

# **MONSERRAT GALAPAGOS CRUISE ITINERARY D**

**4d/3n Thu-Sun**



## **DAY 1: BALTRA ISLAND / SANTA CRUZ ISLAND (THURSDAY)**

### **Santa Cruz Highlands Excursion (PM) (2h-3h)**

Visit the highlands of Santa Cruz and see the Galápagos giant tortoise in its natural surroundings. Explore the area and its incredible underground lava tunnels – some are more than 1km (.6 mi) long! Wander along the volcanic tubes and keep an eye out for the (mainly) nocturnal barn owls that sometimes roost here.

## **DAY 2: DRAGON HILL / CHINESE HAT (FRIDAY)**

### **Dragon Hill (AM) (1h-3h)**

Visit Cerro Dragón (Dragon Hill) for some prime birdwatching. Take a short walk from the beach to a hypersalinic (saltier than the ocean) lagoon frequented by pink flamingos, common stilts, pintail ducks, and other species of birds. Pass through a Scalesia tree forest; endemic to the area, there are only 400 specimens of Scalesia trees left in the world.

### **Chinese Hat Visit (PM) (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) (PM) (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!

## **DAY 3: EL BARRANCO / DARWIN BAY (SATURDAY)**

### **Prince Phillips's Steps (AM) (2h)**

El Barranco or Prince Phillips's Steps as otherwise known, was named after a visit by the British Monarch in 1964. El Barranco's steep 81-foot stairway leads up to a high cliff-face that opens out onto the plateau surrounding Darwin Bay. Here an amazing view can be appreciated. Once at the top of the stairway we will meet Nazca boobies, red-footed boobies, mockingbirds, and finches along the way of a palo santo trail. It will also be possible to see wedge-rumped storm petrels swarm and short-eared owls.

### **Darwin Bay (PM) (1 ½h)**

Darwin bay was formed by the collapse of the flooded caldera of Tower Island, another name used for Genovesa. After landing at a small sand and coral beach, it easy to realize why this island is a bird lover paradise. Among the bird species found here, the most common are swallow-tailed and lava gulls, mockingbirds, yellow-crowned night herons, lava herons, Galapagos doves and yellow warblers. We will continue on a short and flat trail to encounter redfooted booby and great frigatebird nests. We will visit a tidal lagoon where sea lions swim playfully ending our path on a cliff with magnificent views of this remote part of the Galapagos.

## **DAY 4: BLACK TURTLE COVE / BALTRA ISLAND (SUNDAY)**

### **Black Turtle Cove Excursion (AM)**

Explore the mangroves by panga to find rich marine wildlife between the fresh and salt waters. Keep any eye out for manta rays and sea turtles in this tranquil ecosystem. Whitetip reef sharks can also be seen gliding by.