

## GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - MONSERRAT



### INTRODUCTION

Cruise the central, southern and eastern Galapagos Islands aboard the comfortable Monserrat and discover the magic of the archipelago and its vast array of fascinating wildlife. Discover the dramatic black lava flows of volcanic Bartolom  Island, snorkel with turtles and sea lions, explore Espa ola Island or laze a on her white-sand beaches instead. Encounter giant Galapagos tortoises in the highlands, marvel at the incredible birdlife and gaze out at the amazing scenery. This adventure will leave you will life-time memories.

### ITINERARY

#### DAY 1: Arrival transfer in Quito

On arrival, please make your way through to the Arrivals Hall where our representative will be waiting for you to transfer you to your hotel. He/she will be holding a sign with your name on it. Should you not be able to locate them, please refer to the front of your itinerary for emergency contact details of our representative office. Please note this service is with a driver only.



NO IMAGE  
AVAILABLE

#### TRIP CODE

SEV10NB

#### DEPARTURE

Select Saturdays January  
through September 2020

#### DURATION

10 Days

#### LOCATIONS

Galapagos Islands,  
Ecuador



## GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - MONSERRAT

### DAY 1: Free day in Quito

Today is free for you to explore Quito at your leisure.



### DAY 1: 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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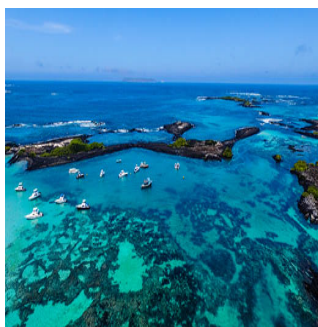
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### DAY 2: San Cristobal Island

This morning you will be transferred early to the airport for your flight to the Galapagos Islands. On arrival in San Cristóbal you will be met by your naturalist guide and transferred to the ship. Please note that the Galapagos National Park charges a visitor fee of USD100, payable on arrival, which funds park maintenance and supervision in the Galapagos, as well as ecological study and conservation. The Galapagos Islands are located about 1000 kilometres (620 miles) off the Pacific coast of South America. The archipelago is comprised of 13 major islands and scores of islets that served as a living laboratory for Charles Darwin, the renowned evolution theorist. Long before Darwin arrived in the Galapagos, seafarers knew these isolated islands as home to some of the strangest and most wonderful wildlife imaginable, including birds that could swim but no longer fly, aquatic iguanas, dragon-like lizards left over from prehistoric times and the giant Galapagos tortoises for which the islands were named. Later in the day we explore the tiny Islas Lobos, home to a large sea lion colony and abundant marine life. Here you will explore on foot and by boat for some great wildlife encounters, taking a panga ride to view the sea and shore birds nesting and feeding. You may spot a small colony of blue-footed boobies, nesting frigatebirds as well as two species of sea lion. There is also the opportunity to snorkel off the beach at Isla Lobos, in amongst the families of sea lions and their inquisitive pups looking to play. We return to our ship, the Monserrat, a spacious 20 person vessel, sailing overnight to ensure that you arrive refreshed and ready to explore the next destination. Enjoy the amenities while cruising - spend time in the top deck lounge and bar, indulge in a meal with new friends or relax in the indoor air-conditioned areas. The ship travels at night so you will wake up in a new destination, ready to explore.



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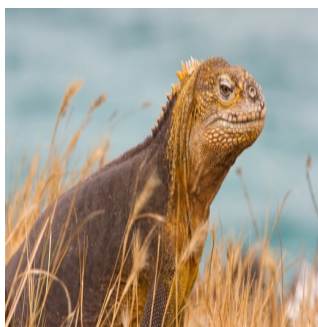
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### DAY 3: Cerro Brujo & Highlands

The first landing for the day is at Cerro Brujo on the north coast of San Cristóbal, where we explore the coastline and look for wildlife and seabirds and learn about the island's natural and human history. The sandy beach is home to Sally Lightfoot crabs, brown pelicans, blue-footed boobies and California sea lions as well as marine iguanas. There will be time to take a refreshing swim and to walk to a freshwater lagoon frequented by flamingos. We then spend the afternoon visiting the highlands, a tortoise natural breeding area surrounded by endemic flora of the islands. We also visit the Jacinto Gordillo Breeding Centre in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno. At this giant tortoise Breeding Centre you can see all of the different species of tortoises close up. The tortoises are bred in captivity in a protected wild area, safeguarded from predators. There are newly hatched tortoises as well as full-grown adults that can live well over 100 years. You may also see finches, warblers and mockingbirds in the vegetation surrounding the Breeding Centre.



