



Galapagos Petrel Cruise:  
Itinerary B - Central and Southern Islands

Enjoy one of the world's most famous natural laboratories while cruising on the sophisticated Petrel Catamaran. Discover the wonder of the Galapagos as you explore this enchanting UNESCO World Heritage site, known as the "living museum and showcase of evolution". You'll get close to endemic species that seem unfazed by the presence of humans, like Giant Tortoises, Penguins, Sea Lions, Marine Iguanas, Frigate Birds, Blue Footed Boobies, and much more! Experience the beauty of the islands, swimming in crystalline and turquoise waters, snorkeling or kayaking. For birdwatchers, there will be plenty of opportunities to observe both native and migratory birds, as well as learning more of the wildlife at the Charles Darwin Center. There will be an incredible snorkeling adventure at Devil's Crown and you'll have the opportunity to be a mail carrier at the world's most unusual "Post Office".

INCLUSIONS

- Arrival and Departure Transfers
- 5 Nights Accommodations
- Excursion to South Plaza and Santa Fe Islands

- Excursion to Gardner Bay, Osborn Islet & Suarez Point
- Excursion to Cormorant Point and Devils Crown

- Excursions to Isla Lobos, Galapaguera & Charles Darwin Research Center
- All Meals



ARRIVE SANTA CRUZ ISLAND:

Today after arriving in Baltra Airport, you'll pass through customs and immigration, meet your driver/guide for your transfer to the port and on to the Petrel Catamaran. The Petrel crew will show you to your accommodations, and afterwards, the guide and cruise manager will hold a short briefing on all safety and emergency protocols.

The Petrel Catamaran has a maximum capacity of 16 passengers allowing both intimacy and camaraderie at the same time. Well-appointed staterooms, spacious sundecks, a private balcony, lounge and jacuzzi, creates the perfect ambiance for a relaxing stay. Snorkeling gear and kayaks are also available for your aquatic activities. In addition, a bilingual naturalist guide will be accompanying you on all island expeditions.

In the afternoon, your first excursion will be to Santa Cruz Island and **Los Gemelos**. Spanish for "The Twins", they are two volcanic depressions on the highest part of the island. Walk along a path observing a variety of fauna and flora, volcanoes and an abundance of wildlife. This area is home to giant tortoises, mockingbirds, Darwin finches, and many other species. You'll explore underground lava tubes (1 km long), and walking through them, guarantees a unique and surreal experience.

(Dinner & Accommodations, Petrel)



SOUTH PLAZA ISLAND - SANTA FE ISLAND:

After breakfast, you'll visit **South Plazas Island**; a small island with steep cliffs formed by rising lava. It is home to one of the largest sea lion colonies, as well as colorful land iguanas. The most characteristic plant on the island is the *Sesuvium* that turns bright red during the dry season, creating a contrast on the island. The amazing colors of the turquoise waters against the black lava create a setting for amazing photography opportunities.

In the afternoon, you'll stop at **Santa Fe Island**, home to the endemic Santa Fe iguana. The island was created by a volcanic uplift that now hosts a forest of Opuntia and Palo Santo trees. It is a picturesque island with two different trails, one leading to a scenic viewpoint and the other leading from a small beach to a prickly pear cactus forest.

(All Meals & Accommodations, Petrel)



SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND:

After breakfast, we'll visit **Isla Lobos**, named for the sea lions that rest and play on the rocky shores. It's also home to blue-footed boobies, great frigate-birds, brown pelicans, lava gulls, common noddies, yellow warblers and small and medium ground finches. There is good snorkeling in the clear waters of the channel and this is one of the best sites at which to swim with sea lions underwater.

In the afternoon, our first stop will be the **Interpretative Center**, with many interactive exhibits on natural history, human history, and conservation. Then we'll head to the southeast part of San Cristobal Island to **Galapaguera**; the perfect venue to observe Galapagos tortoises in their natural habitat. You'll view several native species such as the San Cristobal Mockingbird, Lava Lizard, Chatham Leaf-toed Gecko, and of course, the tortoises. The beach is huge and serves as the ideal nesting zone for marine tortoises. Between January and May, it is common to find the footprints of the female tortoises who have climbed to the sand dunes to deposit their eggs!

