

ECUADOR - M/V ORIGIN: SOUTHERN & CENTRAL ROUTE



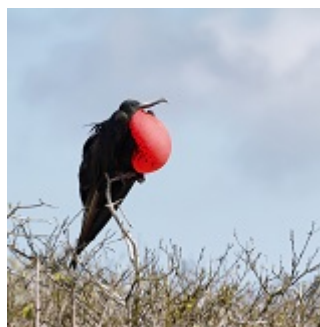
INTRODUCTION

Discover the Galapagos Islands on board the M/V Origin, a luxury mega yacht that will take you between the islands in search of spectacular landscapes and an abundance of fascinating wildlife. See Pinnacle Rock, the Cathedral, the Chinese Hat and Frigatebird Hill. Snorkel with Galapagos penguins and swim or kayak with sea lions. The scenery is as diverse as the wildlife with lava fields, lava tubes, lagoons, sandy beaches, coral reef lined bays and cactus forests all waiting to be explored. Add to this the diverse range of birds, reptiles and sea mammals and the experience of a lifetime awaits.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: San Cristobal - Frigatebird Hill

On arrival into Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, San Cristobal, you will be met at the airport by the crew and escorted to the main dock by bus and then to the M/V Origin by Zodiac. A delicious buffet lunch is served after the welcome briefing and safety drill. In the afternoon we travel by bus to Cerro Tijeretas (Frigatebird Hill) situated on the edge of town. We hope to see nesting colonies of both species of frigatebirds (great and magnificent). We follow the trail that leads to Punta Carola with beautiful views along the way. Here we hope to find lava lizards, the medium ground finch and the Chatham mockingbird. After our visit we return to the yacht for a briefing, followed by the Captain's welcome cocktail party and dinner prepared by our culinary school-trained chefs.



TRIP CODE

GATSSCR8

DEPARTURE

Weekly

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

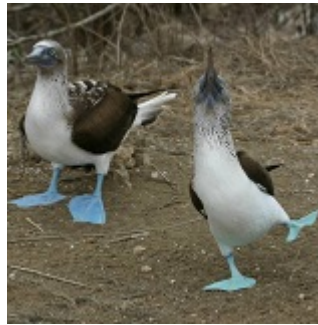
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DAY 2: San Cristobal/Cerro Brujo/Punta Pitt/Leon Dormido

Today sees us arriving at Cerro Brujo, a stunning white coral beach, one of the most spectacular in the Galapagos. Cerro Brujo was one of the first sites to be visited by Charles Darwin. This is the perfect place for a peaceful walk with panoramic views and the chance to see coastal and migratory birds including pelicans, swallow-tailed gulls and blue-footed boobies. Here you have the opportunity to swim with sea lions, snorkel or kayak. A Zodiac ride takes us through a cave called "The Cathedral". During lunch, we cruise towards Punta Pitt on the north-eastern tip of San Cristobal. This tuff formation serves as a nesting site for many seabirds including three types of boobies (Nazca, blue-footed and red-footed), great and magnificent frigatebirds, swallow-tailed gulls, storm petrels, shearwaters and brown pelicans plus a colony of sea lions. This is the only place in the Galapagos where you can see all three species of booby nesting together. Punta Pitt is on a par with Genovesa (Tower) Island for bird viewing. You can snorkel at Pitt Rock with sea lions and colourful fish such as king angel and surgeon fish. After returning to the yacht we cruise around "Leon Dormido" or "Kicker Rock". This vertical tuff cone formation rises abruptly almost 150 metres out of the ocean. On the cliffs we look for blue-footed boobies, Nazca boobies and magnificent frigatebirds. Back at the yacht we have a briefing followed by dinner.




