


ECUADOR - WEST & CENTRAL ISLANDS | EDEN



TRIP CODE
ECTSEWCI
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Ecuador, Galapagos Islands


INTRODUCTION

Discover the rugged landscapes and incredible wildlife of the Galapagos as you sail around the western and central islands of this beautiful archipelago. Wander the Santa Cruz highlands in search of the Galapagos giant tortoise, hike to the Sierra Negra volcano, swim and snorkel with turtles and tropical fish and take a panga ride through the mangroves. Along the way you will encounter a myriad of fascinating birds and animals, with many species endemic to the islands. Blue-footed boobies, frigatebirds, sea lions, Darwin's finches, marine iguanas and flightless cormorants are just a few of the species that you may encounter on this Galapagos adventure.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Quito

Arrive at any time. Feel free to explore the city of Quito. Sitting at 2,850 metres above sea level high in the Andean foothills lies Quito, the capital of Ecuador. The city, a short distance from the Equator and with an amazing backdrop of snow-capped mountains, is known for its stunning colonial architecture and art-work. Founded in the 16th century on the ruins of an Inca city, Quito has one of the largest, least-altered and best-preserved historic centres in the Americas. It was declared a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 1978.



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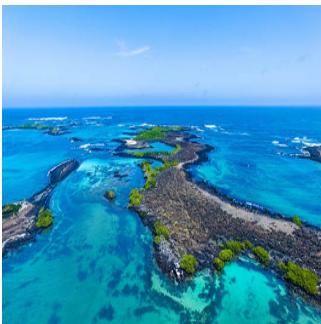
## DAY 2: Santa Cruz

This morning you will have an early transfer to the airport for your flight to the Galapagos Islands. On arrival we head to Santa Cruz’s verdant highlands and the El Chato Reserve, a perfect place to see giant tortoises in their natural environment. Explore the reserve’s lagoon and lava tunnels, keeping an eye out for owls that often roost in the tunnels’ entrances



## DAY 3: Isabela Island


Begin your day with a stop at the charming town of Puerto Villamil. Take a leisurely stroll around the town and soak up the local atmosphere before heading to the Wall of Tears. Built by prisoners after the Second World War, this imposing structure is a powerful reminder of the harsh conditions they were subjected to. After that, spend the afternoon at the wetlands and tortoise breeding center in the Puerto Villamil area. Here, you'll have the opportunity to witness a variety of fascinating species up close, including the magnificent giant tortoise. Learn about the conservation efforts being undertaken to protect these gentle giants and their fragile ecosystem.



## DAY 4: Isabela Island & Fernandina Island

In the morning we visit Punta Moreno and explore its interesting landscape, which is home to black lava flows and a unique system of brackish lagoons that draw in a wide range of wildlife. Spot Darwin’s finches, Galápagos doves, penguins, and more! Be sure to bring your camera for shots of the island’s amazing scenery. Punta Moreno boasts a panoramic viewpoint of three of Isabela’s imposing volcanoes: Alcedo, Sierra Negra, and Cerro Azul. We then head out by panga to explore, keeping an eye out for wildlife hiding among the mangroves. Search for marine turtles, rays, and flightless cormorants in the sheltered waters. Also spot blue-footed boobies, penguins, and pelicans feeding on the abundant marine life.



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### DAY 5: Fernandina Island

Today we visit Tagus Cove, an Isabela Island anchorage site that was popular among whalers and pirates. Tour the area on foot for spectacular views of Darwin Lake (a spherical saltwater crater), the bay, and Darwin and Wolf volcanoes. Upon landing, take the wooden stairway to the trail entrance, and follow the trail through a dry vegetation zone. Continue on an ascent to a promontory made up of spatter cones (small volcanic cones). We then continue onto a number of different trails at Punta Espinoza. This not-to-be-missed landing site that's home to some of the largest colonies of marine iguanas and sea birds. Follow the path along the beach and across lava flows for a unique opportunity to explore one of the least-visited areas of the Galápagos.



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### DAY 6: Puerto Egas and Rabida Island

This morning we enjoy an excursion to explore the spectacular shoreline of Puerto Egas, also known as James Bay. Spot a great number of shore birds and reptiles – the beach area is home to a plethora of wildlife. Grab a snorkel and jump into the water right off the beach to explore Puerto Egas' interesting underwater world. Keep your eyes peeled for rays, turtles, and reef sharks while snorkeling. After, visit the large tidal pool area – marine iguanas and Sally Lightfoot crabs are everywhere. Later we Arrive at a red sand beach at Rábida to explore its trails. A short trail leads to a saltwater lagoon; another trail goes past the lagoon to the interior, where the revered palo santo trees grow. (When burned, the branches of this tree give off a pleasing aroma and ward off mosquitoes.) Head back to the beach to see prehistoric-looking pelicans nesting among low-lying bushes – it's a rare treat to watch parent pelicans return with gulleets full of fish for the squawking youngsters.



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## DAY 7: North Seymour

Today we visit North Seymour. This island is teeming with life! Follow trails to see all the action (you may need to give way to a passing sea lion or marine iguana while walking). See blue-footed booby nests where mating pairs perform their courtship dance. Head to a rocky shore to see flocks of pelicans having lunch in a dive bomb feeding frenzy, then turn inland to a large nesting site of magnificent frigate birds. These huge, dark acrobats have two-metre (6.5 ft) wingspans, and males, with their puffed-up scarlet throat sacks, sit precariously perched in low bushes to watch over their equally large chicks. Top off the excursion with a snorkel among sea lions and rays. In the afternoon we fly back to Quito and you're transferred back to your hotel.



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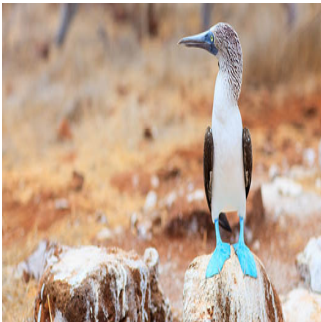
## DAY 8: Transfer to the Airport

You will be collected from your hotel at the appropriate time and transferred to the airport for your onward flight.



## DAY 8: Depart Quito

You will be collected from your hotel at the appropriate time and transferred to the airport for your onward flight.




## INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

<b>Accommodation</b>	Standard
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Inclusions	Accommodation Internal Flights All shore excursions All meals throughout the cruise (7 breakfasts, 5 lunches & 5 dinners) Galapagos National Park Certified Guide Snorkelling equipment and wetsuits
	<b>Exclusions</b> USD\$100 Galapagos National Park Fee (must be paid in cash on arrival at Galapagos) USD\$20 Transit Control Card (must be paid in cash at Quito Airport) International or domestic flights to or within South America, unless specified Transfers not mentioned in the itinerary Airport arrival or departure taxes Passport, visa, reciprocity and vaccination charges Travel insurance or emergency evacuation charges Hotels and meals not included in itinerary Optional excursions not included in the itinerary All items of a personal nature Gratuities Visas
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.

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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.

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