(All Meals & Accommodations, Petrel)

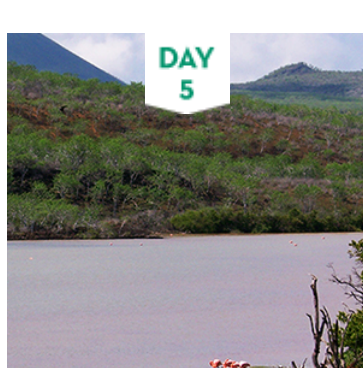


ESPAÑOLA ISLAND:

A busy morning awaits you. Located on the north-eastern coast of Hood, **Gardner Bay** offers an excellent beach to relax, swim and even kayak, plus the opportunity to observe sea lions. This is also the breeding site of nearly all of the world's 12,000 pairs of Waved Albatrosses. Here we can also observe sharks in the crystal clear ocean waters. At this site, one can see three species of Darwin finches: A subspecies of the large-billed cactus finch, which is similar to the large-billed terrestrial finch; the small-beaked ground finch and the singing finch, which is another endemic subspecies. While observing both resident and migratory birds are observed, it's worth to notice that this zone is vitally important for nesting marine tortoises, specially the Green Sea Turtle, one of the largest sea turtles and the only herbivore among the different species. A short distance away is **Osborn Islet**. After landing, you can walk across a lovely white sand beach among a busy sea lion colony, or dive into the water to swim with sea lion pups. This small island is a marine visit where you can enjoy fantastic snorkeling and swimming.

In the afternoon, we'll head to **Suarez Point**. This area is great for spotting blue-footed boobies, albatrosses and Nazca boobies. A beautiful site on the oceanfront, the large waved albatrosses use the cliffs as a launching pad. The famous attraction is the magnificent blowhole, spurting water high into the air at least from 50 to 75 meters high. Make sure you have your camera handy as you'll have exceptional photograph opportunities.

(All Meals & Accommodations, Petrel)



FLOREANA ISLAND:

After breakfast, our first stop will be **Cormorant Point** on Floreana Island. This site offers probably the best flamingo lagoon in the Galapagos, and also one of the largest. It is situated between two lava cones that give the area a special atmosphere. There are various species of shorebirds to observe besides flamingos; the most frequent are common stilts, white-checked pintail ducks, and other migratory birds. It is very interesting to see the two distinct beaches: "The Green Beach" (due to its high percentage of olivine crystals in the sand) and the "Flour Sand Beach" which is made up of coral. Just off Floreana Island, a fantastic snorkeling site known as **Devil's Crown** is on the agenda. Various tropical fish species can be seen, even Galapagos sharks or white-tipped sharks. Sea lions can be seen hunting for fish or playing through schools of hundreds of fish in circles. Walking along the trail after the lagoon leads to a hidden beach great for walking in the soft sand. But watch your feet if wading in the water; stingrays love to hang out here as well.

In the afternoon, we head to **Post Office Bay**. Ask the Cruise Manager for one of their complimentary postcards to write a message and address it home. Historically, this site is the location of a wooden barrel that was placed in the 18th century by the crew of a whaling ship. It has been used since this time by marines and tourists as a post office. Leave it in the barrel used before by pirates and sailors. While your there, see if there are any other postcards you can take home with you to send for fellow travelers who have already left their messages!

(All Meals & Accommodations, Petrel)



SANTA CRUZ ISLAND:

The **Charles Darwin Research Station** is one of the Galapagos Island's most important sites for visitors. It is a research facility that has an extensive collection of Galapagos plant life specimens carefully preserved and also acts as a biological research station and active breeding center for the tortoises. The famous "Lonesome George" was cared for in this place, and was the only known living individual from his specific subspecies until his death in 2012. You'll also find many adult Galapagos tortoises living on the premises.

After the morning excursion you'll have a transfer to Baltra Airport for your return flight home via Quito or onward to your next Avanti Destination!

(Breakfast, Petrel)