ECUADOR - 8 DAY CRUISE | CALIPSO



TRIP CODE
ECGGC8D
DEPARTURE
Selected Thursdays
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Ecuador, Galapagos Islands, South America

INTRODUCTION

Enjoy an 8-day journey through the **Galapagos Islands** on board the M/Y Calipso. Enjoy a unique adventure that blends comfort and expedition experiences. A great way to witness the marvels of the Galapagos, the M/Y Calipso will take you to pristine beaches of Santiago Island, to the incredible highlights of the nesting sights of the unique **flightless cormorant** and the home of **giant tortoises** on Santa Cruz. The Galapagos archipelago is a paradise for wildlife lovers.

Check out the other itineraries onboard Calipso: 5 Day Western Islands Cruise, 4 Day Southern Islands Cruise

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Thursday, Arrival San Cristobal & Witch Hill



You will arrive at San Cristobal Island in the morning. After passing through immigration and baggage claim, you will be met by a Calipso staff member and transferred to the yacht. You will be shown to your cabin where you will have some time to settle in before lunch and a welcome briefing. In the afternoon we will approach Witch Hill, located on the northern coast. This eroded hill and its surroundings present one of the most picturesque beaches in the Galapagos with its white powdery sand and an abundance of animals. Wildlife includes sea turtles, rays, and various types of booby birds. The clear water provides an excellent opportunity for enjoying swimming and snorkelling.

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DAY 2: Friday, Batholomew and Santiago Islands

This morning you will head to Bartholomew Island, where the famous Pinnacle Rock is found. Bartholomew consists of an inactive volcano with a variety of red, orange, black and even green volcanic formations. We will take a trail of stairs to the summit of the volcano (about 30 or 40 minutes) where you will enjoy one of the best views of the islands! You will also visit a small, beautiful beach surrounded by the only vegetation found on this barren island. The beach is perfect for snorkelling where you may even see and swim with Galapagos penguins. Following this, you will be on your way to Chinese Hat Islet. This small islet is located near the southeast coast of Santiago Island. Its name comes from the distinct shape of the islet's summit. This is a great location to view many geological formations such as lava tunnels and lava flows. Some of the lava flows were formed underwater and subsequently raised above sea level. Embark on an afternoon exploration of the captivating Puerto Egas, also known as James Bay. This remarkable location is not only home to the inquisitive Galapagos hawks and agile Galapagos lava lizards, but it also features a stunning coastline adorned with picturesque tide pools and enchanting grottos teeming with diverse fauna. As you wander along the trail, keep an eye out for the Galapagos fur sea lions basking in the warm sun, adding to the natural beauty of the area. For those seeking underwater adventures, Puerto Egas also offers an excellent snorkeling opportunity, immersing you in the mesmerizing marine world that surrounds the Galapagos Islands.



DAY 3: Saturday, Fernandina and Isabela Islands

Crossing the Bolivar Channel that divides Isabela and Fernandina Islands, you will land at Espinoza Point, and after walking past a colony of marine iguanas and a group of sea lions, you will reach the island's highlight: the flightless cormorant nesting site. This area also provides a great opportunity to see the Galapagos hawk. In the afternoon, you will visit Tagus Cove on Isabela Island which is located across from Fernandina Island, near the Bolivar Channel dividing the two islands. This spot has been frequented by ships since the 1800s, using the area as an anchorage site. Trails winding by Lake Darwin up to a ridge display wonderful views.



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DAY 4: Sunday, Isabela Island

Urbina Bay is located at the base of Alcedo Volcano on the west coast between Tagus Cove and Elizabeth Bay. This area experienced a major uplift in 1954 causing the land to rise over 16 feet. The coast expanded half a mile out, leaving marine life stranded on the new shore. This area is also a great place for snorkelling. Later, you will visit Mareno Point. Moreno Point is located southwest of Elizabeth Bay. Here a dry landing onto what was once flowing lava is possible. The lava has left craters in its wake which formed crystal tide pools. In the brackish pools of this area, you may see pink flamingos, white-cheeked pintails, and common gallinules. If you look carefully into the pools, you may see white-tip reef sharks and some sea turtles.



