GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - CENTRAL & WESTERN ISLANDS (D+A) | HERMES



TRIP CODE
ECVNH8AD
DEPARTURE
Selected Thursdays
DURATION
8 Days
LOCATIONS
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, South America

INTRODUCTION

Enjoy this 8-day **Galapagos Islands cruise**, visiting sites and islands such as **Balta, Santa Cruz Highlands, Dragon Hill, Chinest Hat, Prince Phillips's Steps, Darwin Bay, Puerto Egas, Tagus Cove and Buccaneer Cove.**

Explore lava tunnels, encounter giant tortoises, nesting sea turtles and witness unique volcanic formations. You will be able to snorkel with sea lions and Galapagos penguins and spot a range of diverse bird life including Red and Blue-footed bobbies, the flightless cormorant and frigate birds.

Immerse yourself in the Galapagos' wonders on this unforgettable expedition onboard the ultra luxury **Hermes**, a modern catamaran with all of the creature comforts you would expect and many bonuses such as a spa, unpacking service and a 24/7 butler.

Check out some of the other itineraries onboard the Hermes: 5 Day North West Islands Cruise, 4 Day Central Islands Cruise

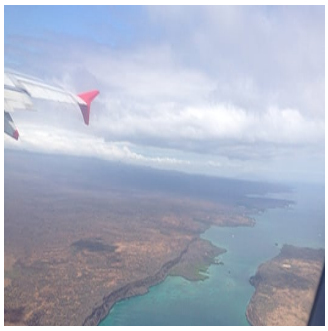
ITINERARY

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DAY 1: Arrival to Baltra & Santa Cruz Highlands

Today, you are set to embark on an exciting journey to the Galapagos Islands. Upon your arrival at the airport, our dedicated staff will extend a warm welcome to ensure your smooth transition. Subsequently, you will be transported to the cruise ship, where you can begin your exploration of the stunning archipelago. In the afternoon, an enriching experience awaits as you explore the highlands of Santa Cruz. In the captivating setting of the Santa Cruz Highlands, you'll find yourself immersed in a unique and diverse ecosystem that showcases the natural wonders of the Galapagos Islands. The highlands are renowned for their lush landscapes, mist-covered hills, and endemic flora and fauna, providing a stark contrast to the coastal environments. As you traverse the winding paths, you may encounter the iconic giant tortoises, meandering leisurely through their natural habitat. These magnificent creatures, often considered living fossils, contribute to the enchanting charm of the highlands. Observing these majestic beings in their native surroundings offers a rare glimpse into the evolutionary history of the Galapagos.



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DAY 2: Dragon Hill & Chinese Hat

Embark on a captivating morning adventure to Dragon Hill, a distinctive site on Santa Cruz Island in the Galapagos archipelago. Named after the land iguanas that inhabit the area, Dragon Hill offers a unique opportunity to witness these magnificent creatures in their natural habitat. As you stroll along the trail, keep your eyes peeled for the prehistoric-looking iguanas basking in the sun or meandering through the diverse vegetation. The panoramic views from the hill provide a picturesque backdrop to this enchanting encounter with the island's iconic residents. In the afternoon, set sail for the iconic Chinese Hat Islet, a geological marvel in the midst of the Galapagos seas. Known for its distinct shape resembling a traditional Chinese hat, this islet promises a fascinating exploration of volcanic landscapes and pristine beaches. Snorkel in the crystal-clear waters surrounding the islet, discovering the vibrant marine life that thrives in the underwater world. Alternatively, take a leisurely stroll along the shores, marveling at the unique formations and perhaps spotting some of the indigenous wildlife, including sea lions and marine iguanas. Chinese Hat offers a perfect blend of geological wonders and aquatic adventures for a memorable afternoon in the Galapagos.



