

ARCTIC - GALAPAGOS ON A SHOESTRING



TRIP CODE
ECITGOS
DEPARTURE
Selected Fridays
DURATION
7 Days
LOCATIONS
Ecuador


INTRODUCTION

This unforgettable island hopping tour of the Galapagos takes you to the volcanic islands of San Cristobal, Santa Cruz and Isabela where you will discover some of the unique biodiversity that has evolved over the millennia on this isolated and fascinating archipelago. Wander alongside giant tortoises in the Santa Cruz highlands, trek to the top of Sierra Negra volcano for incredible views and maybe take an excursion to Tintorerias Island to see the rare Galapagos penguin and visit 'Shark Alley'. Gain a better understanding of the islands and conservation efforts at the Charles Darwin Research Centre and learn about the history of the islands at the Interpretation Centre on San Cristobal.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Isla San Cristobal

Welcome to San Cristobal! Today you'll be joining with other travellers arriving from Quito. This afternoon take an included visit to the Interpretation Centre and learn about the human and natural history of the Galapagos islands. Afterwards perhaps hike up to Frigatebird Hill or head to Mann beach and chill.



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DAY 2: Isla San Cristobal

Enjoy a free day on Isla San Cristobal. You may also like to take an optional boat ride to Kicker Rock or Isla Lobos. This is one of your leader's favourite optional activities. You'll be able to observe the famous Galapagos marine life along the way, and have the opportunity to go snorkelling with sea turtles, eagle rays and the harmless Galapagos shark, just to name a few.



DAY 3: Isla Santa Cruz

Early in the morning, take a two-and-a-half hour public speed boat ride to Isla Santa Cruz. Once in Santa Cruz have breakfast and Settle into the hotel. Mid-morning visit the Charles Darwin Research Station. The station's visitor centre and museums contain information about the islands and the conservation efforts being made to preserve the unique ecosystem here. It's also a great place to have close encounters with giant tortoises. In the afternoon, head to the higher part of the islands to observe these giants roaming in their natural habitat.



DAY 4: Isla Isabela

Travel to Isabela Island. Check-in to the hotel and enjoy breakfast. The island is the largest in the Galapagos and one of the most volcanically active places on earth. A worthwhile optional activity today is an excursion to Tintoreras Island, home to the rare Galapagos penguin. The excursion will then take you to "shark alley", where white-tipped sharks rest during the day. This is also a popular nesting site for the endemic marine iguanas.



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DAY 5: Isla Isabela

Start the day with a visit to the Giant Tortoise Breeding Centre for a close encounter with these placid giants. Here you can see tortoises in different stages of development as well learn about the preservation program of this unique species. Take a bus to the highest part of Isabela Island where Sierra Negra Volcano is located. Weather permitting, go for a hike up to the crater to enjoy spectacular views and the possibility of sighting the rare vermilion flycatcher. The challenging 17-kilometre hike takes between five and six hours both ways, but at the top you'll be able to enjoy spectacular views. Please ensure you wear comfortable walking shoes that offer good support for the rocky climb. During the rainy season it can get quite muddy. There is an option to hire gumboots locally, should you wish to do so. During the hike it can get quite hot, there isn't much shade along the way so be sure to come prepared with your hat and sunscreen etc. After the hike, make your way back to town in the late afternoon for some free time to curl up with a book or venture down to the water for a relaxing swim before dinner. Unfortunately, recycling isn't available on Isabela, so please take your plastic rubbish with you.



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DAY 6: Isla Santa Cruz

Travel back to Santa Cruz in the morning. We'll enjoy breakfast back in Santa Cruz. Consider taking part in some of the optional activities available, such as an excursion to Tortuga Bay, an immaculate natural paradise where you can go kayaking, observe marine iguanas and birds or swim with harmless sharks in an alcove. You may also like to rent some snorkelling gear while you're here.



DAY 7: Isla Santa Cruz

This morning your Galapagos adventure comes to an end. Say goodbye to your fellow travellers who may be continuing on to Quito to finish their trip.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Standard
Inclusions	<p>Meals 6 breakfasts</p> <p>Transport Speed boat, Private Vehicle, Public bus</p> <p>Accommodation Hostel (2 nights), Hotel (4 nights)</p> <p>Included activities Isla Isabela - Giant Tortoise Breeding Centre (1 Hour) Isla Isabela- Sierra Negra Volcano Hike (5-6 Hours) Isla Santa Cruz - Charles Darwin Research Centre (45 Minutes) Isla Santa Cruz - Highlands Visit (3 hours) - Dry Landing Isla San Cristobal - Interpretation Center (45 minutes)</p>
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request
Notes	Contact us for more details
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

SUSTAINABILITY

Chimu Adventures undertakes a number of sustainability measures within its operations including:

- 1) Only using local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprints. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting.
- 2) Where possible, using locally owned and operated boutique hotels to maximise the return to the local community.
- 3) Chimu's "Pass it on" programme has provided funding to hundreds of local community projects in Latin America. Our aim is to empower local communities, helping them to develop their own infrastructure for the future. Since 2006, we have been working with Kiva (a well-known Non-Governmental Organisation), providing hundreds of loans to local businesses all over South America.
- 4) In our pre tour information we provide a range of tips and advice on how to minimise your impact on both local environments and communities.
- 5) Chimu Adventures' offices also take a number of sustainability measures including

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carbon offsets for company vehicles and most staff travel. Chimu Adventure's internal processes are also structures to create a paperless office and to reduce waste. There are also internal programmes to help staff minimise their carbon footprint such as our staff bike purchase assistance plan which encourages office staff to commute to work via bicycle. Currently almost half of our office based staff commute to work via bicycle.

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