



6DAYS/5NIGHTS "B"

ITINERARY

2017

6 DAYS / 5 NIGHTS B PETREL ITINERARY OUTLINE

WEDNESDAY

AM: Arrival to Baltra Airport – Santa Cruz Island: Los Gemelos (The Twin Craters)

PM: Transfer to Petrel

THURSDAY

AM: South Plaza Island

PM: Santa Fe Island

FRIDAY

AM: Lobos Island

PM: San Cristobal Island - C.C. Jacinto Gordillo Giant Tortoise Breeding Ctr. / Interpretation Ctr.

SATURDAY

AM: Espanola Island – Gardner Bay / Osborn Islet / Gardner Islet

PM: Espanola Island – Suarez Point

SUNDAY

AM: Floreana Island - Devil's Crown / Cormorant Point

PM: Floreana Island – Post Office Bay / Baroness Lookout Point

MONDAY

AM: Santa Cruz Island – C.C. Fausto Llerena Charles Darwin Research Station

PM: Transfer to Baltra Airport for departure

TERMS TO KNOW

LANDINGS – LANDINGS ARE HOW YOU ARRIVE TO THE VISITOR SITES. EACH SITE IS VISITED BY USING A DINGHY (SMALL BOAT), ALSO KNOWN AS ZODIAC OR PANGA.

PANGA – PANGA IS THE SPANISH TERM FOR DINGHY OR ZODIAC. YOU WILL HEAR THIS WORD OFTEN.

DRY LANDING –UPON ARRIVAL TO THE VISITOR SITE YOU WILL NOT HAVE TO ENTER THE WATER WHEN EXITING THE ZODIAC OR DINGHY.

WET LANDING – UPON ARRIVAL TO THE VISITOR SITE YOU WILL EXIT THE DINGHY (SMALL BOAT) BY ENTERING THE WATER FIRST, THEN WALKING ASHORE.

NO LANDING – THERE WILL BE NO LANDING BECAUSE ACTIVITY WILL CONSIST OF PANGA RIDE OR SNORKELING.

DINGHY RIDE – THE DINGHY RIDE IS A SIMPLE RIDE ON WATER AROUND THE VISITOR AREA. THIS IS DONE WHEN THERE IS NO LANDING PERMITTED OR TO GET A BETTER VIEW OF NEARBY WILDLIFE OR LANDSCAPES.

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES – ALL ACTIVITIES ARE TO BE ULTIMATELY DECIDED BY THE GUIDE CONSIDERING DIFFERENT FACTORS LIKE: WEATHER, SEA CONDITIONS, AND OTHERS. THE ACTIVITIES LISTED IN ALL THE ITINERARIES ARE ULTIMATELY DECIDED BY THE GALAPAGOS NATIONAL PARK

OFFICIALS WITH THE BEST INTEREST OF THE ISLANDS IN MIND. THESE CANNOT BE ALTERED IN ANY WAY.

DAY 1 (WEDNESDAY)

ARRIVAL TO BALTRA ISLAND (GALAPAGOS)

Upon arrival to the airport in Baltra you will be greeted by our staff and taken across the Itabaca Channel to visit the Island of Santa Cruz before boarding. The visit includes a short hike. Dress appropriately with sturdy shoes, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt due to the climate of this area. You will visit a site called Los Gemelos (The Twins Craters).

Santa Cruz Island – Los Gemelos (Twin Craters)

Santa Cruz Island: Today Santa Cruz is one of the most popular tourist sites. With a population of about 12,000 Galapagos natives, it has the longest paved road in the entire archipelago. One of the biggest conservation efforts is to eliminate all non-native plants and animals that are destroying native and endemic species on the island. There is no longer any volcanic activity but that does not mean there is no evidence. Santa Cruz means holy cross, but it's English name comes from the British vessel – Indefatigable.

Twin Craters: The Twin Craters or Gemelos, meaning twins in Spanish, are two caved in magma chambers of a previous volcano. After years of erosion and extinction, the once full chambers caved in leaving two similar craters that can be seen on a short hike that passes by a Scalesia forest.

After the visit to the Twin Craters you will be transferred to the yacht. You will then be shown to your cabin where you will have some time to settle in before the welcome briefing.

Possible Activities: Hike

Difficulty: Moderate

Type of Landing: Dry Landing

Highlights: On the trail to the craters many different land birds can be seen in the Scalesia forest – finches, short eared owls, vermilion flycatchers, and Galapagos doves.

