

Galapagos Natural Life

Tourist Superior Class - Galapagos Yachts

Nemo III - CATAMARAN



ITINERARY DAY BY DAY

Itinerary 5A 5 days / 4 nights

DAY 1 - WEDNESDAY

Santa Cruz-Charles Darwin Scientific Station

The main visit in Puerto Ayora is to the **CHARLES DARWIN SCIENTIFIC STATION**. An excellent way to begin learning about the islands and their origin and formation is to visit the Station. You can also see how the Galapagos turtles are raised and meet Jorge, the famous solitary turtle. The Scientific Station has its own beach that receives many visitors on weekends.

Dinner at night and navigation to Isabela.

DAY 2 - THURSDAY

Punta Moreno - Urbina Bay

A colorful part to any tour located on the western shore of Isabela, **PUNTA MORENO** is often the first or last stopping point on the island (depending on the direction the boat is heading). Punta Moreno is a place where the forces of the Galapagos have joined to create a work of art. The tour starts with a panga ride along the beautiful rocky shores where Galapagos penguins and shore birds are frequently seen. After a dry

landing the path traverses through jagged black lava rock. As the swirling black lava flow gave way to form craters, crystal tide pools formed-some surrounded by mangroves. This is a magnet for small blue lagoons, pink flamingos, blue herons, and Bahamas pintail ducks. Brown pelican can be seen nesting in the green leaves of the mangroves. You can walk to the edge of the lava to look straight down on these pools including the occasional green sea turtle, white-tipped shark and puffer fish.

This idyllic setting has suffered from the presence of introduced species. Feral dogs in the area are known to attack sea Lions and marine iguanas.

Snorkel lunch and navigation to Urbina Bay

URBINA BAY

Lying at the foot of Alcedo Volcano, south of Tagus Cove, is Urbina Bay one of the best and the most recent example of geological uplift in the Galapagos. Uplift occurs when the molten materials beneath the surface shifts. In 1954 the shoreline was uplifted nearly 15 feet (4 meters). The coastline was driven 3/4 of a mile further out to sea, exposing giant coral heads and stranding marine organisms on what was now on shore. A Disney film crew visited the site shortly afterwards and discovered skeletons of sharks, sea turtles and lobsters unable to find the ocean from the rapidly rising land. Schools of fish were found stranded in newly formed tide pools. Boulder sized coral heads can be seen near the area that once was the beach. The uplifting of Urbina Bay was followed by an eruption of Alcedo a few weeks later.

Seasonally Urbina Bay provides a nesting area for many of the Galapagos creatures. Female tortoises journey down from Alcedo to lay their eggs in the sand. Galapagos penguins, flightless cormorants and brown pelicans nest in the area as well.

The visit begins with a wet landing on the white sand beach. Difficulty of the route varies by season. The trail ranges from stark and easily passable during the dry season to mildly challenging requiring wading to pass during the rainy season. Visitors cross the uplifted region learning about this geological wonder. Then reach the sandy area that was once the beach. Shorter visits return to the landing point on the same path, while longer visits continue past the coral heads and new beach.

Other highlights of this site include marine iguanas and some of the largest land iguanas in the islands, and Galapagos Cotton an endemic plant, historians believe the Incas brought to the islands, while naturalist theorize it floated across from Peru.

Dinner at night and navigation to Fernandina

DAY 3 - FRIDAY

Punta Espinosa - Tagus Cove

PUNTA ESPINOSA is a narrow salient of lava and sand that extends from the base of the volcano to the sea. It is located to the northeast of Fernandina, where hundreds of marine iguanas gather in large groups. The famous flightless Cormorant inhabits this island, as well as penguins, pelicans and sea lions is a place famous for its large colonies of marine iguanas, Galapagos Penguin, the Galapagos Hawk Galapagos snake, among others. It is an ideal place to observe the lava cacti that grow on young lava and survive with very little water. In addition you can see one of the volcanoes most active in the world. Punta Espinoza is crossed by a channel from Tagus Cove, and is known as the point for one of the largest concentrations of endemic marine iguanas.

TAGUS COVE (ISABELA ISLAND) is situated directly east of Fernandina Island on the west coast of Isabela Island. It is a beautiful, well-protected cove sheltered by the shoulders of two volcanic craters and has been used as an anchorage for over 300 years. A nature trail here ascends through the typical dry vegetation zone and offers spectacular views of Darwin Lake, a saltwater crater lake and the long narrow inlet that appears to connect with it. At the top of the trail it is possible to observe the different vegetation zones,

catch a glimpse of Darwin and Wolf volcanoes, and observe Galapagos penguins, Flightless cormorants and pelicans.

