



INTRODUCTION

This active island hopping tour of the Galapagos introduces you to the rich wildlife and fascinating history of the “Enchanted Islands” as you tour by boat and on foot, staying in island hotels each night. Discover the amazing wildlife for which the Galapagos Islands are renowned as you swim and snorkel with sea lions, turtles, rays and Galapagos sharks, wander alongside the placid giant tortoises and spot countless species of birds including boobies, frigatebirds and Darwin’s finches. Walk to the top of Frigatebird Hill and the active Sierra Negra volcano for stunning views across the archipelago as the secrets of the Galapagos are revealed to you.

ITINERARY

TRIP CODE

ECTSGIH

DEPARTURE

Fridays and Sundays

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

Ecuador





DAY 1: Isla San Cristobal, Galapagos

Welcome to San Cristobal, Galapagos Islands. As you start this trip on the Galapagos Islands and join other travellers arriving from Quito, you have two options for joining the group. SUNDAY DEPARTURES: You can meet the others at San Cristobal Airport at 11.30 am: The guide will be waiting in the arrivals hall with an Intrepid sign for the arriving passengers from Quito. FRIDAY DEPARTURES: You can meet the others at San Cristobal Airport at 12.30pm: The guide will be waiting in the arrivals hall with an Intrepid sign for the arriving passengers from Quito. Alternatively you can meet them at the hotel (Casa de Nelly) when they arrive at approximately one hour after the airport meeting time. Check in time for the hotel is 12 pm. If you're making your own way to the hotel, we recommend taking a short cab ride which will cost approximately US\$2. Please advise us where you plan to join this trip no later than 15 days prior to departure. If you are going to be late for either of these meeting times, please contact the local emergency number located in the 'Essential Trip Information' After joining up with the group, travel to La Loberia where you'll put on snorkelling gear for the first time and go for a swim with sea lions, and maybe even some sea turtles. Continue back to town. Tonight you may wish to head out with the group and enjoy some of the fresh seafood available.

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DAY 2: Isla San Cristobal, Galapagos

Today begins with a short boat ride to Leon Dormido (approx 45 mins) or Isla Lobos, observing along the way the abundant marine life that Galapagos is renowned for. On the way we might be able to spot nesting frigates and blue-footed boobies and/or might swim/snorkel with playful young sea lions. Here we can snorkel keeping an eye out below for sea turtles, manta rays and maybe the odd harmless Galapagos shark, to name a few. This snorkeling is in open sea, on occasion the currents can be quite strong so it's particularly important you are a confident swimmer for this activity. If you have any concerns, please ensure you speak with your leader. Included lunch today is a packed box lunch on board the boat! Unfortunately it is against National Park rules to eat on the beach. Later head we will head to the interpretation Center. Learn about the history of the 'Enchanted Islands' and the conservation projects which seek to preserve the unique Galapagos wildlife. Next, make our way to Frigatebird Hill (Cerro Tijeretetas), which is located two kilometres from the Interpretation Center, southwest of Isla San Cristobal. It's quite a climb to the top, but well worth the amazing views of the bay. From here you can also see Kicker Rock, an eroded volcanic formation protruding from the sea which has become an emblem of the island. We'll return to town in the late afternoon/early evening.

DAY 3: Isla Floreana / Isla Isabela

Take an early morning boat ride today towards Floreana Island, which should take about 2.5 hours. Along the way keep your eyes peeled for wildlife such as dolphins and whales. On arrival to the island, snorkel in the clear blue waters and then break for lunch. Afterwards venture to a black sand beach which belongs to the Witmers, decedents of some of the first settlers on the Galapagos. The town here, Puerto Velasco Ibarra, has about 150 residents and an intriguing history involving deaths, disappearances and murders. Later in the afternoon, wave goodbye to Floreana and continue to Isabela Island (approximately 2 hours) From Isabela Port it's a short transfer to the hotel where we will spend the night (approximately 15 minutes)

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DAY 4: Isla Isabela, Galapagos

Start your second day on Isla Isabela with a short bus ride (approximately 15 minutes) to the Giant Tortoise Breeding Center where you'll observe giant tortoises in all stages of development. The centre has almost a thousand giant tortoises training for life on their own. After our visit we take a short bus ride (approximately 15 minutes) to a brackish lagoon where we will be able to observe flamingos. In the afternoon after an informative visit, board a small pangas for Tintoreras or Shark Alley. On our way we will go along the coast line in the hope to spot blue-footed boobies and the famous Galapagos penguin who is home on the western part of the archipelago. On arrival, hop off for a short walk on this isolated islet and popular iguana nesting site that's home to hundreds of marine iguanas. Snorkel in a calm inlet with colourful fish and winding underground lava tubes. This area is frequented by green sea turtles that like to rest on the calm, sandy bottom. Late afternoon, return to town in search of your own sandy resting spot and enjoy your first Isabela sunset, arguably the most beautiful of all the islands.

DAY 5: Isla Isabela, Galapagos

Start your last day on Isla Isabela by heading towards the Sierra Negra Volcano (approximately 45 minutes by bus), one of the most active volcanoes in the Galapagos and the second largest crater in the world. Weather permitting, take a challenging hike of around 17 kilometres up the rocky mountain, which takes between five and six hours. 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, Galapagos

Today begins nice an early at about 5 am. Take a boat transfer to Santa Cruz at approximately 6 am. Upon arrival transfer to Puerto Ayora to have breakfast. After breakfast head to the Charles Darwin Research Station. This is a great opportunity to learn more about conservation efforts to preserve the unique ecosystems of the Galapagos. You can even get close to giant tortoises which are being raised for the repopulation program. Next, head to a restaurant that offers a typical Ecuadorian lunch package, simply referred to as 'Menu'. Usually this consists of a fresh juice, basic entrée (usually a soup) as well as a main meal. These lunch deals are very popular throughout Ecuador so it's a great way to eat like a local. In the afternoon visit the higher part of the islands to observe the giant tortoise roaming in its natural habitat. Afterwards visit a locally owned Sugar cane farm. Here the farmers will show us the process in which sugar cane is processed and turned into alcohol. Take the opportunity to try some!

DAY 7: Isla Santa Cruz, Galapagos

This morning we will hike approximately 3.5kms to Tortuga Bay beach where we will head out on a kayak excursion in a protected bay. Along the way, keep an eye out for eagle rays, sea turtles and blue-footed boobies. Later head back to Puerto Ayora. In the afternoon have free time to further explore the town. Tonight, enjoy an included group dinner.

DAY 8: Isla Santa Cruz, Galapagos

This morning at approximately 8am your Galapagos trip comes to an end.

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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Standard

Inclusions	<p>Meals 7 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 1 dinner</p> <p>Transport Boat, Public bus, Speed Boat, Private Vehicle</p> <p>Accommodation Hotel (7 nights)</p> <p>Included activities Isla San Cristobal- Snorkeling in La Loberia (1.5 Hours) San Cristobal - Excursion to Leon Dormido or Lobos Islands Isla San Cristobal - Interpretation Center (45 minutes) Isla San Cristobal - Cerro Tijeretas View Point (1 Hour) Floreana - Snorkeling Isla Isabela -Tintoreras or Shark Alley (2.5 Hours) Isla Isabela - Flamingo lagoon visit (30 Minutes) 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) Santa Cruz Highlands Visit (3 Hours) Tortuga Bay Kayak Excursion (1 Hour)</p>
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 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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