DAY 2 (THURSDAY)

South Plaza Island

South Plaza: South Plaza is one of the smallest islands with a visitor site, but is home to an incredible amount of diverse flora and fauna. It has a large population of Sesuvium plants like the prickly pear cactus tree that is an important source of food for the land iguana. Just a few years ago mice were finally eradicated from the island, helping the population of land iguanas grow healthily once more.

Possible Activities: Walk

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Wet Landing

Highlights: Cacti native only to South Plaza, land iguana, finches, sea lions, swallow tailed gulls, red-billed tropicbirds.

Santa Fe Island

Santa Fe: Santa Fe Island is home to the unique Santa Fe land iguana and is the only place to find Opuntia cactus. Giant tortoises were once native to this island but after the many years of pirates and buccaneers visiting the island and taking the tortoises aboard as food, they became extinct. The Island is also called Barrington Island, named after British Admiral Samuel Barrington. Large numbers of sea lions can be found on the landing beach and Galapagos hawks can also sometimes be seen.

Possible Activities: Short hike, Panga Ride, Kayaking

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Wet Landing

Highlights: Galapagos hawk, Santa Fe land iguana, Opuntia Cactus, sea lions, lava lizards.

DAY 3 (FRIDAY)

San Cristobal Island – Lobos Island

San Cristobal Island: This is the fifth largest island in the Galapagos and lies farthest East. It is where Darwin first landed back in 1835 and where the first permanent settlements were founded. Today the main port Puerto Baquerizo Moreno is the capital of the Galapagos province and houses many government offices, the Ecuadorian Navy, and an airport with daily flights to the mainland of Ecuador. Conservation challenges the island faces include invasive plants like blackberry and guayaba and insects like the blackfly.

Lobos Island: Lobos Island is an islet about an hour away from San Cristobal. Blue-footed boobies will nest here seasonally. In recent years frigate birds have begun to nest here. Sea lions are abundant, as well as marine iguanas. It is a very calm and tranquil site with beautiful views, including Kicker Rock off in the distance.

Possible Activities: Short Walk, Panga Ride, Snorkel

Difficulty: Easy/Moderate

Type of Landing: Dry Landing

Highlights: Frigate birds, sea lions, blue-footed boobies and nesting sites, views of Kicker Rock, marine iguanas. Snorkel – sea lions, sea turtles, rays.

C.C. Jacinto Gordillo Giant Tortoise Breeding Ctr. / Interpretation Ctr.

Giant Tortoise Breeding Ctr. / Interpretation Ctr.: The Interpretation Center has been open to the public since 1998 and offers extensive information about the history of Galapagos, all ecosystems, geology, and flora and fauna. Giant tortoises are also bred here and roam about in a semi-natural habitat created by the centers employees. Inside the center there are meeting rooms, interpretational panels, auditoriums, exhibits, and much more.

Possible Activities: Walk

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Dry Landing

Highlights: Giant tortoises up close and roaming freely, exhibits of various stages of tortoise breeding, learn more about origin, evolution, natural habitat, and threats of introduced animals and plants.

DAY 4 (SATURDAY)

Espanola Island – Gardner Bay/Osborn Islet/Gardner Islet

Espanola Island: Here lies the southernmost island in the Galapagos, as well as the oldest. It is estimated to be about four million years old. Because it is so far away from the other islands it has the most endemic species. It is a wonderful opportunity for some great photography of endemic bird species that are found only on Espanola and awesome landscapes created by millions of years of erosion.

Gardner Bay/Osborn Islet/Gardner Islet: Visit one of the best beaches in the Galapagos. The white sandy beach is home to a large colony of friendly and playful sea lions. Three different types of finches can be seen. The Espanola Mockingbird is very friendly, but probably looking for food. At one point in time, tourists must have given it water or food, which taught them bad habits. The site is also where green sea turtles will come to nest their eggs between January and March.

Possible Activities: Walk, Snorkel, Panga Ride

Difficulty: Easy/Moderate

Type of Landing: Wet Landing

Highlights: Espanola Mockingbird, longest beach in Galapagos, three species of Darwin's finches, large colony of sea lions, occasional green sea turtles. Snorkel – coral fish, sea lions, and other marine life.

Suarez Point: This is a phenomenal site where you will get to see many of Espanola Island's endemic species. The trail will pass by the only Waved Albatross breeding site. If you are lucky you might see a young albatross take off for its first flight for up to five years at sea. Older birds stay at sea for months at a time, only coming back to breed. They have the same mate for life and will meet each other each year, only here to reproduce. Other species that can be seen are marine iguanas that stay brightly colored year round, Galapagos doves, Nazca boobies, blue-footed boobies, swallow-tailed gulls, red-billed tropic birds, and Darwin finches.

