Taller Peter. Taller Peter is on Via Municipal, one block west of the blue-roofed municipal equipment repair shop. Pedro said he could also do stainless, monel, steel, and bronze welding. His partner Jorge is an engineer who also does diesel and gas engine repair—he regularly works on the engines of visiting tour boats. Shop # 02-529436 Cell 08-6925177. They were extremely helpful to Visions of Johanna in 2010 in fabricating a propeller-puller.

Carpenter: Right next to Taller Peter is Taller Peter, a woodworking shop owned by David Playito apolinario_7@hotmail.com. Soggy Paws had some minor woodworking done by David. He does custom cabinetry, etc, and has all the right tools.

Hardware: There are at least 2 hardware stores in town. The best one is Ferreteria Ana Karolina, downtown on Calle Escalecia, right next to Isabela Dive Center. Lincoln Moscoso is the owner. Ph #02-529070 Cell # 09-3241810. He had quite a bit of stainless fasteners, tools, gasket material, etc. His daughter Ana is also a certified guide and can do guide trips.

Souvenirs: Rare, but on the block to the west of the plaza there was a shop with attractive t-shirts.

Money: No banks and NO ATMs. Bring U.S. cash with you!!

Internet: Easy Net and Albatross Net. Both were SLOW. In 2010, EasyNet was \$1.50 per hour. Easy Net had a laptop station with LAN cable, but somewhat limited hours (closed 12:30-3pm weekdays, and closed Sat aft and Sunday). There are many other locations with 'Internet' advertised out front... two down the street from EasyNet cost \$2/hr, (sometimes) open during lunch. Don't expect much internet on a rainy day on Isabela.

Laundry: Concha de Perla Lavaderia; a hundred yards inland from the embarcadero, on the right. \$1.50/kg, one day turnaround, nicely done.

Taxi Drivers: Recommended by Max at Hotel Albermarle: Arnaldo 08-6212852 and Wellington 09-2134350. Recommended by Luis (a guide): Frank 09-7745290

Shipping Parts from Ecuador and/or Santa Cruz: With the phone numbers of the hardware stores on Santa Cruz, we were able to call them and purchase items and have them shipped on the daily ferry boats to Isabela. We were also able to get a part air-freighted from Quito (approximately 2 day service), and delivered in Isabela by Emetebe (the small airline, which handles the transfer at the Baltra airport on Santa Cruz). The cost was only about \$5 total.

General Help and Questions: We have found Max at Hotel Albermarle (very nice hotel on the waterfront near the Port Captain) to be very helpful. Max is a Brit married to a Galapagos woman, so he is fluent in English and Spanish. (Max has been so helpful that Visions has been trying to sign him up as an SSCA Cruising Station).

6.6 Isla Baltra: Puerto Seymour

There is an international airport on this island, for Isla Santa Cruz. Some large tour boats pick up their passengers here, rather than in Puerto Ayora.

6.6.1 Entry and Anchorage

Entry Information: Easy entrance. The charts call it Caleta Aiolian, but the Port Captain's address is Puerto Seymour. Approach waypoint was 00°26.500S, 090°18.000W

Anchorage: There are large patches of rocks in the anchorage, but there are also large patches of sand. The tour boats seem to have no problems, but look for sand. The wind seemed to be diurnal in nature and swung us around 180° morning and evening. The anchorage seems to be well protected. Anchor at 00°26.248S, 090°17.042W

6.6.2 Things to Do

No real tours except to get checked out of Ecuador on Isla Santa Cruz Immigration office. MUSIC caught a bus to the airport \$1 pp, then a truck to the ferry terminal \$1 pp., then the ferry across to Santa Cruz, \$1pp., then a cab to Puerto Ayora to check out, then back again with a stop at the Mercado \$30 total. Or, you can take the airport bus, which is scheduled to meet flights, for much less. Only runs in the morning, however.

- Isla Mosquera, white sand island with sea lion colony, is about 4.5 miles from the anchorage, and possibly reachable by dinghy, although we didn't try it.

6.7 Isla Santa Maria (Floreana): Puerto Ibarra

Note that as of 2010, Bolivar's standard autografo EXCLUDES Floreana. When we asked during our check-in in San Cristobal, there was an exchange between Bolivar and the Port Captain representative, in Spanish too fast for us to follow.

It seems that the bottom line is that some cruisers in the past have abused the privilege of going to Floreana by going places and doing things they were not supposed to do. So now, they are very reluctant to let cruisers go there.

We feel we could probably get permission to go there if we pressed Bolivar—though it might cost us something more in agent fees. Visions, using a different agent (Ricardo) had no trouble getting permission to go there from Santa Cruz. But Visions paid \$400 for their agent fees. They had to swear to their agent that they would ONLY anchor in the harbor, and every other activity would use a guide as park requirements dictate.

The autografo doesn't say anything about which ports are permitted.

6.7.1 Entry and Anchorage

Entry Information: Straightforward, if you avoid rocky patch noted on chart to north of anchorage area. Approach waypoint: 01° 16.0 S 090° 30.0 W

Anchorage: Anchor in front of Hotel Wittmer, to the right of the Port Captain building off brown sand beach. Lots of rocky areas, but good holding in coarse sand off this beach. SHE WOLF first tried to anchor closer to Port Captain, but just volcanic rock bottom there. Anchorage position: 01° 16.657 S

090° 29.436 W, in 35'. Beach your dinghy in front of the hotel. Sand is coarse, not packed down and dinghy wheels sunk in, so be ready to push hard if your dink/engine is heavy. Alternatively, you can tie your dinghy up to the concrete pier by the Port Captains office – however, be wary of surge which could abrade your dink on the rough concrete.

6.7.2 Things to Do:

Note that the authorities are very touchy about cruisers doing their own thing on Floreana. So rather than screw it up for everyone following in your wake, please ASK what is permitted before you do it. The best place to ask seems to be Hotel Wittmer.

- **Highland tour:** take the bus up to the end of the line and hike up to the old Wittmer farm. Turtle pen with tortoises which were the pets of Margaret Wittmer and are completely used to humans. Spring which is the only water supply on the island and caves where the Wittmers lived when they first arrived. Great island overlook. "Bus" goes to the farm early in the morning and returns right away – good for "birders" who ride up and then walk back down. Also goes at 3pm and returns at about 5 or 5:30pm. You may be able to tag along behind a tour group and listen to their guide, as SHE WOLF did, for free. SEA TERN went up with Erica Wittmer (grand daughter of the original settler, Margaret), who guided them. Bus is \$1pp each way.
- **Panga tour to "Post Office Bay":** this is an official tourist site and requires a guide. Hotel Wittmer can arrange.
- **Snorkeling tour to Devil's Crown:** arrange through Hotel Wittmer.
- Have a beer and/or dinner at Hotel Wittmer, meet Margaret's daughter, Floreana and grand daughter Erica, and look through their Yacht Book, especially the one from the early 60's. Learn about the very interesting history of human habitation on this island. Make arrangements for dinner early in the day as the Hotel does not always have guests, or may have too many to accommodate extra heads.
- Walk or dinghy to La Loberia, sea lion rookery south of the anchorage.

6.8 Other Ways To Visit The Galapagos

If you don't want to take your own boat out to the Galapagos, or if you have guests joining you who need land arrangements, here are some options:

Air Travel: TAME flies from Quito and Guayaquil to Isla Baltra and Isla San Cristobal airports. Round trip fare from Guayaquil to Baltra in February, 2005, was about \$350. TAME usually does not release seats for general sale until close to the departure date (saving them for pre-arranged tour groups), so if you want to assure a seat to someone not on a tour (particularly in high season), you may need to go through an Ecuadorian travel agency. SHE WOLF used Bahía Delfin Tours agency in Bahía de Caráquez to book the flight and a few days in a hotel on Isla Santa Cruz for a visitor, when they were unable to get the flight arranged directly with TAME.

There is a small air taxi that flies from Puerto Villamil to Islas Baltra and San Cristobal. \$80 one way to Baltra, timed to connect with TAME flight back to Guayaquil.

Boat Travel: There are regularly scheduled small boats which run passengers between Puerto Villamil, Santa Cruz and San Cristobal. \$30 one way.

Multi-Day Boat Tours: Once in Puerto Ayora or Puerto Moreno, you can arrange to take multi-day liveaboard or live-on-land boat tours to other destinations, including many which can only be reached by a tour boat. Also liveaboard dive boat tours. Last minute bookings or advance bookings through travel agencies on the islands.

Hotels: Many hotels and hostels in Puerto Ayora and San Cristobal, and quite a few in Puerto Villamil. Wide range of prices and accommodations. Some suggestions:

Hotel Fernandina, Puerto Ayora: \$37 single, private bath, a/c, including breakfast and taxes.

The Wooden House Hostel, Puerto Villamil: \$25pp, private bath, including breakfast and taxes. Little dipping pool, free use of kayaks, a/c. Email: thewoodenhouse@hotmail.com

Hosteria Isabela del Mar and Hotel Ballena Azul, Puerto Villamil: same owner. \$15pp single, \$12pp double plus 22% tax, does NOT include breakfast. Email: isabela@ga.pro.ec

Hotel La Casa de Marita B&B, Puerto Villamil: European style "boutique" hotel on the beach. \$35 plus 22% tax single, \$60 plus tax double, \$90 plus tax ocean front suite, including breakfast. Takes Mastercard or Visa. Email: hcmarita@easynet.net.ec or hcmarita@ga.pro.ec

6.9 Passage Reports

6.9.1 Gerimar: Panama to San Cristobal – Late Feb 2009

On the passage itself, we used Jimmy Cornell's advice to head S-SSW from Panama to Isla Malpelo, and then turn to the islands, rather than following the rhumb line. It worked brilliantly for us, good northerlies in the beginning, plus nice push by the current until well after the bay of Panama; all on a course of about 200 degrees T. We motored from about 6N to 4.30N, then with light winds from the south (SSW), close hauled. As we moved further southwest, winds gradually developed some east and were able to ease the sheets and fly the genaker.

Some motoring from time to time (also to charge batteries). Total time 7 1/2 days, could have shaved 1/2 day if we had pushed just a little bit harder - now we had to slow down to avoid arriving at night.

Total engine time: about 36hrs. Sailmail GRIB files fairly accurate: more a trend of developments than a hard prediction (after all it is a region with light and variable winds).

Jimmy Cornell's advice: <http://www.noonsite.com/Members/val/R2009-02-10-1>

6.9.2 Visions of Johanna: Bahía to San Cristobal – mid Dec 2009

Although often known as a light air sail, we had for the most part plenty of wind, generally in the 14 to 18 knot range. Unfortunately, the first half found us sailing 40 degree AWA's, which we found uncomfortable. So we eased off and sailed 48 deg angles or so, placing us farther north than ideal. Wind slowly came south and SE by day 3 & 4 allowing 60 plus angles. Much better. I had planned an approach to Wreck Bay from the SW corner, but ended up coming in around from the north. It is quite an approach - Kicker Rock is an awesome sight.

Easy entry into Wreck Bay, no significant hazards. You will be directed to anchor in the NE sector of the harbor. We anchored in 30' of water with Playa Mann to port, old fish plant astern, WP 00 53.79S, 89 36.70W. Our agent's representative knew of our arrival (we called him as there was good cell coverage and even wifi 8 miles out) and he was at our boat immediately. Check-in was uneventful, and fees essentially per SSCA 2007 doc as best as I can tell.

Anchorage is mildly rolly, but just fine.

6.9.3 s/v Soggy Paws: Bahía to San Cristobal – early January 2010

We left Bahía on a morning high tide, and had to motor offshore for a couple of hours before we got far enough offshore that the wind steadied out. The first 24 hours after that was very 'boisterous', with crew who had been sitting in Bahía too long, puking over the rail. For the next 3 days, things settled out. The wind was up and down, and gradually veered from WSW to SSE as we went west. We drifted north of the rhumb line at first, to keep from bashing too much, but then easily made it back the last day. We ended up motoring a total of 12 hours when the wind died and we were rolling around, but more patient people could have easily held out and waited for the wind to fill back in. We averaged 5.8 knots with our main and genoa reefed most of the time.

Entry into San Cristobal was easy, following the waypoints given elsewhere in the guide.

We emailed our agent about 24 hours out of our planned arrival the next day, and then phoned him (with an Ecuadorean cell phone obtained on the mainland) about an hour out. He organized an official boarding party and they all came out to the boat about an hour after anchoring, in the water taxi.

7 CRUISING IN PERU

7.1 *Voyaging in Peru – from s/v Precious Metal, April 2010*

Precious Metal is now anchored safely at her final destination for this season - the prestigious and hospitable Peruano Yacht Club, in La Punta, Callao - just outside of Lima. Every day as continue to look out my salon windows, an ominous foggy haze hovers over the anchorage so that only shadows can be detected of numerous surrounding humungous freighters, hundreds of fishing vessels, a prestigious naval base, and the stunning shoreline. This is the largest port and oldest yacht club in Peru boasting of extensive history, and Precious Metal is now proudly registered in their guest book along with notable sailing yachtsmen including Tristan Jones and Hal Roth(1973).

