

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION



INTRODUCTION

Take a step back in time with this eight-day Galapagos island hopping cruise aboard The Evolution. Allow this luxury vessel to transfer you from San Cristobal – the first landing spot of Darwin in 1835 – to North Seymour, Santa Fe and eventually Baltra. Snorkel with sea lions, spot lazy marine iguanas, seek out the blue-footed booby and venture out to see white tipped reef and hammerhead sharks. Seeing the islands by boat allows you to access the hidden corners where people rarely go while relaxing in the beautiful surroundings of your luxurious boat. Channel your inner Darwin on this extensive exploration of the diverse archipelago.

ITINERARY

TRIP CODE

ECQUFBT

DEPARTURE

Selected Saturdays

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

Galapagos Islands,
Ecuador



GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

DAY 1: Saturday, San Cristobal & Cerro Brujo


Embark on an adventure to the captivating Galapagos Islands on the first day of your itinerary. After flying from Quito with a stop in Guayaquil, you'll arrive at San Cristobal Island airport, where your National Park Guide will greet you and take you to the waterfront. From there, you'll board a dinghy and make the short crossing to the Evolution, your home for the next week. After settling in, you'll head to the first landing site, Cerro Brujo, a picturesque beach where you can swim with sea turtles, rays, and sea lions. Don't forget to bring your snorkeling gear for a chance to get up close and personal with these playful creatures. In the afternoon, the yacht will sail south towards Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, and you'll have the chance to witness a stunning Pacific sunset while enjoying happy hour on the Evolution's sky lounge. Later, your guide will give a presentation on the next day's activities and visitor sites before sitting down to a delicious dinner. With an oversized Jacuzzi on board, you can end your day by relaxing in comfort while admiring the starry night sky. Get ready for an unforgettable adventure in one of the most incredible places on earth.



DAY 2: Sunday, South Plaza, Carrion Point & Mosquera

Today you'll explore South Plazas Island, one of the smallest yet richest islands in the archipelago. Marvel at the colorful palate of lush and diverse flora, including prickly-pear cacti, red sesuvium, and fiery sally lightfoot crabs against the black lava rock. And don't forget the friendly yellow land iguanas waiting for lunch to drop from a cactus! As you follow the trail up the island to cliffs overlooking the ocean, keep an eye out for swallow-tailed gulls and marine life such as manta rays. South Plaza is also home to a healthy population of sea lions, including a colony of bachelors that sit atop the cliff. In the afternoon, head to Punta Carrion and Mosquera Island for some unforgettable snorkeling experiences. Dive into the inviting green-turquoise cove to swim with schools of yellow-tail surgeon fish, parrot fish, Creole fish, and blue stripped sea slugs. And of course, the sea lion welcoming committee will be there to make you feel right at home! You can also venture out to deeper waters where white-tipped reef sharks and occasional hammerhead sharks inhabit the channel, while tuna and red-tailed snapper pass through. On Mosquera Island, stroll along the white sand beach to observe brown pelicans, boobies, and colonies of sea lions that love to laze there. Don't forget to keep an eye out for the sally lightfoot crabs in the rocks and tide pools! As the day comes to an end, raise your glass to the Pacific sunset aboard the Evolution's sky lounge.




TRIP CODE
ECQUFBT
DEPARTURE
Selected Saturdays
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador


GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

DAY 3: Monday, Chinese Hat & James Bay

This morning you will visit the Chinese Hat Island, which got its name due to its resemblance to a traditional Chinese Coolie's hat. This island is one of the least visited sites in the central islands and is off-limits to larger groups and day boats. The landing site is a small crescent-shaped cove with a sandy white beach between black lava rocks and crystal turquoise waters. Here, you will find a sea lion colony, sally lightfoot crabs, marine iguanas, and American oyster catchers. You can explore the island's volcanic interior by taking a quarter-mile trail that leads to rock formations, including excellent examples of pahoehoe lava resembling black rock ropes. After that, you will have a chance to snorkel with sea lions and see Galápagos penguins during a panga ride. You can also kayak in areas that are not off-limits. In the afternoon, you will head west along the length of Santiago's dramatic southern coastline before turning north up her western shore to reach James Bay (Puerto Egas). This location offers access to three unique sites. You can land on a black beach with intriguing eroded rock formations inland and cross the dry interior eastward to rise to the rim of an extinct volcanic crater. Another path leads south, where you can see a series of crystal-clear grottos formed of broken lava tubes, home to sea lions and tropical fish. Further to the north, you can visit a series of inland lagoons, home to flamingos. Puerto Egas is also an excellent spot for taking pictures, especially during sunset. James Bay is a snorkeling site accessed from the shore, where you can see sea turtles hiding among the rocks. At certain times of the year, large schools of Golden rays and spotted eagle rays also glide by.

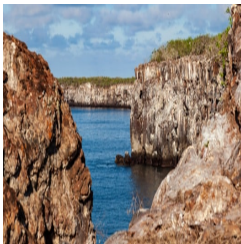



TRIP CODE
ECQUFBT
DEPARTURE
Selected Saturdays
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador


GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

DAY 4: Tuesday, Darwin Bay & Prince Phillip´s Steps

Tower Island could serve as a film set for a remote secret submarine base. The southwestern part of the island is an ocean-filled caldera ringed by the outer edges of a sizeable and mostly submerged volcano. The island sits to the northwest, slightly removed from the Galápagos archipelago. It is also known as Bird Island, a name it lives up to in a spectacular way. Landing on the white coral sands of Darwin Bay and walking up the beach, you will be surrounded by the bustling activity of great frigate birds. Puffball chicks and their proud papas—who sport bulging scarlet throat-sacks—crowd the surrounding branches, while yellow-crowned herons and lava herons feed by the shore. Farther along you will discover a stunning series of sheltered pools set into a rocky outcrop. Watch your step for marine iguanas, lava lizards and Galapagos doves that blend with the trail. The trail beside the pools leads up to a cliff overlooking the ocean filled caldera, where pairs of swallow-tailed gulls, the only nocturnal gulls in the world, can be seen nesting at the cliff’s edge. Lava gulls and pintail ducks ride the sea breezes nearby. A brief panga ride brings us to the base of those same cliffs to reveal the full variety of bird species sheltering in the ledges and crevices created by the weathered basalt. Among them, red-billed tropic birds enter and leave their nests trailing exotic kite-like tails. This is also an intriguing place to go deep-water snorkeling. Tower offers two very different snorkeling experiencing along the cliffs that form the inner part of the caldera. The center of the caldera is very deep and attracts hammerheads and large manta rays which sometimes patrol the western edge of the caldera that is more open to the sea. You can snorkel here gazing down into the depths where you just may spot these large animals if you are fortunate. But don’t worry, if you don’t really want to see them there is an equally amazing and far more sheltered snorkeling experience for you across the bay. Across the bay is Prince Phillip’s Steps, named for a visit by the British Monarch in 1964. The shoreline here falls off less sharply into the depths and is far more protected. The first thing you will notice when snorkeling here are very large tropical fish. These are warm water fish feeding off cold water nutrients. You’ll find the full assortment here including oversize parrot, unicorn, angel and hogfish along with schools of perch, surgeon fish and various types of butterfly fish. Hiding in and around the rocky shoreline that drops off into the caldera you will also see a rainbow assortment of wrasse, basslet, anthias and tang. This is the place to bring your underwater tropical fish identification chart. There are some special treats to be found here including occasional visits by fur sea lions. This area of the bay is also excellent for some kayaking in the calm waters close to the shore to observe nesting birds. Prince Phillip’s actual steps are a 25-meter (81-foot) stairway leading up to a narrow stretch of land that opens out onto the plateau surrounding Darwin Bay. It extends to form the north side of the island. Red-footed boobies wrap their webbed feet around branches to precariously perch in the bushes, and, in contrast, their masked-booby cousins dot the surface of the scrublands beyond. Crossing through the sparse vegetation, you will come to a broad lava field that extends toward the sea—this forms the north shore of the island.