Possible Activities: Hike

Difficulty: Moderate

Type of Landing: Dry Landing

Highlights: Only Waved albatross breeding site, blow hole on the point, Nazca boobies, swallow tailed gulls, red-billed tropic birds, three different species of finches, Galapagos doves, marine iguanas, sea lions.

DAY 5 (SUNDAY)

Floreana Island – Devil’s Crown/Cormorant Point

Floreana Island: This Island is one of the most interesting when it comes to human history. The first Galapagos resident was an Irishman who lived on Floreana from 1807 to 1809. It is the site of the first post office within the islands created by whalers in the 1700’s. Later it became the first island to be colonized by Ecuadorians, but to this day is still very isolated. Surrounded by mystery, in the 1930’s various disappearances occurred and is thought to be because of tension between a baroness and her three servants who arrived after an already settled husband and wife, who gave birth to the first to be born in Galapagos and another couple of a doctor and female companion who lived of the land from their garden. The small population of today lives off the land with home grown farms and gets their water from rain filled ponds during the rainy season. There is one hotel with the only phone in the port of Velasco Ibarra where most residents live, the rest live up in the highlands. Transportation is limited and is only available every two weeks.

Devil’s Crown: Devil’s Crown is a visitor site that boasts the best snorkeling opportunities. Below the surface are amazing volcanic structures that have submerged over time. Hundreds of different colorful fish species can be found here among the coral reefs. Sharks, rays, sea turtles, hammer head sharks and sea lions are also common visitors. It is an underwater spectacle that cannot be missed.

Cormorant Point: Another fun and interesting visitor site. Two beaches can be visited and flamingoes can be seen wading through brackish lagoons looking for shrimp, which gives them their bright and vibrant colors. One of the beaches look green because of olivine crystals and the other is appropriately called Flour Beach a powdery white, made from fine pulverized coral.

Possible Activities: Snorkel, panga ride, hike

Difficulty: Easy/Moderate

Type of Landing: Wet Landing

Highlights: Devil’s Crown - a wide array of colorful fish species – king angel fish, balloon fish, yellow tail grunts, white-tipped sharks, hammerheads, eagle rays, sea turtles, sea lions and more. Cormorant Point – flamingoes, green olivine crystal beach, coral beach, pintail ducks, large-billed fly catchers, several finches, green turtle nesting area, and stilts.

Post Office Bay/Baroness Lookout Point

Post Office Bay: A completely human influential site, Post Office Bay is the first official post office created by passing whalers in the 1700’s. To this day visitors continue the tradition as many leave addressed messages on post cards in the barrel to be sent by future visitors while picking up post cards left behind by previous visitors to send when they return home. It is a fun exchangeable activity many visitors enjoy.

Baroness Lookout Point: On the northern part of the island, Baroness Lookout Point has a beautiful landscape and historic view. It was named after the supposed Austrian Baroness that was the subject of many mysterious disappearances and well-known stories of loathing by those on Floreana.

Possible Activities: Walk, kayak, panga ride, snorkel

Difficulty: Easy/Moderate

Type of Landing: Wet Landing

Highlights: Barrel Post Office – leave/pick up post cards, remnants of Norwegian settlement, beach, sea turtles, amazing landscapes. Snorkel – Sea turtles, corals, rays, colorful assortment of fish species.

DAY 6 (MONDAY)

Santa Cruz – C.C. Fausto Llerena Charles Darwin Research Station

Charles Darwin Research Station: The station conducts many different research projects and provides assistance to other researchers and governmental institutions and agencies, especially the Galapagos National Park. Many of the results are later published online, in magazines, and popular scientific journals. The research station also plays a big part in educating the community and public schools in Galapagos. There is also the longtime running Giant Tortoise restoration program that includes various stages of the giant tortoise from eggs, hatchlings and adults.

Possible Activities: Walk

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Dry

Highlights: See the latest advances in research at the Charles Darwin Research Station. Also see Giant Tortoises and land iguanas.

Transfer to Baltra Airport

Your cruise has officially come to an end. We hope you enjoyed your Galapagos Cruise! We will now transfer you to your scheduled departure from Baltra Airport to mainland Ecuador. Safe travels!

IMPORTANT:

Itineraries and activities are subject to change without prior notice depending on weather conditions, water currents, and sea conditions.

The wildlife described above is not guaranteed to be seen during your visit. Please remember to respect your distance between any and all wildlife.

Please stay on marked trails and heed the directions of your Naturalist Guide