Dinner at night and navigation to Santiago

DAY 4 - SATURDAY

Puerto Egas - Buccaneer's Cove

PUERTO EGAS

A visit to Puerto Egas begins with a wet landing on the dark sand beaches of James Bay. The visit begins with a walk along the rocky coast giving visitors the opportunity to view some of the Galapagos Island's best tide pools. Sponges, snails, hermit crabs, barnacles and fish including the endemic four-eyed blenny can be seen. The walk also presents visitors with a variety of shore birds, marine iguanas, sally light foot crabs and sea lions.

There are two interesting excursions normally visited from Puerto Egas. The first is a short walk from the landing site brings visitors to the site of one of the Galapagos' first entrepreneur endeavors. For decades salt was extracted from a local salt crater. The industry was abandoned in the 1950's leaving behind a variety of rusted old machines and parts of buildings. The trail follows the path once used by wagon trains to the crater cone.

The steep trail is easy, but can often seem one of the hottest hikes in the islands. Feral goats prune the arid vegetation, which lines the trail. The goats feed on any leaf within reach leaving little left for the endemic island creatures. Bird lovers will be delighted with the opportunity to catch a glimpse of one of Darwins finch, the endemic Galapagos hawk, or the colorful vermillion flycatcher.

Finally reaching the crater rim presents an incredible vista. Looking into the crater you are able to see this extinct volcano whose floor has sunken below sea level. Salt water seeps into the crater creating a small salt lake. The sun evaporates the water, leaving the salt that many have tried to mine without success.

Looking away from the crater are the older orange lava fields supporting vegetation including the palo santo trees and the younger desolate black lava fields.

The second excursion begins just a short distance beyond the tide pools is the fur seal grotto. Fur seals and sea lions can be seen swimming in the rocky lava ringed pools. This may be the only opportunity visitors have to see and swim with fur seals.

Fur seals were once hunted to near extinction for their coats. The Galapagos Fur Seal is the smallest of the fur seals found in the southern hemisphere, now compare in numbers with the sea lions. During the day they hide from the hot equatorial sun in shelves or caves of the rocky lava cliffs. At night they feed on squid and fish avoiding the sharks, which are their natural predator.

The crystal clear water, volcanic bridges, fur seals and sea lions make this a magnificent place for swimming and snorkeling.

BUCCANEER'S COVE

Less than an hour north of Puerto Egas, Buccaneers Cove served as a safe haven for pirates, sailors and whalers during the 18th and 19th century. Anchoring in the protected bay they were able to make much needed repairs to their ships while other men went ashore to stock up on salt, tortoises, fresh water and firewood. Several years ago ceramic jars were found at the bottom of the bay, the disregarded cargo of some mariner from years gone by. Inside the jars were supplies of wine and marmalade.

Few boats stop at Buccaneers Cove today. Though many cruise by at a slow speed giving visitors the opportunity to view the steep cliffs made of tuff formations and the dark reddish-purple sand beach. This dramatic landscape is made all the more impressive by the hundreds of seabirds perched atop the cliffs. Two

of the more recognizable rock formations are known as the "monk" and "elephant rock". A large population of feral goats now frequents Buccaneers Cove and this portion of Santiago. The National Park Service has fenced off part of the area to protect the native vegetation from the destructive eating habits of this introduced species.

A wet landing on the large coffee-colored sand beach is just north of the prized fresh water supply that once attracted pirates and whalers.

Dinner at night and navigation to Santa Cruz

DAY 5 - SUNDAY

Daphne - Baltra

Volcanic in origin, these two Islands are actually quite different from one another, and while Daphne Minor is badly eroded, Daphne Major still retains much of its volcanic form.

Visitors that disembark here should consider themselves lucky to be among the few people that are allowed to visit this Island.

Breakfast transfer to Baltra airport end of the services.

Rate includes:

- All meals, Buffet (breakfast - lunch - dinner) water with meals.
- Accommodation in double cabins.
- Transfers from the airport to the yacht and vice versa in Galapagos.
- Excursions in the islands with English Speaking Naturalist Guide.
- **Air ticket.**

Rate does not include:

- Galapagos National Park Entrance Fee: USD 100.00 per person.
- Migratory Control Card: USD 20.00 per person.
- Soft drinks and alcoholic beverages.
- Snorkelling equipment for rent on board.
- Tips.

Note:

- Rates per person in U.S. Dollars.
- Single occupancy supplement 80% or 100%.
- The route of the ship and the itinerary are subject to change and can vary depending on the regulations and policies of the Galapagos National Park, weather, seasonal changes, safety, etc.

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Quito - Ecuador - South America