This same fog bank smothered the horizon as we approached Lima the afternoon of Sunday, April 11, after motoring for most of the voyage and fighting the notorious Humboldt Current. (The Humboldt Current is cold and very strong, extending 1000 miles off the coast of Peru, at times bringing Precious Metal to a frustrating 4.5-5 knots.) Having been at sea for 9 days from the Galapagos, and close to a month since our departure from Mexico, it was disappointing that the only land we could see was by radar!

They knew we were coming, and our reception was incredibly heartwarming. **Huge fines and penalties are imposed if you don't check into the TRAMAR Marine Traffic office at 0800 and 2000 hrs each day once entered into Peruvian waters.** I called by sat phone once we crossed into Peruvian waters 5 days from our arrival. The number is important to have: **005114200177**.

The TRAMAR email address is: costeracallao@marina.mil.pe. Other cruising yachts used this email successfully which worked well as they had a good record of each position report. I don't have the SSB channel, but I'm confident that people could access it by emailing the above address.

Yesterday a cruising boat arrived and hadn't sent their position reports (bad decision)...They were sent back out to sea to the 200-mile limit just to make the position report!

During the final 20 miles, 14 miles, 4 miles and channel entrance buoy they monitor your progress amongst a traffic jam of vessels all navigating their way in and out of port through the fog, marked shipwrecks, and reefs.

It was always fun to make the call twice a day because the same adorable officials Marco and Javier spoke as little English as I speak Spanish. "OK,OK," they would say after every understood notation, and this became a fun, common saying aboard.

[Here are] the coordinates for entering Callao Harbour. There are a lot of wrecks to dodge, and it's usually totally foggy so having these coordinates is important. TRAMAR Traffic Control needs to be called at the 20 mile mark, and they provide directions to their next call in. There's a lot of traffic so they continued to monitor my progress until I reached RAYCON X which is at the entrance to the bay. From there they gave me clearance to head for the Peruano Yacht Club, and these are my waypoints:

- **LIMA 1:** 12. 02'.13S, 77.13'.38W. RACON X . Head 130M 3 nm to:

- **LIMA 2:** 12.04'.00S, 77.11'.23 This is between two danger areas with barely visible markers. Head 85M 1.25 nm and you are in the boundary of Peruano Yacht Club. Those are my coordinates and I had a lot of water.

Suddenly in the distance as we approached Callao Harbour a lone sailboat was sailing towards us... he seemed to be coming right at us... it didn't matter where I steered, he just kept coming towards us. When they finally tacked around beside us they were waving and cheering a warm welcome. It was Gonzalo (the Seven Seas Sailing Association representative in Peru whom I had been in communication with prior to my voyage, Gonzalo.Ravago@yanbal-int.com) and his family greeting us and ushering us to our Yacht Club mooring buoy. What a wonderful welcome to Peru, and this incredible hospitality hasn't wavered ever since. Three pisco sours (a deadly Peruvian cocktail) awaited us at the bar, and Chef Frano prepared a feast of fish ceviche and scrumptious dishes to celebrate our arrival.

Our passage from Galapagos was generally uneventful insofar as we motored into strong (15-20knot) headwinds and current the majority of the way. In fact, since we left Mexico 2300 nm ago we consumed close to 1000 gallons of fuel!

Perhaps the most notable highlight for me was the camaraderie and contribution of my crew Jim and Doug. Dr. Jim, who has recently acquired his Honors Masters Degree in Literature at 61 kept us captivated and humoured by his continual references to famous philosophers and eras in literature...For instance, the Romantic Era always encompasses chaos – but when we had chaos it was never romantic!! Doug, a competent mechanic and electrician was relied upon for numerous challenges aboard, and was always keen and happy to solve issues. Both took their watch shifts seriously and assisted wherever possible PLUS we had tons of laughs...Forty six feet is a small space to cohabitate in for nearly a month at sea, and yet we all got along famously. However, we DID have a few mishaps and highlights to share...

We fished everyday and usually had success. Our first big 40-ish pound sierra brought huge excitement aboard because until then our catches were mostly tuna in the 10-15 pound range. Jim and Doug mastered bringing the fish into the anchor well, and Doug is incredibly talented at filleting (I cooked so we made a great team). Our taste buds became highly selective after our first Mahi Mahi, and on our third to last day we hauled in the BIG ONE...a fifty pound Mahi Mahi. We were so excited that we brought out the Soy Sauce as Doug was filleting we ate delicate scrumptious sashimi amongst the blood and dead fish right in the anchor well!! Fantastico!

Our two major breakdowns were the watermaker and fuel transfer pump. Our water tanks were full when the watermaker failed so we were fine with water, and they still allowed me one bath per day...The fuel transfer pump was another story because our 400 gallons of fuel in the keel tank needed to be pumped into the day tank so we finally submitted to using my manual pump which took a lot of work – particularly in bumpy seas. Poor Doug took the brunt of the situation when the hose slipped off the pump and sent diesel everywhere – including all over him and into his eyes and mouth. Hence, hose clamps were installed and we managed to retrieve our fuel.

Night watches were spectacular under starlit skies accompanied by a flock of birds and often dolphins. Our three-hour watch rotation worked well with the guys doing 9-12 and 3-6, while I took the midnight to 3 watch. Time always goes quickly on night watch – between star gazing, managing the boat, watching and dodging traffic (we went 5 days without seeing another boat), and listening to my ipod – there's something very special about night watch.

Riley's "wake me up when we get there" attitude makes for a delightful boat dog. He wasn't able to go ashore on our final three nights in the Galapagos because it's a National Park, so he certainly was excited by terra firma!

The Peruano Yacht Club has excellent facilities and has been wonderful. In addition to Gonzalo, Jaime Ackerman has been exceptional as well. I did not use an agent coming into Peru. Jaime Ackerman at the yacht club processed all of my forms, and it went incredibly smoothly – we were sipping pisco sours at the bar within an hour of our arrival! I think I would have had more problems if I didn't have the radio reports well documented.

Internet is a continual issue as I've discovered throughout my voyage. The Claro representative neglected to set up my G3 modem properly so I've had a difficult time sorting this out. It was very expensive, and because it didn't work, the majority of my first week in Peru was spent inside the Claro office... The main thing is that once the G3 is purchased, it's necessary to activate the program (which they didn't tell me)...

But I have met some wonderful people and the few times that I've ventured into Lima have been exceptional. It's a fabulous city with so many incredible sights.

It appears that at present (April 2010) **the only place suitable to leave a boat my size** (46 ft, 20 tons) for a length of time **is the Marina Club in Callao**, which is just down the road from the Peruano Yacht Club. The cost for me is US \$800.00 for haulout and delivery into the water. Yard storage is US\$340.00. Originally they wanted US \$1000.00 to haul out and US \$380.00 month for yard storage; I managed to negotiate them down a bit. .

No tax (which is 20 percent here), and they wrap the boat. They have full 24-hour security, and it's reputable. I went to Ancon, which has been touted as an option in cruising reports, but they are a private club and won't store a boat for long periods. There's a new marina that looks very nice being built in Lima. I went to it but they wouldn't let my taxi in the gate. It doesn't have a clubhouse yet, but the docks look very nice. Perhaps it will be an option in the future. The Peruano Yacht Club has a small yard but can't haul 20 tons.

7.2 Update on Peru from s/v Aliisa, February 2010

We have learned that Jaime Ackerman is not able to guide people through the check-in process any longer, as the number of visiting yachts is increasing and he found himself being stuck in offices at times when he was needed in the club. Jaime strongly recommends using an agent, though it is possible to do the clearing in yourself. A good command of Spanish language is certainly needed if one insists in doing the job and there is likely to be some attempts to extract extra fees and bribes from the "gringo".

We opted to use an agent that Jaime recommended. Though the initial quote was very expensive, at the end we negotiated it down to US \$200, including the monies the agent pays for the various offices and their fees. A boat stamp is quite important and those without one may consider having one made – it was the first thing being asked from me after the 3 public servants had opened their cans of coke and sat down in the cockpit with a stack of almost 100 copies of paperwork!

I did not fill in one single detail of us or the boat. The official enthusiastically stamped all the forms and all I needed to do was to put my signature next to each stamp. The procedure was over in 15 minutes and the officials very friendly, jovial and laid back. Our passports were taken from us to be stamped in the immigration. We were promised to have them back in 1 hour but we haven't yet even gone to the club office to pick them up. (Too much tidying up and catching up on sleep)

The agent we used first quoted \$400 and Jaime told me he has chastised them for being too greedy. The fee is negotiable, but the first \$100 goes to the officials and the agent takes the rest. We got away with \$200 total and according to Jaime that was a good deal. Other yachts here have paid up to \$400, so this is a little awkward topic. Maybe in the future the price will settle to a figure somewhere inbetween.

The Tramar coast stations still want a position report every day at 0800 and 2000 while the vessel is in Peruvian waters. We had trouble with tuning into 8 MHz freq so I sent our position by email. I often got a reply of confirmation and thanks. For some silly reason they still wanted copies of our radio log and copies of the emails to prove our contact. (Don't they keep a log themselves??!)

Contacts:

Costera Callao is working on SSB 8255 (rx) / 8779 (tx)

Approaching from north, the initial entry to Peruvian waters should be notified to costera.paíta@dicapi.mil.pe

Position reports can be sent to costera.callao@dicapi.mil.pe and dicapi.traficomaritimo@dicapi.mil.pe, dicatramar@dicapi.mil.pe

Jaime Ackermann is at: jaime.ackermann@yachtclubperuano.com

The agent we used is called Jose Luis Borbor Espinoza, dborbor@hotmail.com. The agency is managed by Mr. Napuri.

s/v Renegade passed on another contact: Erik Alejandro Ramirez Carrion, erik_alejandro@03hotmail.com. He may be able to help with check-in but I have no experience of him.

7.3 Info from Yacht Club Peruano, February 2008

From Loon III.

Hi all. please find below our correspondence with Yacht Club Peruano. their email is yachtclubperuano@infonegocio.net.pe and the contact name is Jaime Ackermann.

They also have a web page [spanish] at <http://www.yachtclubperuano.com/>. We understand you still have to check in via radio or email daily once you have entered Peruvian waters as per s/v Breila notes in the Southbounders cd .

Dear Sr. Iain Leckie:

1. We understand it is free to stay on a mooring ball for a certain amount of time [how long is that ?] then it is 40 dollars a month is this correct?

Is free for the first month, then the cost es US \$ 60.00 for a month

2. how long can we stay at the club and how long in the country?

In the country 18 month

In the club every time than you want

3. what is the cost for the travel lift?

The cost of the travelift is US \$ 270.00

4. what is the cost in the work yard once you have hauled out?

US \$ 27.00 per day

5. can a boat be stored on land [work yard] for a long term [5 months]?

Is possible.

6. is there a monthly rate for storing the boat on land?

The cost for the size of your boat [39ft] per day is US \$27.00

Per month is US \$ 800.00

And a monthly rate is US \$ 700.00

7. does the daily yard rate include electricity water etc?

The dailly yard rate on land include electricity and water

8. we heard from the vessel condessa that after a 5 month stay he had a major bird guano (shit) problem. if we were to stay at the yacht club is there anyway to avoid this problem?

Is necessary employ some person to clean the boat twice a week under supervision of the club

9. can we do the check in ourselves or do we have to hire an agent.

Yes you can do your check in under the asistence of the Yacht Club

7.4 Notes from Moon Dog, July 2007

We got here to Callao last Saturday. Took 6 days 10 hours, the first 3 days was beating into 8-14 kts to get around the western capes of Peru (past Paita) and last 3 days was motoring in less than 8 kts. Seas generally calm, sailing very pleasant even when beating to weather, and an uneventful trip.

We first contacted TRAMAR through Talara Port Control, then also checked in with TRAMAR Paita, and then notified the YC when we were within 72 hours of arrival at Callao (hard to estimate of course). And called TRAMAR Callao when entering the harbor area.

The reception at the YC Peruano has been exceptional. Jaime Ackerman (the YC manager) helped us clear in. We did it on Sunday with no overtime charges or hassles. Had to visit 4 offices. Cost less than \$100 approx. Only unusual item was the need to provide a copy of our radio log showing when we first checked in with TRAMAR. The TRAMAR interactions seem very important to them.

YC has given us a free mooring, use of showers, etc as noted below in the email from Jaime. Members seem delighted to have us visit, we are the 4th foreign yacht this year so far. Harbor is fine but slightly rolly. Foggy and cool here of course. The La Punta neighborhood is relatively safe and has the basic cruiser needs (laundry, bakery, small restaurants). Big shopping malls are only a cheap taxi ride away.

So bottom line, the horror stories of the past seem to have been overcome and I think Jaime Ackerman here should get a lot of the credit for working with the authorities here and streamlining the clearance process for yachts.

>From: yacht\operaciones <yacht.operaciones@infonegocio.net.pe>

>To: symoondog <symoondog@hotmail.com>

>CC: jimackermann02 <jimackermann02@hotmail.com>

>Subject: Re:por favor, necesito informacion de aduana

>Date: Wed, 13 Jun 2007 20:25:06 -0500

>

>Hi John:

>I'll be glad to give you a preview information for your visit, clearance

>with peruvian authorities aren't expensive, a sailboat or a yacht is not

>consider a cargo boat, so won't need an agent, unless you want it.

>

>You will need this papers

>1. The last registered zarpe.

>2. Boat certificate.

>3. Passports.

>4. Vaccine certificate.

>

>Steps for your check in

>

>1. Call Tramar (Peruvian Maritime control) radio when you get into our
>territory.

