

## 5 Days/4 Nights

Departs Mondays from Quito or Guayaquil



### M/V Santa Cruz II Northern Cruise

This new state-of-the-art expedition vessel is perfect for exploring the islands in comfortable style. The generous 5-deck craft has 50 cabins and ample luxury-sized social areas indoors and out.

#### INCLUSIONS

- Roundtrip air & ground transfers
- Cruise accommodations

- Galapagos National Park Entrance Fee
- Excursions with naturalist guide

- All Meals



DAY 1

#### ARRIVAL - SANTA CRUZ ISLAND:

##### AM: Flight to Galapagos from Quito/Guayaquil Airport:

Upon arrival at Baltra Airport, guides will meet you, collect your luggage, and escort you to the ship, where the crew will welcome you aboard. After an orientation and safety briefing, lunch is served and the cruise begins.

##### PM: Santa Cruz Island:

Visit Las Bachas, a glorious white sand beach with a couple of lagoons that are the feeding grounds for various wading birds, including flamingos and stilts. You may enjoy swimming and/or snorkeling at this beach. Then return to the boat for a welcome cocktail and afternoon briefing, followed by dinner.

*(Lunch, Dinner & Accommodations, M/V Santa Cruz II)*



DAY 2

#### SANTIAGO ISLAND

##### AM: Buccaneer Cove:

We start with a visit to **Buccaneer Cove**: Years ago **Buccaneer Cove** was a safe haven where pirates in the 1600 and 1700's would stake out on the Northwestern side of Santiago Island. Sea turtles now take the pirates place and dig their nests for their eggs near the Mangrove trees. It is a great location for snorkeling and many marine birds and sea lions can be found here.

##### AM: Santiago-Puerto Egas:

Also known as James Bay, Puerto Egas is home to the curious Galapagos Hawks and Quick-footed Galapagos Lava Lizards. The trail leads to a coastline with gorgeous tide pools and grottos full of fauna. Here the Galapagos Fur Sea Lions bathe in the sun. This is also a great snorkeling site.

*(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner & Accommodations, M/V Santa Cruz II)*



DAY 3

#### RABIDA ISLAND - BARTOLOMÉ ISLAND:

##### AM: Rabida Island:

This morning, disembark on Rabida (Jervis), a small Island considered the geographic center of Galapagos because its volcanic rocks are the most diversified in the archipelago. The dark red color of the beach comes from the high iron content in the volcanic stones. Follow the trail to a saltwater lagoon where greater flamingos migrate, keeping an eye out for marine iguanas, mockingbirds, yellow warblers and Darwin's finches. Afterwards, do not miss the opportunity to snorkel with a colony of sea lions and rays. Return to the boat for lunch.

##### PM: Bartolomé Island:

Bartolomé is a barren islet in Sullivan Bay to the east of Santiago Island, and is home to a distinctive and recognizable site of the archipelago: Pinnacle Rock. Pinnacle Rock, a volcanic cone, was formed when magma was expelled from an underwater volcano; the sea cooled the hot lava, which then exploded, only to come together and form this huge rock made up of many thin layers of basalt. Visitors to Bartolomé may recognize the island and Pinnacle Rock from the 2003 blockbuster movie "Master and Commander." Bartolomé is the most visited and most photographed island in Galapagos. Visitors have access to two sites: one that involves a climb to an incredible viewpoint and the other at the beach where snorkeling and swimming is enjoyed. Birdwatchers should be on the lookout for Galapagos Penguins, herons, and Galapagos Hawks.

*(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner & Accommodations, M/V Santa Cruz II)*



DAY 4

#### GENOVESA ISLAND:

Spend the entire day on **Genovesa (Tower) Island**, one of the most spectacular places in Galapagos for bird species. Land at **Prince Philip's Steps**, where red-footed boobies nest in palo santo trees, Nazca boobies nest near the trail, and storm petrels gather in large numbers in an open lava field. With luck, you may see the elusive short-eared owl. Return to the boat for lunch on the sun deck. Chose to paddle from a kayak or stand-up paddleboard and explore the cliffs. Look for the red-billed tropic bird hiding in the crevices or snorkel in deeper water from the Zodiac. Land at **Darwin Bay**, a coral sand beach where swallow-tailed and lava gulls gather near the tide pools. Enter a forest of Opuntia cactus and mangroves where colonies of great frigate birds nest, the males inflating their red-throated pouches to attract females as they fly overhead. Chose to relax on the beach or swim with sea lions in these northern warmer waters. Return to the yacht for a briefing followed by dinner and an evening full of stars.

*(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner & Accommodations, M/V Santa Cruz II)*



DAY 5

#### SANTA CRUZ ISLAND TO BALTRA AIRPORT:

We start our last morning at the north shore of Santa Cruz Island. After breakfast, your luggage will be taken to the airport, while you visit the Tortoise Reserve. A dry landing at a passenger's wharf and a bus ride to the inland region of the island will provide the last highlight of the cruise: giant tortoises in the wild. The windward slopes of the island are home to two species of giant tortoises. These lush highlands include dense forests of Galapagos daisies, orchids and bromeliads, and several endemic land birds. After this visit we will transfer directly to Baltra airport. Farewell to Galapagos!

*(Breakfast, M/V Santa Cruz II)*