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DAY 3: Genovesa Island

Embark on a morning exploration of El Barranco, also referred to as Prince Philip's Steps, situated on Genovesa Island. This esteemed site provides a distinctive avian observation opportunity, notably featuring red-footed and Nazca boobies, along with the elusive short-eared owl. As you ascend the rocky terrain, take in the captivating behaviors of these avian inhabitants. The elevated vantage point affords panoramic views of the island's coastal expanse, enhancing the overall experience. Subsequently, in the afternoon, proceed to the renowned Darwin Bay, an immaculate white-sand beach gracefully enclosed by Genovesa Island's crescent shape. Bearing the name of Charles Darwin, this location pays homage to the island's profound natural beauty and rich biodiversity. A serene stroll along the sandy shores unveils colonies of frigatebirds, swallow-tailed gulls, and red-footed boobies. The option to engage in snorkeling activities in the pristine waters provides an intimate encounter with marine life, from vibrant reef fish to the playful presence of sea lions. The afternoon at Darwin Bay assures an immersive and refined exploration of the Galapagos, seamlessly blending picturesque landscapes with the contemplative observation of the islands' unique wildlife.



DAY 4: Black Turtle Cove & Las Bachas

Commence your day with a visit to the esteemed Black Turtle Cove, a secluded and tranquil mangrove lagoon nestled within Santa Cruz Island. Renowned for its pristine natural beauty and diverse marine life, this cove offers a serene exploration by panga (dinghy). Glide through the winding waterways, surrounded by mangrove forests, and observe the underwater world through the crystal-clear waters. Keep an eye out for marine turtles, golden rays, and various species of sharks that inhabit these serene waters. The morning at Black Turtle Cove promises a peaceful and contemplative encounter with the Galapagos' coastal wonders. In the afternoon you will visit las Bachas Beach on Santa Cruz Island. Enjoy a leisurely stroll, spot flamingos and crabs, and consider optional snorkeling to explore the vibrant marine life. Bachas Beach provides a tranquil escape for a delightful afternoon in the Galapagos.



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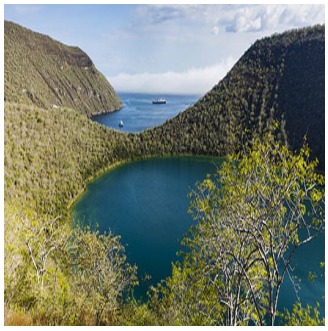
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DAY 5: Tagus Cove & Urbina bay

Embark on a morning exploration of Tagus Cove, a historic anchorage situated on Isabela Island. This site, known for its dramatic landscape and historical inscriptions left by pirates and whalers, offers a captivating blend of natural beauty and human history. As you traverse the trails, witness the striking views of Darwin Volcano and Darwin Lake, surrounded by the arid volcanic terrain. Keep an eye out for the diverse birdlife that inhabits the area, including the iconic Galapagos penguins and flightless cormorants. The morning at Tagus Cove promises a contemplative journey through the island's geological wonders and a glimpse into its storied past. Later in the afternoon, venture to Urbina Bay, located on the western side of Isabela Island. This secluded bay is recognized for its uplifted coral formations and the unique opportunity to encounter the Galapagos land iguanas in their natural habitat. Take a leisurely stroll along the shoreline, marveling at the remains of coral structures uplifted during a historic volcanic event. The bay also presents an ideal setting for snorkeling, allowing you to explore the underwater realm teeming with marine life. The afternoon at Urbina Bay offers a serene exploration of Isabela's distinct landscapes and the chance to observe the island's fascinating terrestrial and marine inhabitants.



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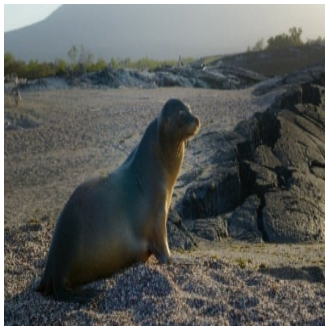
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DAY 6: Espinoza & Vicente Roca Point

Embark on a morning exploration of Espinoza Point, situated on Fernandina Island, renowned for its untouched natural beauty and unique wildlife. As you traverse the rugged volcanic terrain, be prepared for encounters with the iconic marine iguanas, the only species of iguana that forages in the ocean. Witness their distinctive behaviors and marvel at their adaptation to this harsh environment. Keep an eye out for flightless cormorants and Galapagos penguins, adding to the rich diversity of this pristine ecosystem. The morning at Espinoza Point promises an immersive journey through a landscape shaped by volcanic forces, offering a glimpse into the extraordinary adaptations of the Galapagos wildlife. In the afternoon, set sail for Vicente Roca Point, located on the northwestern coast of Isabela Island. This remarkable site is celebrated for its dramatic sea cliffs, pristine waters, and the opportunity to engage in deep-sea snorkeling. Explore the fascinating underwater world, encountering a variety of marine life, from colorful fish to graceful sea turtles. Keep an eye out for Galapagos penguins and flightless cormorants that frequent the area. The afternoon at Vicente Roca Point promises a tranquil and awe-inspiring maritime experience, offering a unique perspective on the diverse marine ecosystems of the Galapagos Islands.