>2. Announce us at least 72 hrs. before your arriving so I will make an appointment and arrangements
with:

>a. Autoridad Portuaria Nacional.

>b. Direccion de Sanidad (there is a charge around \$20 when you enter and

- >\$20 more when you leave, depending when are you planning to leave).
- >c. Capitanía de Puerto. (Present paperboats.)
- >d. Inmigraciones. (Seal your passports)
- >
- >When you announce us your arriving we will contact these authorities to make the check in of your boat.
- >
- >In the Yacht Club Peruano you will receive the following facilities that we give to the navigators visitors: free (mooring & buoy, shuttle boats 24 hrs/day, restrooms). Inside we have a five fork restaurant that has an excellent sea food and accepts every Credit Card usually from 9 to 5 p.m.)
- >
- >For your boat(s) we have a pump station with Diesel (low sulfur) and a 90 octane gasoline, also different kinds of oil. If you need some boat repairs we have a 20 ton. travel lift and an 8 ton. crane, and a 3000 yd² if you decide to lift your boat for days or weeks.
- >
- >Nearby the Yacht Club Peruano in La Punta district of Callao city & port at the extreme west of the city of Lima capital of Peru, you'll find a bank with ATM, store, drugstore, laundry, internet café, a bakery (excellent bread), and a comunal market with main groceries.
- >
- >Public transportation to the center of Lima, or you can call to a Phone Taxi. The old Lima is about 20 minutes from here, modern districts 20 to 40 minutes, and the airport is about 15 minutes.
- >
- >Remember you must contact a Coast Station and indicate your port destination when you got into peruvian waters they will ask you some characteristics of your boat, when you arrive to Callao call by channel 16 to Tramar and indicate that you expected at the Yacht Club Peruano.
- >
- >The following coordinates are for the mooring area of our Club:
 - >a) Q = 12° 03' 48.9" L = 77° 09' 55.2"
 - >b) Q = 12° 03' 55.8" L = 77° 09' 50.7"
 - >c) Q = 12° 03' 50.7" L = 77° 09' 42.5"
 - >d) Q = 12° 03' 43.7" L = 77° 09' 47.8"
- >
- >Visit our Web Site: www.yachtclubperuano.com
- >
- >Best regards,
- >Jaime Ackermann
- >Operations Manager
- >(0051) 1429-0775 Office number
- >(0051) 198174869 Nextel mobile also 51*817*4869

7.5 Notes from s/v Breila, September, 2004

1. Cruising: As a cruising ground, Peru has lots to offer. Sadly, due to very strict controls on check-ins and movements, we were limited as to where we could stop. They just don't get cruisers here, so we have to fit into the procedures for ships which only go from big port to big port.

Since we were on a limited timeframe, we planned to enter the country at Lima (port is Callao) which is about half way down the coast, so did not stop at any anchorages or ports north of Lima. We did ask if it was possible to check into the country at a port further north, and were told (by our agent) that it was impossible. We suspect that if you just arrived at a major town in the north, you might get checked in, but we don't know for sure.

2. Agent: You must use an agent to check in and out. Since our agent was in Lima with an additional office in Pisco in the south, we visited both places. Our agency, Cosmos, charged \$50 US per international check-in (incl. national zarpe) and another \$50 for international zarpe. Plus we paid an additional \$70 US for check-in fees and an additional \$36 US for various fees for int'l zarpe. Total fees \$206 US. Note that as a small vessel you don't have to pay the Health Certificate fee (\$226 for us), although it took a while to get this verified.

3. Controls: This country is the worst we've seen for excessive controls and paperwork. You have to provide position reports twice daily - either by email or by radio (email's best as you'll have a record) from the moment you enter the country until you leave Peruvian waters (except when you are checked into a port), up to 200 miles offshore. There is a \$10,000 fine for non-compliance if they want to pursue it, so they don't fool around. You must inform Tramar by email 24 hrs before arriving in port. Then call them from 10 miles out, and they will direct you when to call back from there. The port captain/harbour master will come aboard your boat, and you can not leave until he does. Upon arrival, you must supply a form, in triplicate, (info in following email) which you can print on board, or have made up before you leave your previous port. Your ship's stamp will get lots of use, too. NOTE: They are open 24 hrs, but do not arrive at night, as this causes a bunch of unnecessary confusion, and may necessitate you paying a \$25 US (min) independent lancha service fee.

4. Yacht Club Peruano (YCP)(based in Callao/Lima, with an outstation in Paracas/Pisco) is the most accommodating place we have ever visited as cruisers. Free moorage for short stays, incl. 24-hr security, 24-hr lancha service, decent showers, a lovely bar and restaurant, very friendly members and staff who treated us like visiting royalty. (Note from SHE WOLF: for longer stays, \$40/month). They were exceptionally wonderful-admin. staff even took us home for dinner. The YCP is located in La Punta, an upscale suburb, very safe, with tiendas, a small mercado, restaurants, laundry and internet. It is on the outskirts of Lima, about an hour by bus to centro, or 20 min cab ride. Major supermercado nearby. Lima has interesting museums and architecture. It is a big city - 8 million - and parts are dangerous and dirty. Nearly everything is available here, prices are similar to Ecuador. Fuel is expensive in Peru (nearly \$3 US/gal.) and you will use lots.

5. Inland touring. Fabulous. For Macchu Picchu, Lake Titicaca, Cuzco, Sacred Valley, Colca Canyon. YCP Callao is a great place to leave the boat for inland touring; you can get anywhere in the country

from Lima. While in Paracas, we took a day tour that included the Nazca Lines (via plane), a visit to a pisco distillery, Huacachina oasis, sand dunes, Nazca tombs, ceramics maker, cochineal (red dye) farm, for \$230 US for two (incl. private car, driver and guide). You could do it cheaper if you took buses, stayed overnight en route, etc., but we were short of time. We understand that just about anywhere you stop along the coast has fascinating stuff to see.

6. Facilities: 18-ton TravelLift at YCP Callao. Water (non-potable) and v. clean diesel at fuel dock. Gasoline, propane and kerosene available in town (ask at YCP). 50-ton TravelLift at Ancón, 18 Nms north. At YCP Paracas, clean diesel is available on the dock (by jerry jug - it is too shallow to take your boat in), as well as nice clubhouse and great showers.

7. Passagemaking. We were southbound from Ecuador, against the Peru/Humboldt Current. The first part - around the two capes just south of the Golfo de Guayaquil - was a tough slog with big waves and winds on the nose to 23 knots. Not so hard after that, but we motored or motor-sailed a lot. Load up with fuel in Ecuador; we bought extra jerry jugs before we left. The US Pilot book recommends keeping close to shore from Golfo de Guayaquil, which we discovered after we had sailed offshore to escape the "cape effect." In hindsight, we would have been better close to shore. The huge swells (to 20') disappeared closer inshore, and the wind dropped significantly. We did sail a lot around the capes but think it would have been better staying inshore, as our tacking angles were pretty flat. The current seemed weaker inshore, in fact we don't think we were hindered by current after the capes, and in southern Peru we actually got a 1 knot south-going current. It's about 1200 miles along the Peruvian coast, which took us a total of 16 days cruising.

The first leg to Lima is about 760 miles from Salinas Ecuador, but we covered 1027 with tacking. It took 258 hrs of which we motored 102. The trip from Lima to Pisco/Paracas was 120 miles and took 25 hour; we sailed the first 4 hours and motored the rest in hardly any wind. Pisco to Arica Chile (465 miles), we traveled 102 hours, 541 miles, but we motored a total of 74 hours, the last three days straight as there was less than 10 knots headwind. The strongest wind we saw was 23 kn on the nose sailing in big swells and large seas offshore of the northern capes. Most of the time it was between 12-18 kts in reasonable seas. Others we heard from had a motorboat ride the whole way during their November passage. If you have a motorsailor, you have it made, but fuel is nearly 3 times that in Ecuador, so stock up to the gills.

8. Great handicrafts, either in Lima (huge markets at Miraflores or Puebla Libre) or just about everywhere in the country. Alpaca knits, leathersgoods, silver, ceramics, weavings, musical instruments. Bargain hard.

9. Weather: We had a cool passage south from Ecuador, longjohns, fleecies and foulies most of the time, which is normal for Aug/Sept/Oct. Apparently it can be somewhat warmer and less windy starting in Nov (per the folks on PEN AZEN). The YCP in Callao is, for some reason, a local cold spot, and we used our furnace every night. Again, warms in Nov (their spring). Very dry - no rain, although in "winter" you get cold coastal sea fog, which can even be heavy mist. In Pisco, it is VERY dry - no rain ever. Days are warm and sunny - water temp in Bahía Paracas was 18°F warmer than in Callao (75° vs. 57°).

10. Forms: Here is a sample of the twice daily check-in form we emailed.

To TRAMAR: costeracallao@marina.mil.pe

POSITION REPORT FOR YATE BREILA

1. La tripulación

Sienda la tripulación de este yate como sigue:

NOMBRE:	NACIONALIDAD	PASAPORTE #	CARGO A BORDA	EDAD:
Michael Whitby	Britanico	702101473	Capitan	53
Catharine Whitby	Canadiense	VN470390	Marinera	47

2. Rol de pasajeros

Zero/0

4. Declaración General

Michael Whitby, Capitán del yate de placer“BREILA”, de la matricula numero 703732 de VANCOUVER, CANADA del porte de 9.24 toneladas brutas y de 8 netas de arquero. Radio Call Sign: VD3700

5. Mensaje – Planear ruta

FECHA	HORA	LATITUD	LONGITUD	RUMBO	VELOCIDAD
10/04/04	20:00L	17°40.0'S	071°38.1'W	121	5.6 Kn

COMENTARIO FECHA y HORA de CHEGADA

Enroute Arica, Chile 10/05/04 16:00

6. Nota.

Upon arrival at port, you will need to present three copies of a report with the above info, but in Section 5 (Mensaje) put the time, date and position you entered the country. We used our laptop and printer, but if you don't have this facility, get the forms made up before leaving previous port, and fill in the blanks. Use your ship's stamp to “official-ize” the form.

11. Contacts/Info/Positions:

TRAMAR (Transportes Maritima) for twice-daily check-ins (0800 and 2000), plus 24 hrs before arrival in port. email: costeracallao@marina.mil.pe

radio: VHF Ch 16, for each of the 3 stations, north to south: Radio Paiti, Radio Callao, Radio Mollenda.

We had no luck getting a response from Paita and didn't try in Mollenda as we used email check-ins.

Agency: Cosmos Agencia Marítima. general email: operaciones@cosmos.com.pe

Our contact (good English) Yuri Quispe, Jefe de Operaciones, email: yquispe@cosmos.com.pe

You must arrange agent in advance of making port.

YACHT CLUB PERUANO

Callao: Position: 12°03.5'S 077°09.8'W

General email: yachtclubperuano@infonegocio.net.pe (NOTE: These are all new email addresses.) Our contact (good english, GREAT guy): Jaime Ackermann, email: yacht.operaciones@infonegocio.net.pe

250 moorings, some with power (!). Occasional swell in north winds (rare). Easy entrance, straight in from the north. Club monitors VHF Ch 68.

Paracas: Position: 13°49.7'S 076°26.6'W

Club outstation, with dock, lancha service, clubhouse, great showers, fuel. Hire a guarda to sit on your boat if away for a full day or longer. The bay is very shallow. You can not get into the dock, use anchor, excellent holding in sand. Can get winds to 50 kts here (called a Paracas). Monitors VHF Ch 68..

ANCON: Position: 11°45'S 77°11'W

Port 18 Nms N of Callao, has 50-ton TravelLift

8 LAND TOURING IN SOUTH AMERICA

Here are some unedited notes from various people on their trips Peru, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina. The un-dated ones are pre-2008. The experiences are relevant, but prices have gone up considerably, so don't rely on prices.

8.1 *Chile from Bahía de Caráquez – s/v Soggy Paws, March 2009*

Soggy Paws left their boat on a mooring at Puerto Amistad, Bahía de Caráquez, Ecuador and traveled to Chile and Patagonia in March and April of 2009.

High season in Chile is December and January, and the weather, crowds and prices start dropping off in March, so we wanted to launch off from Ecuador in mid-March.

Though it is possible to get to Chile from Ecuador by bus, it's a long trip, and between bus tickets and hotel rooms and meals, it doesn't cost a lot more to fly. We decided that with summer fading fast in Patagonia, we'd best get ourselves down there as fast as possible. So we flew down and booked tickets ahead for certain critical legs of the trip:

1. **Guayaquil, Ecuador to Santiago, Chile** - via air (\$7 bus from Bahía de Caráquez to Guayaquil). LAN Chile about \$275 per person, booked online through Costamar Travel in Lima Peru. We stayed in Santiago for a week and do some local sightseeing. .

Note that flying to Lima instead of Santiago, and taking a bus in MIGHT save Americans the \$130 per person 'visa' or 'reciprocity fee' that Americans have to pay when entering Chile at the airport. But it's a LONG bus ride.

Also note that the Chileans are very serious about the agricultural stuff you cannot bring into the country. Research this issue before you pack a bunch of snacks, and if you are asked to declare items at the airport, be honest, because they DO FINE if you get caught (and they do search bags). The forums I read said that things like rice and pecans were confiscated...

