

# ITINERARY A 5 DAYS / 4 NIGHTS

From Tuesday to Saturday

			HIKING	SNORKEL	PANGA RIDE	PADDLE BOARD	KAYAK	
5 DAYS "A"	TUESDAY	PM	<b>San Cristobal:</b> Lobos Island	•	•	•		
	WEDNESDAY	AM	<b>Española:</b> Gardner Bay /Gardner Islet/Osborn Islet	•	•	•		
		PM	<b>Española:</b> Suarez Point	•				
	THURSDAY	AM	<b>Floreana:</b> Post Office Bay	•	•			
		PM	<b>Floreana:</b> Cormorant Point/Devil'S Crown	•	•	•		
	FRIDAY	AM	<b>Santa Fe:</b> Santa Fe	•	•	•	•	•
		PM	<b>Plazas Sur:</b> South Plaza	•				
	SATURDAY	AM	<b>Santa Cruz:</b> Charles Darwin Station	•				

## DAY 1: TUESDAY

### AM: SAN CRISTOBAL AIRPORT

Departure to the Galapagos Islands, arrival at San Cristobal airport, where our naturalist guide of the National Park will be waiting for you.

### PM: LOBOS ISLAND

Lobos island is a small islet separated from San Cristobal by a narrow channel, forming a sheltered bay where sea lion pups play in tidal pools. Despite its small size, the island is surprisingly packed with wildlife, especially with “lobos marinos”, the Spanish name for sea lions. Groups of sea lions will welcome you at the landing spot, but as you walk a few steps inland, male frigate birds displaying their inflated red balloons will be perched on the bushes and trees. A small colony of blue footed boobies, which often nest right on the trail, will give you the opportunity to observe their famous courtship dance.

**Snorkel:** This is a great snorkeling location as the water are usually calm and the sea lions often play with divers to show off their swimming skills. Sea turtles and rays are often seen resting in the sandy bottoms.

**Highlights:** Galapagos sea lions, marine Iguanas, magnificent & great frigate birds, blue-footed Boobies, San Cristobal Lava Lizards.

**Trail:** 0,6 km / 0,4 mi

**Meals:** Lunch, Dinner



## DAY 2: WEDNESDAY

### AM: GARDNER BAY

Gardner beach is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful and interesting beaches to visit in the Galapagos. Its fine coral sand and turquoise water give it a totally tropical appearance, which contrasts with the presence of sea lions basking in the beach. You will have the opportunity to walk along the beach and learn about the biology of sea lions and other endemic species, such as the Española mockingbird, marine iguanas and Galapagos hawks.

**Snorkel:** There are several great snorkeling places at Gardner bay. It is a fantastic site to swim with sea lions, reef sharks, rays and many species of fish, including; Angelfish, Parrotfish, Damselfish, Surgeonfish and many others.

**Highlights:** Coral sand beach, sea lions, Galapagos hawks, Española mockingbirds, Darwin finches, marine iguanas.

**Trail:** 0,8 km / 0,5 mi

### PM: SUAREZ POINT

This rocky trail is one the most amazing nature walks you can do in the Galapagos islands.

From the moment you set foot on the island and all the way along the trail the amount and diversity of fauna is truly amazing. Sea lions and marine iguanas will be the first ones welcoming us, followed by large colonies of sea birds, including Nazca and Blue-footed boobies, gulls and tropicbirds. At the end of the trail we will visit a colony of waved albatross (April to January), the largest bird in the islands and one of the most interesting because of its powerful flight and elaborate courtship. Waved albatross only nest at Española, so this is the only place where you will see them at close range.

**Highlights:** Sea lions, Waved Albatross, Galapagos hawks, Española mockingbirds, Darwin finches, marine iguanas, Nazca & Blue-footed Boobies, Red-billed Tropicbirds, Swallow-tailed gulls, herons, lava lizards, herons.

**Trail:** 1,7 km / 1,1 mi

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 3: THURSDAY

### AM: POST OFFICE BAY

Floreana is famous for the tales of German settlers and the baroness during the late 1920's and 30 's. Assassinations, disappearances and other unsolved mysteries are the ingredients of this fascinating story. Post office bay was often used by whalers to anchor their ships and go up to the highlands to get freshwater and tortoises. Most boats visiting the Galapagos had to come to this place sooner or later, so a system of mail was established more than 200 years ago: a barrel near the beach became the way to leave messages to other ships and also to the outside world. This mail system is still in use and will allow you to send postcards from the Galapagos to the outside world.