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DAY 3: Espanola (Hood) - Punta Suarez & Gardner Bay

This morning we arrive at Espanola Island, the southernmost of the Galapagos Islands and one of the oldest. Due to its isolation, Espanola has a number of endemic species including the Espanola mockingbird, the Espanola lava lizard and the waved albatross. We disembark the Origin at Punta Suarez with its amazing variety of wildlife and are greeted by noisy sea lions and inquisitive Hood mockingbirds. During the months of April to December, the waved albatrosses perform their fascinating mating rituals. Blue-footed and Nazca boobies can also be found here as can the swallow-tailed gulls - the only nocturnal gulls in the world that fish at night. Red-billed tropicbirds can be seen sheltering under the cliffs. Darwin's finches, Galapagos doves and Galapagos hawks are also found here at Punta Suarez. Brightly coloured red and green marine iguanas can be seen, the only marine iguanas that remain brightly coloured throughout the year. Sally light-foot crabs can be observed as they crawl along the shoreline near to the famous "blow-hole". After lunch we make a wet landing at Gardner Bay, Espanola's second visitor site. Here we walk along the vast stretch of white sandy beach where large colonies of sea lions can be seen. As you explore the area look out for Galapagos hawks, Darwin's finches and Hood mockingbirds. You can swim with sea lions from the beach, explore the bay and islets by kayak or just relax on the beach. There is also an excellent snorkelling site off Gardner Islet with a diverse range of colourful sea life near Tortuga Rock. There is also the opportunity to explore caves covered with invertebrates by Zodiac. At the end of our visit we return to the yacht for our daily briefing and then dinner.




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DAY 4: Floreana - Cormorant Point & Post Office Bay

Landing at Punta Cormorant, we step ashore onto one of the few populated islands in the Galapagos. Floreana has the most interesting human history of all the Galapagos Islands, being the site of the first "Post Office" dating back to 1793 and home to the first Galapagos resident. It was the first island colonised by Ecuadorians and was a penal colony for a short period. We set foot on a green-sand beach where sea lions, lava herons, yellow-crowned night herons, blue-footed boobies and penguins can all be found. The trail leads to a brackish lagoon, home to Bahama ducks, common stilts, Galapagos flycatchers, yellow warblers and greater flamingos. We pass a wide variety of plants including morning glory, cut leaf daisies, palo verde and Scalesia as well as black, red and white mangroves. The trail continues to a beach with fine soft sand where sea turtles lay their eggs in the sand dunes and sting rays swim in the shallow waters. After the walk, there is the opportunity to snorkel at Devil's Crown or Champion, a shallow sunken crater colonised by a brilliant array of colourful fish, coral, white-tipped sharks, sea turtles, spotted eagle rays and sea stars. Lunch is served on the sundeck if weather conditions permit and in the afternoon we visit Post office Bay, one of the most famous sites in the Galapagos. Whalers placed a wooden barrel here in 1793 and used it as a post office. You can leave a postcard here and pick up any mail from your home area to deliver on your return home. Here you have the chance to swim from the beach with sea lions. Later in the afternoon, we take a Zodiac ride near Baroness Point to spot sea turtles and rays, returning to the yacht for a briefing followed by dinner.



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DAY 5: Santa Cruz - Charles Darwin Centre & Puerto Ayora

Today sees us travelling by bus to the highlands of Santa Cruz Island. As we wind our way through the seven vegetation zones of the Galapagos, the scenery gradually changes. We visit "Las Primicias" tortoise reserve, a private farm in the highlands where giant tortoises can be seen in their natural habitat. We make a stop at "The Tunnels", the largest lava tubes found in the Galapagos. We also visit "Los Gemelos" (The Twins), a pair of large pit craters where we hope to see red male vermilion flycatchers. Our next stop is at the Charles Darwin Research Station where we visit the tortoise and land iguana corrals and the breeding centre where new hatchlings and miniature tortoises not yet ready to be repatriated are housed. Although Lonesome George is no longer with us, Diego, "The Professor" can be seen. Puerto Ayora is the social heart of the Galapagos with the largest population of 24,000 inhabitants and after lunch back on board, we return to town to explore, shop for souvenirs or maybe spend time at an internet cafe. You have the option to remain in town to have dinner in a local restaurant (at own expense) or you can return to the boat for dinner. Zodiac transfers will be provided between the town and yacht.