2. **Santiago to Punta Arenas, Chile** a week later - via air. Sky Airlines one way at \$112 per person, booked through Costamar Travel in Lima Peru. LAN flies there too, but was double the price. It is difficult booking this ticket from outside of Peru, because Sky won't accept credit cards.

3. **Navimag Ferry from Puerto Natales to Puerto Montt** (a 5 night 4 day trip thru the Chilean fiords) - April 7-11 for \$435 per person. Booked on their website... fill out the form and they email you back. If you don't get their email, get on Skype and call, we had a problem with our spam filter at our ISP filtering their emails. http://www.navimag.com/en/canales/norte/ruta_norte.asp

4. **Flight back from Santiago to Lima**, again on LAN Chile, on May 2, for a total of 7 weeks. Also booked through Costamar for about \$250 per person (Note: #1 and #4 booked together as a multistop gave us better rate than 2 one-way tickets). From Lima, we booked on Spirit Airlines back to Florida.

This plan gave us about 3 weeks in Patagonia, to hike Torres del Paine and to see Ushaia and Puerto Williams (right next to Cape Horn), all by bus. Then we worked our way back north towards Santiago.

We looked at doing a 10 day cruise to Antarctica from down there, but it's still WAY too expensive--the cheapest cabins start at about \$5,000 pp.

Our travels on this trip have been well documented, day-by-day costs and adventures, here:

http://www.svsoggypaws.com/travel_chile.htm

and here:

<http://www.svsoggypaws.com/blog2009/Chile%20Inland.html>

8.2 Peru from Salinas Ecuador – s/v Soggy Paws, September 2009

We left our boat on the hard at Puerto Lucia Yacht Club in La Libertad, drying out, and flew to Lima, Peru for our Peru adventure.

We have friends who live in Lima, and the first part of the trip we took with them, north toward the Cordillera Blanca (White Mountains). Starting out in Huaraz, and circling around the mountains for 5 days, back to Huaraz and back to Lima. This was all done by private car. But there are buses from Lima to Huaraz, and local buses for getting around town to town. Huaraz is a big outfitter place, so there are lots of trips and traveler information at the hostels there. (recommendations on our website).

Then we went by overnight bus from Lima to Arequipa, staying in Arequipa for 4-5 days, and seeing the local sites as well as the Colca Canyon (big condors there).

From Arequipa, we did a day bus to Puno, next to Lake Titicaca. We were running short on time and opted not to spend any time on Lake Titicaca, or go into Bolivia. Part of this was impacted by the \$125 per person fee that Bolivia charges US passport holders to come into the country.

We opted to take a tourist bus for \$50 from Puno into Cuzco, and stop at some of the sights along the way, rather than a plain bus (recommend you book this a day or two in advance).

We spent about 10 days in Cuzco, waiting until we were there to book anything. We 'did' Macchu Pichu on a 4 day custom trip, which also included several other sites. And we did the Apurimac River Rafting trip with Mayuc Rafting, 3 days, 2 nights for \$160 each. Fantastic trip, great guides, great rafting, fantastic scenery. (the same trip, booked ahead on the internet, will cost you ~\$400, so it pays to travel slightly off season, and wait til you get there to make a deal).

We had planned to go back to Lima by bus the 'direct' route, but it turns out that direct-by-map didn't factor in the road situation in Peru. We heard it was a very rough trip—very bad roads and correspondingly bad buses. So we opted instead to take the 26-hour bus trip which goes on the good roads (back thru Arequipa) to Lima. Pay a little extra for the semi-cama seats, and it's not a bad trip.

Our adventures and lots of recommendations are on our website, here:

http://www.svsoggypaws.com/travel_peru.htm

and here:

<http://www.svsoggypaws.com/blog2009/Peru%20Inland.html>

8.3 Peru from Salinas Ecuador – s/v Restless, October 2007

8.3.1 Travels thru Ecuador to the Border

Mark's daughter Erin flew to Ecuador the first of September and joined us for just over three weeks. On the top of Erin's list of places to visit was Machu Picchu in southern Peru. Mark had done some reading and found a pre-Inca site called Kuelap in the northern highlands of the Peruvian Andes that was said to rival Machu Picchu, with the added advantage that since it is so difficult to get to, hardly anyone is there. With those two basic destinations, we planned the trip which turned out to be a remarkable adventure.

Our overall strategy was to work our way through the southern part of Ecuador, cross the border into northern Peru, and then make our way to the city of Chachapoyas where we would visit the ruins of Kuelap. From there, we would bus to Lima and onto Cuzco, the Sacred Valley of the Incas, and Machu Picchu. We would then work our way back up the coast of Peru, cross back into Ecuador, and make it home to Restless. Twenty days to cover approximately 4,000 kilometers or 2,400 miles—by bus and taxi...

Day 1: We took a late bus from La Libertad, where Restless is, into Guayaquil. A 2-1/2 hour, \$3/pp, ride that was uneventful. Unlike most cities in Central or South America, Guayaquil has a central bus terminal that is huge. Upon departure you have to remember to get a dime so you can pay the toll at the turnstile to get out to your bus. A quick \$3 taxi ride from the bus terminal to the **Hotel California** just off the malecon (waterfront) in downtown and we were checked into a decent room for \$30 per night. Guayaquil is the second largest city in Ecuador behind Quito in the north which is the capital. With a population of 2,118,000, Guayaquil is a big city with a beautiful malecon, parks, hotels, and the most amazing malls. They rival those in the states and are a nice little reminder of the capitalism and chaos of home. We took a cab to the big mall where we watched the late movie. The movie theaters here look exactly like the multiplexes back home. Most movies are the same as the current releases in the US, in English with Spanish subtitles. A ticket costs somewhere between \$2-\$4, and a large popcorn is about \$1. They are a great deal and another little taste of home. After our movie, we took another taxi to the airport where we picked up Erin just after midnight. We took yet another taxi, \$5, back to the hotel and arrived about 2:00 am. Throughout South America, it is customary for taxis to charge 20% - 30% more at night. They must consider it hazard pay.

Day 2: We explored Guayaquil including Parque Bolivar also known as Iguana Park. This is the most amazing place--there are literally hundreds of Iguanas that inhabit this city block. They're in the trees, on the grass, sidewalks, they're everywhere you look. We asked several locals how long they had been there and no one was quite sure. They just say for as long as anyone can remember. In the afternoon we gathered our luggage, checkout at the hotel is 2:00 pm which is nice. We boarded a bus for the three hour ride, \$5/pp to Cuenca, population 417,000, which is considered by many to be Ecuador's most beautiful city. The bus ride in and of itself was remarkable. Guayaquil is at sea level, Cuenca is at 7,660 feet, and the trip there takes you through the cloud forests and up to an elevation of 12,100 feet in the

Parque Nacional Cajas before dropping back down and into Cuenca. We stayed at a little hostel called **Posado Todos Santos**. Charming—3 stars, \$24 per night for all three of us.

Day 3: We were up early and started our adventure at the bus station. We rode local buses, \$1/pp to three small villages that all have Sunday markets: Gualaceo, Chordeleg and Sigsig. Each town got progressively smaller and by the time we got to Sigsig, it seemed as if we were the only tourists that had ever ventured this far. It was wonderful to be out of the city and immersed into the local culture.

Gualaceo and Sigsig's markets were completely for the locals to buy, sell, and trade their produce, rice, and animals. In Ecuador, the indigenous women wear a heavy, pleated felt skirt with fancy embroidery around the bottom, a simple shirt, and what many mistakenly call a panama hat which is actually called a montecristi. It looks like a man's hat and they vary in color depending on what area the women are from. Chordeleg's was a bit more touristy with souvenir shops surrounding a small town square and a locals market up the hill.

Back at the hostel, we had a nice evening with our host who owns and runs the place and is also a student working on a master's degree. He spoke fluent English which was wonderful. We bought a bottle of vodka and some limes and spent several hours learning about the Cuenca perspective on the new Ecuadorian President and current politics in the country. We also learned about the Ecuadorian way of life, their perspective on family, and many, many other interesting things.

Day 4: We spent the day in Cuenca exploring the city, shopping, eating, and visiting the gallery of modern art. Like most Latin America cities, Cuenca has a wonderful plaza in the center of town that is surrounded by a magnificent cathedral, several older churches, and government buildings. After dinner the hostel loaned us a Monopoly game that was of course in Spanish which made it that much more fun.

Day 5: Up early for a bike tour that didn't work out. Our guide didn't show up. We got our money refunded after a bit of effort and decided to hop on an afternoon bus for Loja, 3 hours, \$7/pp to begin our journey south. We stayed at the **Hostel American**, right off the town square, \$25, and we had a wonderful time. Loja, population 170,000, was not planned to be an overnight stop on our way south. We had intended to just make a quick change of buses here but since the bike trip didn't work out, we decided it was an opportunity to explore this city a bit and get a head start on the next day's travels. We learned that the week long celebration of THE virgin was on day six and it was quite a party. Several thousand people filled the square that evening, live bands, fireworks, dancing, tiny hot air balloons, and a complete party filled the streets.

At the suggestion of our darling, English speaking hostess at the hotel, we went for dinner to a local favorite and tried the delicacy of this area, cuy, pronounced koo-ee. Cuy is your standard household guinea-pig. Yes, you read that right, guinea-pig. We had read about this and heard you could get cuy on a stick at the markets. We had envisioned something similar to a chicken skewer...but...uh...no...it wasn't like that. Cuy on a stick is literally just that...head, teeth, little feet, all there, stuck on a bamboo pole about three inches in diameter, from end to end. See the photos and you'll understand. We had passed on these at the market in Gualaceo and decided we'd try it in a more civilized setting. Mark and I shared one—I got the back half, he got the front. They looked pretty much like they did at the market minus the stick. I got the back half with its little barbecued rat feet sticking out, Mark got the front half

with ears, eyes, and little rodent teeth. Its texture was like chicken but it tasted like wild pork. My half of cuy didn't yield as much meat as you would have on a good chicken wing which was OK with me. Glad we tried it; don't need to do it again.

Day 6: This is the day we really began the journey south in earnest. We had read in the Lonely Planet Guide book of a "wonderfully remote boarder crossing" although the book also warned to stay on the road because this was a major area of confrontation during the 1995 war between Ecuador and Peru and still contained numerous landmines. Perfect—we love this stuff!

We caught the 6:00 am bus from Loja to Vilcabamba, population 4,200. There we had breakfast and met a couple from California who were working their way to the same town in Peru we were. They had walked across the boarder from San Diego into Tijuana with their backpacks almost a year ago and were headed for the tip of South America—cool, perfect traveling companions. We caught the bus and headed for Zumba, population unknown, it's not in any guide books, but maybe 100 people. When we arrived in Zumba we were not exactly sure how to get to the next town of La Balsa. We talked to a woman who said the next combi, a big truck with bench seats in the back wouldn't leave for about another three hours. Mat, our traveling companion who spoke pretty good Spanish found an old man and his small, beat up old truck who said he would take us right then for about \$3 each--we jumped in. The man stopped at his house to put a park bench in the back for us to sit on which was very kind. However, once underway we were stopped by the "taxi police" and he was told he couldn't take us. Guess he didn't pay off the right person, I mean get the proper license. Another truck came along, imagine that, and we all piled into it for the dirt road, four wheel drive, two hour ride to La Balsa. Now it was getting fun!

8.3.2 Crossing the Border into Peru

We arrived at the border about 3:00 pm and walked into the only structure, the customs office. The agent seemed happy to see us and officially stamped us out of Ecuador. The five of us walked across the bridge and into Peru. Same exercise with the passports on the Peru side and it appeared we were the only people who had crossed the boarder and signed the book for a few days.

The real challenge with this two day, off the beaten path trek, not including the multiple forms of transportation, is that you have to make it to a little place in Peru called San Ignacio because it's the only town once past Vilcabamba with a place to stay. We found a four wheel drive Subaru station wagon, all five of us piled in with our packs, and off we went for the last three hour leg of the day. During the planning stages of this crossing, we kept looking at maps to see if we could connect all the dots. We could see a road as far as Zumba on the Ecuadorian side, and we could see a road from San Ignacio south, but we never could find anything that showed a connection. We went on blind faith figuring we just didn't have detailed enough maps. But now the reason was clear. There were dirt roads, at least in the dry season. They included multiple river/creek crossings where no bridge existed; you had to just drive through the water. We still can't imagine how you could possibly get through this area during the rainy season.

We arrived in San Ignacio, Peru about 8:00 that night. San Ignacio isn't listed in the guide books either but it probably had a population of about 5,000. We were most certainly the only white people in town, we were exhausted, and all we wanted was a bed and something to eat.

8.3.2.1 Changing Money

We had a small problem though... While we were in Cuenca, we had gone to an international bank and gotten Peruvian Nuevo Soles. The Nuevo, new, part is important because in the late 1980's the country experienced inflation that reached 10,000%. They cancelled the old money and came up with a new one. We were warned to watch for these old bills because folks will try and pass them off to you when you get change. The bills we got in Cuenca were 100 Nuevo Sole notes which are about \$33 US dollars. When we got to San Ignacio, we had five of these bills and then US money which is what Ecuador uses. Cambio means change in Spanish and no one had or would give us any Cambio! The taxi driver didn't have any, the hotel where we stayed would only change the 100 Nuevo Sole note for the room, no other change. We spent our first hour in San Ignacio trying to get enough cambio for the taxi driver. We offered to pay him in US dollars and he just gave us a bewildered smile and shook his head back and forth. This is not a tourist area and consequently they had no use for US money, no way to exchange it for Soles. We finally got it figured out, checked into the hotel, \$15, and over dinner, we felt pretty satisfied with the day's journey. We temporarily forgot that we had almost as long a trip planned for the next day before we would arrive at our destination of Chachapoyas.

