

INTRODUCTION

This alluringly unique archipelago was first made famous by Charles Darwin when he published his books *Voyage of the Beagle* (1839) and especially *The Origin of Species by Natural Selection* in 1859. Darwin explored this island chain and used his discoveries to revolutionize how scientists think of life.



This sense of adventure is now open to all exploration-minded travelers, as the Galápagos remains a world of everyday discovery and breathtaking mystery. With the aid of 2 Galápagos naturalists and Florida Museum staff, you will have the opportunity of a lifetime to discover the natural history of this one-of-a-kind chain of islands. Not only is this an area of unrivaled biological diversity, but the sheer numbers of animals around you is astonishing. We will have a chance to see giant Galápagos Tortoises, Marine and Land Iguanas, Nazca Boobies, Sea Lions, Blue-Footed Boobies and much, much more. There is also an unmatched diversity of sea life which we will have the opportunity to marvel at through glass bottom tandem kayaks and snorkeling gear. We look forward to having you on our expedition to the Galápagos Islands!

ABOUT YOUR LEADER

Mr. J. Court Whelan, General Manager for Expedition Travel, Inc. and current Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Entomology and Nematology at the University of Florida, is making all logistical arrangements for the trip and has guided previous groups to the Galapagos Islands, Mexico, South America, Central America, Madagascar, and Papua New Guinea. While in the Galapagos, he will lead discussions and educate you on the natural history of this fascinating archipelag, both from a terrestrial and aquatic stance.

DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

SATURDAY: Fly into Quito, Ecuador, from the U.S. and transfer to our first-class hotel for the night.

SUNDAY: Transfer to Quito Airport for our jet flight to the airstrip on San Cristobal Island in the Galápagos. Upon arrival at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, **SAN CRISTOBAL** Island, our crew is waiting at the airport to escort you to your anchored yacht. After the welcome briefing and safety drill, we set sail for **Playa Ochoa**, where we have a chance to test our snorkeling equipment and at the same time swim with a small colony of sea lions. Behind the beach, there is a tidal lagoon where birds can be spotted, including the rare Chatham mockingbird.

At sunset, we cruise around **Kicker Rock (Leon Dormido)**, a vertical tuff cone formation that abruptly juts up almost 500 feet out of the ocean. On the cliffs, we find Blue-Footed Boobies, Masked or Nazca Boobies and Magnificent Frigate Birds.

MONDAY: We will spend the entire day on **TOWER** (Genovesa), considered to be one of the most spectacular Islands in Galápagos for bird species. This morning, we have a dry landing at **Prince Philip's Steps**. Red-Footed Boobies nest here in Palo Santo trees and Nazca (formerly Masked) Boobies nest near the trail. In an open lava field, we may find Storm Petrels in large numbers. Here we will also have a chance to see the elusive Short-Eared Owl. After lunch, sea kayaks are available to paddle along the shoreline.

Look for the beautiful Red-Billed Tropic Bird usually seen in crevices. A snorkeling opportunity is offered along the inner rim of the volcanic crater. We then land on **Darwin Bay**, a coral sand beach where Swallow-Tailed and Lava Gulls gather near the tide pools. Here we will enter a forest of low mangroves, *Opuntia* cactus and Palo Santo trees where colonies of Great Frigate Birds nest. The males inflate their red-throated pouches to attract females as they fly overhead. The trail leads through a rich inter-tidal zone where we find a wide diversity of animal life. This is now an opportune time to swim with sea lions on the beach.



TUESDAY: This morning, we will visit northern **SANTA CRUZ**, at **Las Bachas**, which is the Spanish translation for "barges." There is a long stretch of a soft white-sand beach and interior lagoons where we find the Greater Flamingo. There is also a wonderful chance to snorkel here from the beach. Remnants of the U.S. presence from World War II – a floating pier - are found here.

This afternoon, we disembark on **NORTH SEYMOUR**, a small island created by geological uplift. After a dry landing, we follow a trail that leads us to Swallow-Tailed Gulls, Blue-Footed Boobies and the endemic Land Iguanas. Here we will visit the largest colony of Magnificent Frigate Birds found in Galápagos. As we stroll along the beach, body-surfing Sea Lions will entertain us and provide a great photo opportunity!



WEDNESDAY: This morning, we will visit **Tagus Cove**, located on the western Island of **ISABELA**. Six volcanoes flowed together and formed the largest island in Galápagos. On our walk, we will discover a salt-water lagoon, a scenic overlook with a spectacular view of the ocean, lava fields, and volcanic formations. Graffiti dating back to the 1800's are written on the rocky cliffs. Here we have the chance to explore the cove in Zodiaks and sea kayaks to find Galápagos Penguins, Boobies, Pelicans, and other seabirds. After lunch, we will cross the Bolivar Channel while looking for Whales and Dolphins riding the bow wave.

