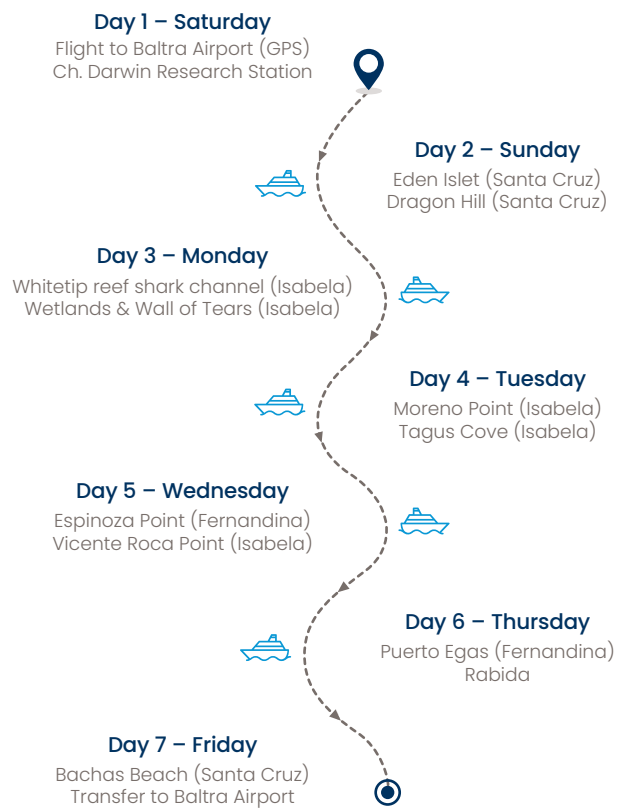




ITINERARY C | 7 DAYS / 6 NIGHTS
Saturday to Friday

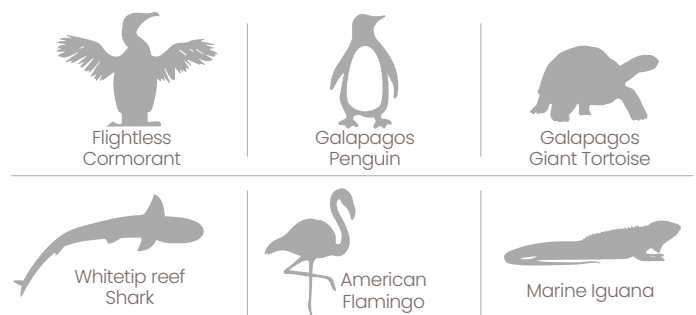


ROUTE



Our 6 night-route runs around the largest, seahorse-shaped island of Isabela, where nature seems to hunt for the greatest. Explore the virtually untouched western end of the Galapagos Islands, which has just been born out of fire. You are right on time for the first thrilling chapters of evolution! Uncover the mystery of how tough pioneer species make barren lava fields habitable; and approach bizarre outgrowths of adaptation as marine iguanas and flightless cormorants. It's true that accessing this remote and isolated region demands longer navigation (mainly overnight), but our stable mega-catamaran enables you to witness 'survival of the fittest', without experiencing it.

HIGH CHANCE OF SPOTTING:



DAY 1 – SATURDAY

AM – Flight to Baltra Airport (GPS)

Upon arrival at Baltra Airport, you will pass through an airport inspection point to insure that no foreign plants or animals are introduced to the islands, as well as to pay the park entrance fee of \$100 (unless it has been prepaid). Your guide will meet you at the airport, help you with your luggage, and escort you on the short bus ride. You will then board the Treasure catamaran where the crew and captain will introduce themselves and you will proceed to your assigned stateroom. Finally, you will enjoy your first lunch on board.

PM – Charles Darwin Station (Santa Cruz)

Although the great majority of Galapagos visitors come here to observe and appreciate natural wonders, it is also interesting to learn how the protection and conservation of the islands are carried out. The main attractions are the National Park information center, the Van Staelen Exhibition Hall, the Breeding and Rearing Center for young tortoises, and adult Galapagos tortoises in captivity.



