

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - LETTY



TRIP CODE

ECGNWNR

DEPARTURE

Departs Select Sundays

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

Galapagos Islands



INTRODUCTION

The Western and Northern route proposes an adventurous experience throughout the islands. On board the 20-guest Letty you will find a quaint and intimate cruising experience with your fellow passengers. Create unforgettable memories as you explore these incredible islands. Walk through pristine beaches home to curious colonies of sea lions, discover contrasting islands of lush jungle and volcanic activity, hike through highlands on the trail of giant Galapagos Tortoises. A true adventure awaits.

ITINERARY

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DAY 1: San Cristobal - Galapaguera de Cerro Colorado

When you land at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno on SAN CRISTOBAL Island, your guides will be there to greet you and escort you to your yacht by bus and Zodiac. Once you've boarded, you'll have a welcome briefing and a short safety drill. Begin your vacation with a delicious buffet lunch before traveling to Cerro Colorado to visit Centro de Crianza Jacinto Gordillo (La Galapaguera). Here, you'll learn about the breeding program for giant tortoises that the national park has established to ensure that these animals continue to thrive despite the endangered status of some species. At the visitor centre, you'll have a chance to learn about the evolution of tortoises and the threats they face, from invasive species to habitat loss. Along the trail, your first exposure to Galapagos wildlife may include the San Cristobal mockingbird and Calandrinia plant, both endemic to this island. Back on the yacht, after a briefing, the captain and crew will welcome you with a cocktail reception. An elegant multi-course dinner, prepared by our accomplished chefs and accompanied by wine, will be served, and you'll set sail for Genovesa Island. But for tonight, enjoy meeting your fellow passengers as your kitchen staff treats you to a multi-course dinner complete with complimentary wine.



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DAY 2: Prince Philip's Steps & Darwin Bay

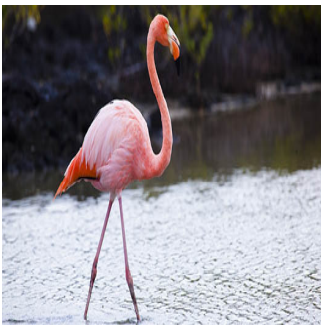
Later in the afternoon, you'll land at Darwin Bay, a gorgeous coral sand beach. Here, you'll see both swallow-tailed gulls and lava gulls gathered near the tide pools. A forest of Optuntia cactus and mangroves provide shelter for Great frigate birds. Males looking to attract a mate inflate a red pouch on their chests. Round out the afternoon by relaxing on the beach, or choose to swim with friendly, playful sea lions in these warmer northern waters. When you return to the yacht, you'll have a short briefing followed by a delicious dinner. If the night is clear, take a stroll on the deck and enjoy the sky full of bright stars. Your guides can point out constellations and help you identify the species of birds flying alongside the yacht.




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DAY 3: Las Bachas, Black Turtle Cove & Dragon Hill

This morning you'll visit Las Bachas, (Spanish for barges) on the northern side of Santa Cruz. Dozens of bright pink flamingos feed on the interior lagoons, and a long white sand beach is a beautiful site for a stroll. Your guides will point out endemic plant species and share some fascinating Galapagos history. Before returning to the yacht for lunch, you'll have time to snorkel from the beach. Bring your underwater camera to take photos of colourful tropical fish and sea stars, along with sea turtles and maybe even sharks along the ocean floor. Your guide will offer an enrichment lecture that is informative and entertaining, the topic is on marine currents, climate and geology of the Islands. In the afternoon, when you step ashore on Cerro Dragon (Dragon Hill), you'll have a magnificent panoramic view of the bay and island landscape. You may see flamingos in the brackish lagoon, along with a variety of plants, including opuntia cactus, Palo Santo and Muyuyo trees (Cordia letea). As you walk the trail, look for Darwin's finches, Galapagos flycatchers, yellow warblers, and Audubon shearwaters. The guides will also pause to point out birds such as stilts, pintail ducks and sandpipers. Scan the path for yellow Land iguanas, strikingly different from their marine cousins, resting in the sun. These iguanas, which are endemic to the Galapagos, were once part of the Station's breeding program. After walking the trail, you'll return to the yacht for a briefing and dinner.




