



ECUADOR WOMEN'S TRAVEL GUIDE

Hello, Mermaid!

Welcome to an exclusive travel guide crafted especially for adventurous women.

My name is Iva, and as an expat living in Ecuador for 10 years, I'm excited to share my tips and tricks to help you enjoy this beautiful country to the fullest. With my guidance, you'll save time, money, and, most importantly, worries.

We all know that news and search engines can sometimes paint an incomplete or misleading picture of a country, leading to unnecessary worries about things that aren't truly representative. As a foreign woman living and surfing here in Ecuador, I want to offer you peace of mind along with my personal recommendations for safe and enjoyable travels. Let my firsthand experiences and insights guide you through this beautiful country, ensuring your journey is both memorable and secure.

Enjoy!

Iva.

YOUR TRIP TO ECUADOR: WELCOME TO SOUTH AMERICA!

Ecuador is a beautiful country, with a nice weather, and lovely people.

It's located in the western region of South America, with incredible sunsets at the Pacific Ocean and right on the equator, so we have the best climate in the world throughout the year. It limits to the north with Colombia, to the south and east with Peru.

Ecuador is a small country with 4 different regions very close one to each other: Mountains, Amazon, Coast and the Galapagos Islands.

Arrival and Transportation:

When it comes to choosing an airport for your arrival, we highly recommend Guayaquil Airport (GYE), known as Jose Joaquin de Olmedo International Airport. It's small, very easy to navigate, and conveniently located in the city, making it the closest to the coast. Additionally, the bus station is right next to the airport, allowing you to travel anywhere in the country from this point.



However, if you plan to start your trip in the mountains, consider arriving at Quito Airport (UIO). Just keep in mind that this airport is about 40 minutes from the city center, and you may need to take a taxi, which costs around \$25. Some people mention a bus service, but this information is not certain.

Uber: there is a Taxi Service we recommend called: Go Girl.

Phone:

You can get a local SIM card. It costs around 5 USD and comes with GB of internet and you can use your mobile phone normally during your stay. Find it in any small store in the city or even at the bus station itself. Companies: Claro, Movistar, Tuenti.

Vaccines:

Vaccine for yellow fever is recommended if you are going to the amazon. but not mandatory.

Currency:

Ecuador officially uses the US dollar as its currency. If you are arriving with a different currency, we suggest exchanging money in your home country where commissions tend to be lower, as airport exchanges often charge higher fees.

While major cities and some supermarkets accept card payments, it's advisable to carry cash as many smaller establishments may not have card readers. In beachside shops, only small denomination bills such as \$5, \$10, and \$20 are typically accepted. Larger bills like \$50 or \$100 are less commonly seen and may not be accepted. You can obtain smaller bills at supermarkets or larger stores if needed.

Safety:

I've found the people in Ecuador incredibly kind, and traveling by bus is generally safe. Like in many developing countries, it's important to keep a watchful eye on your belongings. If you happen to doze off during your journey, ensure your bags are securely within reach or placed in the designated storage areas provided by the bus service. Drivers typically issue tickets for checked bags, akin to procedures at airports. Always double-check with them if your bag hasn't been tagged. Keep your most valuable items close to you in a bag that you carry personally for added peace of mind.



SURF SPOTS:

Here's a curated list of my favorite surf spots from South to North, tailored with details on skill level, wave type, and how to get there:

Playa Chabela: [click here to see the wave](#)

Chabela or Chabelita, is a delightful right-hand wave nestled in the town of Playas de General Villamil. While the town may not be the epitome of luxury, its year-round sunshine and warmth create an inviting atmosphere. This wave is particularly beloved by longboarders and beginners alike. It features a sandy bottom with some rocks on the sides, typical of point breaks, yet it remains a popular spot for those just starting out in surfing. Pro tip: Build your arm strength, as the current can sometimes be strong when paddling out back. Alternatively, you can catch waves, stroll back along the beach, and find your way back to the peak through the rocks.

How to get: One hour from Guayaquil by Car, 1.5 hours by Bus (Companies: Villamil and Posorja).

Where to Stay: airbnb, check hotels in google maps, or stay at Free Spirit Hostel in a town called Puerto Engabao (25 minutes drive).