Day 7: Up early again and into a moto-taxi, a three wheeled motorcycle, for the ride to the bus. One thing we've learned over the past year is that most of the people in these countries make a buck just about anyway they can, especially the taxi drivers. If a taxi takes you to a restaurant for dinner, the driver is likely to go in and ask the owner for his cut of the cost of your dinner. If someone shows you to a hotel, they'll go in and tell the inn-keeper they brought you here and they want their cut. They seem to get it too, like it is an understanding they all have with each other. First the driver took us to a taxi stand—the most expensive way to go and the biggest cut for him. We said no, autobus, and he continued on. He then dropped us at what they call here a colectivo. He was pretty persistent that this was the bus and we finally got out and paid him. We're pretty sure he got a cut from the driver because we did eventually see a bus on the route. No problem though, we would get there eventually.

A colectivo is essentially a small, bare bones, Japanese van, with as many seats as possible crammed in. These vans don't leave for their destination until they are full. Full means twenty three – twenty five people plus small kids who are either standing or in laps. Luggage is generally on the roof rack, including our packs, but if you have something special like a small pack/purse with passports, or your pet chicken, that's OK to have inside. Three hours to Jean, where we got in another moto-taxi which took us to another colectivo. Two more hours to, Bagua Grande, another moto-taxi to another colectivo, then two hours to our final destination for the next few days, Chachapoyas, population 20,700.

8.3.3 *Chachapoyas & Kuelap (Kway-lap)*

So in summary, two days, four taxis, five buses/colletivos, two four-wheel drive taxis, two countries, and we made it! We stayed at the Hotel Revash on the main square for \$18 per night and all the hot water we could use. Great place, we would definitely stay there again. We stashed our packs in our room and headed out to explore the town.

The main square here was a full city block in size with a dated fountain at its center and brick paved paths and landscaping filling out the balance of the area. On our last colectivo from Bagua Grande, one of the passengers was a young man in his early twenties and Mark noticed that his legs bent in an odd direction as he sat crammed into the van with the rest of us. There was also a very beat up, very simple wheelchair that got tossed up to the luggage rack. The chair had a seat, a back, two large wheels, but only one small rusty wheel on the front. We thought maybe it was broken. It didn't look like it could possibly work and looked as though it was being taken somewhere to be repaired or maybe scraped. However, when we all got out, they threw this chair down and the guy with the bendy legs got himself out of the van, into the chair, and proceeded to wheel his way out of the dirt lot balanced on the two big wheels. An hour or so later, he and his amigo where in the city square with a huge crowd gathered around. Their street show included the guy in the wheelchair who did amazing feats of strength and flexibility including wrapping his non-functioning legs around the back of his head, then standing on his hands. Sill in that position he walked circles around the crowd. The highlight of the show, the part that really got the crowd excited, was when this same guy put on a blindfold and his friend threw knives at him. They went through this whole process several more times during the afternoon and evening and it looked like they made some pretty good money. It was the third world version of the street performers at the Pike Place Market in Seattle.

As evening unfolded, many local people came out to the square which seems to be the social center of these small towns seven nights a week. Couples with children, older people selling everything from candy and cigarettes to fresh empanadas to kid's toys, and teenagers in groups or in pairs holding hands. It's the place to see and be seen and in Chachapoyas, it was a fine way for us to end the day and plan for the next.

Day 8: Chachapoyas, Peru is unique because there are a number of archeological sites surrounding it. It is also so difficult and time consuming to get to that you just about have the place to yourself. The down side to this isolation is it means your options for visiting the sites are either to hike for days/weeks since there is not public transportation, hire a taxi for a fortune, or go with a tour. We had talked the night before with the hotel guy about arranging for a tour and so we were up early and joined a group of three others for the trip to Kuelap which was our main reason for coming to Chachapoyas. The ride to the ruins was three hours and the tour for all three of us, including transport both ways, a guide, lunch, and the fee to get in, was \$50. It looked like just a short distance on the map that didn't show any topography. It turned out to be a drop down into the valley of over 5,000 feet, then back up the other side about 6,000 feet. That little van and its driver really earned their money.

The drive was magnificent. Steep, twisting, single-track dirt roads on both sides of the valley wound through the highlands of the Peruvian Andes. It was astonishing to see that every acre on the Kuelap side

had been cultivated and in fact most land was still being worked. This is from 5,000 feet to 10,000 feet of elevation for hundreds of miles. The steep hillsides looked like a patchwork quilt in greens and browns. We were stopped twice on the way up. Once because a rockslide occurred blocking the road completely. You'd think this would have jeopardized the trip but it only slowed us down. There were several men working to clear it and we just piled out of the van and did what we could to help. It was cleared enough that the van drove between the rocks and the sheer drop-off of the edge of the road while rocks were still falling from above. He made it and we all jumped back in and continued on.

Working our way up this hill and through the tiny villages is where our love affair with the Andes really took hold. The experience was magical. Oxen were plowing the fields and around each corner we found sheep or goats grazing, often a donkey just standing in the road. Most houses had a pig and piglets running around the front yard. Life seemed like it had gone on like this here for hundreds of years. Twenty kilometers past the last village, we arrived at the top of the highest mountain and to Kuelap.

Kuelap is a pre-Inca citadel that is "matched only in grandeur by the ruins of Machu Picchu" according to the Lonely Planet Guide. It is situated atop a mountain at an elevation of 9,600 feet and was constructed between 900 and 1100 AD. It was built by a cloud-forest civilization that inhabited the area from 800 AD until the Inca arrived in the 1470s. Over five hundred homes are contained within the walls of Kuelap along with ceremonial, burial, and defense structures. It is said that the Inca tried first to convince the tribes they conquered to join them peacefully. They showed them how to grow food in a way that produced abundance and even required they retain their culture and language. I guess if you didn't join peacefully they'd conquer you anyway so most did. Our guide pointed out architectural elements in the construction that showed the difference between what was built by the natives and what was later added by the Inca. Unlike the Spanish, the Inca did not destroy and rebuild, they added to what was already there.

Our original plan had been to try and hike some part of the way up to these ruins. We instead followed the suggestion of our new friend at the hotel and took the van up, then hiked down from the ruins to a small town where the van picked us up. The trip down was 3,600 feet of drop in elevation in just over three hours. As we started down the trail, we met the archeologist in charge of the site and had a very interesting discussion about how they were trying to preserve the great walls from collapsing. Our next stop was a little complex where the workers stayed doing the restoration camp. There were several structures, no electricity, no running water, but there was a wonderful woman who invited us to rest before heading out. We went into her dining room—a 4' x 8' room with a dirt floor, old weathered plywood walls with no windows, and a large table with benches on each side covered with sheep or lama pelts. She made us coca tea from fresh coca leaves and an interesting corn patty with aji which is made from hot peppers. Rested and with our bellies full, we headed out. The trek down was breathtaking. The trail down was steep and rugged. Every mile or so we would come across a man or a small family who were working their way up the path, most with a mule that was loaded with provisions. Tiny houses, what we would call shacks, were tucked away every mile or so. This trek was one of our favorite parts of this trip.

Day 9: We signed up for more tours. The morning adventure, which included another three hour van ride, was to **Karajia**—home of the sarcophagus. We were more than a little sore from the day before so although the hike to Karajia wasn't all that difficult, we were dying. Karajia is situated in a rock wall of a small valley and was the burial area for a pre-Inca tribe. It was discovered (by the outside world) within the last ten years by a hang-glider which we learned is how many of the ruins in this area were discovered. The wall of the valley has a group of sarcophagus that bare an eerie resemblance to the Moai of Easter Island. These statues however, contain the mummified remains of tribal elders. The archeologists say that at one time, the whole stone wall of the valley was full of these statues. Over time, due to earthquakes and other natural phenomenon, many have fallen. This is clearly evidenced by the number of human bones piled up at the bottom of the cliff. See the photos, this was so powerful. We had lunch at a local house with typical Peruvian food and music and in the afternoon, we went caving.

The cave was totally amazing; huge, deep, and full of stalactites and stalagmites. We had to stop at someone's house along the way to rent rubber boots for 5 Soles each (60 cents). We just pulled up to the house, walked in, used the bathroom, picked out our boots, and piled back into the van. Hum....

Neither of these places is even mentioned in the guide book and we were the only tour groups there. This group was eight people. The day's trip, including transportation, a guide, lunch, and both sites was \$47 for the three of us. We loved Chachapoyas and could have easily spent another week or so there. The town was great, the people charming, and the exploration opportunities endless. Ten years from now this area will be another Machu Picchu. We were so pleased we had taken the time to visit it now, while it is still rugged and unspoiled.

8.3.4 Lima

Day 10: You know they say that the second day is when you really feel the pain? We'll it was true. Neither Erin nor I could step off a two inch curb without crying out in pain. Mark probably felt the same but he was much tougher about it. We said good-bye to Chachapoyas and boarded a luxury bus for Lima via Chiclayo. The bus was Movil Tours, \$34/pp. Nice big bus with semi-reclining seats, movies, bathroom, and meals. It was twenty hours to Lima but was broken up by several stops along the way including two where we got off the bus and had lunch/dinner at the bus stop. You got off, showed them your bus ticket, and they gave you a ticket for your meal. The bus-attendant, who is like a flight-attendant, grabbed a tray and become our waitress. Typical food—rice, beans, french fries, and a piece of chicken. Sounds funny but it was decent and it was a nice break from being aboard. We rode through the night arriving in Lima the next day.

Day 11: Off one bus, into a taxi, and off to the next bus station—Cruz del Sur. We hung out in the terminal for a couple of hours and then boarded the next luxury bus for the 20 hour ride to Lima, \$47/pp. Fewer stops, meals aboard but it was fine. We'd taken books, a magnetic chess board, sudoku and so we were pretty prepared. We departed Lima at 2:00 pm and we still had a few hours of daylight to be able to see the sights along the way. The route south was via the Pan American Highway and it went directly through the town of Pisco where the recent 8.0 magnitude earthquake was centered. It damage was devastating. All of the buildings were damaged, most beyond repair, and piles of rubble had been swept

into neat piles along the edge of the streets. There was a beer truck in front of the bus and small children would run along side begging for food. The kind driver slowed down and dropped a small bag of apples to a little girl. We saw an elderly woman sitting on the side of the road sobbing. It was truly heartbreaking. Our first trip through this area was approximately three weeks after the earthquake. We couldn't even imagine what it must have been like there for the past three weeks. We felt torn, like we wanted to jump off the bus and do something, anything. We in fact talked about just that for the next week. At some point, if you do want to make a difference, you do have to "get off the bus" and do something about it. By the time we came through this same area a week or so later, things did look better and it appeared more tents had been erected and more aid had arrived. We were however profoundly affected by Pisco and decided that one of the things we would like to do with our flexible schedule, is look for opportunities where we can volunteer—a place where we can get off the bus and help.

8.3.5 Cuzco, Machu Picchu, and Surrounding Area

Day 12: We arrived in Cuzco mid morning. Another taxi to our hotel-- Hostal Qorichaska, \$24 per night. Forty plus hours on the bus but we felt surprisingly good. We were excited to ditch our packs, shower, put on clean cloths and go discover the city. Cuzco, located in the Sacred Valley, was the capital city of the Incas and is steeped in history and ruins. We spent the day exploring the city and devising a plan for what to do over the next few days.

Day 13: Our second day in Cuzco we visited the four sets of ruins just outside the city. You need to buy the Boleto Turistico del Cuzco (Cuzco Tourist Ticket) to enter these ruins, \$25/pp. It's a good deal since it also gets you into many other archeological sites in the Sacred Valley. The highlight of the day's hiking was the ruins at Saqsaywaman, pronounced sexy woman. The magnitude and precision of the stone work was astounding.

We also spent part of the day determining how and when we wanted to visit Machu Picchu. That probably sounds a little funny but the place is such a tourist machine, you can't just "show up". The typical route people take from Cuzco to Machu Picchu is via train. The Machu Picchu Train leaves early in the morning and takes about four hours to reach the small support town of Aguas Calientes which exists for the sole purpose of providing a base for Machu Picchu. From there, you board a bus for the twenty minute ride to the ruins. We decided to do the trip a little differently. The train stops along the way in a little town called Ollantaytambo and so we decided it would be more interesting to spend a day and night there, and catch the train the next morning.

Day 14: We departed Cuzco and headed for **Ollantaytambo**, pronounced oy-an-tay-tambo, via a taxi for \$9. Ollantaytambo has a wonderful Inca history. It lies on the floor of a picturesque valley and is dominated by a massive Inca fortress above. It is said to be the best surviving example of Inca city planning and its narrow cobblestone streets, with functioning aquaducts, has been inhabited for over 700 years. Entry to the ruins is covered by the tourist ticket mentioned above. In our opinion, these ruins were the best example of the Inca stone masons astonishing skill. Single stones measuring ten feet in height, five feet in width, and three feet in depth and they are fit together, with no mortar, to create a wall that is mind-boggling. They had no metal tools, they did all this with wood and stone—wow! The

Inca also included numerous water features into their stonework. Water was the essence of life and it was celebrated and displayed at every set of ruins we visited. A stream or a spring was channeled through the rock in little carved channels anywhere from two inches wide to five feet wide. Often it would start at the top and work its way down through a series of pools and waterfalls. The other unique thing about these ruins was that most we had visited required a significant hike just to get there. But here, at Ollantaytambo, the city is tucked right into the base of the mountain and the stone terraces that lead to the temples above.

