



## **GALAPAGOS HIGHLIGHTS 2017**

**8 days / 7 nights (shared program)**



### **Day 1: QUITO OR GUAYAQUIL - SAN CRISTOBAL**

We will pick you up on arrival at San Cristobal Island and take you to the hotel. Get settled and get ready to enjoy a nice Ecuadorian lunch. Visit Loberia Beach: a beautiful site with great snorkeling!

During the snorkel you may find sea turtles, rays, sea lions and many species of colorful fishes. There is also a nice hike (optional) to a cliff where you can observe many marine iguanas and birds such as, blue footed boobies, swallow-tailed gulls and frigate birds. After that you will go back to the hotel and get ready for dinner.

Meals included: Lunch / dinner

Difficulty: EASY

### **Day 2: SAN CRISTOBAL**

Kicker Rock (León Dormido): It's a volcanic tuff rock rising at 144 meters above the sea level. It's a beautiful snorkel site, also famous because of its rich marine life. You can spot there many tropical fishes, sea turtles, sea lions, rays, Galapagos sharks, white tipped sharks and if lucky, hammerhead sharks!

Going around the rock with the boat you can spot nazca boobies, blue-footed boobies and frigate birds. Lunch will be served on board and then we will navigate back to the pier around 2 PM.

The rest of the afternoon is free until dinner. You can use it for shopping or go and visit the interpretation center (entrance free), Tijeretas, playa Carola and playa Mann. You will meet with the whole group for dinner where the guide will give you the details for the next day

Meals included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

Difficulty: MEDIUM (snorkeling in open water)

### **Day 3: SAN CRISTOBAL – FLOREANA – ISABELA**

Breakfast will be served at 6AM in your hotel. Around 06:30AM you will be picked-up at your hotel to go to the pier to depart around 7am to Floreana. The private boat ride lasts for about 2 hours and 30 minutes.



Upon arrival, you will visit the highlands, a place called “Peace Asylum” where the first colonists of the islands settled. The guide will tell you about the history of the colonists.

During the short hike you will also spot Galapagos giant tortoises. Lunch will be served in the small village. After lunch you will go snorkeling on a beautiful beach nearby the pier. Afterwards you will continue on the boat to Isabela Island (approximately 1,5 hour ride).

Isabela is one of the youngest islands which has still moderate volcanic activity (but it’s safe!). It’s a beautiful island with its pier located near a clear bay and a long White Sandy beach.

Upon arrival you will be picked-up by taxi/bus or chiva and driven to the flamingo lagoon to spot these beautiful animals at sunset. (If time allows, otherwise it will be re-scheduled throughout the stay in Isabela). Transfer to the hotel to get ready for dinner

Meals included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner  
Difficulty: EASY

#### **Day 4: ISABELA**

On your 4th day you must choose (**upon booking**) between a Volcano trekking tour (land tour) or Cabo Rosa (water tour as a supplement)!

\*\* spaces to Cabo Rosa are very limited that’s why it has to be booked in advance and is at extra cost\*\*

#### **Option 1 - VOLCANO HIKE (included in the price)**

Early in the morning you will be picked-up by bus/taxi/chiva and driven towards the highlands: You will start a trekking (6 hours!) to the Sierra Negra and Chico volcano.

The first stop on the hike is Sierra Negra Volcano which has the second largest active crater in the world: 10km diameter. You will continue to walk towards Chico Volcano, which is a cone of Sierra Negra.

You will walk through moon-like sceneries and have great views of nearby Fernandina Island and the north of the Isabela Island. This gives you an idea of how the islands looked at their creation.

After walking back you will be moved by bus/taxi/chiva to a local farm where lunch will be served. You will be back in the hotel around 3:30PM, on the way back we will stop at the flamingo lagoon. The rest of the afternoon is free.

Difficulty: MEDIUM

#### **Option 2 - CABO ROSA TUNNELS:**

This tour option has an additional cost of **\$155 per person**

If you prefer snorkeling over hiking this is a great opportunity. You can take the excursion to Cabo Rosa tunnels which are located about 1 hour boat ride south from the port.

This is an amazing place where the volcanic activities created lava tunnels going under and over sea level. You can spot the penguins, blue footed boobies and you will have great snorkeling too! Food will be provided during the tour. The rest of the afternoon is free.

Meals included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner  
Difficulty: EASY

### Day 5: ISABELA - SANTA CRUZ

In the morning you will visit the Tintoreras Islet near the pier: There you can spot small Galapagos penguins, sea lions, marine iguanas, blue-footed boobies and often you can even spot white tipped-sharks in one of the channels. You will have a short hike and go snorkel nearby.

Afterwards you will continue with our private boat to Santa Cruz (2 hours). Upon arrival you will be transferred to the hotel and change to get ready for lunch and the afternoon program.