Aside from a small beautiful beach and a lava tunnel, the area is great for dinghy tours to look for sea lions, green sea turtles, shorebirds, small sharks and, with some luck, Galapagos penguins.

**Snorkel:** There is great snorkel from the beach, as you can see lots of sea turtles, rays, great diversity of fish and, if you are really lucky, Galapagos penguin,

**Highlights:** Sea Lions, sea turtles, finches, shorebirds, marine iguanas, penguins.

**Trail:** 0,7 m / 0,4 mi

#### **PM: CORMORANT POINT / DEVIL'S CROWN**

Punta Cormorant is located in the north of Floreana and it is known for its large coastal lagoon with American flamingoes, white-cheeked pintails, black-necked stilts and other shorebirds. There is a beautiful white sand beach which is an important nesting ground for green sea turtles where we can also see rays and reef sharks. In the last years, a small groups of blue footed boobies have started to breed right by the trail. This is also a great trail to look at endemic plants.

**Snorkel:** It will be done at Devil's Crown, a heavily eroded little volcano right by Floreana island. This is considered by many as one of the best snorkeling sites in the entire archipelago as the current funnels plankton through the Crown, attracting huge schools of snapper, Creole fish parrot fish, angelfish, reef sharks, sea turtles, rays and a phenomenal amount of marine life.

**Highlights:** American flamingo, blue-footed booby, frigate birds, tropicbirds, Galapagos shearwaters, sea lions, sea turtle nesting site, finches, shorebirds, coral-sand beach.

**Trail:** 1,6 km / 1 mi

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



#### **DAY 4: FRIDAY**

##### **AM: SANTA FE**

Giant Prickly-pear cactus and barren lava rocks surround the landing spot at Santa Fe, located inside one of the most beautiful bays in the Galapagos. Turquoise water and white sand beaches make this location a perfect home for a large colony of sea lions which you will see basking in the sand. Inland, look down for endemic Santa Fe land iguanas, but also look up for Galapagos hawks, which often perch at the top of the cactus looking for prey. Darwin finches, Galapagos doves, mockingbirds and lava lizards are also common along the trail.

**Snorkel:** After the hike, you will have the option to kayak or snorkel in the sheltered waters inside the bay, where you can swim with sea lion pups and reef sharks. Also look for sea turtles, rays and a large variety of tropical fish including large schools of surgeonfish and parrotfish.

**Highlights:** Giant cactus, Santa Fe bay, Galapagos sea lions, Santa Fe land iguanas, Galapagos hawks, Galapagos doves, reef sharks.

**Trail:** 0,8 km / 0,5 mi

#### **PM: PLAZAS**

Of the two twin islands, only South Plazas is allowed to be visited, while North plazas is kept exclusively for scientific research. This is a small islet, but it packs an impressive amount of wildlife. Right after you land you will see Galapagos land iguanas waiting under prickly-pear cactus feed on their fruits. A large colony of sea lions will give you the opportunity to see playful pups enjoying the tide pools, but also large grumpy males defending their territories. The trail will take you to a cliff where you can observe many sea birds, such as frigate birds, red-billed tropicbirds, boobies, swallow-tailed gulls and pelicans. A reddish succulent vegetation with scattered cactus covers most of the islands like a carpet, giving this island a unique personality.

**Highlights:** Galapagos land iguanas, sea lions, tropicbirds, pelicans, boobies, Galapagos shearwaters, swallow-tailed gulls.

**Trail:** 1,4 km / 0,8 mi

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **DAY 5: SATURDAY**

#### **AM: ESTACIÓN CHARLES DARWIN**

The Charles Darwin Station is a nonprofit organization which has been working for decades together with the Galapagos National Park to preserve the biodiversity of these unique islands. During this visit you will learn about the projects that both institutions carry together to protect the native species and eradicate the invasive ones which are threatening the Galapagos environment. One of the most important and emblematic projects has been reproducing giant tortoises in captivity. The visit is mostly outdoors in a beautiful dry native forest with giant cactus and many other interesting native plants. It is also a fantastic place to find several endemic Darwin finches, as well as flycatchers and mockingbirds.

**Highlights:** Galapagos giant tortoise & land iguanas breeding program, Darwin finches, Galapagos mockingbirds, Galapagos flycatchers, yellow warblers. Trail: 2 km / 1,2 mi

Then, transfer to the airport to take your flight back to continental Ecuador.

**Meals:** Breakfast

