

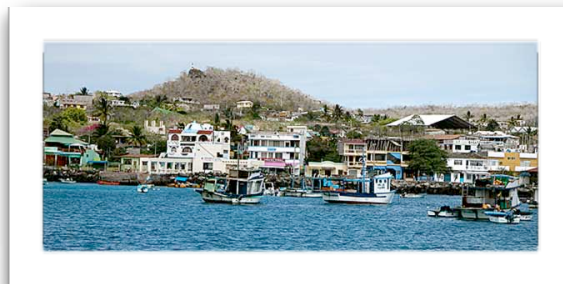
# The Clark family Galapagos adventure

Here is a little more information about your placement on San Cristobal Island

## The Galapagos Islands

The Galapagos Islands are located approximately 1,000 km (625 miles) off the coast of Ecuador. They are comprised of thirteen islands and over forty islets. Some 18,000 humans inhabit five of the islands (San Cristobal, Santa Cruz, Isabela, Floreana, and Baltra), and 97% of the islands' total area is designated as National Park land. San Cristobal Island, the easternmost island and home to the New Era Galapagos Foundation, has roughly 5,000 (human) residents, but countless more seals, tortoise and birds that you will meet each day during your stay.

You will be staying and working on San Cristobal. The population of the whole island is approximately 6,500, most of whom live in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno - the principal town on the island, a port where our Galapagos partner - The New Era Galapagos Foundation, is located.



## Climate

There are two seasons in the Galapagos, a dry season and a wet season. Surprisingly, the "dry season", from June to November, tends to be cloudier and cooler, and frequently there is a mist in the air, called the garúa, more so in the highlands than in town. While real rain is infrequent, it does occur during the dry season. When the sun is out, it can be quite warm, even hot, and evenings are quite cool. The "wet season", from December to May, tends to be much hotter, with more frequent rain and also more intense sun.

## Daily Life in San Cristobal

The pace of life in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno and on San Cristobal is laid back and casual. While many people have emigrated here from mainland Ecuador, many others have lived here all their lives. They live here for the tranquility and peaceful lifestyle of the island. The local people are very friendly and helpful. Dress and customs are informal.

## Transport on San Cristobal

While a few people in town have private cars or trucks, you will notice white taxi/trucks available everywhere. For \$1, you can ride anywhere in town, and for a couple of dollars you can get a ride to El Progreso. You can walk from one side of the town to the other in about half an hour.

## Health and Safety

You should either buy and drink only bottled water or you should boil water before drinking it.

With food, be sure to wash all fresh fruits and vegetables before eating them. With packaged food, look for expiration dates before you purchase them...the health department frequently has to confiscate food because stores sell food beyond the expiration dates, so you should look out for this.

If you drink alcohol, we recommend you stick to beer and wine rather than hard liquor, especially when eating/drinking out. There have been many instances over the past few years where bottled liquor has been tampered with, with ethyl alcohol or some other cheaper (sometimes more toxic) kind of alcohol being substituted. While this isn't necessarily dangerous, it isn't pleasant, so you might want to consider bringing your own liquor to be safe.

Relatively speaking, San Cristobal is very safe. Unlike the mainland, there is very little theft and little concern for crime. However, normal precautions should be taken with your possessions and walking in badly lit areas with few people around at night, as you would anywhere.

## Travelling Between the Islands

There are daily boats and a daily (normally) small plane, between San Cristobal and Santa Cruz.

### Boat

There are boats to Santa Cruz from the quay in San Cristobal every day at 7am. The cost is \$25 one way and the journey lasts around 2 and a half hours. On calm days it is a picturesque trip and en route you are likely to encounter a variety of sea birds, as well as the possibility of dolphins and even whales.

### Plane

If you prefer an alternative to travelling by boat, you can fly to Isabela and Santa Cruz with Emetebe Airlines. The flight is on a small 8 seater plane, which leaves San Cristobal daily (as long as there are passengers), usually in the morning. The flight only takes around 40 minutes, but is a more expensive option than travelling by boat. The office is located at the airport in San Cristobal.

## About the New Era Galapagos Foundation

Our partner in San Cristobal is the New Era Galapagos Foundation, which works with the people of San Cristobal to develop environmental education through community programs. We place English speaking volunteers in a variety of programs across the island, where they can make a real difference to the local community and contribute to the long term conservation of the islands.

NEGF was founded in 1996 with the commitment to provide a more inclusive and therefore effective conservation programme for the Galapagos Islands. We aim to achieve this through a program of education, which can ultimately provide the necessary skills, knowledge, and awareness to the most influential species in the Galapagos; humans.

## Your project placement

English teaching volunteers will be based at the NEGF centre, which is based in the centre of town on the 'Malecon' (promenade), right on the seafront of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno. The NEGF centre offers after school English courses during the afternoons and evenings for children aged 5 - 17 and adults.

The NEGF educational program runs parallel to the school year, which runs from April - January (In much of mainland Ecuador the regular school year runs from approximately late September to the end of June)

- English classes are held four afternoons a week (Mon - Thurs)
- The children's classes last for one hour each from 3.00 - 4.00pm, 4.00 - 5.00pm and 5.00 - 6.00pm. On Friday afternoons no regular classes are held, but the children may come to watch films or participate in special activities.
- The adult English classes are also an hour each in two blocks, from 7.00 - 8.00pm and 8.00 - 9.00pm.

Students are divided into beginner, elementary, or intermediate levels. There are also a few advanced students. The majority of the students are at the beginning or elementary levels. Most of the beginner and elementary classes have between 8 and 25 students. In the larger classes, there may be two teachers sharing the teaching responsibilities, which will be discussed and explained on your arrival.

In the mornings, Mo and Martin you will be working within the Alejandro Alvear school, from 7am to 12.30pm each day, which the Clark children will also be enrolled into. The school had children from 6-14 years and there are generally 20 children per class. You will carry out the role of teaching assistants, helping the class teachers in the various classes, including English, Maths, Music, Computers, and physical exercises (gym)



On Friday afternoons and at weekends there is also the option to get involved with various outdoor environmental improvement activities, such as beach clean-ups, mural painting and repair work.

### Accommodation

You'll be staying in a 2 bedroom self-catered apartment for the duration of your stay. The apartment is just a 7 minute walk from the school and 5 minutes from the nearest stores where you can buy your food and supplies. The apartment is well equipped with items you will need to cook and has good electrics and hot running water.

### Donation materials

If you have an additional room in your luggage and would like to bring supplied that are needed at the school and the centre, the following items are always appreciated:

- school supplies such as pens, pencils, notebooks, chalk, arts materials, etc
- Blu-tac, or other wall-hanging solutions
- cartridges for HP