

Day 1 FRIDAY

Arrival and first visit to the Islands.

AM: Baltra Island

Our first stop is to Baltra Island, also known as *South Seymour* (named after Lord Hugh Seymour). Located in the hearth of the archipelago, Baltra serves as the main airport to the islands and will be our first stop before our journey.

Upon arrival, we clear the Galapagos National Park checkpoint. Customs agents check passports and the transit control card, after check-in, we enter the islands (If you have not previously paid your Galapagos entrance fee you will be asked to pay on spot, payments are cash only: \$100 USD for adults and \$50 USD for children under 12 years of age. (Please consult rates, they may change without notice from the Galapagos authorities.)

We are welcomed by our naturalist guide and staff at airport's exit, *please remember to collect your luggage from the belt.*

Next we take a short coach ride to the Seymour dock to board the pangas (this is how the locals commonly refer to dinghies) to the *M/C Petrel* where crew members await to welcome you with a cold drink and show you your cabins.

A briefing is given about the ship's facilities, a safety drill is conducted by your cruise concierge and your cabin is assigned. Lunch is served and afterwards we start navigating to North Seymour island.

PM: North Seymour Island

Landing type: Dry landing.

Possible activities: Walking, comfortable walking shoes are recommended. snorkeling, panga ride.

Our first visit is the islet of North Seymour, a 1.9 square kilometer (0.73 sq mi) islet that is home of one of the largest colonies of frigate birds in Galapagos. A magnificent bird that is easily recognizable by its red pouch that swells during mating season, and one of Galapagos most iconic birds. The island is also home to other unique birds like blue footed boobies and swallow-tailed gulls that can usually be seen nesting in, or perching over, the bushy vegetation.

We return to the yacht and prepare to set sail for our next destination.

Meals included: Lunch & Dinner

Day 2 SATURDAY

Isabela and Fernandina are the youngest islands on the archipelago and a constant reminder of how life can flourish even in the most strenuous conditions.

AM: Isabela Island - Vicente Roca Point

Landing type: No landing.

Possible activities: Snorkeling, panga ride, aquatic activities during this visit.

The Island of Isabela is the largest of the archipelago and it is shaped like a giant seahorse when seen from the air. It is also home to a great number of endemic species, including reptiles and marine birds.

The Galapagos marine reserve is the second largest in the world and one of the richest. Today, we discover its vast treasures by snorkeling in its waters. Our first snorkeling point will be Vicente Roca Point, here schools of fish gather close to the rocky formations where they can find shelter from predators. The crystalline waters of the Pacific provide a clear vision of the sea bed that allow us to enjoy this magnificent spectacle of colorful fishes that dwell under the sea.

After exploring the underwater world surrounding us, we return to the ship and prepare for our afternoon excursion.

PM: Fernandina Island - Espinosa Point

Landing type: Dry landing

Possible activities: Hiking, over slippery rock, good shoes are required.

Fernandina is the youngest island of the archipelago and the closest one to the hotspot that gave birth to the Enchanted Islands. This also makes Fernandina the island with most volcanic activity in the archipelago. The continuous eruptions on the island have formed pathways of lava that extend all over Fernandina. This has left very little space for fertile ground. Yet, to our amazement, these very few fertile spaces have been colonized by cacti and small bushes, converting this desolated terrain into a forest filled with life. Large colonies of iguanas take advantage of the warm lava fields and abundance of algae on the coast to feed and breed.

Punta Espinosa is also the home of the flightless cormorant, another unique endemic species in the Galapagos islands. This is the only type of Cormorant that has lost its ability to fly; its wings have been atrophied and their bodies have perfectly adapted to dive and fish in these rich waters.

We return to the yacht and have some time to say goodbye to this amazing sight.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Day 3 SUNDAY

Northern Isabela, discover the coves and bays that served as lairs for pirates and whalers.

AM: Isabela Island- Tagus Cove

Landing type: Dry landing.

Possible activities: Hiking, snorkeling, panga ride.

Tagus cove, that was the perfect hideout for pirates and buccaneers back in the 17th century, also hosted one of the most renowned visitors of the archipelago, Charles Darwin. During its journey to the “Encantadas”, the Beagle spent some time anchored in Tagus Cove. Follow your guide on an exciting excursion of the Island and share Darwin’s journey of discovery in this lost paradise.