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### DAY 4: Española Island

Today we visit Gardner Bay and Punta Suárez on Española Island, one of the oldest in the archipelago, with guided walks to observe wildlife and free time for swimming or snorkelling.

Gardner Bay is an excellent site for swimming and snorkelling and features a magnificent white sandy beach, home to sea lions and seabirds. The beautiful turquoise waters support incredible sea life. Look out for young sea lions and schools of large tropical fish, including yellow-tailed surgeonfish, king angelfish and bump-head parrot fish. There is the option to snorkel at Gardner Bay. Further out towards Tortuga Rock and Gardner Island you may see schools of large colourful tropical fish, manta rays and whitetip reef sharks. You may get the chance to swim with the sea lions - an opportunity not to be missed! In the afternoon we sail to Punta Suarez on the western side of Española Island. Española (also known as Hood) is the southernmost island in the Galapagos archipelago and is home to several species of wildlife including masked and blue-footed boobies and the waved albatross. A hike to the top of the cliff provides spectacular photo opportunities. We follow the trail through a rookery and learn the geological history of the island from our guide, including its dramatic volcanic features, climate, flora, and fauna.



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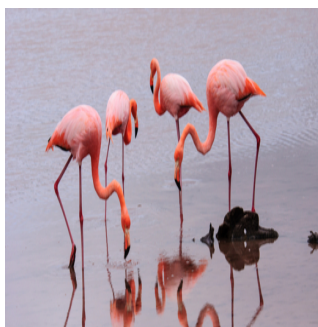
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### DAY 5: Floreana Island

Punta Cormorant is the only landing site on Floreana Island. The landing site is a green sand beach, coloured by olivine crystals, volcanic-derived silicates of magnesium and iron. The trail leads to a lake normally inhabited by flamingos and other shore birds and continues to a beach of fine white sand particles known as “Flour Beach”, an important nesting site for turtles. You may see Galapagos penguins and marine iguanas and there will be the chance to explore the lava tubes with your guide. We also plan to make a stop at Champion Islet where you will be able to snorkel with a colony of playful sea lions that reside in the waters off this tiny island. You may also see turtles, rays and tropical fish. You need to be a strong swimmer to snorkel here due to the currents around the island. In the afternoon we visit historic Post Office Bay. In the late 18th century, English whaling vessels placed a barrel here to be used as a post office. Today the box is used mainly by tourists, who drop off and pick up unstamped letters to be carried to far destinations.



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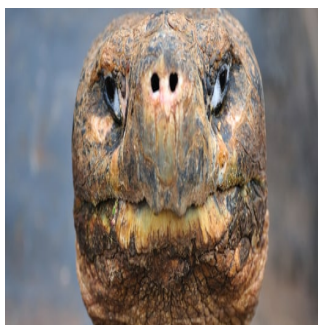




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### DAY 6: Santa Cruz

This morning we disembark in Puerto Ayora on Isla Santa Cruz and visit the Charles Darwin Research Centre. Santa Cruz is the second largest island in the Galapagos, with the largest population and with Puerto Ayora as its main town. It also boasts the most varied of the islands' vegetation zones including coastal, transition, scalesia, miconia and pampa. The Charles Darwin Research Station is located a short walk from the centre of the town. It is a science organization that was initiated in 1964, working to preserve the ecosystem of the Galapagos through the conservation efforts of scientists, researchers and volunteers. It also provides a study location for international scientists and training for Naturalist Guides. We tour the exhibition centre to see photo displays of recent volcanic eruptions, charts outlining geological formations and drawings of the evolutionary development of endemic species. The station is also a great place to observe many species of tortoises and land iguanas in captivity, brought back from the brink of extinction. Here you can see the famous Galapagos tortoise close up. A corral houses adult Galapagos tortoises and there is a nursery in which the young are cared for until around age three when their shells have hardened. \*\*Please note: The Charles Darwin Research Station has partially closed until December 2016. Groups affected will visit the highlands to see the giant tortoises in the wild.\*\* We head to the highlands of Santa Cruz Island to see giant land tortoises in the wild in their natural environment. We explore the area and see some of the amazing volcanic formations including lava tunnels, keeping an eye out for owls that roost in the entrances to the tunnels. There will be time to explore the small town of Puerto Ayora. You may like to visit a local fish market or buy some souvenirs and discover how people live in the Galapagos.



