

ECUADOR - SIGNATURE GALAPAGOS



INTRODUCTION

Join our 11-day in-depth exploration and superior cruise of the Galapagos Islands starting in Quito, Ecuador's capital.

This tour and cruise offers all the creature comforts, starting with a three night stay in Quito at the boutique five star Illa Experience hotel. Centrally located in the Quito's old town, the hotel is the perfect base to explore the city's attractions such as the Iglesia de la Compania de Jesus (Church of the Society of Jesus), San Francisco Catholic Church, Capilla del Hombre museum and El Panecillo (a monument to the Virgin of Quito).

You will also visit the Equatorial Monument to stand with one foot on each side of the hemisphere at Latitude 0° and take an excursion to Cotopaxi National Park.

From Quito you will fly to the Galapagos Islands and board the MC Seaman Journey, a luxurious sixteen passenger catamaran for your cruise. Highlights of your cruise include observing Galapagos tortoises in their habitat, snorkelling at Punta Vicente Roca and Mangle Point, exploring the lava flows and red rocks of Santiago Island and becoming a buccaneer in the pirate hideaway of Tagus Cove.

This superior itinerary includes accommodation onboard the Seaman Journey - a luxurious 16 passenger catamaran and three nights in Quito staying the Illa Experience hotel, a boutique 5 star hotel located in the city's old town, this hotel is the perfect base to explore the best sights and attractions the city has to offer.

ITINERARY

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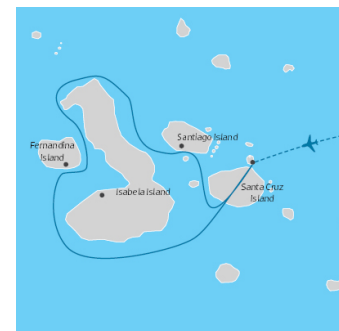
Selected Tuesdays

DURATION

11 Days

LOCATIONS

Quito, Ecuador, Galapagos Islands



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DAY 1: Arrival in Quito

Welcome to Quito, Ecuador, a city declared a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 1978. On arrival you will be transferred from the airport to your hotel which sits nestled in the Andean foothills, 2,850 metres above sea level. The city is known for its stunning colonial architecture, artwork and amazing snow-capped mountain backdrop.



DAY 2: Quito

You will tour the bustling streets, charming squares and majestic churches of Quito city and its old town before venturing into the city's surrounds. There, you will head 25km north and visit the Equatorial Monument. It marks the exact middle of the World, Latitude 0°, and you will stand with one foot on each side of the hemisphere. The surrounding volcanic scenery is stunning and you can choose to visit either the Ethnographic Museum or the Intinan Museum, both located near the site of the monument.



DAY 3: Cotopaxi National Park Excursion

Today you will head south from Quito to visit Cotopaxi National Park. Cotopaxi is the highest active volcano in the world. Despite the altitude, the park is home to numerous birds and varied plant life. Weather permitting, there are spectacular views from the north face of the mountain. The surrounding scenery includes volcanoes like Pasochoa, Ruminahui and Sincholagua. You will also have the opportunity to visit a local indigenous market.



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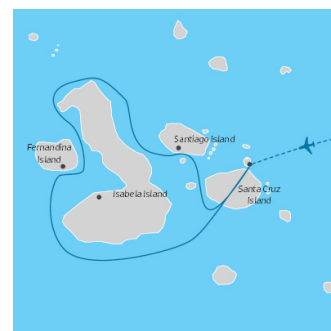
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DAY 4: Fly to the Galapagos Islands

Fly from Quito to the Galapagos. On arrival you will meet your naturalist guides who will collect your luggage and transport you to Ranch Mazanillo on Santa Cruz Island. Enjoy a picnic lunch and a short walk to see giant tortoises in their natural habitat. In the afternoon you will head to the Santa Cruz highlands. As we drive through the agricultural lands and into the mist covered forests, keep an eye out for the bright red feathers of a vermillion flycatcher or one of Darwin's finches. Almost every bird present in the Galapagos can be found here. Santa Cruz also offers plenty of lava tubes, sinkholes and craters to explore. Afterwards you will head to your accommodation for the next seven nights, the MC Galapagos Seaman Journey.



