

ECUADOR - GALAPAGOS 8 DAY WESTERN ISLANDS | M/Y GALAXY



INTRODUCTION

Many theories exist regarding the unique nature of the flora and fauna on the Galapagos Islands. A popularly held belief is that the original species that evolved into the unique Galapagos variety found their way to the islands on flotation rafts of vegetation that were carried to the island via wind and sea currents. Join us on this amazing 8 day itinerary and discover the many secrets of the Galapagos Islands.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Baltra & Santa Cruz Highlands

Following an arrival flight from either Quito or Guayaquil you will arrive at Baltra Airport. Here you will be met by our representative who will transfer you to your vessel. Once on board, you will have a welcome drink and lunch. In the afternoon, explore Santa Cruz Islands' highlands, stopping along the way at one of the reserves to visit the lush highland forests where you will look for Galapagos Giant tortoises in their natural environment. This is the best place in the Galapagos to see these gentle giants casually grazing and resting in freshwater ponds. This is also home for a great diversity of birds rarely found at the lowlands, including finches, flycatchers and several species of water birds. You may have time to visit a lava tunnel and learn how these extraordinary formations were created by ancient volcanic eruptions.



TRIP CODE

ECGSG8W

DEPARTURE

Selected Saturdays

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

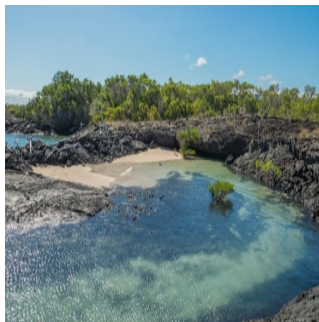
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador



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DAY 2: Moreno Point & Elizabeth Bay

Today you will explore Isabela Island, the largest in the archipelago. Spend the morning at Moreno Point, a magical place with extensive lava fields which look lifeless at first sight, but once you head inland, you will find scattered brackish lagoons that form an oasis of life. You will also have the chance to snorkel and looking for sea turtles, penguins, and many species of fish. In the afternoon, head to Elizabeth Bay which is a beautiful, sheltered bay surrounded by large mangroves and barren lava fields. There is no trail here so you will take a dinghy tour to explore many channels, pools and coves teeming with life. This is one of the best locations in the islands to see Galapagos penguins, also flightless cormorants nest in the area and blue-footed boobies and pelicans often fish in these shallow and rich waters. Rays and sea turtles are also very abundant.



DAY 3: Urbina Bay & Tagus Cove

In the morning you will have a chance to snorkel at Urbina Bay, a place known for the dramatic uplifting that happened here during the 1950's. A large portion of the coast was pushed up, exposing many hectares of previously submerged land. You can also take a scenic trail in search of land iguanas. In the afternoon you will head to Tagus Cove, a trail will take you through a dry Palo Santo forests where you can see Darwin finches and mockingbirds. You will get great views of Darwin's lake and the large volcanos of northern Isabela. Then a boat tour along the shore will give you chances to see penguins, cormorants, and marine iguanas. You may also see a very unique species, the Galapagos martin, a small endemic bird which is one of the most endangered species on the island.



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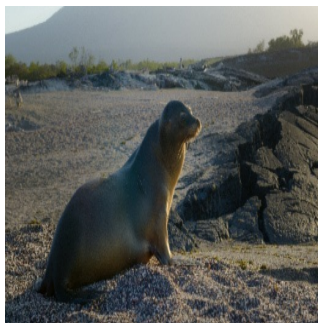
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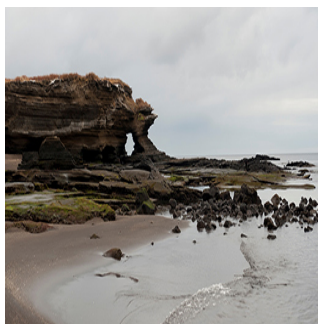
DAY 4: Espinoza Point & Albemarle Point

In the morning visit Espinoza Point located at the base of an imposing volcano on Fernandina Island. As soon as you disembark you will be surrounded by hundreds of marine iguanas, as this is the largest colony for the species. Sea lions bask in the beaches while their pups play in tide pools. Along the shore you will see flightless cormorants, which are restricted to the western areas of the archipelago. In the afternoon head to Albemarle Point back in Isabela Island. This place is great for wildlife despite being mostly barren and surrounded by endless lava fields. You may see marine iguanas, penguins, sally light-foot crabs, and birds. It is also a historical site, during WWII, the Americans built a radar base in order to detect the presence of Japanese war ships approaching the Galapagos.



DAY 5: Egas Point & Espumilla Beach

Spend the morning at Puerto Egas on Santiago Island, you might see a few remains of the last attempts to colonize the island during the 60's. The trail goes along the coastline, which is rich in wildlife, with marine iguanas basking in the sun everywhere, Galapagos sea lions, herons, oystercatchers and many shorebirds. At the end of the trail an area called "the grottos", it is home for a small colony of the endemic Galapagos fur seal. In the afternoon head to Espumilla, a beautiful beach with rusty-brown sand, located in the northern coast of Santiago Island. It is surrounded by large mangrove trees and a very interesting native dry forest, which is home to Galapagos hawks but also a great diversity of finches, mockingbirds and doves. The place is very scenic with beautiful cliffs and interesting rock formations. There is no trail, but here you will take a dinghy to look at wildlife from the small boats.