TRIP CODE
ECQUFBT
DEPARTURE
Selected Saturdays
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador


GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

TRIP CODE

ECQUFBT

DEPARTURE

Selected Saturdays

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

Galapagos Islands,
Ecuador




GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

DAY 5: Wednesday, North Seymour & Santa Fe Island

North Seymour Island was lifted from the ocean floor by a seismic event, and its origins as a seabed give the island its low, flat profile. Cliffs only a few meters high form much of the shoreline, where swallow-tailed gulls sit perched in ledges. A tiny forest of silver-grey Palo Santo trees stand just above the landing, usually without leaves, waiting for the rain to bring them into bloom. This island is teeming with life! You might have to give way to a passing sea lion or marine iguana. Blue-footed boobies nest on either side of the trail where mating pairs perform their courtship dance. You are likely to see fluffy white chicks peeking out from beneath their protective mothers. The trail follows the eastern shore along the beach. You may be fortunate to witness flocks of brown pelicans and blue-footed boobies hunting schools of fish. The boobies, which look so comical on land, are ideally adapted as dive bombers and easily pierce the water, zeroing in on their targeted prey. Frigate birds with wingspans of up to 5 feet soar overhead and all around. They were named for the way that the trim of their wings in flight are reminiscent of the square rigged sailing warship. Not coincidentally frigate birds are also called Man O' War birds and they live up to that name in a literal way when they target boobies, pelicans and other birds to steal their catch. Because the frigates are pelagic, they lack the ability to take off from the water, so they do better at snatching fish from the surface or simply stealing them. They also target marine iguanas and young baby sea turtles. The trail turns east and inland to reveal the nesting stronghold of the frigates. Here you can see males with large, bright red, inflated throat sacks known as gular pouches, all done in an effort to attract females. Your guide will point out the difference between the Magnificent, or Man O' War frigates and their Great frigate bird cousins. Large puff-ball frigate bird chicks inhabit nests, waiting for their parents to return with a meal. Even at this young age they possess long hooked beaks and act defiant when they feel threatened. You will also get a closer look at the feathers of the proud parents and notice their iridescent quality and deep green tinge. Another inhabitant along the trail is the yellow land iguana. The species was originally introduced to the North Seymour in 1932 by Captain Alan Hancock and his crew from Baltra with the aim of rescuing the creatures from the poor conditions left by goats and other feral animals. The iguanas colonized the island without problem. The original colony disappeared from Baltra when it became a US military base in WWII. In 1980 Charles Darwin Station began a breeding program using some of the animals found on Seymour and successfully reintroduced their Prodigy to both islands. Today the population on Seymour is roughly 600 and on Baltra 1,500. Our snorkeling site at North Seymour also attracts scuba divers. You have a chance to see many types of rays here including marble rays, golden eagle rays, spotted Eagle rays, sting rays and even manta rays. Dormitories of white-tipped reef sharks sleep on the bottom while schools of king angelfish and yellow tailed surgeonfish swarm the rocky shoreline passing the occasional parrot and damselfish. Some of the rocks are actually well disguised scorpion fish. Large schools of tightly packed blue and gold snappers, grunts and jacks are usually found plying these waters.



TRIP CODE
ECQUFBT
DEPARTURE
Selected Saturdays
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador


GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

TRIP CODE

ECQUFBT

DEPARTURE

Selected Saturdays

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

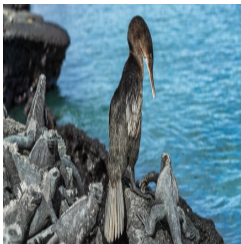
Galapagos Islands,
Ecuador




GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

DAY 6: Thursday, Post Office, Punta Cormorant

Floreana has had a colorful history: Pirates, whalers, convicts and a small band of somewhat peculiar colonists—a self proclaimed Baroness among them—who chose a Robinson Crusoe existence that ended in death and mystery. Today roughly a hundred Ecuadorians inhabit the island. In 1793 British whalers set up a barrel as the island’s post office, to send letters home on passing ships. The tradition continues to this day, simply by dropping a post card into the barrel without a stamp. The catch is you must take a post card from the barrel and see that it gets to the right place. That is how the system began and continues to this day. Some claim it works better than the official Ecuadorian post office. You’ll have a chance to continue the traditions by sending your own card and picking up others. Continuing a bit farther inland at Post Office Bay you will have the opportunity to enter the underworld of Floreana in the form of a lava tube. The lava tube descends fairly deep into the earth back toward the ocean, where you can swim in a subterranean grotto beneath the tide. Bring a good waterproof flashlight. Snorkeling in Post Office Bay offers choice encounters with waiting sea turtles and tropical fish. We return to the Evolution for lunch and a siesta. Our next landing is further along the shore to the northeast. On route we pass within view of Baroness Point in an area of mangrove lined lagoons. Eloise Wehrborn de Wagner-Bosquet, the self proclaimed Baroness (of Floreana) frequented this overlook, but we will leave the rest of her intriguing story to your Galapagos guide. Punta Cormorant offers two highly contrasting beaches; the strand where we land is composed of volcanic olivine crystals, giving it a greenish tint that glitters in the sun. From here you’ll notice the small cinder cone that forms the point. Our landing is just to the west of the cinder cone where a trail crosses the neck of an isthmus to a beach of very fine white sand known as Flour Beach. Flour Beach was formed by the erosion of coral skeletons. Between the two beaches, in a basin formed by the surrounding volcanic cones, is a hyper-saline lagoon frequented by flamingoes, pintails, stilts and other wading birds. We stop at the lagoon and then continue on the trail to Four Beach. Be careful not to wade into the tide with bare feet! If you stand at the edge of the water and look into the tidal area you will soon notice that the silty surf is rife with rays. Sea turtles also surf the waves off the beach. We return to our yacht and set out to our snorkeling destination as we don wetsuits while making our way around Punta Cormorant. Not far from the north shore of Floreana is the tiny islet known as Champion. Champion is considered one of the top snorkeling sites the Galapagos offering prime underwater sea lion interactions. Dolphins are frequently seen near the shore along with humpback whales who like the bay off Flour Beach. As you swim with the sea lions you will be surrounded by an assortment of tropical fish including yellowtail grunts, amberjacks and schools of king angel. You may spot sleepy white-tipped reef sharks hugging the bottom. Sea turtles glide by, while torpedo-like Galapagos penguins can also be encountered in the waters off Champion. Alternatively we may snorkel at Devil’s Crown which is located some 250 meters (700 ft) north of Punta Cormorant. The crown is an old submerged volcanic cone that has been worn down by waves.

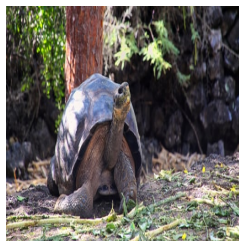


TRIP CODE
ECQUFBT
DEPARTURE
Selected Saturdays
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador


GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

DAY 7: Friday, Darwin Station & Highlands

Santa Cruz, our next stop, is the second largest island in the Galapagos and something of a hub for the archipelago. Baltra, where one of the archipelago's two airports is found, is on the far north end of the island. Puerto Ayora, located in the south of this large, round volcanic island is the seaside economic center of the Galapagos, focused on fishing and tourism. The little port town offers restaurants, hotels, souvenir shops, internet cafés and a place to get your laundry done! This morning we visit Puerto Ayora, home to both the Galapagos National Park Service Headquarters and Charles Darwin Research Station, the center of the great restorative efforts taking place in the park, and a UNESCO World Heritage site. Here we visit the Giant Tortoise Breeding & Rearing Program run by the research station, which began by rescuing the remaining 14 tortoises on the island of Española in 1970. This program has restored the population of animals there to over 1,000 today. You will see many of these animals, with their sweet ET necks and faces; from hatchlings to juveniles to large, distinguished individuals. This is where famed tortoise, Lonesome George, lived out his last days as the last of his particular race of tortoise. A highlight of any trip to the archipelago is a visit to the Santa Cruz Highlands, where the sparse, dry coastal vegetation transitions to lush wet fields and forests overgrown with moss and lichens. Our afternoon destination is the Wild Tortoise Reserve where we will have chances to track and view these friendly ancient creatures in their natural setting. This extends to the adjacent pasturelands, where farmers give tortoise safe quarter in exchange for allowing paying visitors to see them. When viewing the tortoise in their natural setting you are literally scratching the surface because there is another world awaiting you beneath the highlands. Lava tubes are formed when the outer surface of a lava flow cools, insulating the interior lava, which continues to flow on leaving a hollow tube as the result. The tubes become covered with earth over time and the result is a perfectly formed underground tunnel courtesy of Mother Nature. A wooden stairway descends to the mouth of the arched entrance to one of these underground passages and continues to the narrow opening that marks its exit. There are lights to show you the way but it's also a good idea to bring a flashlight. The terrestrial world of the tortoise and underworld of the lava tubes meet at Los Gemelos (the twins). These two large sinkholes craters were formed by collapsed lava tubes. The contrast between the marine desert coast and verdant Lost World look of the highlands is most striking here and you can easily encounter rain even when sun is shining a half an hour away at the coast. Los Gemelos are surrounded by a Scalesia forest. Scalesia is endemic to Galapagos and many endemic and native species call the forest home. This is an excellent place to view some of Darwin's famous finches along with the elusive and dazzling vermillion flycatcher. We return to Puerto Ayora with time for shopping, visiting an internet café or simply enjoying this little port town near the edge of the world.



TRIP CODE

ECQUFBT

DEPARTURE

Selected Saturdays

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

Galapagos Islands,
Ecuador




GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

DAY 8: Saturday, Black Turtle Cove & Baltra

This Galapagos itineraries his last morning of our visit to the Galapagos we visit Black Turtle Cove. Located on the northern shore of Santa Cruz, the cove is a living illustration of how mangroves alter the marine environment to create a rich and unique habitat. Four species of mangrove crowd from the shore out into the lagoon, which stretches almost a mile inland. As we drift through the quiet waters in our dinghy, we are likely to see spotted eagle rays and cow nosed or golden rays, which swim in a diamond formation. White-tipped reef sharks can be seen beneath the boat and Pacific green sea turtles come to the surface for air and to mate. Sea birds, including brown pelicans, blue herons and lava herons, come to feed in the cove which has also been declared a “Turtle Sanctuary”. It’s time to begin your journey home as we set sail for nearby the Baltra Island. During WWII the island was a US Air Force base and one can still see the remnants of the old foundations left behind from that era once ashore. It doesn’t take long for the Evolution to navigate north along Baltra’s western shore to the island’s port. Don’t worry about your bags, your guide will instruct you on how to prepare your luggage and have it ready for pick up in your cabin. Our crew will see to transporting your luggage ashore where you will reunite with it at the airport. All you need to do is take along your carryon luggage in the panga for the short crossing to shore. Once there a bus will pick us up for the 5 minute drive to the airport. Your guide will be there to make sure you are checked in on the proper flight. This is your last chance to purchase souvenirs in the Galapagos and the airport offers an assortment of shops where you can purchase everything from baseball caps and t-shirts to animal figurines, jewelry and much more; all with a Galapagos theme. There is one final check point before you enter the waiting area from which you will board your flight. Almost all flights to the mainland stop in Guayaquil and continue on to Quito so make sure you know where to get off the plane. We say farewell to the Galapagos as you begin your journey home, or on to other destinations like the Ecuadorian highlands, Amazon or nearby Peru.




TRIP CODE
ECQUFBT
DEPARTURE
Selected Saturdays
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador


INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Cabin
---------------	-------

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

Inclusions	Shipboard accommodation All meals whilst on-board including snacks All shore excursions Guiding and lectures by Galapagos Naturalist Guide English-speaking expedition team Use of snorkelling equipment and wetsuits 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
Notes	Contact us for more details
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

TRIP CODE
ECQUFBT
DEPARTURE
Selected Saturdays
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador


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

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - M/V EVOLUTION

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.

TRIP CODE
ECQUFBT
DEPARTURE
Selected Saturdays
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador