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### DAY 7: Sullivan Bay & Bartolomé

The day begins with a visit to Sullivan Bay on Isla Santiago to witness the striking giant lava formations that contrast with the white coral sand beach. Plant life is sparse on the island due to its harsh environment and relatively new lava flow. We enjoy a walk along the lava formations before reaching a white coral sand beach, where abundant Sally Lightfoot crabs and sea lions gather on the shore. There is time to enjoy a refreshing dip in the water, snorkelling in amongst the varied fish species and other marine life found in the shallow waters. You may also see turtles and rays. We continue on to Bartolomé and have a guided tour of the dramatic volcanic features of the island, before hiking to a panoramic viewpoint. At the summit of the island you will gain an understanding of its volcanic origins and enjoy a spectacular view. The island is famous for Pinnacle Rock, one of the most iconic rock formations in the Galapagos and an excellent spot for swimming and snorkelling. Here you may encounter Galapagos penguins, sea turtles, sea lions, whitetip reef sharks and a huge variety of fish. The Galapagos penguin is the only species of penguin found north of the Equator.



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### DAY 8: Bachas Beach & Cerro Dragón

Today sees us visiting the beach on Las Bachas to relax or swim in the crystal waters before we continue to Cerro Dragón on the west coast of Santa Cruz to see land iguanas and a saltwater lagoon frequented by flamingos and other species of birds. This morning we visit Playa las Bachas (Bachas Beach), located on the north eastern tip of Santa Cruz. Here the sand is made of decomposed coral, making it soft and white and a favourite site for nesting sea turtles. As you stroll along the beach, you may see colourful Sally Lightfoot crabs on the lave rocks along the shoreline. Trek with the guide to look for a range of wildlife including flamingos, hermit crabs, frigatebirds, blue-footed boobies, black-necked stilts and sea lions. There will be time to take a dip in the crystalline waters, snorkelling or swimming off the beach. Next we visit Cerro Dragón (Dragon Hill) on the west coast of Isla Santa Cruz to observe land iguanas and a saltwater lagoon frequented by flamingos and other bird species. We take a short walk from the beach to a hypersalinic lagoon frequented by pink flamingos, common stilts, pintail ducks and other species of birds. We pass through a Scalesia tree forest. This tree is endemic to the area with only 400 specimens of Scalesia trees left in the world.



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### DAY 9: Black Turtle Cove, Baltra & Quito

This morning we explore Black Turtle Cove on the northern end of the island and take an excursion by panga. Here we explore the mangroves to observe the rich and varied marine life between the fresh and salt waters, including manta rays, sea turtles, pelicans and an abundance of other birdlife. Whitetip reef sharks can sometimes be seen gliding by. This afternoon you are transferred to the airport for your flight to Quito. On arrival there is a transfer to the group hotel with time to enjoy one last night in Ecuador's capital.



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DAY 10: Transfer to the airport for onward destination


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



INCLUSIONS & DETAILS	
Accommodation	Standard
Inclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 nts in the Galápagos Islands aboard the Monserrat</li> <li>• Arrival transfer on Day 1</li> <li>• Flights to and from the Galápagos Islands</li> <li>• 2 Certified Galápagos National Park Service guides</li> <li>• All landings, excursions, and transportation.</li> </ul> <p>Snorkelling equipment. Visit to a wildlife interpretation centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 7 dinners. (Allow USD75-100 for meals not included. Drinks and tips while on the yacht are extra.)</li> <li>• Hotel (2 nts), aboard the Monserrat in twin-share or double cabins (7 nts).</li> <li>• Local flight, Monserrat motorized yacht, van, Zodiac.</li> <li>• 2 Galápagos National Park Service guide while in the islands.</li> </ul> <p>You must pay a USD20 Transit Control Card fee at the Quito airport and a USD100 (cash) Galápagos park entry fee immediately upon arrival to the Islands (subject to increase).</p>
Difficulty Rating	1 (easy)
Single Surcharge	Available Upon Request
Notes	Contact us for more details
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

## SUSTAINABILITY

Chimu Adventures undertakes a number of sustainability measures within its operations

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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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