

GALAPAGOS CRUISE

11 DAYS / 10 NIGHTS **

**** Itinerary based on the 7 nights cruise**



The Galapagos Islands are renowned for their unique wildlife. You can swim with sea lions, float eye to eye with penguins or stand beside a blue footed booby as it feeds its young. Spread out over 50 000 squares km of the Pacific Ocean, the archipelago comprises 13 main island and 6 smaller ones.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 QUITO

Arrival - transfer to the hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel Quito 4* or similar for 2 nights

DAY 2 QUITO

Colonial City Tour & Middle of the World: bustling streets and squares of the largest historical old town in the Americas, a multi-ethnic, artistic and cultural heritage destination. Visit the "Middle of the world" situated at 0°0'0" latitude. (B)

DAY 3 QUITO · GALAPAGOS ISLAND : BEGINNING OF YOUR CRUISE **

Departure from Quito to Baltra (2 ½ hours flight). Passengers are picked up at the airport by our naturalist guides and taken on a ten minute bus drive to the pier to board the M/V Galapagos Legend.

PM Highlands Tortoise Reserve (Santa Cruz Island)

Dry landing. In the mountains of Galapagos is possible to admire different kinds of birds, such as tree and ground finches, vermillion flycatchers, paint-billed crakes, yellow warblers, and cattle egrets (usually standing on the tortoises' shell). The journey to the reserve offers great opportunities to see the contrasts that the island offers in reference to the variety of ecosystems. The road goes from the coast through the agricultural zone and straight up to the dense humid forests. Often, Galapagos Giant Tortoises are also seen on the way, wandering through pastures in the paddocks. This spot is a bird watchers' haven since almost every land bird present on the island lives or migrates here. (B/L/D)

Difficulty level: easy

Type of terrain: flat & muddy sometimes (depending on season)

Duration: 45 minutes drive / 1h30 walk

Accommodation: Standard Plus Cabin

DAY 4 GALAPAGOS ISLAND

AM El Barranco, Prince Philip's Steps (Genovesa Island)

Be marvelled at the variety of sea life that uses the crevices of the lava cliffs for shelter. Red-billed Tropicbirds fly overhead, switching between their nests and the bay, and a small colony of fur seals may be found near the landing site. You will be dropped off at a steep stairway that begins on rocks at the foot of a path that leads through a seabird colony full of Nazca and Red-footed Boobies. At the plateau, the trail continues inland allowing you to see more nesting booby colonies in the thin Palo Santo forest. Near the end of the trail, over a rocky lava plain, Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrels can be observed flying in all directions. If you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse of a Short-eared Owl.

Difficulty level: moderate

Type of terrain: rocky – lava

Duration: 45-minute walk

PM Darwin Bay (Genovesa Island)

Disembark onto a small sand and coral beach. A short trail heads west along a tidal lagoon and then up a rocky hill that leads to a point overlooking the cliffs and Darwin Bay. Along the trail near the tidal lagoon, visitors will see pairs of Swallow-tailed Gulls, Lava Gulls, Yellow-crowned and Lava Herons. The trail continues through Palo Santo trees, Opuntia cacti, and Saltbushes inhabited by Great Frigate birds and Red-footed Boobies. This is one of the few places in the islands where visitors are guaranteed to see Red-footed Boobies. It is estimated that more than 200,000 Red-footed Boobies live in the trees and bushes of Genovesa. (B/L/D)

Difficulty level: Moderate

Type of terrain: Sand & Lava

Duration: 2 ½-hour walk aprox.

DAY 5 GALAPAGOS ISLAND

AM Dragon Hill

Dry landing. Walk by a brackish lagoon to see flamingos. The trail leads across typical dry zone vegetation. Keeping up until Dragon Hill, see an important nesting ground for endemic land iguanas, offering lovely views of the anchored boats and neighboring islands. The forest is home to mockingbirds, Darwin's finches, yellow warblers, and Galapagos doves.

Difficulty level: intermediate

Type of terrain: rocky

Duration: 2-hour walk

PM Santa Fe Island

Wet landing. Santa Fe shows white sand beaches surrounded by sea lion colonies; through the island path, an endemic cactus forest is passed, home the Santa Fe land iguanas (the largest in the islands). This island is the habitat for a number of species, including the Galapagos hawk, Galapagos snakes, rice rats (one of the few endemic Galapagos rodents), a variety of finches and one of the four mockingbird species of the archipelago.

