

ITINERARY E1

5 DAYS / 4 NIGHTS

SATURDAY - WEDNESDAY



DAY 1 – SATURDAY

MORNING FLIGHT TO BALTRA & BLACK TURTLE COVE

PM: After arriving at Baltra airport, we will be greeted by our naturalist guide to then board the M/Y WildAid's Passion and have lunch. Following our meal, we will navigate a short distance to Black Turtle Cove, a large mangrove lagoon on the northern coast of Santa Cruz Island. Pelicans and herons roost on the branches, while marine dwellers such as green sea turtles and golden rays may cruise right next to the *panga* as it makes its way through the mangroves.

The day ends with dinner and a briefing for the next day's activities on board the yacht.

DAY 2 - SUNDAY

DARWIN BAY & EL BARRANCO



AM: We travel to Genovesa Island and for a wet landing on Darwin Bay, a unique site with a beautiful beach, lined with red mangroves and soft-haired prickly pear cacti, where red-footed boobies and great frigatebirds perch tamely.

PM: After a dry landing at El Barranco, we will climb to the edge of a cliff where frigatebirds, masked boobies, and red-footed boobies make their nests. The trail will take us to the inner part of the island, populated by *palo santo* trees and cacti. We will be seeking out the impressive red-billed tropicbird amidst Galapagos storm petrels and the endemic short-eared owl.

DAY 3 - MONDAY

BARTOLOME AND CHINESE HAT

AM: We will have a dry landing on Bartolome, followed by a mild climb up a set of wooden steps to reach the summit of a spatter cone for a breathtaking panorama of the island's iconic Pinnacle Rock and views of neighboring Santiago, and other central islands in the distance. Afterward, we will visit the white sand beach used as a nesting site by sea turtles, followed by snorkeling in the waters of Bartolome Island, where it is not unusual to spot Galapagos penguins.

PM: Less than a quarter of one square kilometer in size, this island gets its name from being shaped like a Chinese hat. The hat shape is best appreciated from the north side. Lava formations can be seen on the western side of

the island, formed under the sea and later raised upward, making it possible to observe coral heads on the lava. Be amazed by the landscapes covered by sea lions' colonies, marine iguanas, and Galapagos penguins.

DAY 4 - TUESDAY

RABIDA & DRAGON HILL



AM: Wet landing onto Rabida's deep-red beaches to explore the red island's fascinating interior and saltwater lagoon, where flamingos are usually present. Darwin's finches, Galapagos mockingbirds, and yellow warblers feed off the vegetation. Given the right time of the year, we may see brown pelicans nesting on salt bushes that fringe the beach.

PM: In the afternoon, we navigate a short distance to Cerro Dragon on Santa Cruz's northwestern shore with a dry landing to visit a saltwater lagoon, home to greater flamingos, black-necked stilts, and white-cheeked pintails. Further inland we will find a fantastic land iguana nesting site.

DAY 5 - WEDNESDAY

SANTA CRUZ HIGHLANDS & DEPARTURE

AM: This is our last day in the islands. After breakfast we will disembark in Puerto Ayora to take our transport to the Baltra airport, making a short stop to visit the highlands. We will visit one of the local ranches where it is possible to see giant tortoises in their natural habitat. As these animals migrate from the highlands to the coastal areas and back, the chosen ranch will depend on the presence of the tortoises since they roam free and change locations. The farms are also great places to see the Santa Cruz ground finch which populates these forests, where it is also possible to see the yellow warbler.

After this visit, we will make our way to the Baltra airport for the flight back to mainland Ecuador.