DAY 5: Fernandina Island

Mangle Point lies off the eastern coast of Fernandina Island and is a superior snorkelling site and a beautiful location for riding in a Zodiac through a forest of mangrove trees. You are likely to see penguins, sea lions, pelicans, rays, marine iguanas and numerous birds. In the afternoon, we will head to Punta Moreno, located on the north coast of Isabela Island between Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul volcanos. Follow a trail which runs along a lava flow into a complex of coastal lagoons. Birds are the main attraction and several species can be found around the lakes and mangroves.



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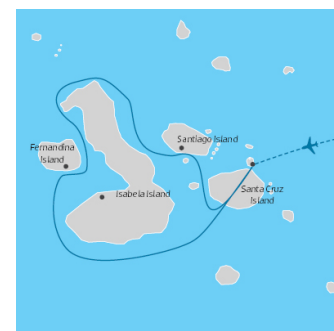
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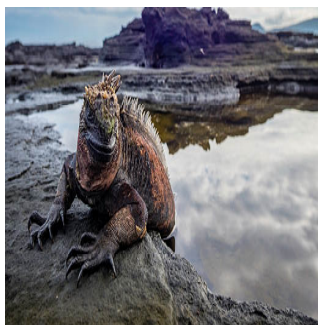
DAY 6: Isabela Island

Today's landings will take place on the largest island in the archipelago, Isabela Island. In the morning you will visit Urbina Bay, where a 6km stretch of coral reef rose during a major uplift of the island in 1954, forming a unique feature that caused marine life to be stranded and coral to be exposed on the new shore. Take a path that leads you through the sand, pumice, lava, coral and vegetation. Flightless cormorants, pelicans, Darwin's finches, giant tortoises and land and marine iguanas can be seen on land, whilst rays and turtles can be seen in the bay. This afternoon you will head to Tagus Cove, named after a British warship that went past the islands in 1814 looking for the Galapagos tortoise for food. This was a favourite spot for pirates and whalers who etched their names into the cliffs and inside caves. A short, steep hike brings you past Darwin Lake, a deep saltwater lake and a great spot for viewing land birds.



DAY 7: Fernandina Island

Dominated by the La Cumbre volcano, Espinoza Point is the first stop this morning. It's famous for its large colonies of marine iguanas and species such as the flightless cormorant, Galapagos penguin, Galapagos hawk and Galapagos snake. Espinoza Point is also one of the best places to see the lava cactus. This afternoon head to Punta Vicente Roca, one of the most impressive and spectacular places in the Galapagos Islands. Its high cliffs, ash and lava formations give the area a majestic touch. The large bay has a spectacular marine life with seahorses, sea turtles and the strange yet fascinating mola-mola or sunfish. A beautiful place for snorkelling, it's common to see feeding frenzies with groups of whales, dolphins, sea lions, tuna, blue-footed and Nazca boobies and pelicans all feeding simultaneously.



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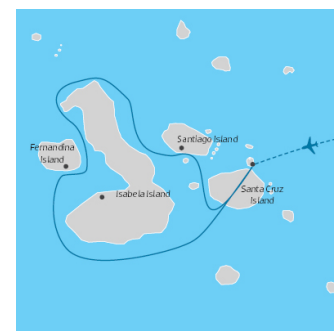
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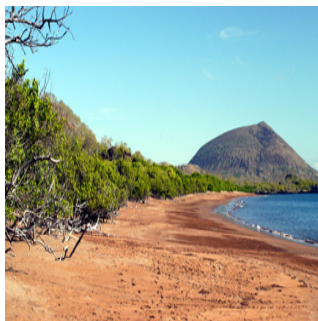
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DAY 8: Santiago Island

This morning's stop is at Espumilla Beach on the northern coast of Santiago Island in James Bay. The beach is an important site for nesting marine turtles. A walk through the mangrove forest leads to a lagoon usually inhabited by a group of flamingos as well as pintail ducks and common stilts. In the afternoon head to Puerto Egas, a black beach due to the volcanic tuff deposits, and it is the main attraction of the island. There you will see abandoned salt mining infrastructure, as there was once an attempt to start the exploitation of salt, which failed because the price of salt on the mainland was already cheap.