We then disembark at **Punta Espinoza, FERNANDINA**, the youngest and most pristine island found in Galápagos. Hundreds of Marine Iguanas, the largest colony in Galápagos, bask in the sun along the rugged shoreline. We may observe Sea Lion harems with resident bulls carefully guarding their territory. Flightless Cormorants build their nest on the point and Galápagos Hawks fly overhead. Recent lava flows formed by an active volcano stretch their way around the coast. A snorkel here provides opportunities to see many Green Sea Turtles.

THURSDAY: This morning, we will stroll along the shore at **Puerto Egas, SANTIAGO** (James) looking for octopus, starfish, and other sea life in the tide pools. At low tide, we may

catch a glimpse of Marine Iguanas as they feed on exposed green algae. This is an excellent place to spot Great Blue Herons, Lava Herons, American Oystercatchers and Yellow-Crowned Night Herons. Our walk ends at the grottos, which are deep pools of clear water. Here we will encounter Galápagos Fur Seals, once on the verge of extinction. Before returning to the yacht, there is a snorkeling opportunity with loads of tropical fish.

On **BARTOLOME** after lunch, it seems like we are walking on the moon, as this young island is inhospitable to most plants and animals. After a dry landing, you will have the option to climb 30 minutes up stairs leading to the summit of a once

active volcano. Along the way, we will pause to marvel at lava bombs, splatter cones and cinder cones. From the top of the wooden stairs, we can gaze out across the island for a panoramic view of the island and "Pinnacle Rock," an eroded tuff cone. This is a marvelous photo opportunity. Down below, crystal clear water is an invitation to snorkel with schools of tropical fish and Galápagos Penguins. On the other side of the Island, we may encounter Sea Turtles and White-Tipped Sharks.

FRIDAY: Friday at southern **SANTA CRUZ** is feeding day at the tortoise corrals at the **Charles Darwin Research Station**. We walk inside all three tortoise corrals and the breeding center with new hatchlings and miniature tortoises not yet ready to be repatriated. Scientists from all over the globe work at this station and conduct biological research from anatomy to zoology. We also visit the Van Straelen Hall where there are exhibits and a short video presentation. Fabulous land bird and butterfly photo opportunities in the tall forest here.

After lunch on board, we travel by bus to the **highlands** of **SANTA CRUZ** Island. The scenery gradually changes as we wind our way through all seven vegetation zones found in Galápagos. From June to January, we can find giant tortoises foraging on the variety of grasses and aggregating around the ephemeral ponds. We visit Los Gemelos, Spanish for "The Twins," which is a pair of large pit craters where we find the bright red male Vermilion Flycatcher. We stop at "the tunnels," the largest lava tubes found in Galápagos. We will take a stroll through the town of **Puerto Ayora** (population: 15,000), the largest town in the Galápagos. Here you may buy souvenirs, mail postcards, or kick back at an internet cafe in the social heart of the Islands.



SATURDAY: This morning, we will step onto **Gardner Bay, ESPANOLA (HOOD)**. We will walk along seemingly endless stretches of sandy beach where you'll find large colonies of Sea Lions. There is no trail to follow, so this is a chance to explore! You may find a Galápagos Hawk, a colony of Darwin's Finches, shorebirds, herons, or a Hood Mockingbird. Here is another opportunity to swim with Sea Lions from the beach. There is also an excellent snorkeling site off Gardner Islet with a colorful diversity of sea life near Gardner Islet and Tortuga Rock including caves covered with invertebrates.

This afternoon, we disembark at **Punta Suarez, ESPANOLA**, where we will witness the highest percentage of endemic species in Galápagos. Sea Lions audibly welcome us as we land on their beach. Curious little Hood Mockingbirds peck at our shoelaces. From April to December, the Waved Albatross, found only on Espanola, perform their wild mating ritual and resting. Colonies of Blue-Footed Boobies engage in "sky-pointing"



to show off for potential mates. Nazca Boobies busily care for their young. Stunning Swallow-Tailed Gulls, the only nocturnal gulls in the world, pose for us. Red-Billed Tropicbirds take shelter under the cliffs. We also find Darwin's Finches, Galápagos Doves, and Galápagos Hawks. We will also have a chance to observe a unique sub-species of Marine Iguana identified with bold strokes of red and green markings.



Colorful Sally Light-Foot Crabs crawl along the shoreline near the famous "blow hole." This is the scene most people envision when they decide to visit the Galápagos and is a glorious finale to your Galápagos cruise.

SUNDAY: This morning, we drop anchor in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, **SAN CRISTOBAL**. We visit the Interpretation Center, which opened in 1999. Here we will summarize our recent "field course" in Galápagos natural history to gain a more complete understanding of the natural and human history of the Islands. Afterwards, we head straight to the airport for our flight back to the mainland. Upon arrival in Quito, we transfer to our hotel for the night. There will be time for late-afternoon shopping before our farewell dinner at an outstanding local restaurant.

Terms and Conditions

COST IS BASED ON a minimum group of 5 passengers. Cost is further based on today's (January 2009's) cost quotations and although unlikely, is subject to change according to changes in local air fare, hotel rates, fluctuations in international monetary exchange rates, and circumstances beyond our control.

