

## ECUADOR - DAPHNE



### INTRODUCTION

This sailing trip aboard the M/Y Daphne takes you through the remote northern islands of the Galapagos archipelago, barely changed since the time of Darwin's visit. Encounter an incredible array of wildlife and stunning scenery as you sail between the islands of San Cristobal, Santa Fe, the north-eastern outpost of Genovesa, Santiago, Rabida and Santa Cruz. Walk through Opuntia forests, climb Prince Philip's Steps to encounter large seabird rookeries, discover flamingo lagoons and pelican nesting sites, and explore the red sand beach of Rabida and the mangrove wetlands of Black Turtle Cove. This is an action-packed itinerary that introduces you to the fascinating and varied wildlife of the Galapagos on land and in the water.

### ITINERARY

#### TRIP CODE

ECTSGAN

#### DEPARTURE

Select Fridays

#### DURATION

7 Days

#### LOCATIONS

Ecuador, Galapagos Islands



## ECUADOR - DAPHNE

### DAY 1: Quito

Bienvenidos! Welcome to Ecuador. A welcome meeting will be held in the evening at either 5pm or 6 pm when you meet others travelling with you on your cruise to the Galapagos Islands. Please check with hotel reception or check the reception notice boards for the time and place of the meeting for your trip. As today is an arrival day, you can arrive at any time as there are no activities planned until this important meeting. If you can't arrange a flight that will arrive in time, you may wish to arrive a day early so you're able to attend. We'll be happy to book additional accommodation for you (subject to availability). Quito sits at high altitude under the towering Pichincha volcano. It is a beautiful city, arguably one of the most beautiful in South America. The city stretches along the valley and is surrounded by the Andes. The Old Town of Quito is awash with history, with more than 30 churches to explore, and a number of fascinating museums. La Compania de Jesus is considered to be the most beautiful and ornate churches in the Americas. The city's oldest street, Calle La Ronda, is well worth exploring. As this trip spends very little time in Quito, we recommend you spend a few extra days before or after your trip to experience all the city has to offer. You may even wish to explore further beyond the city and visit Otavalo, Cotopaxi, the Cloud Forest or the Equatorial Monument.



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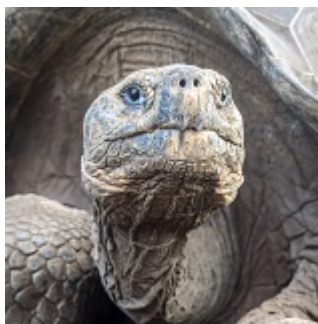
Ecuador, Galapagos Islands



## ECUADOR - DAPHNE

### DAY 2: Quito - Isla San Cristobal

Today is mostly a long travel day, and your Galapagos activities will begin after lunch. Rise early and transfer to the airport (approximately 1 hour) for your flight to the Galapagos Islands. Pick-up may be as early as 4:30 am (your leader will confirm this at the welcome meeting) and a boxed breakfast will be provided. On arrival in the Galapagos we are met in the arrivals hall and then transferred to our boat, the Daphne. Once on board we'll be assigned our cabins, meet the crew members and get to know our naturalist guide and fellow travellers over a delicious lunch. We visit the San Cristobal Interpretation Center. The centre brings the history and geography of the archipelago to life, from its volcanic origins to the present day. The human history exhibit offers an insight into the discovery and colonisation of the Galapagos and the issue of problems the islands face today is also explored. This is a great place to get a complete overview of the Galapagos. This afternoon, you will have the option to head to Galapaguera (Highlands) of San Cristobal to view the Giant Tortoises in a protected area. This will be your only opportunity on this trip to see these magnificent creatures. Your guide will organise this excursion for you and it will take about 2 hours. Depending on the number of passengers wanting to take part in this, the shared cost is approximately US\$120 and paid locally to the guide.



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### DAY 3: Isla Santa Fe - Isla Plaza Sur

Isla Santa Fe is home to more sea lions, and these ones are very eager for swimming partners! It's a lovely place to take a dip, offers a dense concentration of wildlife, and is a fantastic place to see many of the stars of the Galapagos in one relatively small area. Expect to see Galapagos hawks, land iguanas, a variety of finches, Galapagos mockingbirds, sea lions, marine turtles, frigatebirds, Galapagos doves and lava lizards. This stunning island boasts one of the most attractive coves in the whole archipelago. The jade-green waters are ideal for snorkelling. Take a hike along the coast into the Opuntia forest (approximately 1.5 hours). From here you can see Santa Fe's trees - the largest in the Galapagos - along with a forest of giant cacti and palo santo trees. The trail can be a little rocky, so mind your step. Once back at the beach, you'll have time for a snorkel. Playful sea lion pups and fluorescent fish make for nice company. Afterwards, continue to Plaza Sur (South Plaza), a small, picturesque island. Take a walk (approximately 1.5 hours), getting close to sea lions and passing one of the Galapagos' largest land iguana populations which rest among cacti, volcanic landscapes dotted with brightly coloured sea-purslanes. The southern cliffs are great for spotting tropicbirds and swallow-tailed gulls, as well as 'the Gentlemen's Club' - a gathering of male sea lions. Today there may be an extra stop along the way to Plaza Sur to restock the provisions for the boat. Later tonight, set sail for Isla Genovesa.



