

Day by day Description of sites visited with activity and level of difficulty

ITINERARY (A): <http://www.ecoventura.com/experience-itinerary-a-ecoventura-galapagos-cruise/>

SUNDAY: Upon arrival in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno (SCY) **SAN CRISTOBAL** Island, guests are met at the airport and transferred by bus then a Zodiac to the Ecoventura yacht anchored in the bay. After the welcome briefing and safety drill, a delicious buffet lunch is served on board. In the afternoon, you visit **El Junco Lake**, the only sizable fresh water lake in the Galapagos, a 30-minute bus ride from town. Along the way, pass through several Vegetarian Zones and the farming community of El Progreso dating back to the 1880's. The cavity of the lake is the caldera of an extinct volcano. El Junco (Spanish for "sedge") is fed by rainwater and the volume varies with the season. We return to the yacht for our Captain's welcome party and dinner.

MONDAY: Go ashore this morning at **Punta Pitt**, a tuff formation that serves as a nesting site for many sea birds including all three types of boobies – blue-footed, red-footed and Nazca, both frigate bird species, swallow-tailed gulls, storm petrels, shearwaters and brown pelicans. Punta Pitt is considered one of the best sites for birds in the archipelago, and is also home to a colony of sea lions. At Pitt Rock, we snorkel or swim with sea lions and colorful fish such as King Angel and Surgeon fish. Spend the afternoon at **Cerro Brujo**, a breathtaking white coral beach, with expansive views and good birdwatching. Take a peaceful walk along the beach, swim with sea lions or use the kayaks or stand-up paddle boards. Enjoy a zodiac ride through a cave called The Cathedral before returning to the yacht for a briefing followed by dinner.

TUESDAY: Disembark at **Punta Suarez on ESPANOLA (Hood)** Island, home to the greatest number of endemic species found in Galapagos. Sea lions bark noisy greetings as we land on the beach, while curious mocking birds peck at our shoelaces. Colonies of blue-footed boobies engage in sky-pointing to show off for potential mates. From April to December, the waved albatross, found only on Espanola, performs its wild mating ritual. Wildlife spotted here include the Nazca boobies busily caring for their young, stunning swallow-tailed gulls, the only nocturnal gulls in the world. We also find Darwin's Finches, Galapagos Doves, red-billed tropicbirds and Galapagos Hawks, as well as a unique species of marine iguanas with traces of red and green colorings. Follow the trail to the dramatic ocean blow hole, watch for colorful sally light-foot crabs crawling along the shoreline. Disembark at **Gardner Bay**, where large colonies of sea lions dot the seemingly endless white-sand beach. Take a leisurely stroll or relax on the beach, watching for birds such as the Galapagos hawk, Darwin's finch, or Hood mockingbird. Swim with the playful sea lions from the beach, explore the bay and islets by kayak or take a Zodiac excursion to explore the caves covered with invertebrates. Admire the colorful array of underwater life at the excellent snorkeling site near Tortuga Rock. Return to the yacht for a briefing followed by dinner.

WEDNESDAY: Step ashore at **Punta Cormorant on FLOREANA (Charles)** Island, where the olive-sand beach is alive with the sounds of sea lions, lava herons, yellow-crowned night herons, blue-footed boobies, and penguins. Follow a trail to a brackish lagoon, home to Bahama ducks, common stilts, Galapagos flycatchers, yellow warblers and the greater flamingos. Wind your way past a rich variety of plants including the morning glory, cut-leaf daisies, mangroves (black, red and white), *palo verde* and Scalesia. The trail leads to a beach where sea turtles lay their eggs in the powdery sand dunes and sting rays swim in the shallow water. Don't miss the opportunity to snorkel at **Devil's Crown or Champion**, a shallow sunken crater colonized by a brilliant array of colorful fish and coral, white-tipped sharks, sea turtles, spotted eagle rays and sea stars. Lunch is served outdoors on deck, weather permitting. Floreana is one of the few populated islands in Galapagos with a rich and intriguing human history. We visit one of the most famous sites in Galapagos, **Post Office Bay**, where a post barrel was erected in the late 18th Century for use by English whaling vessels. Visitors are invited to leave a post card and to pick up any mail destined for their home area. There is an opportunity to swim

from the beach with sea lions. Late afternoon, take a Zodiac excursion at **Baroness Point** to look for sea turtles and rays. Return to the yacht for a briefing followed by dinner.

