

S/S MARY ANNE



**EASTERN ISLANDS – 8
DAY / 7 NIGHT CRUISE**

SATURDAY - SATURDAY

DAY BY DAY

DAY 1

MORNING FLIGHT TO BALTRA BLACK TURTLE COVE

After arriving at Baltra airport, we will be greeted by our naturalist guide to then board the S/S Mary Anne and have lunch. After lunch, we will navigate a short distance to Black Turtle Cove, a large mangrove lagoon on the north coast of Santa Cruz Island. Pelicans and herons roost on the branches, while marine dwellers such as green sea turtles or golden rays may cruise right next to the panga as it makes its way through the mangroves.

DAY 2

DARWIN BAY & EL BARRANCO

AM

We travel to Genovesa Island and reach Darwin Bay (wet landing), a unique site with a beautiful beach, lined with red mangroves and soft-haired prickly pear cacti where red-footed boobies and great frigatebirds perch tamely.

PM

At El Barranco (dry landing), we climb the edge of a cliff where frigatebirds, masked boobies, and red-footed boobies nest. The trail will take us to the inner part of the island, populated by holy stick trees and cacti. We will be seeking out the impressive red-billed tropicbird amidst Galapagos storm petrels and the endemic short-ear owl.

ISLANDS

- Santa Cruz Island
- South Plaza
- Santa Fe
- Española Island
- Rabida
- Santiago Island
- Genovesa

SUMMARY

This tour will take you to the eastern islands of the archipelago, to deep, silent coves where green sea turtles swim, to the iconic Pinnacle Rock and to a red sandy beach where yet more sea lions await you. After a delicious breakfast, a panga will take you where red footed boobies perch on prickly pear cacti, Nazca boobies nest and green sea turtles glide alongside.



RABIDA ISLAND

RED SAND BEACH

DAY 3 BARTOLOME ISLAND & CHINESE HAT

AM

Dry landing at Bartolome to climb up the wooden steps and reach the summit of this spatter cone for a most breath-taking panorama of the island's well photographed Pinnacle Rock and views of neighboring Santiago and many other central islands in the distance. Afterward, we will visit the white sand beach used as a nest site by sea turtles. Bartolome is also a good place to spot the Galapagos penguin.

PM

Less than a quarter of one square kilometer in size, this island gets its name from being shaped like a Chinese hat. The hat shape is best appreciated from the north side. Lava formations can be seen on the western side of the island, formed under the sea and later raised upward, making it possible to observe coral heads on the lava. Be amazed by the landscapes covered by sea lions' colonies, marine iguanas, and Galapagos penguins.

DAY 4 RABIDA & CERRO DRAGON

AM

Wet landing onto Rabida's deep-red beaches to explore the red island's fascinating interior and saltwater lagoon, where flamingos are usually present. Darwin's finches, Galapagos mockingbirds, and yellow warblers feed off the vegetation. Given the right time of the year, we may see brown pelicans nesting on salt bushes that fringe the beach.

PM

We head across to Cerro Dragon on Santa Cruz's northwest shore (dry landing) to visit a saltwater lagoon, home to Greater Flamingos, black-necked stilts, and white-cheeked pintails. Further inland we find a fantastic land iguana nesting site.

DAY 5 **PUERTO AYORA, SANTA CRUZ HIGHLANDS & DARWIN RESEARCH STATION**

AM

We will have a dry landing at the dock of Puerto Ayora to then board our transportation and head to the island's highlands. This area, in contrast to the coastal region, has lush vegetation and forest due to the humidity in the higher regions.

We will visit one of the ranches of the area where it is possible to see giant tortoises in their natural habitat.

This is also a good place to see the ground finch of the Island, which populates these forests where is also possible to see the vermilion flycatcher or the yellow warbler.

PM

We will return to the ship for lunch and to freshen up to then head back to Puerto Ayora for our second visit of the day, the Fausto Llerena Tortoise Breeding Center. Here, we will see tortoises from different islands. The animals are found in large semi natural pens for their protection, but also to ensure an easy view for the visitors.

After this visit, we will have some time to browse the shops in the town of Puerto Ayora before boarding the ship, as this is the only opportunity we will have for souvenir shopping during the itinerary.

DAY 6 **SOUTH PLAZA & SANTA FE ISLAND**

AM

Dry landing on one of the oldest docks of the archipelago on colorful South Plaza, home to vibrant green prickly pears, deep red Sesuvium, and coppery-orange land iguanas. Impressive seaward cliffs make the perfect perching spot for a variety of coastal birds. This is also a great place to observe the adult and pup sea lions swimming along the shores.

PM

After a wet landing on Santa Fe, we will be encountered by a white beach where sea lions are usually resting. We will be looking for the endemic species of land iguana, larger and yellower than land iguanas on other islands. The largest prickly pear cacti in the Galapagos are also found here.

DAY 7 **SUAREZ POINT, GARDNER BAY, GARDNER ISLET & OSBORN ISLET**

AM

In the morning we will head to Suarez Point, one of the most popular landing sites in Galapagos.

The highlights include: sea lions near the landing place, sometimes to be seen body-surfing in the large breakers, large marine iguanas, with red-colored males in the breeding season, oystercatchers, blue-footed and Nazca boobies, Galapagos hawks, Galapagos doves, swallow-tailed gulls, red-billed tropicbirds, and three species endemic to Española: the waved albatross (present only from April to December), the Española mockingbird, and the Española lava lizard. The trail ends in "El Soplador" a blowhole that sprays water some 25 m (75 feet) into the air.

PM

We will spend the afternoon in the fantastic Gardner Bay (wet landing) of Española Island; an outstanding beach with sea lions, marine iguanas, and the intrepid Española mockingbird. Close to Española, there is a good spot for snorkeling called Gardner Islet. While snorkeling, there is a good chance playful sea lions will join you. Get ready for more snorkeling at Osborn islet, a great place to observe great quantities of marine life.

DAY 8 **TWIN CRATERS & DEPARTURE**

AM

This is our last day in the islands. After breakfast we will disembark in Puerto Ayora to take our transport to the Baltra airport, making a short stop to visit the Twin Craters. The Gemelos (twins) are in fact not craters, but magma domes that have collapsed, leaving two deep and wide holes located to the side of the road that leads to Puerto Ayora from the other side of the island.

After this visit, we will make our way to the Baltra airport for the flight to mainland Ecuador.

In addition to the land visits we offer a good balance of other activities such as snorkeling, panga rides and kayaking.