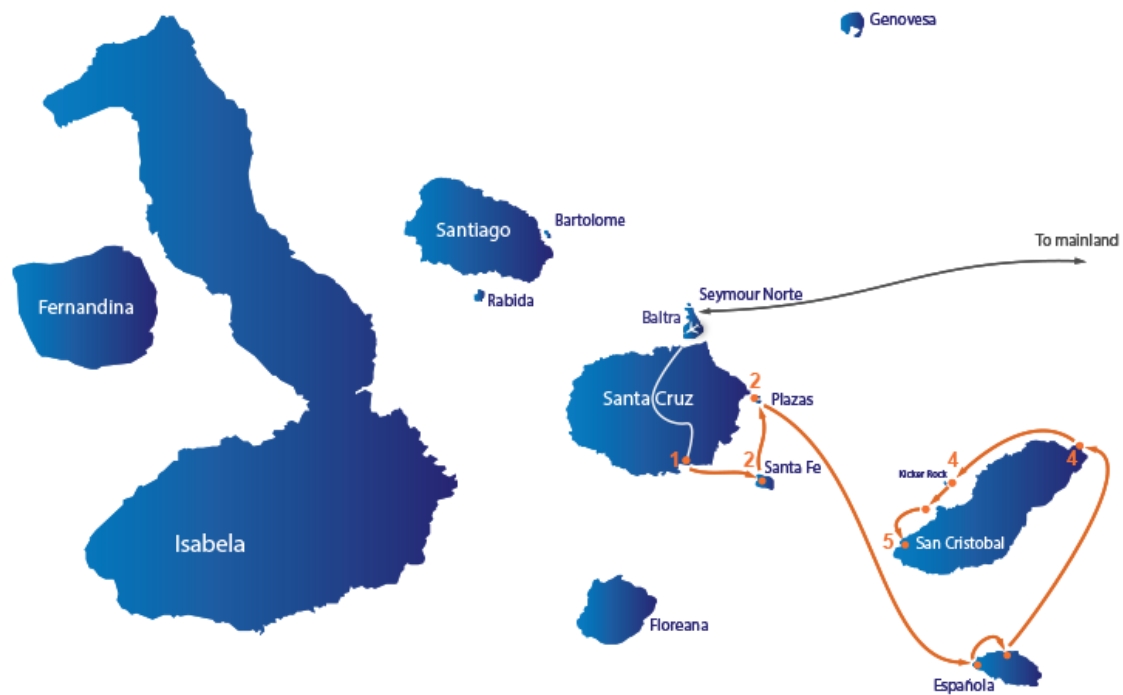


Itinerary 5 Days A



Wednesday - Day 1: Isla Santa Cruz

Welcome to the Galapagos!

Today you will be meeting other travellers arriving from Quito or Guayaquil at Baltra Airport.

You will be met in the arrival hall of the airport by a National Park Guide, and transferred to the catamaran 'M.Y Grand Queen (look out for 'Queen Beatriz' signs) by a transfer guide and transferred to our catamaran - 'M.C. Queen Beatriz', anchored on the other side of Santa Cruz Island. Our transfer guide will take you on an airport public bus for a short distance (10 minute drive) to where you board a public ferry across the Itabaca Channel. The ferry crossing takes only 7 minutes. (Please note that all public transportation costs are included). Once you reach Santa Cruz Island, a private bus you board a private bus for a 45-minute drive to Puerto Ayora, the main port of the island. Here, there will be two dinghies to transport you and your fellow travelers to the 'MC. Queen

Beatriz'. Once on board, cabins will be assigned and you get to meet our crew members and get to know your naturalist guide while enjoying a delicious lunch. After lunch you embark on your first excursion and head into the highlands of Santa Cruz for a total change of scenery. Beginning at the coast you travel across Santa Cruz through the agricultural region and into the misty forests, where you can see the unique scalesia cloud forest and spend time observing giant tortoises in their natural habitat. Look out for the abundant bird life including different species of Darwin finches, woodpeckers, warbler finches and vermilion flycatchers.

Included Activities

- Charles Darwin Research Station

Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

Thursday - Day 2: Santa Fe /South Plaza

Santa Fe is home to more sea lions, and these ones are very eager for swimming partners! It's a lovely place to take a dip, and the landscape on the inland trails is also beautiful, with cacti forests home to a unique sub-species of land iguanas. Hiking towards the cliffs on Santa Fe will lead you to a forest of prickly pear cactus.