Tortuga Bay beach to enjoy a swim into the Galapagos waters and spot a huge iguana colony. The walk to Tortuga Bay is 3km each way, passing through a giant endemic cactus forest

Meals included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner  
Difficulty: EASY TO MEDIUM

### Day 6: UNINHABITED ISLAND

To complete the tour, you will visit one of the completely uninhabited islands such as Bartolome, Seymour, Plazas or Santa Fe. Each one has its own character and species (Seymour, Plazas and Santa Fe have endemic species of land iguanas; Bartolome has penguins and amazing views).

You will be picked-up at the hotel early in the morning. Note that you will be traveling with other people/guide than you were on the tour, as those day tours have restrictions and just a few boats have the permission to go there.

The tour consist in reaching the Itabaca channel by bus (except for Santa Fe which is south), and then aboard a yacht to navigate to the islands. After hiking and snorkeling you will have lunch on board. You are usually back late afternoon.

Meals included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner  
Difficulty: EASY

IMPORTANT: Due to the restriction of the National Park we cannot guarantee before booking which island you will be visiting this day.

### Day 7: UNINHABITED ISLAND

Today we will visit another island: different to the previous day. Hike and snorkel, then we go back to port around 5pm.

Meals included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner  
Difficulty: EASY

IMPORTANT: Due to the restriction of the National Park we cannot guarantee before booking which island you will be visiting this day.

### Day 8: BALTRA airport

In the morning we will reach the airport passing by a lava tunnel that we will visit going entirely through it. We can sometimes spot a Galapagos owl.

Meals included: Breakfast  
Difficulty: EASY

*\*\*Itinerary is subject to change without prior warning depending on seasonal changes, weather conditions, and adjustments in policies set by the Galapagos National Park, or other unforeseen circumstances that may arise \*\**



You can share a room with another single traveler of the same gender, please contact your travel agent.

[Supplement for Christmas departure 125 usd p/person](#)

Tourist class hotels: (or similar): Pimampiro, La Gran Tortuga, Deja Vu.

Tourist superior class hotels (or similar): Casa Playa Mann, Casita de la Playa, Villa Laguna

If these options are not available at the time of booking, we will find similar hotel and give you the name of the hotels in order for you to approve it.

**Prices include:**

- ✓ All meals mentioned before
- ✓ Tours with English speaking guides
- ✓ All transportation (boat, bus)
- ✓ Snorkel gear and short wetsuit
- ✓ Accommodation in double or triple room occupancy
- ✓ Isabela port fee

**Prices do not include:**

- ✓ Flights from and to mainland Ecuador from 464 usd pp
- ✓ Entrance fee of the Galapagos National Park 100 usd pp, 50 usd p/child (12 years and under) CASH ONLY
- ✓ Transit card 20 usd pp, bought at the airport (Quito or Guayaquil) CASH ONLY
- ✓ Other meals and beverages
- ✓ Tips , Travel insurance
- ✓ All not mentioned in the program

**DEPARTURE DATES:**

DEPARTURE DATES 2017
JANUARY 17th – 24th
FEBRUARY 14th – 21st
MARCH 14th – 21st
APRIL 11st – 18th
MAY 16th – 23rd
JUNE 13rd – 20th
JULY 18th – 25th
AUGUST 22nd – 29th
SEPTEMBER 19th – 26th
OCTOBER 17th – 24th
NOVEMBER 21st – 28th
DECEMBER 19th – 26th **

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- Meals are not “a la carte”, but menus. Please let us know any allergy/special diet you may have. Typical meal is soup, main plate with vegetables and rice, fresh made juice and a dessert. Coffee is not included.
- Water: you can fill up water bottles in all the hotels each morning before going on tour



- Transportation: is made on board of small speedboats between islands. Navigation times can be long (max 2h30) due to the distance between islands. We cannot control the ocean, if a swell comes in the ride can be bumpy, especially during the Garúa season (see below) If you are usually subject to motion sickness please bring parches or pills (you can also buy pills here). From experience, the parches are really effective!
- This is a pretty active and group tour, you have to be fit (be used to hiking and swimming), as it is a group we cannot wait too long if you cannot follow, in this case you can book a more private tour to go at your own pace.
- This is not a relaxed tour! Early wake ups are usual here on the Galapagos, to make the most of the day, as days are pretty short (sunset is 6PM).
- When on the 8 day tour, the last 3 days you'll have different guides and boat from the first leg of the tour. We do have local agents on each island that will be introduced to you all along the tour.
- Accommodation is in nice, clean hostels with private bathrooms, hot water, Wi-fi. They are usually family run businesses. Upgrades are possible. In case of the upgrade you'll have more stylish hotels, with A/C

#### FLIGHTS:

- The flight IN shall be to San Cristobal Island (code SCY)
- The flight OUT shall be out of BALTRA (code GPS). please choose the latest flight leaving around 1PM (not before 11AM or, you'd miss the tunnel activity)

#### SPECIES:

- You can never see all species of the Galapagos unless you do a 15 day tour visiting all the possible islands: some animals just live on some islands, sometimes in just 1 part of 1 island.
- Species you CAN see on this tour: sea lions, frigate birds, blue footed boobies, Nazca boobies, swallow tailed gulls, tropic birds, marine iguanas, sharks, rays, penguins, giant tortoises, turtles, Darwin finches, mockingbirds, lava lizards
- Species you CANNOT see on this tour: albatrosses, red footed boobies, flightless cormorant, and pink iguana (nobody can see this one as it is ultra-protected and living in a part of the islands totally closed to tourism): if you are interesting in spotting one of those, let us know so we can complete the tour with a cruise.