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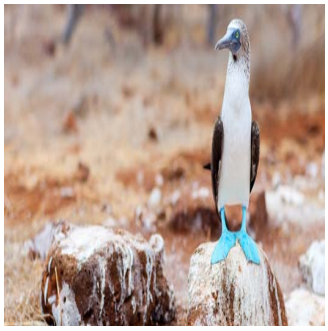
DAY 7: Puerto Egas & Buccaneer Cove

Morning excursion to Puerto Egas to see the salt crater as well as a dark sand beach and tidal pools. Continue to Buccaneer Cove to witness the towering cliff wall rock formations. Santiago Island has seen its share of human activity from whalers and pirates over the years, and despite the introduction of goats to the island many years ago, the wildlife of Santiago has otherwise flourished and provides outstanding viewing opportunities. The island boasts marine iguanas, sea lions, fur seals, land and sea turtles, among others. Enjoy great wildlife viewing both on land and in the water. Puerto Egas Visit (AM) Explore the spectacular shoreline of Puerto Egas, also known as James Bay. Spot a great number of shore birds and reptiles – the beach area is home to a plethora of wildlife. Grab a snorkel and jump into the water right off the beach to explore Puerto Egas' interesting underwater world. Keep your eyes peeled for rays, turtles, and reefsharks while snorkelling. After, visit the large tidal pool area – marine iguanas and Sally Lightfoot crabs are everywhere. Buccaneer Cove Visit (PM) Jump into the panga and cruise alongside high cliffs and rock formations on this visit to Buccaneer Cove, which was a favourite hideout for pirates looking to stock up their boats with food and water. Spot sea lions relaxing on the beach and sea birds nesting in the cove – there's lots to see at this site.



DAY 8: North Seymour Island & Departure

Embark on a morning excursion to North Seymour Island. Explore well-maintained trails, observing frigatebirds, blue-footed boobies, land iguanas, and sea lions. Encounter unique wildlife behaviors and appreciate the island's distinctive flora, including endemic Palo Santo trees. This brief but immersive experience promises a captivating introduction to the diverse ecosystem of the Galapagos. In the afternoon, you will be transferred to Baltra Airport, marking the conclusion of your Galapagos expedition. Our dedicated staff will ensure a smooth transition, providing assistance with your luggage and transportation to the airport. Reflect on the enriching experiences and captivating moments as you bid farewell to the extraordinary landscapes and wildlife of the Galapagos Islands.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Suite on board a Yacht
Inclusions	**INCLUSIONS** • Accommodation in selected cabin • Fuel Surcharge • All activities and excursions as depicted in the itineraries in company of an English speaking naturalist guide • Snorkelling equipment • Kayak • Wetsuits • Stand up Paddle Board • Internet • All meals on board • Purified water, tea, coffee • Non – alcoholic beverages • Selected menu premium wines, beer, and cocktails • Laundry service • Mini bar consumption • Butler service **EXCLUSIONS** • Air ticket to and from Galapagos • Gratuities to guides and crew • Personals expenses • Alcoholic drinks not included in menu selection • Travel insurance • International Airfare • Visa if applicable • Anything not mentioned on the itinerary • Galapagos National Park Entrance Fee* (US$200 from Aug 2024, price subject to change) • Galapagos Control Transit $20* (price subject to change)
Difficulty Rating	2 (light adventure)
Single Surcharge	A single supplement surcharge applies and is subject to availability. Please contact us for more information.

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Notes	All entrance fees are subject to change without prior notice. Please note water activities are subject to weather conditions. Prices are based on per person, twin share* (unless otherwise stated) Prices are correct at time of publishing but are subject to change at any time Snorkelling equipment is available in average sizes onboard complimentary. Wetsuits are available at different sizes complimentary, on a first comes first serves basis Kayaks and stand-up paddle boards are complimentary Unpacking service is complimentary 24/7 butler service is complementary Massages are available for an additional charge and must be booked onboard * 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.

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SUSTAINABILITY

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