After disembarking we take the trail to Darwin’s lake. This impressive saltwater lake sits over an eroded tuff cone and the concentration of minerals doubles the salinity of the oceanic waters that surround the island. The path leads to the lookout point from where we have wonderful views of the lake, a great photo op.

Afterwards, we can enjoy some snorkeling at the cove. The calm waters of Tagus are the perfect place to enjoy the sight of colorful fishes, marine turtles and rays that glide over the seabed in perfect harmony. Look out for the Galapagos penguins.

PM: Isabela Island - Urbina Bay

Landing type: Wet landing.

Possible activities: Hike (two available trails – short: 1 km/0.6 mi or Long: 3 km/1.9mi), snorkeling, dinghy ride.

Urbina bay is proof of the unpredictable and strong force of nature. In 1954, a sudden uplift raised the seabed 16 ft. high, expanding the coast half a mile. This event that shook the foundations of the island was so sudden that many animals were caught in the newly formed coast line.

During our hike, we will witness the remains of corals and shells of the animals that didn’t have enough time to escape from this cataclysmic event. While hiking we look for colorful land iguanas and Galapagos tortoises roaming close to the visitor’s trails.

Return to the yacht for a well-deserved night’s rest.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Day 4 MONDAY

There are many unique species in the Galapagos, but none as adorable as the Galapagos Penguin.

AM: Isabela Island- Elizabeth Bay

Landing type: No Landing.

Possible activities: Panga ride.

We start the day visiting Elizabeth bay. Surrounded by a large group of islets, this bay is considered to be the largest nesting area for the Galapagos Penguin (the only species of penguin that lives north of the equatorial line). We board our dinghies and ride close to the different islets looking closely to observe these cute birds up close.

A narrow cove takes us to a small bay where mangrove trees have created a beautiful forest that serves as refuge for marine birds and colorful fishes, rays and green marine turtles. Water in this mangrove forest is so clear that we are able to spot them from the comfort of our panga.

We return to our yacht and prepare for the next excursion.

PM: Isabela Island- Moreno Point

Landing type: Dry landing.

Possible activities: Hiking, snorkeling, dinghy ride.

In the afternoon, we visit Punta Moreno. A safe-haven for marine birds, Moreno Point presents the perfect opportunity to spot ducks, waders, stilts, blue-winged teals, moorhens (common gallinules), and sometimes flamingos. Some of which can be found feeding in the small ponds that have been formed by the erosion of the basaltic lava terrain creating a rich ecosystem.

This walk is over lava fields with uneven terrain, so good shoes are needed.

We return to our yacht and prepare for the next excursion.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Day 5 TUESDAY

The Sierra Negra volcano possesses one of the largest volcanic craters in the world. We will be witness to the untamed power of nature and the breathtaking dry lava rivers in its interior.

AM: Isabela Island- Sierra Negra Volcano

Landing type: Dry Landing.

Possible activities: Hiking.

Our journey takes us to the small town of Puerto Villamil; we dock here and begin our excursion to the rim of the volcano. A short coach ride takes us to the base of Sierra Negra volcano to start our hike to the crater rim. A lookout point on the edge of the rim will reveal an amazing view of the cauldron and its interior. This overwhelming sight unveils the uncontrollable force of nature that has formed enormous lava walls that rise over 6 feet above the ground and frozen lava rivers that once flowed in the interior of the volcano, all giving life to this sleeping giant.

In the afternoon, we visit the wetlands, an ecosystem that strongly contrasts with the deserted rim of the volcano.

PM: Isabela Island- Wetlands & The Wall of Tears

Landing type: Dry Landing.

Possible activities: Hiking.

Small lagoons, mangrove trees, and swamps have formed this unique and amazing ecosystem. Home of a large variety of birds, the wetlands are considered a sanctuary for many endangered species and one of the best places to admire the different varieties of birds that inhabit the island. Among them we find greater flamingos, common stilts, whimbrels, white-cheeked pintails, and gallinules.

We continue later to the Wall of Tears. This structure is testimony of the penal colony that was established on Isabela. The extreme conditions and severe punishments in which the felons faced gave this grim wall its name. Today only a portion of the wall is still standing.