LAND IGUANAS can be spotted on the 8 day tour only. If you really want to see a land iguana but cannot do the 8 day tour, you can switch the activity of Tortuga Bay and go on your own (entrance free) to the Charles Darwin station where you have land iguanas (but in captivity)

#### CLIMATE:

Galapagos can be visited all year round. There are 2 seasons:

- The Garua season goes from mid-June to mid-October (more or less): the cold current of Humboldt enters the island so the water is colder (around 20 degrees Celsius, wetsuit is needed), cloudy days and a small drizzle. This actually makes the climate fresher so don't expect all sunny days but a cooler weather for the hiking, no need of A/C or fan during the night and almost no mosquitoes. The colder water brings more plankton and more wildlife; this is the best time of the year to spot whales during the boat transports.



- The Warm season is from November to Mid- May: days can be really hot (more than 30 degrees) and the water is warm due to Panama current entering in the islands marine reserve. No need for a wetsuit, sunny days, if you need to warm up from the winter back home, this is the good season! Expect heavy tropical rains that can last 1 to 3 hours ( really, we have not that much days with rain all day long, it can happen but not on all islands at the same time). Due to the rains all the islands are greener. In between these two seasons would be the transition time where you can have a bit of both seasons!

TIPS: if you do not depend on kid's holidays, try to travel in low season: September-October, February, or May-June: you have less people on the visitor sites and still enjoy the same fauna/flora as the rest of the year

#### **Galápagos recommended packing list:**

- ✓ Health and travel insurance policies
- ✓ Scan all your documentation/tickets/passport and email them to yourself
- ✓ Ziploc bags or Dry Packs to keep what you need dry (books, maps, documents, film)
- ✓ Pack towel (fast drying, ultralite)
- ✓ Toiletries\*\* including strong sunscreen (high SPF, waterproof), biodegradable soap, shampoo, and toothpaste.
- ✓ Feminine hygiene (tampons are especially difficult to find).
- ✓ A full prescription of a doctor prescribed antibiotic or any other medication you are currently taking.
- ✓ Flashlight or headlamp
- ✓ Rechargeable batteries
- ✓ Camera and memory card (electronics are very expensive in Ecuador)
- ✓ Swiss army knife or similar multi-tool with scissors/knife
- ✓ Small binoculars
- ✓ Travel alarm clock
- ✓ Basic First Aid kit (for minor cuts, blisters, insect bites, muscle/headaches, diarrhea, and motion sickness, etc.)
- ✓ Insect repellent (avoid repellents with strong concentrations of DEET)
- ✓ Small backpack and money belt/pouch
- ✓ Large garbage bags (to be used as a pack liner or cover)
- ✓ Re-usable water bottle (such as NALGENE)
- ✓ A travel lock
- ✓ Sun hat/ visor
- ✓ Light rain jacket or rain poncho
- ✓ Lightweight, fast-drying clothing
- ✓ Swimsuit
- ✓ Sandals and Teva-style sandals (for wet landings and around town)
- ✓ Sneakers or hiking boots (for dry landings and rocky shores)
- ✓ Sunglasses (with strap is best)

Please DON'T bring any toiletry item containing "micro-crystals", "micro-beads" or "micro-granules" containing POLYETHYLENE.

These micro-beads, often found in toothpastes and exfoliating facial cleansers (such as Colgate and Neutrogena, among many other brands on the market) are made from plastic which wash down the drain and eventually make their way back into rivers and oceans. These small plastic beads are then swallowed by sea creatures, causing irreversible damage to the marine ecosystem

Note that we totally avoid packed lunches as they produce garbage, on the volcano we use a local family owned restaurants. On the boat tours to Kicker Rock, Cabo Rosa tunnels, uninhabited islands on Santa Cruz, we are not directly providing the lunch so I cannot assure you it won't be a packed lunch though we try to work with local boat owners so they don't use plastic dishes.



**ANDANDO  
TOURS**  
Mainland Ecuador &  
Galápagos Islands

**PAYMENT:**

- 50% of deposit at booking
- The balance 40 days before the trip date

**CANCELLATION POLICY:**

- More than 60 days before departure: 100 usd pp for Administration Fee
- 60 days before departure: 20% of Total Amount.
- 59 to 30 days before departure: 50% of total amount.
- 29 to 0 days before departure: 100% of total amount.