(B/L/D)

Difficulty level: intermediate

Type of terrain: rocky

Duration: 1 ½-hour walk / 1-hour deep-water snorkeling

DAY 6 GALAPAGOS ISLAND

AM Bachas Beach (Santa Cruz Island)

Wet landing. On the north side of Santa Cruz; behind the beach lies two small flamingo ponds were iguanas sunbathe, see coastal birds, Darwin finches, mockingbirds, and gulls, as well as interesting native vegetation like red and black mangrove, salt bushes. This beach is one of the main sea turtles nesting sites in the Galapagos. A turtle can lay eggs 3 or 4 times per season with an average of 70 eggs each time. At this paradisiacal site, we will also find the remains of barges that sank a long time ago, when the United States Navy operated a base during World War II on Baltra Island. Local people modified the word barges to "Bachas".

Difficulty level: easy

Type of terrain: sandy

Duration: 1-hour walk / 1-hour snorkeling/beach time

PM Mosquera Islet

Wet Landing, Mosquera Islet is located between North Seymour and Baltra Island. This flat, sandy island has a large colony of sea lions. It is also an excellent site to observe shorebirds such as herons and lava gulls. There is no trail on the islet, the visitor can enjoy the open area. Most of the islet is covered with sand and barren lava rock. Very little sesuvium portulacastrum plants grow on the sand. (B/L/D)

Difficulty level: easy

Type of terrain: sandy

Duration: 1 ½-hour walk & snorkeling

DAY 7 GALAPAGOS ISLAND

AM Egas Port (Santiago Island)

Wet landing. Egas Port is a black volcanic sand beach, visited by Darwin in 1835. The first section of the trail is formed of volcanic ash (eroded tuff) and the other half is an uneven terrain of volcanic basaltic rock. The unique, truly striking layered terrain of Santiago shore is home to a variety of animals including the bizarre yellow-crowned night heron and marine wildlife including lobster, starfish and marine iguanas grazing on algae beds alongside Sally light-foot crabs. It is easy to see colonies of endemic fur seals swimming in cool water volcanic rock pools.

Difficulty level: intermediate

Type of terrain: flat & semi-rocky

Duration: 1 ½-hour walk / 1-hour snorkeling

PM Rabida Island

Wet landing. Dark-red sand covers the unique beaches of this island, home of sea lions colonies; Rabida is considered the epicenter of the Galapagos Islands due to the diversity of its volcanic geology. Nesting brown pelicans are found from July through September plus nine species of the famous Darwin's finches. Here a dinghy ride along marine cliffs is done, to observe nesting seabirds. Snorkel off the coast, where marine life is particularly active. (B/L/D)

Difficulty level: easy

Type of terrain: sandy

Duration: 1 ½-hour walk / 1-hour snorkeling / 1-hour dinghy ride

DAY 8 GALAPAGOS ISLAND

AM Urbina Bay (Isabela Island)

Wet landing (might be difficult due to the tide). Volcanic black beach, depending on the season, it is possible to find giant tortoises, land iguanas, and the unusual flightless cormorant. After a short walk inland it's snorkeling time, a chance to swim with sea turtles, sea lions, and countless tropical fish. Urbina Bay features a wide variety of plants with the different range of colors in flowers, attracting different insects, birds, and reptiles. One of the highlights of the island is the uplifted coral reef that resulted from the 1954 seismic activity; here the views of Alcedo Volcano are remarkable. When navigating from Urbina to Tagus Cove whale watching is usual in May – December.

Difficulty level: intermediate

Type of terrain: flat & rocky

Duration: 1 ½-hour walk / 1-hour snorkeling

PM Tagus Cove (Isabela Island)

Dry landing on Galapagos' largest island where we will learn about the eruption of the five volcanoes that form it. The trail leads to Darwin's salt-water crater lake and excellent views of lava fields and volcanic formations. We will return by the same path for a dinghy ride along a shoreline full of marine wildlife, where we will admire a variety of seabirds, such as Blue-footed Booby, Brown Noddy, terns, Flightless Cormorant and depending on the season, a large number of Galapagos Penguins which are only 35 cm tall; the only penguin species in the world to live in the tropics.