Puerto Engabao: [Click here to see the wave.](#)

Puerto Engabao is a picturesque fishing village affectionately known as the "Town of Pigs," where friendly porcine locals roam freely. The surf break here caters to low intermediate to advanced surfers, offering a thrilling right-hand wave over a sandy bottom. Depending on the swell, it can be quite speedy.

How to Get: It's a scenic 1.5-hour drive from Guayaquil in the same direction as Playas de Villamil. Look for the turn-off to Puerto Engabao. Alternatively, enjoy a 2-hour bus journey: first to Playas de Villamil, then another bus (typically green) to Puerto Engabao. (If you enjoy raw and fun adventures, this trip promises to be both wild and entertaining!)

Where to Stay: Consider accommodations like Free Spirit Hostel or Surf Shelter Engabao for a relaxed and welcoming stay.



Montañita: [Click here to see the wave](#)

Montañita is renowned as Ecuador's surf city, offering a perfect right-hand wave that caters to surfers of all levels, depending on the swell. This vibrant spot features a classic point break with a rocky bottom, ideal for both longboarders and shortboarders alike. For beginners seeking a more relaxed environment, there's a beach break nearby.

While La Punta (the point) can get crowded and occasionally has a hint of localism, confident surfers or those accompanied by friendly locals can still enjoy this wave. Compared to other places, local surfers in Ecuador are notably kind and welcoming.

Beyond surfing, Montañita boasts a charming town with lively nightlife for those who enjoy a bit of partying.

How to Get: It's a scenic 2.5-hour drive from Guayaquil, or you can take a direct 3-hour bus ride with CLP company.

Where to Stay: There's no shortage of accommodation options, with hotels, hostels, and Airbnb listings in La Punta area highly recommended. Balsa Surf Camp is also a fantastic choice for a surf-centric stay.

Olon: [Click here to see the wave.](#)

Olon, located next to Montañita, offers a serene alternative for women surfers seeking a beach break with a sandy bottom and fewer crowds. It's a relaxed atmosphere, perfect for those looking to escape the hustle of Montañita's lively scene. For directions on how to get there and recommendations on where to stay, follow the same instructions provided for the previous spot.



a wave of sisterhood

Ayampe: [Click here to see the wave](#)

Ayampe is a hipster vibe town, with plenty of hostels, airbnbs and cottages. Also coffee shops, restaurants and bars. It's calm and nice.

It's a beach break, sandy bottom, not too crowded. The waves are powerful but suitable for all levels depending on the tide.

How to Get: 3 hours drive from Guayaquil, 3.5 hours by bus. Take CLP bus to Montañita and after that take the green bus (called Manglaralto) to Las Tunas.

Where to Stay: Plenty of Hostels and airbnbs.

Safety: safe, in general you can leave your stuff on the beach and go surfing.

Las Tunas: [Click here to see the wave](#)

Well, what can I say, this is my place on earth. I live and learned how to Surf in Las Tunas. It's a small village with few local restaurants and pizza places, and miles of beach and waves.

It's a beach break, sandy bottom and same than Ayampe the waves can be powerful. Suitable for beginners in low tide, intermediate and advances in high tide.

How to get: 3 hours drive from Guayaquil, 3.5 hours by bus. Take CLP bus to Montañita and after that take the green bus (called Manglaralto) to Las Tunas.

Where to Stay: Hermanos Perdidos Surf (hostel), Los Ahorcados (airbnb), Ronda Home Suites (airbnb).

Safety: super safe, you can leave your stuff on the beach and go surfing.

Mompiche: [See the wave here](#)

Mompiche is a tranquil fishing village in northern Ecuador, offers a fantastic surf spot known for its Point Break with a sandy bottom and a few rocks on the side. This left-hand wave is ideal for longboard enthusiasts and caters to all levels of surfers. The best time to catch these waves is from December to June, when the north swells are in season.

How to get: 5 hours drive from Quito. 7 hours by bus, there is a direct bus from Quitumbe Bus Station (company: Limitada).

Where to stay: Mudhouse Hostel, Casa Banana, airbnb.



As we wrap up this guide for women surfers planning to explore Ecuador, I hope you've found it enjoyable and useful for your upcoming adventures.

If you'd like to connect with like-minded surfers during your travels, join our community on Instagram. Whether you're a beginner or a low intermediate surfer, feel free to join us at our upcoming retreats.

We'd love to share the waves with you!

[Instagram](#)

[Retreats](#)