COST INCLUDES: Local air travel in Ecuador, all cruise expenses, all hotel accommodations in double rooms, all meals, transfers, taxes, and tips except those to hotel personnel and driver/guides. Accommodations listed in the itinerary are subject to availability and those of similar or better quality may be substituted.

INTERNATIONAL AIRFARE: International airfare is not included in the cost of the trip. This is to allow the use of frequent flyer miles, rebates, vouchers, etc. However, we will be happy to direct you in your arrangements, and provide suggested flight information.

COST DOES NOT INCLUDE: Round-trip international air fare to Quito from U.S., items not specifically covered in the itinerary, U.S. Security tax, passport and visa fees, airport departure taxes in either country, insurance, alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, bottled water, laundry, telephone calls, cables, or any other expenses of a personal nature. Neither will it include tips to guides or boat crew.

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS: Full refunds will be made up to 90 days prior to departure, upon receipt of written cancellation. After that date, refunds will be based on moneys recovered by the tour operator subject to the rules and regulations of the hotel and airlines involved. No refunds can be made for any services not used for less than two days or for occasional sightseeing or meals not taken. Refunds will be made solely on residual values received from purveyors of services.

Trip cancellation insurance will be made available to you which will cover you should you have to cancel due to medical or family emergency within the 90 days cancellation period. It is recommended that short term accident and sickness insurance be purchased by each person.

RESERVATIONS AND FINAL PAYMENT A deposit of \$750 per person is necessary as soon as possible in order to confirm booking. Final payment is due **90 days** prior to departure, as will be indicated on your receipt for deposit.

STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE

Expedition Travel, Inc., and/or its agents assume no responsibility or liability for the participants' travel on this trip, including the use of the aircraft, watercraft, and motor vehicles employed, or any difficulty or injury sustained with hotels and food, guides, animals, illness, accident, theft, war, revolution, or other act of God and Man. Expedition Travel also assumes no responsibility or liability for the conduct of others whether criminal or negligent. Additional expenses arising from medical conditions, physical handicaps, accidents, or other unforeseen events that make it necessary to alter the itinerary or arrangements for a passenger or the group shall be borne by the passengers. If the tour is withdrawn prior to planned departure, a full or partial refund will be made at the discretion of Expedition Travel. However, no refund can be made for any portion of the program not used by the passenger during operation of the trip. In signing below, the passenger deems himself or herself physically capable of completing the expedition.

The passenger and Expedition Travel, Inc., enter into and accept this agreement as to the above terms and conditions by the signature of the passenger below and by the acceptance of the passenger's reservation and deposit by Expedition Travel, and all parties to this contract submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida.

(Signature/s) (Date)

(Signature/s) (Date)

Galápagos Islands
November 28th – December 7th, 2009

TOTAL COST: \$ 4,885.00
(From Quito, Ecuador)

In order to immediately reserve a place on the trip, please fill out the following (or a Xerox copy) and return to Expedition Travel with a check for \$750.00 (per person).

EXPEDITION TRAVEL, INC.
1717 N.W. 45th Avenue
Gainesville, Florida 32605

Full name of each passenger (as on passport):
(1) _____
(2) _____

Passport Number:
(1) _____
(2) _____

Mailing Address:

Cell Phone: _____
Work Phone: _____
Home Phone: _____

Email Address:

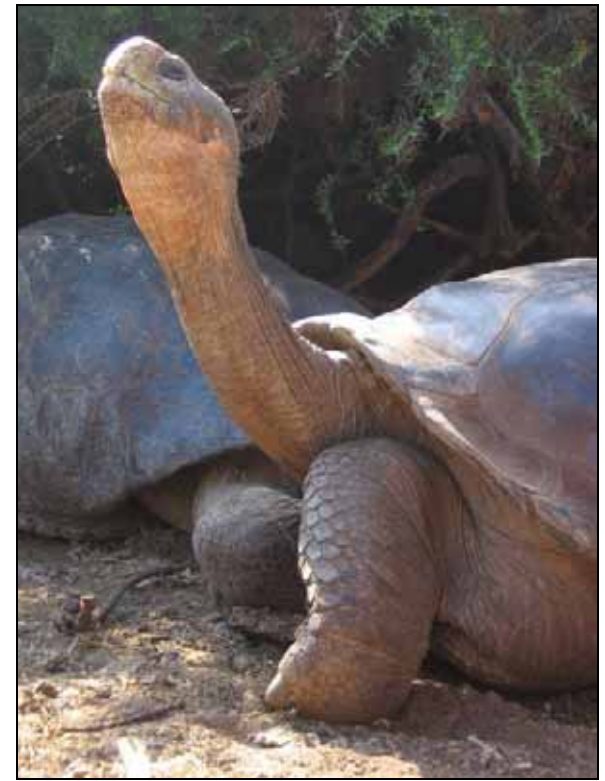
Roommate Preference:



This trip is specially designed for the **Florida Museum of Natural History Travel Program.**

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Galápagos Islands



November 28th – December 7th, 2009

Led by

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Expedition Travel

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