



MONSERRAT GALAPAGOS CRUISE ITINERARY A

5d/4n Sun-Thu

DAY 1: BALTRA / MOSQUERA ISLAND (SUNDAY)

Baltra

Fly to Baltra. Meet the guide and transfer to the boat. In the afternoon, sail to Mosquera Island and walk along the beach and observe the vast sea lion colonies.

Mosquera Island Excursion (PM)

Mosquera Islet (2h-3h)

Wander along the beach and keep a look out for wildlife on land, in the air, and at sea. Relax on the sand or search for aquatic life in the tidal pools that dot the coastline.

DAY 2: ISABELA ISLAND (MONDAY)

Arrive at Puerto Villamil, home to the small community that lives on Isabela Island. In the morning, visit las Tintoreras islet, a small island in front of Puerto Villamil. Its bay is known to be home to a colony of whitetip sharks. Later hike to Sierra Negra volcano, which has the largest basaltic caldera in the Galápagos. In the afternoon, check out the tortoise breeding center to see some of the famous giant tortoises of the Galápagos.

Las Tintoreras Visit (AM)

Isabela Island

Take a panga across the bay to "Tintoreras" Shark Alley to observe the whitetip reef sharks found swimming in the channels between the rocks. Get a close-up view of pelicans, frigatebirds, and diving blue-footed boobies. Watch for manta rays and rare Galápagos penguins.



Sierra Negra Volcano Hike (AM)

Isabela Island (3h-5h)

Hike to the rim of the 10km (6 mi) wide crater of the Sierra Negra volcano, which has the largest basaltic caldera in the Galápagos. Trek across the moon-like landscape of the lava fields and fumaroles, and enjoy spectacular views looking north toward Fernandina and the rest of Isabela Island. The volcano last erupted in October 2005, making it the most recent eruption of the Galápagos.

Giant Tortoise Breeding Centre Visit (PM)

Isabela Island (2h-3h)

Walk through the town's wetlands to visit the Giant Tortoise Breeding Centre. With the giant tortoise on its way to extinction in the late 1950s, this program was established to protect these noble creatures.

DAY 3: CHINESE HAT / RÁBIDA ISLAND (TUESDAY)

Visit Chinese hat for snorkelling opportunities and to observe the birds and sea lions. Take an afternoon excursion to Rábida to see a lagoon and sea lion colony.

In the morning, the boat arrives at a small uniquely shaped island off the southern tip of Santiago called Chinese Hat. Here it is often possible to see Galápagos penguins, and the marine life is fantastic for snorkelling. There is also a large sea lion colony as well as many marine iguanas that can be seen while walking amongst the volcanic scenery. Trek to see good views of the island's volcano.

Chinese Hat Visit (AM)

Chinese Hat (1h-2h)

Explore Chinese Hat's beautiful landscape and spectacular white-coral sand beach followed by snorkeling with sea lions and penguins and swimming opportunities in the cove.

Snorkelling (Chinese Hat) (AM)



Chinese Hat (45m-1h)

Snorkel right from the white-coral sand beach and come face to face with playful sea lions and large schools of tropical fish. Keep an eye out for marine iguanas and penguins too!

Rábida Island Excursion (PM)

Rábida Island

Arrive at a red sand beach at Rábida to explore its trails. A short trail leads to a saltwater lagoon; another trail goes past the lagoon to the interior, where the revered palo santo trees grow. (When burned, the branches of this tree give off a pleasing aroma and ward off mosquitoes.) Head back to the beach to see prehistoric-looking pelicans nesting among low-lying bushes – it's a rare treat to watch parent pelicans return with gullets full of fish for the squawking youngsters.

Snorkelling (Isla Rábida) (PM)

Rábida Island (45m-1h)

Take a panga ride from the beach to a cliff wall that drops off into the water to find one of the best deep-water snorkeling spots in the islands.

DAY 4: PUERTO EGAS / SANTIAGO ISLAND (WEDNESDAY)

Morning excursion to Puerto Egas to see the salt crater as well as a dark sand beach and tidal pools. Continue to Playa Espumilla, one of the most idyllic beaches in the Galápagos Islands, which boasts thick mangroves and flamingo and sea turtle nesting sites. Head to Buccaneer Cove to witness the towering cliff wall rock formations.

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Santiago Island has seen its share of human activity from whalers and pirates over the years, and despite the introduction of goats to the island many years ago, the wildlife of Santiago has otherwise flourished and provides outstanding viewing opportunities. The island boasts marine iguanas, sea lions, fur seals,



land and sea turtles, among others. Enjoy great wildlife viewing both on land and in the water.

Puerto Egas Visit (AM)

Puerto Egas

Explore the spectacular shoreline of Puerto Egas, also known as James Bay. Spot a great number of shore birds and reptiles – the beach area is home to a plethora of wildlife.

Snorkelling (Puerto Egas) (AM)

Puerto Egas (45m-1h)

Grab a snorkel and jump into the water right off the beach to explore Puerto Egas' interesting underwater world. Keep your eyes peeled for rays, turtles, and reefsharks while snorkelling. After, visit the large tidal pool area – marine iguanas and Sally Lightfoot crabs are everywhere.

Playa Espumilla Excursion (PM)

Playa Espumilla

Head to Playa Espumilla, one of the most idyllic beaches in the Galápagos Islands, which has thick mangroves and sea turtle nesting sites.

Buccaneer Cove Visit (PM)

Santiago Island

Jump into the panga and cruise alongside high cliffs and rock formations on this visit to Buccaneer Cove, which was a favourite hideout for pirates looking to stock up their boats with food and water. Spot sea lions relaxing on the beach and sea birds nesting in the cove – there's lots to see at this site.

DAY 5 NORTH SEYMOUR / BALTRA AIRPORT (THURSDAY)

Baltra

Visit North Seymour for guided walks to observe birds and wildlife, including vast sea lion colonies. Disembark at Baltra for flight back to Ecuador mainland.



North Seymour Island Visit (AM)

Have an amazing wildlife experience visiting North Seymour Island – this island is teeming with life! Follow trails to see all the action (you may need to give way to a passing sea lion or marine iguana while walking). See blue-footed booby nests where mating pairs perform their courtship dance. Head to a rocky shore to see flocks of pelicans having lunch in a dive bomb feeding frenzy, then turn inland to a large nesting site of magnificent frigate birds. These huge, dark acrobats have two-metre (6.5 ft) wingspans, and males, with their puffed-up scarlet throat sacks, sit precariously perched in low bushes to watch over their equally large chicks. Top off the excursion with a snorkel among sea lions and rays.