The population of penguins on the islands is about 2,000 individuals, most of which live on this western portion of Isabela; others are scattered further south. We will have an opportunity to snorkel in deep water. Graffiti believed to have been left by 19th-century pirates is a curious reminder of an intriguing past. (B/L/D)

Difficulty level: intermediate/difficult

Type of terrain: steep/steep

Duration: 2-hour walk / 40-minutes dinghy ride / 1-hour deep water snorkeling

DAY 9 GALAPAGOS ISLAND

AM Espinosa Point (Fernandina Island)

Dry landing. From Espinosa Point, it is possible to admire a wide view of Isabela Island across the Bolivar Channel, an area that boasts some of the highest diversity of endemic sea fauna in the Galapagos. Here the largest, most primitive-looking marine iguanas are found mingling with sea lions and Sally Lightfoot crabs. Fernandina displays a wonderful opportunity to encounter flightless cormorants at their nesting sites, Galapagos penguins and the “King” of predators on the islands, the Galapagos hawk. Pa-hoe-hoe and AA lava formations cover the majority of Fernandina terrain. In the shore mangrove can be found.

Difficulty level: intermediate

Type of terrain: flat/semi rocky

Duration: 1 ½-hour walk / 1-hour snorkeling

PM – Vicente Roca Point (Isabela Island)

Great deep-water snorkeling at one of the richest marine havens on Earth, the Bolivar Channel. Accessible by water, we take a dinghy ride along the coast to observe a great diversity of sea and coastal birds; Nazca and blue-footed boobies, noddies, brown pelicans, penguins, flightless cormorants. The upwelling of cold water currents in this part of the Galapagos gives rise to an abundance of marine life, a perfect place for deep snorkeling. (B/L/D)

Difficulty Level: moderate / high

Type of terrain: water

Duration: 1-hour snorkeling / 1-hour dinghy ride.

DAY 10 GALAPAGOS ISLAND · QUITO OR GUAYAQUIL

AM Highlands Tortoise Reserve (Santa Cruz Island)

Dry landing. In the mountains of Galapagos it is possible to admire different kind of birds, such as: tree and ground finches, vermilion flycatchers, paint-billed cranes, yellow warblers, and cattle egrets (usually standing on the tortoises’ shell). The journey to the reserve offers great opportunities to see the contrasts that the island offers in reference to the variety of ecosystems. The road goes from the coast through the agricultural zone and straight up to the dense humid forests. Often, Galapagos Giant Tortoises are also seen on the way, wandering through pastures in the paddocks. This spot is a birdwatchers’ haven, since almost every land bird present on the island lives or migrates here.

Difficulty level: easy

Type of terrain: flat & muddy (depending on season)

Duration: 45-minutes drive / 1 ½-hour walk

After the visit passengers will be transferred to Baltra airport for return flight to Guayaquil or Quito. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel. (B)

Accommodation: Hotel Quito / Oro Verde 4* or similar

DAY 11 QUITO OR GUAYAQUIL

Transfer to the airport. (B)

**** This itinerary is given for information purposes only. It may be change depending on your departure date and the lenght of the cruise.**

INCLUSIONS

- Round trip transfers
- Domestic flights – Quito – Baltra – Quito
- Visits and accommodation as per itinerary
- Local English Speaking guide
- Fuel surcharge
- Migration control card
- Meals: 10 breakfast, 7 lunches, 7 dinners

Not included

International airfare · Galapagos National Park fees \$USD100 · Optional excursions Gratuities to guides and hotels.

	Including 3 night Cruise	Including 4 night Cruise	Including 7 night Cruise
Price in CAD\$, per person starting from, double occupancy			
Departures			
October 1 - December 14, 2020	4499	5499	7999
January 1 - December 14, 2021	4399	5469	7859
Single room supplement, or single passenger	On request		
Note: Seasonal surcharges may apply			



*Prices in this document are for information only; they were issued at press time for the current year. Please note that due to exchange rates and temporary promotions, they can increase or decrease anytime. Contact your travel agent for the price and promotion of the moment.