

ECUADOR - SIGNATURE GALAPAGOS



TRIP CODE

ECSJGALC

DEPARTURE

Selected Tuesdays

DURATION

11 Days

LOCATIONS

Quito, Ecuador, Galapagos
Islands, South America



INTRODUCTION

GALAPAGOS CRUISE

Join our 11-day in-depth exploration and superior **Galapagos Islands cruise** starting in **Quito, Ecuador's** capital.

This tour and cruise offers all the creature comforts, starting with a three night stay in Quito at the boutique five star Illa Experience hotel. Centrally located in the Quito's old town, the hotel is the perfect base to explore the city's attractions such as the Iglesia de la Compania de Jesus (Church of the Society of Jesus), San Francisco Catholic Church, Capilla del Hombre museum and El Panecillo (a monument to the Virgin of Quito).

From Quito you will fly to the **Galapagos Islands** and board the MC Seaman Journey, a luxurious sixteen passenger catamaran for your cruise. Highlights of your cruise include observing **Galapagos tortoises** in their habitat, snorkelling at Punta Vicente Roca and Mangle Point, exploring the lava flows and red rocks of Santiago Island and becoming a buccaneer in the pirate hideaway of Tagus Cove.

This superior itinerary includes accommodation onboard the Seaman Journey - a luxurious 16 passenger catamaran and three nights in Quito staying the Illa Experience hotel, a boutique 5 star hotel located in the city's old town, this hotel is the perfect base to explore the best sights and attractions the city has to offer.

* Itinerary is subject to change depending on weather conditions and government regulations.

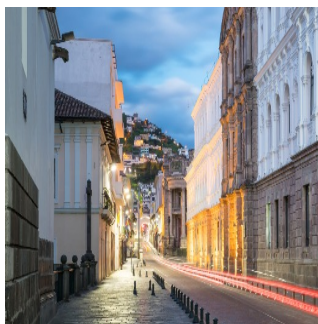
PLEASE NOTE: Pricing is subject to change and availability at the time of booking. [Contact us](#) for more information.

ITINERARY

Welcome to Quito, Ecuador, a city declared a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 1978. On arrival you will be transferred from the airport to your hotel which sits nestled in the Andean foothills, 2,850 metres above sea level. The city is known for its stunning colonial architecture, artwork and amazing snow-capped mountain backdrop.



Today you will enjoy a tour of the charming city of Quito. The tour will tick off all of the main sites, including Independence Square, the Government Palace, the busy street of La Ronda and some of the beautiful baroque churches that the city is famous for. You will also enjoy a range of experiences. These will vary depending on the day and the time of year, but can include things like market visits, empanada or ice cream making (and tasting), working with an artisan to make your own Panama hat or even helping to restore colonial art! Your tour will end with a cocktail at a rooftop bar where you will have the perfect view over the old town and Panecillo hill. (B)



Today you will head south from Quito to visit Cotopaxi National Park. Cotopaxi is the highest active volcano in the world. Despite the altitude, the park is home to numerous birds and varied plant life. Weather permitting, there are spectacular views from the north face of the mountain. The surrounding scenery includes volcanoes like Pasochoa, Ruminahui and Sincholagua. You will also have the opportunity to visit a local indigenous market.



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DAY 4: Fly to the Galapagos Islands

Fly from Quito to the Galapagos. On arrival you will meet your naturalist guides who will collect your luggage and transport you to Ranch Mazanillo on Santa Cruz Island. Enjoy a picnic lunch and a short walk to see giant tortoises in their natural habitat. In the afternoon you will head to the Santa Cruz highlands. As we drive through the agricultural lands and into the mist covered forests, keep an eye out for the bright red feathers of a vermillion flycatcher or one of Darwin’s finches. Almost every bird present in the Galapagos can be found here. Santa Cruz also offers plenty of lava tubes, sinkholes and craters to explore. Afterwards you will head to your accommodation for the next seven nights, the MC Galapagos Seaman Journey.



DAY 5: Fernandina Island

This morning we will head to Punta Moreno, located on the north coast of Isabela Island between Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul volcanos. Follow a trail which runs along a lava flow into a complex of coastal lagoons. Birds are the main attraction and several species can be found around the lakes and mangroves. In the afternoon, visit Mangle Point, a superior snorkelling site and a beautiful location for riding in a Zodiac through a forest of mangrove trees. You are likely to see penguins, sea lions, pelicans, rays, marine iguanas and numerous birds.