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DAY 4: Fernandina - Punta Espinoza, Isabela - Urbina Bay

Begin your morning with a Zodiac ride at Punta Vicente Roca. Your skilled driver will navigate you through the wave-sculpted caves and bring you up close to the tuff walls covered in colorful Sally light-foot crabs. Don't miss the opportunity to snorkel here, with penguins diving playfully in the water or grooming themselves on rock formations. Look for sea turtles poking their heads above water before swimming gracefully beneath the surface. After lunch, take a seat on the sun deck to enjoy the scenery as we sail through the Bolivar Chanel. In addition to the dramatic scenery, you might get to see whales riding the bow wave or dolphins jumping in graceful arcs. You may even spot the Mola-Mola, an odd-looking giant sun fish with triangular fins on the top and bottom and a short, stubby tail fin. In the afternoon, you'll disembark at Urbina Bay on Isabela Island and see some surprising evidence of volcanic activity. Four files of coastal seabed were exposed due to a dramatic uplift during an eruption in 1954, and some of the remaining coral skeletons still stand several feet high. A diverse collection of animal species await on the island as well, including Galapagos land iguanas, marine iguanas, Darwin's finches, brown pelicans, flightless cormorants, and the occasional giant Galapagos tortoise. When you're finished exploring, you'll return to the vessel for your nightly briefing and dinner.




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DAY 5: Isabela - Elizabeth Bay, Tagus Cove

This morning you're in for another geological wonder. Stop at Punta Espinoza on Fernandina Island, the youngest and most pristine Island in Galapagos, formed by active volcanoes that stretch around the coast. With no introduced animals on this island, you can observe the ecosystem at its most pristine. Sea lion harems lie on the beach, with resident bulls carefully guarding their territory and keeping a lookout for sharks that threaten the colony's pups. Hundreds of marine iguanas, forming the largest colony in Galapagos, warm themselves along the rugged shoreline, blending in with the dark rocks. Out on the point, your guide will show you the nests of flightless cormorants, which stay close to shore since they lost their ability to fly. You'll have an opportunity to snorkel here, in the company of the large sea turtles that frequent the area. Return to the yacht for a BBQ lunch served on the sundeck where you'll have a prime view for whale watching. Your guide will offer an enrichment lecture about Charles Darwin and his Theory of evolution. After lunch, you'll get to see some of the human history of the Galapagos when you go ashore on Tagus Cove. This was a favored stopping point for pirates and whalers for centuries, and sections of the rocky cliffs are covered in graffiti from as far back as the 1800s. Hike at a faster pace to a saltwater lagoon and scenic overview, and take in the ocean, lava fields, and volcanic formations. You may choose to explore the shoreline of the secluded cove by kayak or paddleboard. There are many animals to see, including Galapagos penguins, boobies, pelicans and other seabirds.




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DAY 6: Rabida Island - Puerto Egas, Black Turtle Cove

This morning, you'll disembark on the dark red beach of RABIDA. This small island is considered the geographic centre of the Galapagos because its volcanic rocks are the most diversified in the archipelago. A short trail will lead you to a saltwater lagoon filled with greater flamingos. Along the way, look for marine iguanas, mockingbirds and yellow warblers. You may also see Darwin's finches. If you choose to snorkel this morning, you may be able to see a colony of sea lions or rays. Several species of rays live on the Galapagos, but golden rays and spotted eagle rays are the most common. Guests on the Origin have a Zodiac excursion at Caleta Tortuga Negra (Black Turtle Cove) through a series of peaceful coves and inlets surrounded by mangroves whose large roots rise out of the water. View pairs of mating sea turtles (Sept to Feb), white-tipped reef sharks and golden cow-nosed rays. We return to the vessel for the Captain's Farewell cocktail with the crew, and dinner as well as a special presentation by your guides.

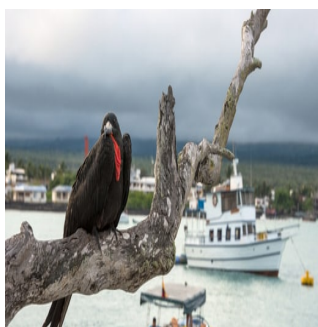


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DAY 7: Santa Cruz - Highlands & Darwin Station

When you wake up this morning, your yacht will be one of dozens of boats anchored in the lively harbor of Academy Bay. You'll disembark at Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz Island, the social heart of the Galapagos, with a population of 24,000 residents. This morning, we visit the breeding centre Centro de Crianza Fausto Llerena and Charles Darwin Research Station where we learn about ongoing conservation efforts from exhibits set up along the wooden trail. You'll see hatchlings and miniature tortoises that will be repatriated by the National Park when grown. The newest exhibit honours Lonesome George, the last surviving tortoise from Pinta Island that tragically died of natural causes. A more hopeful story is Diego, a saddleback tortoise whose species was reduced to 14 individuals before he was transported from the San Diego Zoo and who has since fathered hundreds of descendants. Afterwards, you'll learn about the history of the settlers of this Island on a guided tour through the back streets of Puerto Ayora. Stroll through town to shop for handmade souvenirs, Ecuadorian chocolate ice cream or coffee grown in Galapagos. Return to the yacht for lunch and later board a bus for a short ride to a lava tunnel, a hollow formation created when lava on the earth's surface cools and hardens while molten lava continues to flow in the middle. Your next stop will be Los Gemelos (The Twins), a pair of large, deep craters with vibrant plant life at higher elevation. Next stop is at a privately-owned hacienda, where giant tortoises roam freely - some weighing over 500 pounds - in their natural habitat, feeding or resting in shallow pools.



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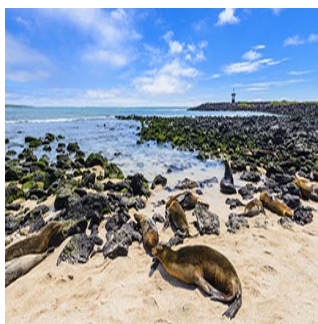
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DAY 8: San Cristobal - Cerro Tijeretas

Your last morning in the Galapagos we disembark after breakfast and travel by bus to Cerro Tijeretas (Frigatebird Hill), where you'll find nesting colonies of both species of frigate birds; Great and Magnificent, lava lizards, medium ground finches and San Cristobal mockingbird. Follow the trail to Punta Carola for a spectacular view. Guests on the Letty have an early morning visit Isla Lobos. Before your flight back to the mainland, you'll have time for any last-minute photos or shopping. A short bus ride will get you to the airport with plenty of time for check in.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Standard
Inclusions	Cabin accommodation on board ship All meals whilst on board Captains welcome/farewell cocktails and dinner Guiding by experienced naturalist guide All shore excursions Airport transfers Wet suit rental & snorkelling equipment Exclusions Return airfares from mainland Ecuador Galapagos National Park Entrance Fee (US\$100 per person subject to change) Galapagos Transit Control Card (US\$20 per person subject to change) Visa fees (if applicable) Travel Insurance Beverages (other than coffee and tea) Personal expenses such as laundry, on-board communication (telephone calls, faxes, email service) Gratuities for the crew Optional Activities whilst on-board
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request, contact us for more details.
Notes	Park entrance fees may be subject to change without prior notice.
Price Dependent upon	Departure date, seasonality & availability.

SUSTAINABILITY

Being environmentally accountable is a crucial part of our organisation. Chimu is currently striving towards using less paper, taking several initiatives to do so and tracking our progress along the way. Our goal: A paperless organisation. For this reason, all information given to you will be sent electronically. We encourage those who choose to travel with us to support our aspirations and actions and ask that you reconsider printing out documentation. To view these documents, you can download them to your iPad or portable computer before and during your trip.

Chimu is passionate and dedicated to sustainability measures and understands the crucial part sustainability plays within the tourism industry.

Ecoventura has a partnerships with **Ecology Project International and Pack for a**

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Purpose, they also help to support the local community through donated supplies, scholarships for Galapagueño students, and community outreach. The Letty was also one of the first recipients of SmartVoyager a voluntary environmental program that requires vessels to meet conditions in regard to social standards and conservation standards designed by various groups of conservation experts and scientific groups. The Letty produces fresh water on board through desalination units as well as offering smart waste management and emission controls. We use local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprint. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting. Our guides are all highly qualified (most with university degrees) or equip with many years of experience and are paid above the standard wage. Whether it be our knowledgeable local guides, locally produced meals or the transport on tour, we do not use imported goods when local products are available. We aim to minimise our impact on the environment and give as much back as possible to the communities we work in.

While visiting the many national parks, heritage sites, museums and landmarks our travellers are encouraged to explore whilst remaining culturally aware and sensitive. We further encourage you to buy appropriate souvenirs and discourage the buying of anything wrongfully made or taken from the environment i.e. shells and endangered species products. Information on how you can be environmentally conscious, and travel responsibly will be made available in our Travellers Guides and provided during your travels by guides and staff.

For more information on our sustainability policies, including how we are striving towards being a paperless organisation, click [HERE](#)

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