

ERIC: A SMARTVOYAGER CERTIFIED BOAT

*SmartVoyager is a Rainforest Alliance Program
Guaranteeing Eco-Conscious Cruises Through the Galapagos*

Welcome aboard the Eric! As you explore the clear waters of the Galapagos archipelago, swim with the sea lions and bask with the blue-footed boobies, rest assured that you are helping to protect the same flora, fauna and their fragile habitat that so inspired Charles Darwin. The ecofriendly and socially responsible boat you have chosen has been given the SmartVoyager green seal of approval. SmartVoyager is a program of the Rainforest Alliance and its Ecuadorian partner group, Conservación y Desarrollo.

What is SmartVoyager and why is it important?

Because last year some 60,000 tourists visited the Galapagos. While most, like yourself, came simply to marvel at the remarkable creatures that inhabit these islands, others, either unwittingly or with intent, subtly contributed to their demise. Over the years, the influx of non-native species, fishing and poorly managed tourist boats have disturbed and distressed the waters and wildlife of the Galapagos.



To protect these wondrous living laboratories, and the people that live and work on and around them, the Rainforest Alliance collaborated with Conservación y Desarrollo in the development of SmartVoyager. The program awards its green seal of approval to tour-boat operators meeting a set of strict conservation standards for protecting the environment, wildlife and the well being of workers and local communities. Ecoventura, the company that operates Eric, was an early adopter of the program. Working together with the Rainforest Alliance team, Ecoventura staff worked hard to implement a rigorous set of environmental and

social standards that make the Eric one of the most environmentally friendly boats in the Galapagos.

Why SmartVoyager?

Tourism is now the world's largest industry, and while it can lead to problems such as waste, habitat destruction and the displacement of local residents and wildlife, the Rainforest Alliance recognizes that properly managed tourism can contribute to conservation, sustainable development and the alleviation of poverty.



For passengers, the SmartVoyager seal is a guarantee that you are traveling with an operator who cares about the conservation of the islands and has taken every precaution to provide you with a memorable, educational and thrilling adventure, without harming the wildlife of this special environment.

As one of the world's leading conservation organizations working to develop and promote economically viable and socially desirable alternatives to the destruction of natural resources, the Rainforest Alliance developed SmartVoyager. After pioneering progressive forestry management in 1989, the Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood program became the world's most extensive in forestry certification. Today, the Alliance is also internationally recognized for its certification of sustainably grown coffee, chocolate, citrus and flowers, as well as tour boats in the Galapagos. As the driving force behind the creation of the Sustainable Tourism Stewardship Council – a proposed international governing body that

would develop standards and criteria for tourism certification, while ensuring that certifiers adhere to the guidelines – the Rainforest Alliance is quickly becoming synonymous with sustainable tourism.

What are SmartVoyager standards?

SmartVoyager's standards were designed in collaboration with scientists, conservation experts and tour operators, and cover a host of environmental and social concerns. They protect against potential sources of pollution; set rules for the good management of docks, tour boats and the small craft that ferry passengers out to the boats; specify criteria for the procurement and management of supplies; and defend against opportunities for introducing alien species. For local people and workers, these standards require good living conditions and advanced training for the boat crew and guides.

The program is based on a definition of ecotourism that combines elements of nature conservation, respect for local cultures, local community participation and benefits and education - a description that is accepted by organizations such as the International Ecotourism Society.

SmartVoyager is voluntary. Tour companies that wish to participate invite a team of specialists aboard their boats to evaluate the vessels according to the guidelines. Once an operator brings a boat into compliance with the standards, the craft is certified and allowed to display the SmartVoyager seal of approval. Each boat is revisited and recertified annually.

The boat you are traveling on today has met the following standards:

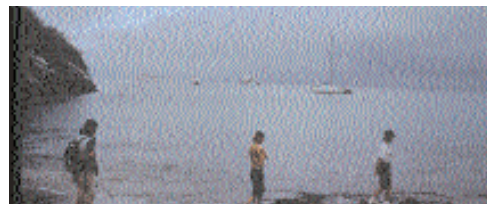
- Use of lead-free paint.
- Use of only biodegradable soaps, detergents and shampoos.
- Implementation of a waste-disposal system, including recycling bins.
- Production of fresh water through the use of a desalinization plant, a method that purifies

water with ozone and eliminates chlorine discharge into the ocean.

- Treatment of black and gray wastewater under aerobic decomposition.
- Installation of light bulbs that do not attract insects to prevent the introduction of non-native species to the islands.
- Replacement of two-stroke outboard motors on dinghies with four-stroke engines that are 70% quieter, emit virtually no fumes and use 50% less fuel.
- Guarantee of sanitary conditions – as well as a good quality of life – for all crew members.

In 2001, the SmartVoyager initiative was commended by UNESCO's World Heritage Committee "given the nature of tourism visitation to the Galapagos and the impacts of tourism on the fragile environment and in light of the proposed Marine Reserve." The committee believed that consideration should be given to promoting similar programs in other World Heritage sites.

We hope you enjoy your voyage, and that your experience is as rewarding as it is environmentally and socially sound. If you could take just a moment to jot down some of your impressions of travel aboard a Rainforest Alliance certified boat, we would greatly appreciate hearing from you.



Thank you for choosing SmartVoyager.



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