THURSDAY: Disembark at **Puerto Ayora, SANTA CRUZ** Island, the social heart of the Galapagos, with a population of 24,000 humans. Travel by bus to the highlands, passing through all seven vegetation zones found in Galapagos. Visit Rancho El Manzanillo, a privately-owned hacienda where giant tortoises roam in their natural habitat. Stop at the lava tunnels at El Mirador, the largest in the archipelago, and visit *Los Gemelos*, (The Twins), a pair of large craters. Return to the yacht for lunch on board. This afternoon, visit the **Centro de Crianza Fausto Llerena** (formerly Charles Darwin Research Station). Visit the tortoise corals and the breeding center with hatchlings and miniature tortoises that will be repatriated when grown. A new exhibit honoring Lonesome George, a worldwide icon of conservation as the last surviving tortoise from Pinta Island that tragically died of natural causes. We stop at a local chocolate shop to learn how high quality *Arriba cacao* is produced in Ecuador. Stroll through town to shop for souvenirs or stop at an internet café or museum to stimulate the local economy. Return to the yacht for dinner or, if you wish, remain ashore on your own at a local restaurant. Zodiac shuttles from the yachts to the main dock will be offered throughout the evening.

FRIDAY: Guests on the ORIGIN go ashore at **Sombrero Chino (Chinese Hat)**, a small island off the southern tip of Santiago that owes its name to its shape. After landing on a beach with colonies of sea lions, follow the trail to a primeval landscape of volcanic rubble including cracked lava formations and tubes. Marine iguanas and pairs of oystercatchers are commonly seen. Snorkel at a site frequented by large numbers of Galapagos penguins. Guests on Eric visit **Las Bachas**, (Spanish for barges) on the northern side of Santa Cruz. Explore the long stretch of a white sand beach and the interior lagoons populated by greater flamingo, then take the opportunity for some wonderful snorkeling from the beach. Guests on the Letty have a Zodiac excursion at **Caleta Tortuga Negra (Black Turtle Cove)** through a series of coves and inlets surrounded by mangroves. View pairs of mating sea turtles (Sept to Feb), white-tipped reef sharks and golden cow-nosed rays. Disembark at **BARTOLOME**, a young Island is inhospitable to most plants and animals. Climb the long wooden staircase to the summit of a dormant volcano, pausing along the way to marvel at lava bombs, spatter cones and cinder cones. It seems as if we are walking on the moon! The panoramic view from the top encompasses the entire island, including the distinctive eroded tuff cone known as Pinnacle Rock. The crystal clear water below beckons for snorkeling with schools of tropical fish, white-tipped reef sharks and Galapagos Penguins. Take a Zodiac ride along the rocky shoreline. Return to the vessel for the evening briefing and dinner.

SATURDAY: Today's visit is at **SOUTH PLAZA**, a small geological uplift with tall cliffs where swallow-tailed gulls, shearwaters, and red-billed tropicbirds build their nests. The trail leads us through *Opuntia* (prickly pear) and *Sesuvium*, and land iguanas are seen here feeding on cactus leaves. The island is also home to a colony of bachelor sea lions, with dominant bulls in various stages of recovery from battles over prime beach territory. After lunch, we can snorkel between North and South Seymour in deeper water. Go ashore at **NORTH SEYMOUR**, a small geological uplift to observe swallow-tailed gulls, blue-footed boobies and endemic land iguanas. Visit the largest colony of Magnificent frigate birds in the Galapagos, and watch for marine iguanas and sea lions body surfing the northern swells. Return to the yacht for the Captain's farewell cocktail party and dinner, followed by a slide show presentation.

SUNDAY: Travel by bus to the Interpretation Center on San Cristobal to gain a more complete understanding of the natural and human history of the Islands. Guests on the Letty visit Isla Lobos. Afterwards, spend time in port before heading to the airport for your flight back to the mainland.

7 day/ 6 night cruise (Sunday to Saturday)

Passengers can disembark one day early on Saturday in Baltra for a shorter, 6 night cruise.

Itinerary A – Southern/ Central Route

Sunday to Friday – same as on 7 night itinerary

Saturday: Drop off Itabaca Canal 6AM (transfer to Baltra or Puerto Ayora not included)

For passengers who disembark on Saturday and require a private transfer to the airport with a guide, there is an additional charge of \$50 per person or \$200 maximum. The return flight from Baltra will incur an additional fee of \$27 per person and is subject to availability and confirmation is requested

For passengers who disembark on Saturday and remain in Santa Cruz, there is no additional charge. Drop off is at the Itabaca Canal at 6AM local time and passengers will need to arrange for transportation to Puerto Ayora through their hotel.

Two week itinerary back to back

Book two consecutive weeks back to back for the most comprehensive cruise itinerary, and do not repeat the same visits twice.

Itinerary A+B 15 day/ 2 week itinerary

Sunday: La Loberia or Cerro Tijeretas, SAN CRISTOBAL
CCJG (La Galapaguera Cerro Colorado), SAN CRISTOBAL

Saturday: Reserva Ecologica Cerro Mesa, SANTA CRUZ
Tortuga Bay, SANTA CRUZ

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