DAY 9: Rabida & Santiago Islands

After thousands of years of oxidisation, Rabida Island is unique due to the red colour of the rocks and sand. A short walk along a trail leads you to a coastal lagoon where you can view a colony of flamingos. Next, sail to the south-eastern tip of Santiago Island where you will see lava formations formed under the sea and raised upwards, with coral forming on the end of the lava. This is an excellent example of geological features such as lava tubes and lava flows. The landscape is home to sea lion colonies, marine iguanas, and Galapagos penguins.



DAY 10: Santiago Island

Located in the west central part of the Galapagos archipelago, Santiago Island is the fourth largest island in the archipelago and is still volcanically active. Explore the dramatic landscape of this island and bear witness to the effects from the last two volcanic eruptions that occurred over the past two centuries. After lunch sail to Bartolome Island, famous for offering one of the most beautiful sceneries in the Galapagos. Explore the lava fields and snorkel with turtles and penguins.



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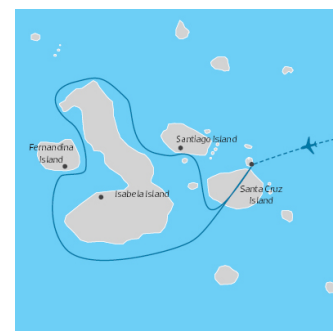
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DAY 11: Santa Cruz Island to Quito

Your last stop will be at Bachas Beach on Santa Cruz Island. The sandy white coral beach is a major nesting site for sea turtles. There is a small lagoon behind the beach where it is possible to observe flamingos and other birds. Here you will see the remains of a floating dock and old abandoned barges used by the Americans during WWII. Afterwards you will be taken to Baltra Airport for your flight back to Quito.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Hotel & Cabin on board a Catamaran Yacht

INCLUSIONS

1 free night in Quito / Illa Experience hotel Luxury room
\$100 USD on board credit

Discounted Round trip flight to/from Galapagos (USD 495pp)

Airport assistance (Quito or Guayaquil, if flights to/from the Galapagos are booked through our local partners)

Galapagos National Park Entrance fee USD 100, 00 p/p

Galápagos Ingala card USD 20,00 p/p

Transfers from Galapagos airport to/from your vessel

Accommodation on board the ship in a double cabin

Meals as per the itinerary & all meals during your cruise

Naturalist Bilingual Guide to explore the landing sites in the Galapagos Islands

All visits and excursions as per the itinerary

Snorkel Gear (snorkel, mask and fins)

Kayaking in the Galapagos (optional)

Unlimited purified water, coffee and tea while onboard the ship

Mainland services

English speaking guide + private transportation

Tours and airport transfers as noted

Hotel accommodations as noted, subject to availability

EXCLUSIONS

Local Taxes

Travel Insurance

Personal expenses and tips

Alcoholic drinks

Items not specified

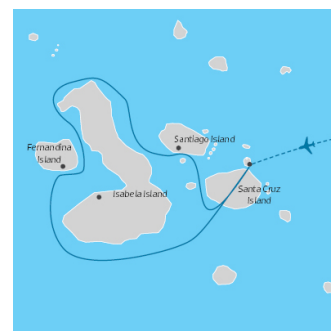
Additional visits

Additional meals

Inclusions

Difficulty Rating

2 (light adventure)



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Single Surcharge	A single supplement surcharge applies and is subject to availability. Please contact us for more information.
Notes	Prices are based on per person, twin share. Prices are correct at time of publishing but are subject to change at any time. All entrance fees are subject to change without prior notice.
Price Dependent upon	Seasonality, currency fluctuations and availability at time of booking.

SUSTAINABILITY

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