We say goodbye to the small town of Villamil and we continue our cruise to the next destination.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Day 6 WEDNESDAY

Charles Darwin's voyage inspired many others to study and comprehend the complexity of the natural habitats. In this visit we will learn more about their research and efforts to preserve this unique ecosystem.

AM: Santa Cruz Island- Charles Darwin Research Station

Landing type: Dry Landing.

Possible activities: Walking.

The Charles Darwin Research Station was established in 1964 in order to provide the scientific community with resources to conduct their research and support the conservation efforts carried out by scientists from all over the world.

One of the most iconic conservation programs carried out by the Charles Darwin Foundation is the breeding and care of the Galapagos tortoises. We visit them in all their stages, from small eggs and hatchlings that can fit in the palm of your hand, to the 400 pound gentle giants that gave its name to the islands.

PM: Santa Cruz Island - Highlands

Landing type: Dry landing.

Possible activities: Walking, comfortable walking shoes are recommended.

The Galapagos Islands are filled with surprises and the highlands of Santa Cruz are one of them. The presence of the now extinct volcanic cones, that once gave birth to the island, have created unique and complex ecosystems among them, the cloud forest of the highlands. Hidden in the mist, this exuberant forest is the home of giant Galapagos tortoises, colorful birds, and hundreds of plants that give a unique touch of green to the slopes of the now extinct volcanoes. We hike with our guide, discovering this buoyant habitat, and then we head to the town of Puerto Ayora where we board our yacht and continue our adventure.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Day 7 THURSDAY

Today we walk among dragons over lava fields, on an island that seems to be lost in time, to the era when dinosaurs ruled the earth.

AM: South Plaza Island

Landing type: Dry landing,

Possible activities: Walking, comfortable walking shoes are recommended.

Our morning visit takes us to South Plaza island, covered by sesuvium plants (*Sesuvium edmonstonei* Hook.) This island seems to change its color depending on the season, from an intense green and yellow to a bright red in the dry season. This Island is perfect to take some amazing photos. During our hike, we look for yellow and red land iguanas. Easily recognizable for their unique skin pigmentations, these reptiles have adapted to survive in this island and make you feel as if you were walking among creatures lost in time. We can also see here a large colony of sea lions and marine birds that have made this colorful island their home.

After hiking, we get back on board and prepare for lunch.

PM: Santa Fe Island

Landing type: Dry landing

Possible activities: Walking comfortable walking shoes are recommended., kayaking, panga ride, snorkeling

Santa Fe island might be one of the smallest in the archipelago, but don't let the small surface of this island deceive you; Santa Fe has one of the highest counts of endemic species, such as: the Santa Fe land iguana, the rice mouse, and the lizard of Santa Fe, to name a few. The high endemism on the island is due to the fact that Santa Fe is one of the oldest in the archipelago. With no options to migrate, the animals that arrived at the ancient island were forced to adapt to this unique habitat, thus creating populations of new species that settled in hundreds of years ago.

During our hike, we can see some of these unique species and also take photos of the beautiful forest that has grown on its surface. Composed mostly of cacti such as opuntias and other trees like palo santo. Santa Fe presents the perfect opportunity to take breathtaking photos.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Day 8 FRIDAY

Mysterious islands that seem to appear and disappear at their own whim in the dense mist of the Pacific Ocean, the “Encantadas” - as they were called by the Spanish explorers - are the home of imps and sirens. Fairy tales created a magic place that will come to life during your cruise of the Galapagos Islands.

Before we return to the continent a last visit to the paradise beach of Isla Lobos will leave an unforgettable memory of this small piece of heaven on earth.

AM: San Cristobal Island- Isla Lobos, Airport

Landing type: Dry landing

Possible activities: short hike, comfortable walking shoes are recommended.

Due to the short time before our flight home departs we will enjoy one last short visit to the Island of the sea lions or Isla Lobos as is known by the locals.

We will have breakfast and then enjoy a panga ride close to the shores of the island, here we will be able to see blue footed boobies, frigate birds and playful sea lions. A short but an amazing hike to reflect upon the beauty of the island and the perfect and delicate balance between mankind and nature that reigns over the mysterious archipelago of the Enchanted Islands.

We will return to the yacht to gather our belongings and then we will be transferred to the airport where our guide will help us with the check in process before we take our flight back to mainland.

Meals included : Breakfast.