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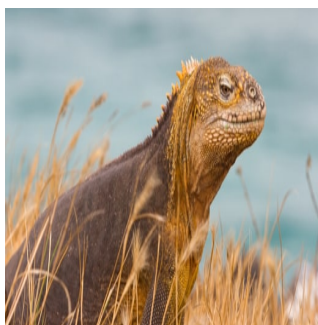
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DAY 6: Dragon Hill & Black Turtle Cove

Spend the morning at Dragon Hill, on the northern coast of Santa Cruz. It gets its name from the land iguanas that inhabit this area, the only location in the whole island of Santa Cruz where you can see this large species of reptiles. Thanks to a very successful breeding program, this population of land iguanas, which was in the brink of extinction during the 70's and 80's, has rapidly recovered. There is also a small salt water lagoon where we can often see flamingos, ducks, stilts, sandpipers and other shorebirds. This afternoon you will go to Black Turtle Cove. There is no landing here so you will be doing a boat tour on the dinghies, exploring shallow channels and small coves surrounded by beautiful mangrove forests. Reef sharks, sea turtles and several species rays inhabit this beautiful area which is considered an important mating area for turtles and a nursery for several species of sharks.



DAY 7: Rabida & Chinese Hat

In the morning visit Rabida, a small island famous for its reddish lava rocks which gives it a unique look. The beach is also red and hosts a small colony of sea lions. There is a small saltwater lagoon where you will see ducks and stilts and sometimes flamingos. The trail will take you inland to get beautiful views of the beach and the lagoon. Look for Darwin finches, flycatchers and mockingbirds. In the cliffs along the coast you can find Nazca & blue-footed boobies, brown noddy, herons and the two species of sea lions: Galapagos and fur seals. In the afternoon you will visit Chinese Hat. This small islet is formed by a volcanic cone with a perfect symmetrical shape. It is separated from Santa Cruz Island by a narrow channel forming one of the most beautiful bays in the islands. Blue-turquoise water and coral sand beaches surrounded by dark lava rocks gives this area a real tropical character, which makes even more surprising finding penguins resting in the rocks. The trail goes along the shore, taking you through a small colony of sea lions.



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DAY 8: Seymour Island & depart

Your last excursion will be to Seymour Island, home for large colonies of both magnificent and great frigatebirds and you can see them displaying their red balloons to attract a female. Blue-footed boobies nest in the ground and perform their famous dance in the open areas, while swallow-tailed gulls perch on the cliff edges. Land iguanas are common inland while their marine cousins bask in the rocks by the sea, close to sea lions, which often like to body surf in the waves. Following this you will be transferred to the airport for your outward flight. **Please Note: This itinerary is subject to change without notice; due to seasonal changes, weather conditions or Galapagos National Park regulations.*



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Cabin on board ship

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Inclusions

INCLUSIONS

- Return flights from Quito or Guayaquil to the Galapagos
- Transportation and fuel surcharge in the Marine reserve of Galapagos
 - Accommodation in single, double or triple cabin according to you booking
 - Bilingual naturalist guide (English-Spanish)
 - Personalized crew service
 - All meals during the cruise, from lunch on the first day to breakfast on the last day
 - One snack after each activity (except last day)
 - Welcome cocktail
 - Unlimited purified water, coffee and tea
 - All visits, excursions & activities according to the itinerary
 - Transportation Airport-Channel/ Channel-Airport (Lobitos Bus)
 - Docks use and ferries.
 - Snorkelling gear (Mask, tube, and fins)
 - Use of kayaks and paddle boards in authorized places
 - Wetsuits
 - Shampoo, hair conditioner, and soap for daily use
 - Beach towels
 - Hair dryer in the cabins
 - Cloth/Towel dryer

EXCLUSIONS

- International flights to/from Ecuador
- **Galapagos National Park entrance fee (\$100 per person)**
- **Transit Control Card (\$20 per person)**
- Alcoholic and soft drinks
- Tips and gratuities
- Personal expenses
- Travel insurance (Highly recommended)
- Additional services not indicated

Difficulty Rating 2 (light adventure)

Single Surcharge Available upon request at a 50% surcharge. Please contact us to check availability and for more information.

Notes There is local National Park payments you need to have cash for.

- **Galapagos National Park entrance fee (\$100 per person)**
- **Transit Control Card (\$20 per person)**

Please Note park entrance fees may be subject to change without prior notice.

Price Dependent upon Exchange rate, season and availability at time of booking.

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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.

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.

Galaxy cruise contributes to a number of sustainability initiatives in line with Galapagos park policy and their own unique contribution philosophy. Plastic is eliminated throughout the Galapagos, naturalist guides provide in depth education and respect for ecosystems when undertaking tours, and suppliers are chosen from locally-owned organisations and operators to ensure economic sustainability within the region. 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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