We stayed in a pleasant place called the Hospedaje Los Portadas for \$20 per night. The most charming part of this hostel was our host. She made us breakfast in the morning, did our laundry, and even made Erin urba tea for an upset stomach (old Inca remedy). She didn't speak a word of English and our Spanish is awful, but somehow we became very close with this woman. Fortunately our plans were to take the train back to this little town and so she said she would have our room ready when we got back.

Day 15: We caught the train in Ollantaytambo about 10:00 am and made the two hour trip to **Aguas Calientes**. This town is Peru tourism at its worst. It is just hotels, restaurants, souvenir stands, a cash machine and a ticket office. We knew this but had decided to stay the night here so we could be on the first bus to Machu Picchu the next morning. We spent the day wandering, shopping, and buying our entrance tickets to Machu Picchu, \$34/pp, along with our roundtrip bus tickets, \$12/pp .

Day 16: Up at 4:00 am, we were on the first in bus to **Machu Picchu**. We arrived at the gates before 6:00 am and climbed to the watchman's tower where we were treated to sunrise on the ruins. It is truly a magnificent site. The stone city is draped over the top and down the sides of a staggeringly steep mountain and surrounded on all sides by other equally steep and splendid peaks. Our favorite part of Machu Picchu was sitting just below the watchman's tower and soaking in the magnitude of the Inca's most well known site. There are no vines, very few trees, and what grass does grow here is kept trimmed by the llamas and the groundskeepers. The ruins have had significant restoration done which allows you to see to a great extent what it must have looked like in the fourteen hundreds when it was abandoned. We roamed the ancient city for several hours and when the hordes of tourists began to arrive by late morning, we headed back down. We picked up our bags at the hotel and caught the 2:00 pm train back to Ollantaytambo where our room was waiting.

Day 17: Our plan had been to move on to another town in the Sacred Valley called Pisac for the day but we decided to stop. We had a day and Ollantaytambo was where we wanted to spend it. We spent the day hiking the ruins and hills surrounding the town, talking with the locals, playing with little kids, drinking coffee in the town square, taking photos, and just relaxing. We had dinner for the second time at a little place close to the ruins. The food was wonderful and the chef should be on the cooking network. He was six foot six with wild black hair, a handlebar mustache, a chef's apron and hat, and a personality that was a kick. Originally from Chile, he moved to this little town and opened his restaurant to get away from the civilization of Chile. Too tame there for him, he liked the more authentic quality of the Peruvian people and he loved Ollantaytambo. This little town was the first place in Central or South America where we thought "we could live here".

8.3.6 Heading Back to Ecuador via Lima and Tumbes

Day 18: This was the beginning of our journey back to Restless. We had great espresso and breakfast at a little place called Heart's Café. It was opened four years ago by a British woman, is staffed by the locals, and all profits go to benefit women and children's programs in the valley. Did we mention how much we loved this place? We reluctantly said goodbye to this little town and our new friends. We would have loved to stay and explore for another week or so.

At about 10:00 am we caught taxi for the two hour ride to Cuzco, \$9, then another taxi to the bus station, \$1. At 4:00 pm we boarded a Cruz del Sur bus for the twenty hour trip to Lima. The first ten hours take you from almost ten thousand feet of elevation to sea level. The road is steep and curvy and the bus was full of local people who didn't look like they'd spent much time in a car. The sun set, the bus was dark, we seemed to have a new driver who didn't really have the hang of how to control a double-decker bus...are you getting the picture? Four or five hours into the trip, people started vomiting—lots of people. These are nice buses but they don't have those cute little barf bags like they have on planes. It must be a predictable occurrence because the attendant started handing out plastic bags, similar to a small grocery bag. This continued for about four or five hours and we didn't know whether to be completely disgusted by the sound, smell, and the thought of the full plastic bags, or to feel just terrible for the folks who were going through this. At some point Erin grabbed her stuff and said "I've got to get out of here!" as she ran for the back of the bus.

Day 19: What should have been a twenty hour trip actually took about twenty-five hours and we arrived at the Lima terminal just in time to board our next bus from Lima to Tumbes. This leg of the trip home was also scheduled to be a twenty hour ride and stayed pretty much on schedule. No trauma like the night before, just a long ride with varied, beautiful scenery from scenic coastal cliffs, to dramatic deserts, to charming little surf towns.

Day 20: We arrived in Tumbes on schedule at about 9:00am. We read we should have been able to catch a bus in Tumbes that would take us across the boarder into Ecuador, and then on to Guayaquil. Of course we didn't have the specifics—like the name of the bus company. The guide books have two cardinal rules when it comes to taxis: don't get in an unmarked car and don't get into a taxi with a driver and a second person. The unmarked part is pretty silly since eighty percent of the taxis aren't marked, but the two people thing seems pretty valid. We had now traveled 48 hours strait from Ollantytambo and we were trashed. We talked to several cabs and decided on an unmarked one that was actually in the bus yard which we thought gave it more credibility. There was a driver and another guy who was talking with us about the bus the cab would take us to, actually showed us the photo on the Tumbes brochure so we felt pretty good.

8.3.7 Crossing the Border into Ecuador

The three of us loaded our packs in the trunk, piled in, and so did the two guys. So now we are in an unmarked cab, with two locals, and we're driving into the desert. It was not a good feeling... About fifteen minutes into what we thought would be a five minute ride, driver number two tells us that the border between Ecuador and Peru is closed and has been for what we think he says is several days.

Strange, we didn't hear about this on the bus ride from Lima. Guess it would help if we spoke better Spanish. She could have announced it in great detail and we very probably wouldn't have understood. So anyway, we say: "but what about the bus?" He says, the bus is on the other side of the blockade.

They drive us to Peru Immigration which wasn't the bus station we wanted or expected but at least we hadn't been robbed and rolled in the desert, we were grateful. We checked out of the country, leaving one of us at the taxi the entire time just to make sure our packs didn't disappear. We got back in and headed another several miles down the road towards the boarder. We went through a checkpoint, and as we approached the second checkpoint, the taxi pulled off into a little dirt lot behind some street vendors, out of sight from the main road. A security officer or a Peruvian cop, hard to tell the difference, was there and we were told that to cross the closed boarder we would need to pay \$60 Soles/\$20 Dollars for the three of us. We felt like we were being fleeced but what choice did we have? We paid the taxi, paid the security guard, put on our packs, and were led by driver number two on foot over a two-by-six that spanned the creek that is the border. We made our way on foot for about a quarter of a mile through a shanty town that was a little scary and eventually ended up back on the main road. Driver number two, our guide, went to hale us another cab. We were really sure at this point we had just been taken for a ride by the taxi and the guard/cop. We stopped an Ecuadorian policeman and asked if the boarder was closed. He confirmed it was. So how was it that we made it from Peru to Ecuador and nobody seemed to care? Who knows, and at this point, we didn't really care.

We got into the next cab and were taken to Ecuadorian Immigration where we checked into the country. Now the whole event was beginning to make more sense. There is one road that leads from Tumbes, Peru, over the boarder, and into Ecuador about six miles before it branches off to the highway. This six mile stretch of road was closed by a series of five roadblocks that had been setup by Ecuadorian protesters. The only way to make it to the highway, and a bus to Guayaquil, was to walk the six miles. We consolidated our bags and packs, put everything on our backs, and proceeded to walk through the roadblocks. Every mile there would be thirty or so taxis, large produce trucks, and anything else they could find, spread across the road six or seven vehicles deep. The two roadblocks on each end weren't too bad but the one in the middle was a little rowdy. Sure enough, at the end of the road, there was the bus to Guayaquil, \$3pp. We boarded and proceeded to collapse. Three hours to Guayaquil, a couple of cold beers at the bus station, a transfer to another two hour bus for La Libertad, \$3/pp, a taxi to Restless, \$1 and we were home just before dark. Fifty-nine hours after we left Ollantaytambo we arrived home.

8.3.8 Summary & Costs

What an adventure. Poor Erin had passed being stressed out, tired, upset, homesick, and had become totally numb—we think. She really wasn't speaking by this point. Mark and I were tired but couldn't wait to go back. Maybe that was why she wasn't speaking to us...

Our total cost for the trip, from the time we left Restless to the time we arrived back at her, twenty days for three people was: \$2,621. That amount includes about \$300 on gifts and souvenirs, \$660 in bus fares, \$77 for taxis, \$307 for the Machu Picchu experience, \$166 for tours, and \$328 for hotels. Not bad for the adventure of a lifetime!

8.4 s/v Music – Peru & Bolivia

Music's Trip to Peru and Bolivia: Itinerary and Costs

Depart	Arrive	Via	Cost	Hotel	Cost
Bahía	Guayaquil	Reina del Camino bus	\$7.00	California	\$23
Guayaquil	Tumbes	Ormeno bus	\$15.00	Asturias	\$20?
Tumbes	Lima	Aero Continente air	\$78.58 + \$12.10 tax	Caribe	\$25
Lima	Cuzco	Trans Peru Airline	\$69.02 + \$5.04 tax	Monarca	\$25
Cuzco	Aguas Caliente	Rail Peru	\$120 including Machu Pucchu tour	Cabana	\$20
Aguas Caliente	Cuzco	Rail Peru	included	Monarca	\$25
Cuzco	Puno	? bus	\$10	Don Julio	\$17
Puno	La Paz	Trans Peru	\$10	Galeria	\$8
La Paz	Guayaquil	Taca Airline	\$389 including \$68 tax + \$25 airport tax		
Guayaquil	Bahía	Reina del Camino bus	\$7		

8.4.1 City Comments

Guayaquil: Hotel California wanted to charge us \$28 for a single with hot water, we were able to get them down to \$23, but it was a hassle. My room was very noisy, right over the bakery. Walked the Malecon in the afternoon, which is a great place to go. Went there the next morning as well, and toured the thieves market just to get a feel for it.

Tumbes: Motor cycle taxis dominate, but you can get a car taxi in town. It has a border town feel to it. Taxi driver said to hold onto luggage which was in an open rack behind us. A nice quiet room, but small.

Lima: At the airport we met a taxi agent that we thought was a taxi driver at first. We negotiated a decent fare and a return trip to the airport early the next morning. He was a bit insistent that we give him something for the little service he provided. The taxi driver made sure that the doors were all locked and I didn't have a real safe feeling on the taxi ride to the marina district down town. Nice quiet room, with a restaurant attached, so we didn't need to go far.

Cuzco: Were picked up by tour agent (see below) and taken to 3 hotels and decided on an expensive one, near the main part of town and very nice. This was the hub of the tours that we took. Great city. The restaurants had menu pushers out in force. You couldn't even look hungry without a dozen of them trying to get you into their restaurant. The post card vendors were as thick as flies and sometimes pretty

insistent. Very tourist oriented where we went, with all of the tourist services you could expect. The airport arrival area was crowded with tour booths and there was even a band playing for tips.

Aguas Calientes: A total tourist town. Restaurant hawkers not as bad here. There are a lot of hostels and restaurants along the main street. Even though the hotel said it had hot water, my room only had very cold water, otherwise it was nice.

Puno: Another very tourist oriented town, located right on the shores of Lake Titicaca. Didn't have much time to spend in the city, out on tours most of the time. Hotel was nice.

La Paz: This was nicer than I expected. I only had a few hours to go exploring. All the streets were lined with stalls selling all sorts of hardware, clothes and food. They were all oriented towards the locals and not tourists. The hotel gave me a wake-up call and arranged for a taxi to the airport the next day. I was told that it was a 45 minute ride to the airport, so I left an hour before the 3 hours I was supposed to be there. It only took 15 minutes early in the morning, so it was a long wait at the airport. They had a rate card in the room that included an antenna for the TV, heater, even oxygen bottles.

8.4.2 Guided Tours that I Took

Sacred Valley: This is a major bus tour that starts in Cuzco and makes 2 stops along the way at artisan stall areas. The main place on the tour was the town of Ollantaytambo, where we went through some of the local's houses and walked around the town. Then we hiked up the agricultural terraces up to the temple of the sun, where the view was spectacular. We looked down at the town and the sculpted mountain at Wiracochan. The bus stopped along the way to allow pictures of the snow capped mountains and at another artisan area. The tour cost \$18 each and includes a lunch stop, which was included in the price. There was someone who came on the bus on the way back that was selling a CD with 500 pictures (and music) of the major areas which I just had to buy.

Down Town tour: This included many stops. The first was at the Cathedral del Cuzco, which is the main cathedral and located right at the Plaza de Amas. It was an additional \$3.00 and not included on the \$10.00 tourist ticket, which is required for most of the sights around Cuzco. All types of photography was prohibited, so I wasn't able to get a picture of the painting of the Last Supper that had Cuy as the main dish, but I was able to buy a postcard of the painting which I've scanned. The next stop was the temple of Qoricancha, which the Spanish mostly destroyed, but still had some of the major structures in tact. Then we went to the ruins at Q'enqo, Pukapukara, Tambomachy and Saqsaywaman, which was the most impressive of the tour. Then the bus stopped at a tourist store that tried to sell overpriced woven goods. I did buy an alpaca blanket for \$28.

