

**8 Days/7 Nights**

Departs Fridays from Quito



## **Galapagos: Darwin's Path**

### **San Cristobal, Santa Cruz, Floreana & Isabela Islands**

Explore the magical Galapagos archipelago by staying on four islands that feature their own diverse topography, plant life and wildlife.

#### **ACCOMMODATIONS**

- 2 Nights San Cristobal
- 2 Nights Santa Cruz
- 1 Night Floreana
- 2 Nights Isabela

#### **INCLUSIONS**

- All Boat & Ground Transfers
- Guided Island Eco-Tours
- Yacht Exploration Tours
- Daily Breakfast & Some Lunches (with Option to Upgrade to Full Board)



## ARRIVAL / SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND:

After arriving from the mainland at San Cristobal Airport, your first visit will be to the Interpretation Center, where you will learn about the origin, history and flora and fauna of the islands. Then you'll have a two-hour hike to Frigate Hill for a beautiful view of the island and its surroundings. The main attraction here is a colony of frigate birds. After this hike you'll visit Frigate Bay for some snorkeling. Finally you head for your hotel for dinner and overnight.

*(Accommodations, San Cristobal)*

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## ESPAÑOLA ISLAND:

A two-hour boat ride brings you to Española, the southernmost and driest of the Galapagos Islands. Our first visit is to **Gardener Bay**, home to a large colony of sea lions. There is an excellent beach for relaxing or swimming. Our next stop is at **Suárez Point**. This rocky land spot sustains one of the most impressive and varied colonies of sea birds in the Galapagos. High cliffs rise up from the sea, permitting spectacular views of soaring birds and an impressive blowhole. A 30-minute boat ride brings you to a bay that offers excellent swimming and snorkeling—bringing you face-to-face with sea lions, rays, white-tipped sharks, marine iguanas and sea turtles. After this day-long excursion, return to San Cristobal and overnight.

*(Breakfast & Accommodations, San Cristobal; Lunch on Excursion)*

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## TRANSFER TO SANTA CRUZ:

This morning you take a yacht transfer to Santa Cruz Island. Upon arrival, you will visit the highlands and will enjoy lunch at a ranch where you will see the giant Galapagos tortoises in their natural habitat. You will have time to walk through the grounds to search for the giant tortoises. After lunch you will continue on to Puerto Ayora, where you'll find your hotel and have the rest of the afternoon at leisure.

*(Breakfast, San Cristobal; Lunch & Accommodations, Santa Cruz)*

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## SANTA CRUZ TO FLOREANA:

This morning after breakfast you will have a 2½ hour speedboat ride to Floreana. This island has perhaps the most interesting human history of all the islands: it is the site of the first "post office," established in 1793 by whalers. It was the first island to be colonized by Ecuadorians, in 1832. A pregnant woman—Margret Wittmer—arrived in 1932 with her husband Heinz and her stepson Harry. They built a house (after spending their first year in a cave) and established a garden. Their son Rolf was the first person to be born in the islands. Descendants of the Wittmers still live on Floreana.

Arriving on the island, we will visit a local farm that will allow us to learn more about people's way of life on Floreana. We will enjoy a delicious lunch prepared with the foods harvested from the farm. After lunch we will continue with our next visit, Asilo de la Paz. It is primarily a historical site where visitors can view a pirates' cave and the freshwater spring, which is the main source of water for the population. Nearby, you will find a corral with various giant tortoises that were originally owned by residents of Floreana. In the evening, we will have a barbeque on the beach. Here you can enjoy the Floreana's peace and quiet and taste the foods harvested by the islands inhabitants.

*(Breakfast, Santa Cruz; Lunch, Dinner & Accommodations, Floreana)*

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## FLOREANA: LA LOBERIA / TRANSFER TO ISABELA:

Today after breakfast, we will begin our excursion to "La Loberia", a sea Lion breeding area where we will take a short walk along shore before we start our first marine excursion in the bright turquoise water where you might be able to swim with sea lions, sea turtles, manta rays and a variety of colorful coral fish. We will enjoy a delicious lunch prepared with the foods harvested from the farm. After we will head to take our speedboat to Isabela Island, approximately 2.5 hours. Arriving to Isabela you will be able to enjoy the Island by your own. Accommodation in selected hotel.

*(Breakfast & Lunch, Floreana; Accommodations, Isabela)*

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## ISABELA: SIERRA NEGRA & TINTORERAS:

After breakfast, we will go by car to the mountainsides of the Sierra Negra Volcano. We will walk along the crater of the volcano. There we will have a wonderful view of the crater and with a little bit of luck, we will be able to see the Galapagos Sparrow Hawk. We will get to know the geology of the Sierra Negra Volcano, learning that most of this island was formed by AA lava. After enjoying a box lunch we will return to the town.

In the afternoon we will visit Tintorerías Islets, located a short distance from Puerto Villamil, which is home to a great variety of wildlife. Its turquoise, crystalline waters are inhabited by white-tipped reef sharks, Galapagos penguins, marine turtles and sea lions.

*(Breakfast & Accommodations, Isabela)*

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## **TORTOISE BREEDING CENTER / FLAMINGOS' LAGOON / SANTA CRUZ:**

After breakfast, you'll visit the Flamingo's Lagoon, where usually you can see flamingos feeding. After this, continue on to visit the Tortoise Breeding Center, where you will learn more about the reproduction and breeding of the tortoises.

Return to Puerto Villamil, where you will take a boat transfer back to Santa Cruz Island. The afternoon is yours for leisure time in Puerto Ayora.

*(Breakfast, Isabela; Accommodations, Santa Cruz)*

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## **CHARLES DARWIN STATION / TRANSFER TO AIRPORT:**

After breakfast, you will head for the Charles Darwin Station. Here you will be able to see a variety of species of Giant Tortoises in captivity. You will watch their different size and ages, and learn more about the Islands they originally come from. Here you will learn more about the ongoing conservation efforts directed to preserve the Giant Tortoises, as well as learning more about the entire Galapagos environment.

After this visit, your guide will transfer you back to Baltra Airport for your return flight to mainland Ecuador—where you can continue on to your next Avanti destination!

*(Breakfast, Santa Cruz)*

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