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### DAY 4: Isla Genovesa

After an overnight sail, reach Isla Genovesa, the archipelago's north-eastern outpost. It's undeniably worth the voyage. Dolphins are often spotted in the waters around beautiful Genovesa. These varied landscapes are a twitcher's paradise, with all three kinds of boobies, including the rare red-footed booby, and numerous other species such as tropicbirds and frigate birds. Next, Bahia Darwin (Darwin Beach) is another superb site with large breeding colonies of seabirds and frigates and other birds such as lava herons, swallow-tailed gulls, mockingbirds and, hopefully, vampire finches. Enjoy a moderate walk (approximately 2.5 hours) that passes tide pools, sea lions and diamond stingrays. This walk involves sand and some rocky sections. The steep Prince Philip's Steps lead you to the heart of the seabird rookeries, with birds overhead and nesting among the cliffs. Look out for storm petrels on the island's rocky plains; Genovesa is the only place in the world where these birds can be seen flying during the day. Afterwards, perhaps cool off with a snorkel. The island's magnificent marine life makes for spectacular snorkelling - you might encounter manta rays, sharks, turtles and moray eels, plus many species of fish. Later tonight, depart Isla Genovesa for Isla Santiago.



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### DAY 5: Isla Santiago - Isla Rabida

On Santiago Island's eastern coast sits Bahia Sullivan, also known as James Island. Here you'll take a walk along pahoehoe lava (approximately 1 hour), which was created by an eruption that occurred in 1897, and witness the plants that have grown on the site since that last eruption. With some luck you might see some marine iguanas, Sally Lightfoot crabs, sea lions, finches, turtles, sharks and penguins. During your walk, your guide will recount the geological history of the islands. Then it's on to Isla Rabida, known for its gorgeous red sandy beach (coloured that way due to rusting iron). This is one of the most striking islands of the archipelago. Starting at the shore, follow a walking trail (approximately 45 minutes) through to what is one of the finest lagoons in the Galapagos for viewing flamingos. Rabida is also a wonderful place to spot nesting pelicans. Elsewhere, pintail ducks, marine iguanas and sea lions are present. Here you will find Opuntia cactus forest, which suggests previous existence of land iguanas and possibly Galapagos hawks, mockingbirds, doves, finches and lava lizards. You'll have the chance to snorkel among sea stars, damsels, gobbies and surgeon fish, and take a panga ride in search of wildlife.



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### DAY 6: Isla Santa Cruz - Quito

As flights to the mainland from Galapagos depart mid-morning, it's an early start for your last morning on the islands. Depending on the time of your flight, your time spent on this final excursion may be limited. Explore Caleta Tortuga Negra (Black Turtle Cove) on a panga. This red mangrove wetland is located on the north shore of Isla Santa Cruz. You will paddle along this peaceful cove to experience its many underwater riches. It's a breeding area for green turtles, so you might catch sight of them mating. There is also abundant bird life, such as the yellow warbler and lava heron. It is also a nursery for golden cow-nose rays, eagle rays and Galapagos sharks. This is your final excursion before you return to the airport in Baltra for your flight back to Quito. The flight will stop over in Guayaquil to drop off and/or pick up passengers. Arrive at Quito Airport (approximately 4 pm) where you will be transferred back to your hotel for an overnight stay. Your local representative may stop by at your hotel this evening to get your feedback on your Galapagos experience.



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## DAY 7: Quito

Your Galapagos adventure comes to an end after breakfast this morning. There are no activities planned for the final day, and you are free to depart the accommodation at any time. There are many fascinating things to do in and around Quito, so please speak to your customer service representative about any optional activities that might be of interest. They can also assist you in booking a departure transfer to the airport.




## INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

<b>Accommodation</b>	Standard
<b>Inclusions</b>	<p><b>Meals</b> 6 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 dinners</p> <p><b>Transport</b> Boat, Plane, Bus, Zodiac (Panga)</p> <p><b>Accommodation</b> Hotel (2 nights), Overnight boat (4 nights)</p> <p><b>Included activities</b> Isla San Cristobal - Interpretation Center Visit (1 hour) - Dry Landing Isla Plaza Sur - Walk (2 hours) - Dry Landing Isla Santa Fe - Walk (1.5 hours) - Wet Landing Isla Genovesa - Bahia Darwin - Walk (2 hours) Wet Landing Isla Genovesa - La Barranco - Walk - Dry Landing Isla Rabida - Walk (1.5 hours) - Wet Landing Isla Rabida - Snorkelling (1 hour) Isla Santiago - Sullivan Bay - Walk (1.5 hours) - Dry Landing Isla Santa Cruz - Black Turtle Cove - Panga ride (1.5 hours)</p>
<b>Difficulty Rating</b>	2 (light adventure)
<b>Single Surcharge</b>	Available upon request
<b>Notes</b>	Contact us for more details
<b>Price Dependent upon</b>	Season and availability

## SUSTAINABILITY

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

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- 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 structured 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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