A member of the cactus family, their name comes from the pear shaped fruit the plant produces. Santa Fe is home to endemic land iguanas. Once back at the beach you will have free time to snorkel back in the lagoon. Playful sea lions pups and florescent fish make for fascinating company.

A small island, Plaza Sur is nonetheless a place of great beauty, where you will get close to sea lions and onto trails past one of the Galapagos' largest land iguana populations, resting amid cacti and volcanic landscapes colored bright red and green by sesuvium. The island's rugged southern cliffs are an excellent place to spot tropicbirds and swallow-tailed gulls, as well as 'the gentlemen's club', a gathering of male sea lions either too young or too old to be beach masters!

Included Activities

- Isla Santa Fe
- Plaza Sur

Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

Friday - Day 3: Isla Espanola

Today you will cruise to the island of Española Española - the southernmost island of the Galapagos and one of the most spectacular. Because of its remote location, this island has a large population of endemic fauna. It is the breeding site for nearly all of the world's 12,000 pairs of waved albatrosses and also home to colonies of blue-footed and masked boobies.

Trails from the golden beaches, where sea lions bathe and marine iguanas make their way towards the water, will lead you right through the middle of booby colonies, and Galapagos doves and mockingbirds are also often seen. You will also visit the beautiful white sandy beaches at Bahía Gardner, which are great places for swimming and relaxing. The rocks off the coast provide excellent snorkeling opportunities, with reef sharks, turtles and many species of tropical fish, including surgeon and angelfish, often seen. The small white-tipped reef sharks are also often spotted resting under the rocks.

You will also pay a visit to Punta Suarez, one of the most attractive locations in the Galapagos and home to large and varied wildlife population - a walk along its trails will take you to a cliff top viewpoint, where you'll gain a magical panorama. Boobies line the rocky shoreline beneath you, while frigate birds may be seen overhead; nearby enormous male sea lions can be seen lounging and albatross use the cliffs as their 'runway', helping become airborne by the southeast winds that blow across this part of the island.

If you're lucky you'll see the elaborate courtship rituals performed by albatrosses before the female chooses her lifelong mate!

Included Activities

- Bahía Gardner
- Punta Suarez

Meals Included

- Breakfast

- Lunch
- Dinner

Saturday - Day 4: Isla San Cristobal

This morning you will visit Punta Pitt on the eastern end of San Cristobal Island. Walk to the top of the volcanic hill for expansive views of the sparsely vegetated area. A variety of seabirds nest here, including blue-footed boobies and frigates.

On a 'panga' ride you can observe the three varieties of boobies nesting in the Galapagos and enjoy a snorkel from the beach.

Close by you will pass through Leon Dormido (Kicker Rock), which is a magnificent rock in the middle of the sea, the shape resembles a sleeping lion. The rock rises 150 meters above the surface and is divided into two parts by a narrow channel. You cruise through the channel with nesting seabirds on either side of the boat, tropic birds overhead, marine iguanas in the water and many sea lions present including many resting on the rocks. You will also visit Isla Lobos, a tiny island almost touching San Cristobal Island. This is the perfect time to witness the always friendly sea lions as they play in the calm shallow waters here. Blue-footed boobies, frigate birds and marine iguanas are also easily seen.

Included Activities

- Punta Pitt
- Kicker Rock
- Isla Lobos

Meals Included

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

Day 5: Isla San Cristobal

As flights to the mainland from Galapagos depart mid-morning, it is an early start for our last morning on the islands. Depending on the time of our flight, our time spent on this final excursion could be limited.

Visit the Interpretation Centre in the morning. The centre brings the history and geography of the archipelago to life, from its volcanic origins to the present day. The human history exhibit offers an insight into the discovery and colonisation of the Galapagos, and the reality of the problems the islands face today is also explored.

You will then head to the airport for our flight back to Quito. As you will be leaving the boat this morning, please remember that if you have enjoyed the services provided by your guide and crew, a tip would be very much appreciated by them. As a guideline we recommend each passenger consider US\$15 per day for the crew and US\$10 per day for your guide. You can leave tips in envelopes that are placed in your cabin on the last day of your journey.

Included Activities

- San Cristobal Interpretation Center

Meals Included

- Breakfast