DAY 5: Monday, North Seymour and South Plaza Islands

In North Seymour you may see Galapagos sea lions, blue-footed boobies, and magnificent frigate birds which are abundant on this island. North Seymour was formed by a series of submarine lava flows containing layers of sediment that were uplifted by tectonic activity. The island is characterized by its arid vegetation zone. Later in the day experience South Plaza Islands, formed by rising lava and is now covered by Opuntia cacti. It is also home to one of the largest sea lion colonies as well as colourful yellow and red land iguanas. The most characteristic plant is the Sesuvium. During the rainy season its colour is a greenish to yellowish tone and in the dry season (end of June through January) a bright red.



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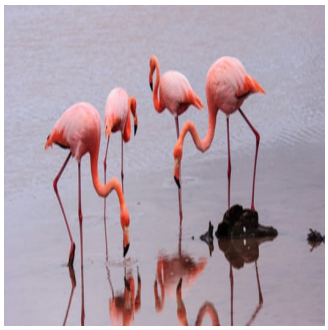
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DAY 6: Tuesday, Floreana Island

You will land on a beach and head to a spot where 18th century whalers placed a wooden barrel used as an unofficial mail box, Post Office Bay. The custom continues to this day with Galapagos visitors. So, don't forget your postcards, and don't be surprised if the post card arrives to its destination before you even get home! Baroness Viewing Point is a fantastic place to absorb the environment of the Galapagos. Once inhabited by an indulgent baroness and her three lovers, the history of this island is intriguing. The legends about this baroness are associated with a fascinating murder mystery. There are easy trails in this area for exploring the flora and fauna of Floreana. In the afternoon, enjoy the sights of Cormorant Point, a point that hosts a large flamingo lagoon. It is here that other birds such as common stilts and white-cheeked pintails can also be see. The beaches on this island are distinct: The Green Beach is named so due to its green colour, which comes from a high percentage of olivine crystals in the sand, and the Four Sand Beach is composed of white coral.



DAY 7: Santa Fe and Santa Cruz Islands

Santa Fe Island (Barrington) is home to the small picturesque bay and anchorage on the island's northeast coast. The bay has two visitor trails: one leading to a scenic viewpoint atop a cliff, and the other spanning from a small beach to a tall prickly cactus forest. Later that day, you will visit "Fausto Llerena", Giant Tortoises Breeding Center in Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz Island, where giant tortoises are bred in captivity; this is home to tortoises ranging from 3-inches (new hatchlings) to 4-feet long adults. Subspecies of the giant tortoises interact with one another, and many of the older tortoises are accustomed to humans stretching out their heads for a photo opportunity. The babies are kept until they are about four years-old and strong enough to survive on their own.



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DAY 8: Thursday, San Cristobal Island & Departure

You will visit Gianni Arismendy Interpretation center, part of an environmental project. The tour of this center will explore the natural history of the islands including human interaction and conservation efforts. The Museum of Natural History explains the volcanic origin of the archipelago, ocean currents, climate, and the arrival of endemic species. The Human History exhibit chronologically describes significant events such as discovery and colonization of the islands. After this final visit, you will be transferred to the San Cristobal airport in time for your flight back to the mainland.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Cabin on board ship
Inclusions	**INCLUSIONS** All meals onboard the ship Transfers in the islands Excursions with a bilingual National Park Guide Use of snorkelling equipment/wetsuit Use of underwater camera Free Airport Assistance* Hotel night in Quito or Guayaquil (the day before the cruise)* 2 Free transfers to Galapagos Flights* *Applies only when purchasing airfare through the ship operator **EXCLUSIONS** Roundtrip airfare to/from Galapagos Alcoholic drinks Galapagos National Park Entrance Fee (US$200 per person from Aug 2024 - Subject to change) Galapagos Transit Control Card (USD$20 per person - Subject to change) Travel/Medical insurance Gratuities Personal Expenses
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	All entrance fees are subject to change without prior notice. Itinerary is subject to change depending on weather conditions and government regulations.
Price Dependent upon	Seasonality, fuel surcharges, currency fluctuations and availability at time of booking.

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 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.

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