



Galapagos Cruises: M/V Santa Cruz

Eastern Islands

Visit the islands and see famous Galapagos creatures such as penguins and fur seals, marine iguanas, giant tortoises, blue-footed boobies and the Galapagos albatross.

INCLUSIONS

- Roundtrip Air and Ground Transfers

- 6 Nights M/V Santa Cruz
- Galapagos National Park Fee

- Tours with Naturalist Guide
- All Meals



DAY 1

FRIDAY:

Baltra Island: We arrive by plane at Baltra Island and transfer to the dock to board the Santa Cruz II where we receive our welcome introductory briefing and lunch.

Mosquera: After lunch and your introductory briefing on board, Santa Cruz II will relocate only four nautical miles from Baltra, next to Mosquera Islet, a small volcanic uplift between Baltra and North Seymour. The island is a long and narrow sand bank surrounded by lava reefs. Our groups will approach the island from its western shore, a long shallow reef, the perfect rookery for young sea lions. After a wet landing, our guides will lead you past the sea lion colonies, where you will learn more about the fragile marine and terrestrial ecosystems of Galapagos. The walk is easy as it is restricted to a few hundred meters of flat sandy dunes. This will also be a great opportunity for an introduction to snorkeling.

(Lunch, Dinner, Accommodation, Santa Cruz)



DAY 2

SATURDAY:

Puerto Baquerizo Moreno (San Cristobal Island): After breakfast, we disembark (dry landing) at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the island's capital, and drive 40 minutes to the island's southern shore. At Cerro Colorado, we visit the breeding center for highly endangered giant tortoises in the midst of a fantastic deciduous forest, home to dozens of bird species, including the San Cristobal mockingbird, and the San Cristobal lava lizard, both island endemics.

Punta Pitt (San Cristóbal Island): In the afternoon, disembark (wet landing) on the eastern tip of the island. Pitt Point is an eroded tuff cone; the trail that ascends from the beach provides spectacular views of the shoreline. This is the only site in the Galapagos where the three species of boobies can be found together, as well as the two frigate species, plus a colony of bachelor sea lions along the beach. After the walk, if conditions are favourable, there is a chance to swim from the beach or snorkel at the nearby islets. Expedition plan for Sunday and dinner.

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Accommodation, Santa Cruz)



DAY 3

SUNDAY:

Santa Fe Island: After breakfast, a wet landing on a sandy white beach with many sea lion harems. Bulls vie for the right of "Beach Master", while smaller males masquerading as females make stealthy mating moves. Galapagos hawks are often easily observed, perched atop salt bushes. The giant prickly pear cactus found here live up to their name with tree-sized trunks! The endemic land iguana, unique to this island, may be spotted during the afternoon walk. Snorkelling and swimming from the beach rounds off the rewarding experience, or if guests prefer, the glass-bottom boat for non-snorkellers. Lunch on board.

South Plaza Island: Disembark (dry landing) in the channel between North and South Plaza Islands, where the island tilts toward the water, the Approach makes for a lavishly colourful sight! The turquoise waters of the channel contrast brilliantly with the white sand and black lava of the shoreline. The rocks have grown thick with green seaweed in places, speckled with bright orange 'Sally Lightfoot' crabs. Yellow-grey land iguanas sit beneath these, waiting patiently for pears to drop. Along the coastline one finds sea lion colonies, while frigates, swallow-tailed gulls and shearwaters glide playing with the thermals that form along the cliffs of this small but amazing island. Expedition plan for Monday and dinner.

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Accommodation, Santa Cruz)



DAY 4

MONDAY:

Puerto Ayora and the Charles Darwin Research Station (Santa Cruz Island): In the morning, we disembark (dry landing) for our visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station and the giant tortoise pens within an impressive giant prickly-pear cactus forest home to many land birds. These are the headquarters of scientific investigation, conservation and the National Park administration. Following our visit, we board our transport to enjoy lunch in the cooler highlands of Santa Cruz Island, a completely different ecosystem.

