

SOUTH AMERICA - M/S BEAGLE: 8 DAY SOUTHEAST



TRIP CODE

ECTSBSE8

DEPARTURE

Tuesdays

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

Galapagos Islands,
Ecuador



INTRODUCTION

The Galapagos is one of the most unique places on the planet. Where animals demonstrate the theory of evolution, landmasses demonstrate both the beauty and volcanic power of the earth. Discover the amazing landscapes and incredible wildlife of the Galapagos Islands as you sail around the south eastern part of the archipelago aboard the M/S Beagle.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Puerto Ayora - Baltra Airport

On arrival at Baltra Airport will be met by a transfer guide and taken to The Beagle. After settling into your cabins and taking a light lunch on board, we head to the Charles Darwin Research Station in the afternoon. Afterwards there will be the opportunity to stroll through Puerto Ayora's main street with time to explore the shops. The Charles Darwin Research Station is on Santa Cruz Island which is the main inhabited island in the archipelago, with a population of approximately 16,000. A visit to the station gives you an understanding of the work being done by the foundation and the importance of preserving the archipelago's ecosystems. A series of walkways takes you through the captive breeding program where you will see juvenile and adult tortoises from different islands.




NO IMAGE
AVAILABLE

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DAY 2: Floreana

Puerto Velasco Ibarra has the smallest human settlement in the Islands. Floreana was inhabited as early as the 1920's and has a colourful history of pirates, whalers, convicts and colonists. We drive up into the highlands on a dirt road in an open-sided bus known locally as a chiva. We pass through chacras (small land holdings) up to a small fresh-water spring called Asilo de la Paz where we visit a tortoise corral. On returning to The Beagle, the ship motors to Punta Cormorant and from there we take the dinghy to a snorkel site at Devil's Crown. This sunken cone offers an exciting snorkelling experience as you are carried by the current while seeing a superb variety of marine life. At Punta Cormorant, on the northern shore of Floreana, we land on a beach with green olivine sand. Several trails allow us to explore a brackish water lagoon with a colony of flamingos who nest and feed there most of the year. Whimbrels, herons, white-cheeked pintail ducks, stilts and other shorebirds feed alongside the flamingos. The trail then goes over a hill and dunes to a stunning white beach consisting of ground coral, where the green sea turtles nest. You may see stingrays and reef sharks from the shore and if you are lucky turtles basking in the sun.



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DAY 3: Hood Island

Hood Island is one of the most popular and attractive islands of the Galapagos. The quantity and variety of wildlife here is remarkable. At Punta Suarez you can see the waved albatross from April to December. Blue-footed boobies, Nazca boobies, Galapagos hawks, Darwin finches, swallow-tailed gulls, Espanola mockingbirds, shorebirds, sea lions, marine iguanas and lava lizards are just some of its residents, and an impressive blowhole can be observed from the high cliffs. Located on the eastern end of the island, Gardner Bay has a wonderful sandy beach for swimming and observing the Galapagos sea lions.




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DAY 4: San Cristobal Island

Punta Pitt is on San Cristobal Island and affords impressive views after climbing up a steep narrow path onto a plateau surrounded by reddish hills. Depending on the time of year there may be nesting marine iguanas, red-footed boobies and other marine birds down on the cliffs. Punta Pitt is the closest point of the Galapagos to mainland South America. After the visit to Punta Pitt, The Beagle navigates to a dramatic tuff cone formation known as Kicker Rock. The rocks rise 500 feet out of the ocean and resemble a sleeping lion, hence its name in Spanish, “León Dormido”. Many seabirds nest on the rocks. As we circumnavigate the rock, we will be able to observe the narrow channel that separates the rocks. The afternoon anchorage is at Isla Lobos and, as its name suggests, it has a sea lion colony and also an endemic lava lizard colony. It is a good site for swimming and snorkelling alongside the sea lion pups, and on the islet you can visit the sea lion colony. Perhaps you'll see the frigatebirds displaying and building their nests, if their food supply is good.



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DAY 5: Santa Fe

One of the most beautiful coves of all visitor sites in the Galapagos, Santa Fe has a turquoise cove sheltered by a peninsula extending from the shore with a line of rock covered in Opuntia cactus and sea lions. This island was formed by an uplift caused by tectonic activity. You can see land iguanas, sea turtles, Galapagos hawks, sea lions, and a forest of giant Opuntia cactus here. Santa Fe is an ancient extinct volcano and it has been isolated from other islands long enough to have an endemic land dragon. Paler in colour than its relatives, the Barrington terrestrial iguana has a primitive morphology. This is a great spot to swim and snorkel in the clear turquoise blue waters. Heading north we reach South Plaza, one of the best spots in the archipelago to see land iguanas and swallow-tailed gulls, both indigenous to the Galapagos. Land iguanas wander through bright carpet weed with their nests scattered all over the hill. The sheer cliffs of the southern shore are a perfect bird habitat, making it an unparalleled bird observatory, especially for swallow-tailed gulls, Audubon shearwaters, and red-billed tropicbirds.



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DAY 6: North Seymour & Bartolome

North Seymour is home to several species of marine birds: swallow-tailed gulls, blue-footed boobies, noddy terns and both the great and the magnificent frigate birds compete for nesting sites. Land iguanas are found alongside marine iguanas, and there are the ever-present comic sea lions as well. North Seymour is a low, flat island located north of Baltra that was uplifted from the sea by underground seismic activity. Bartolome Island is a small island located to the east of James Island. Famous for its Pinnacle Rock, it is home to a small rookery of Galapagos penguins. You can swim and snorkel around Pinnacle Rock, or walk to the other side of the island to see sea turtles nesting (from January to March) and sharks swimming close to shore. You can also climb to the highest point of the island, a climb which gives you the chance to see plants that live in lava and ash and many interesting lava formations. On this island we also see sea lions, Galapagos penguins, pelicans, Galapagos hawks, turtles and sharks.



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DAY 7: Chinese Hat & Cerro Dragon

Chinese Hat is a small island shaped as its name implies which sits off the south eastern tip of James Island. Its small white beaches have a sea lion colony. Snorkelling is usually very good, and with luck you might see the Galapagos penguins in the water. Cerro Dragon is located on the northwest coast of Santa Cruz Island. The visit to Cerro Dragon ("dragon hill") takes us through Palo Santo trees and Opuntia cactus, past a couple of lagoons where flamingos can be seen and where the shy land iguana lives.



DAY 8: Departure Day

This morning we visit Black Turtle Cove by dinghy enabling us to motor through the mangrove inlets. These lagoons provide a refuge to rays, sharks and sea turtles that are clearly visible alongside the boat. The engine is turned off so that we can slowly approach the different species that live in this peaceful place. After the visit, your guide will then accompany you on the short 10 minute bus ride to the airport, in time for your flight back to mainland Ecuador.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Standard Cabin
Inclusions	Airport transfers in Galapagos; Lodging in Twin/Matrimonial cabin as confirmed; All meals during your stay on board M/S Beagle; Snorkel equipment; All excursions lead by an English speaking naturalist Guide.
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request
Notes	Contact us for more details
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

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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 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.