Machu Picchu tour: A real must see. I didn't take the Inca trail, but wish I had. It would have been an extra 4 days. Our cost was \$120 each and included rail transportation, bus transportation up and down the mountain, and entrance to the monument. You just have to see it to believe it.

Lake Titicaca tour: This included 2 floating islands and the island of Tiquilla. The cost was \$10 for the all day tour. Lunch was extra, but organized at a patio restaurant and almuerzo style. I even took a reed boat between the floating islands, which are not to be missed, just because of how they are made and

that people actually live on them. Walking on them was like walking on a wet sponge. They both had stalls where they were selling tourist stuff.

8.4.3 Using a Tour Guide/Travel Agent

I highly recommend this, even if you pay a little for their services. I used Sharamira, for the tours around Cuzco. She arranged the flights from Tumbes to Lima, to Cuzco. Our tickets were prepaid and we picked them up at the respective airports. Her charge for them was \$8.90 for the three of us. We arranged all of our Cuzco tours through her, and she even bought our Boleta and brought them to the hotel. She, or her husband, took us to the tour bus pick-up points, the train station and even picked us up at the train station and the airport upon arrival. We bought our bus to Puno tickets through her, and she made reservations at the Don Julio for us as well. Overall a great service and she speaks good English. Her email is: kpullied@yahoo.com and her cell number is: 084-9636301 or 084-9634446. I highly recommend her. Please give her my name if you use her.

In Puno, I used the hotel owner to arrange my Lake Titicaca tour and bus trip to La Paz. If there were any service charges, they were built into the tickets. For the tour and the trip to La Paz, I was picked up at the hotel by van, so just like in Cuzco, I didn't have to take a taxi, I was even picked up at the bus station by the hotel.

8.4.4 General Observations

In general things are more expensive in Peru. Food, lodging, taxis and most things cost more. The exception is Internet cafes. They were about 50 cents an hour and much faster than in Bahía. Cuzco and Puno are very geared to the tourist trade. When we went to Machu Picchu, we left our big bags at the hotel, and at the train tracks in Machu Picchu there was someone holding a sign with our names on them to deposit our overnight bags, so we didn't have to carry them around Machu Picchu.

The bus trip up the mountain from the valley where the train drops you off is an amazing set of switch backs. A one lane dirt road where the busses were going up and down and managed to not drop over the edge or collide.

There were clouds of black biting bugs all over Machu Picchu, so cover yourself with bug repellant before you get up there.

The Ormeno buses were the best of the trip. Very comfortable leather seats with calf rests and a lot of leg room. We had to buy our tickets in Guayaquil the day before because they get crowded some days. The bus station is a short cab ride from the main bus station.

8.4.5 Bus Trip to La Paz

All of the other bus rides were pretty un-eventful, but this one was the exception. I was picked up by a 20 passenger van that went around to several other hotels to pick up passengers. Then it stopped at an intersection and we all got off of it and onto the big Tour Peru bus. It stopped at the border for check out of Peru and check into Bolivia without any problems except for the time it took. The next stop was at

Copacabana for almost 2 hours. A nice little beach resort with tons of restaurants and stalls selling all manner of tourist stuff. We had to change busses and the new one was a Hotel Galeria bus, not a Tour Peru bus. About an hour out, we all had to get out of the bus so it could go on the ferry across the lake. All the passengers got out and bought their 30 cent boat ticket for their separate and short ride across the lake. The bus took us to the hotel Galeria, which was the nicest of the whole trip for me.

8.5 s/v Saucy Lady – Bahía to Peru and Back by Bus

Bahía to Guayaquil----\$14.00 for two on Reina bus

Bus to Lima, Del Camano--\$100.00 for two

Lima to Cuzco, Rutas de America on Cruse del Sur \$52.94 for two

Cuzco \$17.00 city tour for two

Machu Picchu \$125.00 per person

Sacred Valley \$18.00 per person

Bus to Puno \$34.00 for two

Boat on Lake Titicaca \$70.00 and includes one night stay on island Amantani

Bus from Puno to Cuzco \$60.00 for two including a very nice buffet lunch.

Airline ticket to Lima from Cuzco \$116.00 for two

Airline ticket to Guayaquil from Lima \$142.00 for two—we were in the low season and that is why the prices were low and they were doing a special rate at this time: April-May

Hotel California \$20.00 a night for two

Hotel Iquique in Lima \$10.00 pp a night and in Cuzco it is \$8.40pp a night.

You have to pay taxes leaving Peru on airlines

You have a six hour bus trip from Bahía to Guayaquil and then we had a 22 hour ride to Lima and the country and towns look just like Mexico and Central America. We had a 25 hour trip to Cuzco with a five hour delay for a slide in the mountains. From Lima to Cuzco you follow the ocean and all you see is mountains of sand and very desolate.

Altitude sickness may strike at anytime, so it would be best if you had this medicine with you:

Coramina-Glucosa (Novartis) this is a large pill that you just suck on for a long time to absorb in your system. Coca tea works well also.

Our stays in the hostels were very excellent and the people are very helpful and they can do excellent trips for you.

If you plan a trip to the Sacred Valley, plan on a Sunday as they have a big market in one of the towns and you can get great bargains.

The city tour of Cuzco is a very good bargain, as you will see ruins outside of Cuzco, as well as museums and you will need the ticket to get into Sacred Valley ruins. The cost is \$10.00pp. boleto turistico. (tourism ticket)

All of the buffets that were included on our trips were excellent and no one had any ill effects from the food.

If you do Lake Titicaca, bring shoes you can walk in on rocks and uneven terrain, as you will have two hikes to do.

Shamira Valencia r. is an excellent tour arranger and she will get bus and airline tickets for you. She is in the Hostal Iquique in Cuzco.

It would be best if you e-mailed ahead for reservations to the sights you want to see, as the busy season is June through September. Lima Hostal iquique—hiquique@terra.com.pe phone 511-423-3699 Cuzco Hostal, iquique—kpullied@yahoo.com

We had a very enjoyable trip and we enjoyed our stay in the home on the island with a lovely family, and experienced how they live and work and play. We went to a fiesta and we all had to dress in their dress, it was quite and experience.

You should take warm clothes, as it is cold in the mountains in the mornings and nights. if you go by bus take a blanket, as the bus is cold.

8.6 s/v Saucy Lady – Second Peru Trip

We took the 2:00 pm Ormeño bus from Guayaquil to Tumbes Peru on September 2, 2004. The bus terminal is in a strip mall between the Terminal Terrestre and the airport. You purchase the ticket and get the bus there. It is about a five hour ride to Tumbes. You have to get off the bus three times to show your passport.

1. Just show your passport
2. Make out papers and have them and your passport stamped.
3. Make out papers and have them and your passport stamped.

All this is done in reverse when coming back into Ecuador.

The bus is a double deck and the seats below are more comfortable than the upper deck, but it is a very comfortable bus. There isn't any food served, so it is good to take something along.

In Guayaquil we stay in California hotel, and have been very satisfied with their service and hotel.

In Tumbes we stayed in the Rodrich, and if you are sensitive to odors or mildew this isn't the place to stay. Tumbes has lots of hostals in all price ranges.

We did a one day trip to the mangroves and we were the first tourists to do this trip. We enjoyed the trip through the canals and the walk on the beach, where only the fishermen go. This beach was very clean.

We had a great lunch in the village that does the dugout canoe ride through the mangroves. The cost was \$70.00 for both of us.

Rutas de America has international bus service—e-mail: ragye@impsat.net.ec guayaquil-----quito: rauio@impsat.net.ec

8.7 s/v Cabiri – Peru and Bolivia

Here is some information that might be helpful traveling from Salinas Ecuador to many parts of Peru- Cuzco, Sacred Valley, Puno, Lake Titicaca, Copacabana, La Paz Bolivia, Aerquipa and back again. We spent four weeks in December, the beginning of rainy season but it only rained 2 nights.

We chose to travel most of the trip by bus. The Ormeno line (from Guayaquil-walk 3 blocks from terminal terrestre) will take you directly to Lima but it takes 24 hours. The cost was \$55 dollars each. This made border crossings easier – the bus waits. (It will cost the same if you pick it up here or in Chiclayo as we found out returning). The bus was comfortable with reclining seats, bano, movies and food (dinner and breakfast). We had seats 7&8 which gave us lots of leg room and great viewing. Ormeno leaves at 2PM and we couldn't purchase tickets until an hour before departure.

Arriving in Lima we went directly to Miraflores – similar to New Town in Quito.

A taxi should cost about \$3-4 or \$9-12 to any part of Miraflores. We stayed in three different hostels but our favorite was El Zaguán Lodging Home(511)4469356 Av. Diez Canseco No 736 Miraflores www.elzaguanelodging.com It is a private house with a beautiful garden, water fountain, birds, courtyard, and living space. \$30 for matrimonial. We walked to the malecon, markets, shopping, and restaurants.

Flew the next leg: from Lima to Cuzco. We flew LAN Peru - \$68 but our agent charged an additional \$15 each for us to pick up tickets at the Lima airport and then picked us up in Cuzco to take us to a hotel. There are other agents at the airport in Cuzco waiting for tourists who will call to find available hotels then even take you. The cost is about \$3 from the airport to Cuzco.

8.7.1 Cuzco

There are plenty of English-speaking tourist agents. Except for train tickets in advance, you should be able to book yourself and taxi. We used Sharamira. Her prices were expensive, the hotels needed to be booked and paid for in advance (some of which we were unhappy with) and lastly they over charged us for bus arrangements to Puno by 100%. After one night in Monarca \$30 – Sharamira's recommendation, which we found to be too noisy, we found near the square Hostal Alfredo's Palace \$30. Calle Triunfo No 373 (51) 084-223087

alfredospalace@hotmail.com

We spent two nights in Cuzco before leaving for Sacred Valley. The Cuzco day tour was too many churches and not enough Inca ruins.

8.7.2 From Cuzco to Pisac

Arrange your train schedule in advance. Sharamira arranged ours. Even though we had train tickets we opted to bus to Pisac -\$1. Ask for directions or take taxi to bus station. It is about one mile from town square. The bus will be crowded and is used by the locals. When you get off bus in Pisac it is a short walk across the street and up 3 blocks to the village. We stayed at Hotel Pisaq on the plaza - \$20
hotelpisaq@terra.com.pe www.hotelpisaq.com

The manager is German and speaks English. He knows the area well and gave us good advice and information. We hiked that day to the top of the ruins. Up and down took about two hours each way plus about 2 hours in the ruins. The path is next to the church and leads to the top. Take water and camera.

8.7.3 From Pisac to Ollantaytambo

Bus (\$1 every hour) at the same corner we got off arriving from Cuzco. Found hotel \$30.

Hotel Munaytika in Ollantaytambo Av. Estacion S/N munaytika@latinmail.com

We were glad to arrive early, get settled and see the ruins before the crowds. The hotel is easy to find. Walk down the main road to train station and it is on the left side.

Train: to Aguas Calientes

Stayed at Hostal Ima Sumac (prepaid with our package \$30) but would recommend Gringo Bill's for the same price. It is right off the square and near the train. Gringo Bill's Calle Qoya Raymi 104
www.gringobills.com gringobills@yahoo.com cel 748-347 www.machupicchuhostels.com

We arrived around noon and had time to hike Puchu Cuisu. The trail is .2 mi. down the train tracks then up stairs and ladders. It took less than two hours and you find yourself above Machu Picchu looking down! A real highlight for us. We considered hiking the Inca trail but didn't want the outdoor sleeping on the ground for four days (rainy season!). This hike plus Pisac made up for the loss. Sharimira's package includes train both ways, guide on site and entrance, we chose to bus through Sacred Valley and catch train in Ollantaytambo. The train costs the same from Cuzco or from here however. Don't miss the Valley and do it going because after Machu Picchu everything is less impressive. We stayed two nights - the next day toured MP and stayed another night before leaving back to Cuzco. We didn't feel rushed and enjoyed the time on Machu Picchu, hiking to the top. Unless you want to go down and back up again do not hike to the Temple of the Moon as we did. It made for a long hike and the Temple was a disappointment.

Train back to Cuzco: After Ollantay, the train is tedious. Coaches have two seats facing each other with no leg room. Consider getting reservations only to and from Ollantay and bus the rest of the way. Spent two days and nights re-visiting Cuzco then bus to Puno

Lots of options. Tour bus departs every morning (\$25 with guide and stops at churches/ruins). We took a less expensive bus at 9 and arrived in Puno late afternoon. It is necessary to take taxi to hotels.

Puno: Stayed at Conde De Lemos Inn \$32

8.7.4 *Bolivia*

Then booked day tour to the Titicaca islands through Edgar for the next day -\$25. Returned to hotel and next day left by Tour Peru bus \$8 for Copacabana, Boliva.

Copacabana Thanks to Cosmos we found a nice hotel (Chasqui de Oro) on the beach for \$20 for a room on the 4th floor with our own terrace with a stunning view. We walked to the top of Cerro Calvario but did not take island tours.