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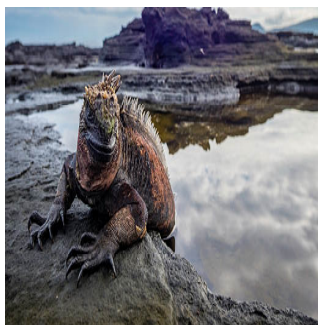
DAY 6: Isabela Island

Today's landings will take place on the largest island in the archipelago, Isabela Island. In the morning you will visit Urbina Bay, where a 6km stretch of coral reef rose during a major uplift of the island in 1954, forming a unique feature that caused marine life to be stranded and coral to be exposed on the new shore. Take a path that leads you through the sand, pumice, lava, coral and vegetation. Flightless cormorants, pelicans, Darwin's finches, giant tortoises and land and marine iguanas can be seen on land, whilst rays and turtles can be seen in the bay. This afternoon you will head to Tagus Cove, named after a British warship that went past the islands in 1814 looking for the Galapagos tortoise for food. This was a favourite spot for pirates and whalers who etched their names into the cliffs and inside caves. A short, steep hike brings you past Darwin Lake, a deep saltwater lake and a great spot for viewing land birds.



DAY 7: Espinoza Point & Punta Vicente Roca

Dominated by the La Cumbre volcano, Espinoza Point is the first stop this morning. It's famous for its large colonies of marine iguanas and species such as the flightless cormorant, Galapagos penguin, Galapagos hawk and Galapagos snake. Espinoza Point is also one of the best places to see the lava cactus. This afternoon head to Punta Vicente Roca, one of the most impressive and spectacular places in the Galapagos Islands. Its high cliffs, ash and lava formations give the area a majestic touch. The large bay has a spectacular marine life with seahorses, sea turtles and the strange yet fascinating mola-mola or sunfish. A beautiful place for snorkelling, it's common to see feeding frenzies with groups of whales, dolphins, sea lions, tuna, blue-footed and Nazca boobies and pelicans all feeding simultaneously.



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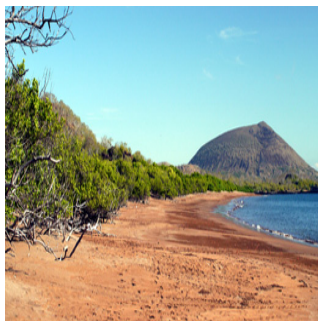
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DAY 8: Santiago Island

This morning's stop is at Espumilla Beach on the northern coast of Santiago Island in James Bay. The beach is an important site for nesting marine turtles. A walk through the mangrove forest leads to a lagoon usually inhabited by a group of flamingos as well as pintail ducks and common stilts. In the afternoon head to Puerto Egas, a black beach due to the volcanic tuff deposits, and it is the main attraction of the island. There you will see abandoned salt mining infrastructure, as there was once an attempt to start the exploitation of salt, which failed because the price of salt on the mainland was already cheap.



DAY 9: Rabida & Santiago Islands

After thousands of years of oxidation, Rabida Island is unique due to the red colour of the rocks and sand. A short walk along a trail leads you to a coastal lagoon where you can view a colony of flamingos. Next, you'll visit the Chinese Hat, or Sombrero Chino. This small islet sits just off the southeastern tip of Santiago Island. It's a recent volcanic cone, resembling a Chinese hat when viewed from the north. On its western side, lava formations, originally formed under the sea and subsequently elevated, are adorned with coral heads.



DAY 10: Black Turtle Cove & Fly to Quito

Your final excursion is Black Turtle Cove, situated on the north coast of Santa Cruz Island, just west of Baltra. Embarking on a dinghy ride to Black Turtle Cove offers a serene glimpse into one of the Galapagos' tranquil hideaways. As you enter the cove, the boat's engines are silenced, allowing for a peaceful exploration of the mangrove-enshrouded inlet. Within these calm waters, sea turtles gracefully feed and mate, while three species of sharks can be spotted. Afterwards you will be taken to Baltra Airport for your flight back to Quito.



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Today you will take a shuttle transfer back to the airport in time for your onward flight.



INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Hotel & Cabin On Board A Catamaran Yacht

INCLUSIONS

Airport assistance (Quito or Guayaquil, if flights to/from the Galapagos are booked through our local partners)
Galapagos National Park Entrance fee (US\$200 per person from Aug 2024 - Subject to change)

Transfers from Galapagos airport to/from your vessel

Accommodation on board the ship in a double cabin

Meals as per the itinerary & all meals during your c

Naturalist Bilingual Guide to explore the landing sites in

the Galapagos Islands

All visits and excursions as per the itinerary

Snorkel Gear (snorkel, mask and fins)

Kayaking in the Galapagos (optional)

Unlimited purified water, coffee and tea while onboard the ship

Mainland services

English speaking guide + private transportation

Tours and airport transfers as noted

Hotel accommodations as noted, subject to availability

EXCLUSIONS

Local Taxes

Travel Insurance

Personal expenses and tips

Alcoholic drinks

Items not specified

Additional visits

Additional visits
Additional meals

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Inclusions

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A map of the Galapagos Islands archipelago in the Pacific Ocean. The islands shown are Isabela (the largest), Santa Cruz, San Cristobal, Santa Fe, Santa Elena, Santa Ana, Santa Isabel, Fernandina, and San Sebastian. A blue line with arrows indicates a circular travel route starting from Santa Cruz, going clockwise through San Cristobal, Santa Fe, Santa Elena, Santa Ana, Santa Isabel, Fernandina, and San Sebastian, before returning to Santa Cruz.

SUSTAINABILITY