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DAY 6: Bartolome - Las Bachas - Chinese Hat

This morning we make a dry landing on Bartolome Island, a relatively young Island that is inhospitable to most plants and animals. We climb for 30 minutes up wooden stairs that lead to the summit of a once active volcano. Along the way, we encounter lava bombs, spatter cones and cinder cones. From the top, there are panoramic views of the island and "Pinnacle Rock", an eroded tuff cone. There is time to snorkel in the crystal clear waters off the beach alongside schools of tropical fish and Galapagos penguins. Alternatively Zodiac rides are available. In the afternoon we visit "Las Bachas" (Barges), a sandy white-coral beach that is a major nesting site for sea turtles. The remains of a floating dock used by the Americans during World War II can be found here. At a lagoon behind the beach we may see greater flamingos, white-cheeked pintail ducks and migratory birds. There is the chance to snorkel from the beach. Off the southern tip of Santiago is "Sombrero Chino" (Chinese Hat), named due to its shape. Here we make a wet beach landing amongst sea lion colonies. The trail leads us through a fascinating landscape of volcanic rubble including cracked lava formations and lava tubes. There are marine iguanas and oystercatchers here. You have the opportunity to snorkel at a site that is frequented by Galapagos penguins. Back on board our nightly briefing is followed by dinner whilst we anchor in a calm and protected area.



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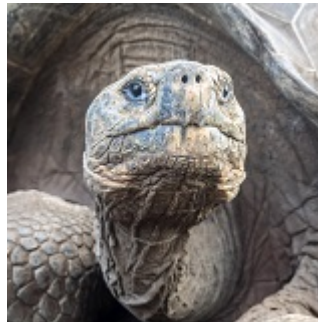
DAY 7: South Plaza, North Seymour

South Plaza is a small geological uplift with tall cliffs that offers spectacular views. We make a dry landing, and then follow the trail that leads us through prickly pear (opuntia) and sesuvium. The Galapagos land iguana feeds on the cactus leaves and we may encounter a colony of bachelor sea lions with the dominant bulls in various stages of recovery following battles over prime beach territory. Here we may also find swallow-tailed gulls, shearwaters and red-billed tropicbirds who nest along the cliffs. Following lunch, we make a dry landing at North Seymour, a small geological uplift that is home to 2,500 land iguanas. The trail leads us to swallow-tailed gulls, blue-footed boobies and land iguanas. We visit the largest colony of magnificent frigatebirds found in the Galapagos and we may see marine iguanas and sea lions body surf the northern swells. Back on board the yacht we settle in for the Captain's farewell cocktail party and dinner as well as a slide show presentation by the guides.



DAY 8: San Cristobal - Interpretation Centre

This morning we head out by bus to visit the Galapagos Island Interpretation Centre opened on San Cristobal Island in 1999. The museum provides a complete and documented natural and human history of the archipelago, from its volcanic origins to the present day. Afterwards, there is time to explore the port before heading to the airport for your flight back to the mainland.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Standard

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Inclusions	<p>Cabin accommodation, all meals and snacks, All beverages including open bar, Captain’s welcome and farewell party, Guided shore excursions, Cruise director, Use of wet suits, snorkeling equipment, stand up paddle boards and sea kayaks, Transfers in the Islands between the airport and dock.</p> <p>Cruise rates do not include International Airfare, Airfare to Galapagos, Galapagos entrance fee (park tax), transit control card, Premium alcoholic beverages, Gratuities to guides and crew, purchases on board laundry service, Wi-Fi (when available) and travel insurance. Galapagos Park Tax: The entrance fee to the National Park is \$100 for adults and \$50 for children 11 and younger and is not included in the cruise rate. Transit Control Card - A TCT card or tarjeta de control de transito is \$20 per person and is required by INGALA for all visitors to Galapagos to control migration to the Islands.</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.

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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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