La Paz, Boliva: Scenic bus ride and ferry! Hostal: Posada del Angel Av Illampu 867 Zona El Rosarido Almost across the street from where bus stops in the city. \$10

We liked La Paz especially after the all day city tour on the double-decker open bus! We saw all corners of the city that would have otherwise been missed and appreciated the history and “hat” story.

8.7.5 *La Paz to Arica, Chile*

Unfortunately, this is the route back. Luxury Chile Bus left at 6am. Three hours into the ride it stopped for a broken-down bus and picked up about 10 stranded passengers who stood most of the way. Border crossing was tedious. We moved our watches back one hour eastbound entering Boliva and then moved back another hour westbound into Chile (daylight savings time) – thus, Chile was 2 hours different from Peru. The northern Chilean Pacific Ocean is inhospitable but there is a nice basin in Arica. No cruising yachts though! Jan did not like Arica and we woke early to continue ride to Arequipa.

Border Crossing. Taxi then colectivo to Tacna where we waited five hours for the next direct 1st class bus departing for Arequipa. Flores Line about \$7 each person. Arrived in Arequipa at 5:30. The taxi from bus station to town should cost S3-4.

8.7.6 *Arequipa*

La Casa de Melgar Melgar No 108. 054-222-459

Email lacasademelgar@terra.com.pe

We loved this hotel. It is an 18th century building with about 20 rooms, all decorated differently. Ours had an outside garden area #109 for \$30. We were there for Christmas and loved it.

Tour Agent Peru Incas Explorer: Katherine@peruoncasexplorer.com, Katherine@hotmail.com

She can be found across the street and around the corner. She was witty, young, helpful,(spoke English), honest, fun-loving, and booked our overnight tour to Colca Canyon , Oltursa Bus to Lima, our Lima hostel and found the greatest hostel for us in Chivay. Pozo Del Cielo (51-54)205838 Colca (51-54) 531040 reserves@pozodelcielo.com.pe

The tour was rewarding but a long drive getting there. The landscape is rather barren except for alpacas, llamas, and vicunas grazing in large herds. Did see 6 condors at the canyon and the overlooks are spectacular.

8.7.7 Arequipa to Lima

Overnight bus (\$30 Oltursa – nicest bus we had for the entire trip). In Lima, back to Mira Flores and an enjoyable day.

8.7.8 Lima to Guayaquil

We were tired of hotels, restaurants, and churches and ready to get back to Cabiri. Tried to break up the 24 hour bus ride by stopping in Chiclayo. Bad hotel (noisy), no sleep, thus no desire to tour the area. Awkward to go north from here. Alternatives were to day bus to Piura to transfer bus to Tumbes or Truillo spend the night and cross border the next morning then on to Guayaquil or wait til 2am and catch the direct Ormeno bus that originated in Lima 12 hours earlier. We did the second option and paid \$50 for the second 12 hours!

8.7.9 Recommendations and Highlights

Miraflores: Café Amore. Please say hi to Carmen, the owner. She loves practicing her English.

Cuzco: Duffy's Restaurant, upstairs above the square.

Arequipa : La Casa de Melgar Hostal, Katherine at Inca Explorer. Tell her we sent you! She will book any part of Peru, including Machu Pichu.

Sacred Valley: Pisac. Don't go for the market.

Aguas Calienta: Gringo Bill's. Hike up to Puchu Cussi. Two nights gives you time to spend the day at the ruins.

Oltursa, Ormeño, TourChile Buslines

La Paz, Bolivia day tour on double decker bus

Travel light. December was warm and dry. We didn't need a lot of extra clothing.

8.8 s/v She Wolf Trip to Peru – Summary

**Original plan was Bahía to Guayaquil to Tumbes to Piura to Chiclayo. Strike at border necessitated diversion to Loja and different border crossing. This is not the optimum route unless Cuenca/Loja is part of your itinerary.

Date	Day	Location	Activity	Hotel	Cost	Notes
11-May	W	Bahía to Guayaquil	Travel by bus - 6 hrs.		\$14.00	Reina del Camino - 7:15am
		Guayaquil		Ecuahogar	\$25.00	Incl. Breakfast
12-May	R	Guayaquil to Loja	Travel by bus - 9 hrs.		\$20.00	Transportes Loja
		Loja		Hotel Podocarpus	\$30.00	bath, hot water, TV, breakfast
13-May	F	Loja to Piura	Travel by bus - 9 hrs.		\$16.00	Transportes Loja, 7am
		Piura to Chiclayo	Travel by bus - 3 hrs.		\$7.40	Linea
		Chiclayo		Hotel Paraíso	\$14.00	bath, hot water, TV, restaurant
14-May	S	Chiclayo	Museo Tumbes Reales		\$9.25	minibus to Lambayeque, entrance and guide
				Hotel Paraíso	\$14.00	bath, hot water, TV, restaurant
15-May	Su	Chiclayo	Tour to Sipan		\$37.00	transportation, entrance and guide
				Hotel Paraíso	\$14.00	bath, hot water, TV, restaurant
16-May	M	Chiclayo to Trujillo	Travel by bus - 3 hrs.		\$7.40	Linea - morning
		Trujillo	Chan Chan tour		\$26.75	guide, entrance, transportation
				Casa de Clara	\$15.40	hot water, TV, guides own it
17-May	T	Trujillo	Tour of Huacas de Sol y Luna		\$ 26.75	guide, entrance, transportation
				Casa de Clara	\$15.40	
18-May	W	Trujillo to Chimbote	Travel by bus - 2 hrs.		\$3.10	Linea
		Chimbote		Hostal El Parque	\$15.40	bath, hot water, TV
19-May	R	Chimbote to Caraz	Travel by bus - 9 hrs.		\$15.40	Jungay Express - 8am
		Caraz		Hostal Caraz Dulzura	\$14.00	bath, hot water, TV in lounge
20-May	F	Caraz	Tour to Laguna Paron		\$28.00	cab and box lunch
				Hostal Caraz Dulzura	\$14.00	bath, hot water, TV in lounge
21-May	S	Caraz to Lima	Travel by bus - 10 hrs.		\$24.00	Expreso Ancash, Movil Tours
		Lima		Hostal Iquique	\$14.00	bath, hot water, TV, breakfast

Date	Day	Location	Activity	Hotel	Cost	Notes
22-May	Su	Lima	Plaza de Armas			
			Plaza San Martin			
			Museo de la Nación		\$6.75	Entrance and guide
			Miraflores			
				Hostal Iquique	\$14.00	bath, hot water, TV, breakfast
23-May	M	Lima	Tour to Pachacamac		\$14.00	Bus, guide, entrance
				Hostal Iquique	\$14.00	bath, hot water, TV, breakfast
24-May	T	Lima	San Francisco Monastery & Church		\$3.00	guide and entrance
			Changing of the Guard - Presidential Pal.			
			Zoo		\$5.25	
				Hostal Iquique	\$14.00	bath, hot water, TV, breakfast
25-May	W	Lima to Ica	Travel by bus - 4.5 hrs.		\$9.85	Peru Bus
		Ica to Huacachina	Travel by taxi		\$1.00	
		Huacachina		Hosteria Suiza	\$35.00	bath, hot water, breakfast
26-May	R	Huacachina	Winery tour - Vista Alegre			
			Dune buggy tour		\$21.50	
				Hosteria Suiza	\$35.00	bath, hot water, breakfast
27-May	F	Huacachina to Ica	Travel by taxi		\$1.00	
			Regional Museum - Ica		\$6.75	
		Ica to Nazca	Travel by bus 2 hrs.		\$3.70	Expreso Chichapa
		Nazca	Lecture on Nazca lines		\$13.00	Maria Reiche Planetarium 7pm
				Hospedaje Yemaya	\$15.00	bath, hot water, TV, breakfast
28-May	S	Nazca	Flight over Nazca lines		\$110.00	book at hotel
			Museo Didactico Antonini		\$6.00	entrance, guide
				Hospedaje Yemaya	\$15.00	bath, hot water, TV, breakfast
29-May	Su	Nazca to Arequipa	Travel by bus - 10 hrs.		\$21.50	Ormeno- 4am
		Arequipa				
				Hotel Castilla	\$18.50	bath, hot water, TV
30-May	M	Arequipa	Museo Santuarios Andinos		\$9.25	

Date	Day	Location	Activity	Hotel	Cost	Notes
			Plaza de Armas			
			Catedral			
				Hotel Castilla	\$18.50	
31-May	T	Areq to Colca Cnyn	Colca Canyon Tour		\$38.00	Guide, transportation, hotel, breakfast
			Entry to Colca Canyon		\$14.00	
			Chivay			
			Hot Springs		\$3.00	entrance to site and museum
1-Jun	W	Colca Cnyn to Areq	Colca Canyon Tour			
		Arequipa		Hotel Castilla	\$18.50	
2-Jun	R	Arequipa	Monasterio Santa Catalina		\$15.00	entrance and guide
			Municipal Historical Museum		\$1.25	
				Hotel Castilla	\$18.50	
3-Jun	F	Arequipa to Puno	Travel by bus - 5 hrs.		\$18.50	Destinos
		Puno	Plaza de Armas			
				Don Julio	\$27.00	cable TV, heating, breakfast
4-Jun	S	Puno	Day tour to Uros and Isla Taquile		\$20.00	transportation, entrance and guide
				Don Julio	\$27.00	breakfast
5-Jun	Su	Puno to Cuzco	Travel by bus - 6 hrs.		\$12.30	Transportes Imexso
		Cuzco			\$43.00	tourist ticket
				Hostal Iquique	\$20.00	bath, hot water, breakfast
6-Jun	M	Cuzco	Plaza de Armas - La Compañía			
			Museo Inka			
			City tour		\$24.00	guide, transportation
			Qorikancha		\$3.70	
				Hostal Iquique	\$20.00	bath, hot water, breakfast
7-Jun	T	Cuzco	Sacred Valley Tour		\$36.00	lunch included
				Hostal Iquique	\$20.00	bath, hot water, breakfast
8-Jun	W	Cuzco	Santo Domingo			
			Center for Native Art (dance)			
				Hostal Iquique	\$20.00	bath, hot water, breakfast

Date	Day	Location	Activity	Hotel	Cost	Notes
9-Jun	R	Cuzco to A Calientes	Travel by train - 3.5 hrs.		\$270.00	2-day tour price, incl. rail, bus, fees, guide
			Machu Picchu			
		Aguas Calientes		Hostal Ima Sumac	\$25.00	bath, hot water, breakfast
10-Jun	F	A Calientes to Cuzco	Travel by train - 3.5 hrs.			
		Cuzco		Hostal Iquique	\$20.00	bath, hot water, breakfast
11-Jun	S	Cuzco	Convent of Santa Catalina			
				Hostal Iquique	\$20.00	bath, hot water, breakfast
12-Jun	Su	Cuzco to Lima	Travel by air - 1.5 hrs.		\$146.00	Trans Peru
		Lima to Tumbes	Travel by air		\$172.00	Trans Peru
		Tumbes		Hotel Roma	\$18.50	
13-Jun	M	Tumbes to Guayaquil	Travel by bus - 5 hrs.		\$10.00	CIFA
		Guayaquil		Ecuahogar	\$25.00	
14-Jun	T	Guayaquil to Bahía	Travel by bus - 6 hrs.		\$14.00	Reina del Camino
					\$1952.05	

At this time of year (dry season), Peru is COLD, especially at altitude!! Dress in layers for warm days, cold nights. SHE WOLF used the agent Sharamira in Cuzco and did not find her prices more expensive, as did CABIRI. Good service, pleasant person. Recommend booking Cuzco hotel, Machu Picchu train, and flights ahead. Absolutely essential to do this in high season (June – August). Northern Peru not as overrun with tourists, so pre-booking not necessary.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

s/v SoggyPaws inherited this guide in 2009 from s/v Carina, who I think inherited it from She Wolf. Many cruisers have contributed information and updates. Below is only a partial list.

- El Regalo – Brian and JoDon – 2010 updates on interior Ecuador
- Aliisa – Lauri & Annina – Updates on checking into Peru
- Cynosure – Phil – Notes on Bahía and Sunbrella in Quito.
- Dream Caper – Steve and Portia – Notes on liferafts repacking and batteries in Bahía
- Visions of Johanna – Updates from Galapagos Dec 2009 and Jan/Feb 2010.
- Soggy Paws – Sherry and Dave – Spent the year of 2009 in Bahía de Caráquez and left in early 2010 for the Galapagos
- Sarana – Notes on stops between Bahía and the Colombian border.
- Sarana, Nakia, Mainly – Bahía de Caráquez and Ecuador travel info 2008/2009.
- Lightfoot, Lauren Grace, Restless, Zen, Geramar. Galapagos info 2009.
- Breila
- Carina – Phil and Leslie. Cruised the Galapagos and hung out in Puerto Lucia during 2006 & 2007, and more updates when they passed thru in 2009.
- Loon III – Hung out in Callao Peru for most of 2008
- Migration – Dave and Aileen – Passed through the Galapagos 2008
- Music
- Nine of Cups – Marcie and David. Passed through Puerto Lucia in 2005 and again through Bahía de Caráquez in 2008
- Restless – 2007 Peru Travel
- Saucy Lady
- She Wolf
- Vilisar
- Willow – Gunkholed the coast of Ecuador