Santa Cruz Island: We have several options available for the afternoon, which can be discussed in advance with your Expedition Leader:

- Trek along trails amid miconia forest in the highlands
- Mountain bike (mostly downhill) to Garrapatero Beach
- Sea kayak and relax on a beautiful, sandy beach
- Experience sustainable agriculture in an organic coffee plantation
- Discover SCUBA diving day in Puerto Ayora. This activity takes for most of the day and has a cost. Please ask us for more information

At the end of the afternoon's activities, we return to Puerto Ayora and embark on the M/V Santa Cruz.

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Accommodation, Santa Cruz)



DAY 5

TUESDAY:

Punta Suárez (Española (Hood) Island): Morning outing at Punta Suárez (dry landing) for an exciting walk on lava/boulder terrain to visit its unique sea bird colonies, including waved albatrosses (April - December), Nazca boobies, bluefooted boobies, swallow-tail gulls as well as a view of the Galapagos famous "blow-hole". Among its land birds, the Hood island mockingbird, Galapagos hawks, Galapagos doves and three species of Darwin's finches are common highlights. Also, look for red-green-black marine iguanas. Back on board for lunch

Gardner Bay (Española Island): In the afternoon, disembark (wet landing) at a white coral beach for a short walk to observe the sea lions, mockingbirds, finches or enjoy the beach. There is great snorkelling in this area, or a ride aboard the glass-bottom boat. Departure briefing, Farewell Cocktail and dinner.

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Accommodation, Santa Cruz)



DAY 6

WEDNESDAY:

Eden Islet (Santa Cruz Island): After breakfast, a panga ride takes us to Eden Islet, a small islet located off the coast of Santa Cruz, where we can observe blue-footed boobies diving into the water, reef sharks and frigates. There's a chance to snorkel and, if weather condition permits, ride in the glass-bottom boat and kayak.

North Seymour Island: North Seymour was lifted from the ocean floor by a volcanic event, and its origins as a seabed give the island its low, flat profile. A tiny forest of silver-grey Palo Santo trees stands just above the landing (dry landing), usually without leaves, waiting for the rains to burst into bloom. This is a great introductory site to the islands and their wildlife, full of bird colonies of blue footed boobies, two species of frigate birds, swallow-tailed gulls, as well as sea lions and marine iguanas.

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Accommodation, Santa Cruz)



DAY 6

THURSDAY:

Baltra Island: Disembark at Baltra Island. Transfer to the airport to take the flight back to the continent.

(Breakfast, Santa Cruz)

PACKING LIST:

- At Night: Cruise-Casual attire for dining; no shorts, swimwear or tank tops
- On Shore: shorts or fast-drying slacks, T-shirts, or long sleeved cotton shirts
- Walking shoes
- Thongs or sandals
- Wind-breaker
- Hat with a brim
- Bathing suits
- Bandana to cover the back of your neck from the sun's rays
- Sunglasses (with holding strap)
- Extra set of glasses or contact lenses + lens solution
- Sun block (SPF30 or higher)
- Insect repellent (Mosquitoes are NOT malaria carrying)
- Grooming kit
- Personal medication
- Multi-purpose Zip-loc bags.
- Camera gear, extra memory and charger (or extra batteries)
- Lip balm (SPF30 or higher)
- Portable computer or Tablet (intermittent and low-bandwidth WiFi available onboard)

Included:

- Accommodation
- Island sightseeing
- Naturalists and lecture services
- Snorkeling gear and transfers

Not Included:

- Air transportation to/from Galapagos
- Galapagos National Park admission fee (US \$100 subject to change without notice)
- Transit Control Card for Galapagos (US\$ 10 per person)
- Wet suits
- Alcoholic and non alcoholic beverage, gratuities, gifts and additional items

Important Notes:

The itineraries and programme are subject to change without prior notice, due mainly to adjustments in the policies and regulations of the Galapagos National Park, weather conditions, seasonal changes and safety reasons.

- Dry landing: guests step from the dinghy onto rocks or a dock.
- Wet landing: as the dinghy edges onto a sandy beach, guests step into knee-deep water and wade ashore.