DAY 2 – SUNDAY

AM – Eden Islet

El Eden is a paradisiacal tuff cone islet, just off the west coast of Santa Cruz (between Whale Bay and Dragon Hill).

This morning we will disembark to the appropriately named Eden Islet. On its coast you will observe land iguanas and sea lions soaking up the sun, as well as seabirds feeding in the nearby mangrove forests. It is a perfect location for swimming activities, as the clear and calm waters will allow you to snorkel along tropical fish, rays, and two species of sharks. Alternatively, a kayak ride would be a memorable experience.

PM – Dragon Hill (Santa Cruz)

The visitor site at Dragon Hill has been open for visits since 1993. This site is located in northwestern Santa Cruz Island and consists of a trail that leads to a hyper-saline lagoon behind the beach, frequented by flamingos, pintail ducks and other species of birds. This site has been repopulated with land iguanas from Seymour, Isabela and Santa Cruz islands. There is a short walk to the Hill, which offers a beautiful view of the bay.

DAY 3 – MONDAY

AM – Whitetip reef shark channel (Isabela)

Just outside the port of Puerto Villamil, a group of islets jut out of the ocean. The jagged black formations, dotted with mangroves and candelabra cacti, are the remains of a lava stream that has ended in the ocean. In this place you can easily observe white-tip reef sharks (called "tintoreras", as the official name of the site) from the shore in the crystal clear turquoise waters. Turtles and graceful eagle rays sometimes glide through this calm channel, as do smaller fish and Galapagos sea lions. After this brief visit, you will continue to the upper part of Isabela.



PM – Wetlands and Wall of Tears (Isabela)

The Villamil beach wall hides the Las Diablas lagoon; the largest lagoon in the Galapagos and also the breeding place of the largest concentration of red flamingos. It is the jewel of Isabela's swampy wetlands, with more salty and brackish lagoons in collapsed lava tubes, and an ancient mangrove forest. These lagoons attract many wintering waterfowl and shorebirds; some of them even come from arctic regions!

Afterwards we will follow a trail to the "The Wall of Tears"; from 1946 to 1959 Isabela was designated a penal colony by the Ecuadorian government. Prisoners were obligated to build a wall with enormous blocks of lava. Due to the arduous labour and harsh conditions in which the prisoners lived, this site is known as "El Muro de las Lagrimas". There are a number of interesting sites along this route, such as the cerro Orchilla, El Estero, Poza Escondida, Playa del Amor and Pozas Verdes. You will certainly be able to see quite a bit of wildlife, including many marine iguanas, a wide variety of birds and, as a highlight, perhaps some giant Galapagos tortoises in the wild.



DAY 4 – TUESDAY

AM – Moreno Point (Isabela)

Punta Moreno is located on the north coast of Isabela Island between the volcano Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul volcano. The trail runs along a lava flow Pahohoe (solidified lava in the form of corrugated or an accordion) into a complex of coastal lagoons, its main attraction are several species of birds which can be found around this lakes and mangroves

PM – Tagus Cove (Isabela)

A tour along the cliffs in a zodiac will give the visitors a good chance to see the Galapagos penguin, the flightless cormorant and other sea birds. From the landing dock it is about a 30 minute hike along the trail up to the top of the cliff from where you can view Darwin Lake, an uplifted ultra-saline lake saltier than the sea. You can also see several volcanoes from this location. Look carefully at the graffiti on the surrounding cliffs of the cove, it has been written by pirates, whalers and buccaneers in past centuries.

DAY 5 – WEDNESDAY

AM – Espinoza Point (Fernandina)

Fernandina is the third largest island in the archipelago and has a single visitor site: Punta Espinoza located at the northeastern tip of the island. Marine iguanas conglomerate in larger groups than in any other island. They bask around in the sand, swim near the shore and sometime block the way at the landing dock. Among the unique species found here, is the Flightless Cormorant. This bird had to adjust its way of survival and perfection its skills of finding food in the ocean. Their wings, tails and feet progressively adapted for swimming. To see these birds, is to witness evolution happening right in front of you.



PM – Vicente Roca Point (Isabela)

Whilst having lunch we will cross the Bolivar Channel for the last time to Vicente Roca Point, just at the mouth of Isabela's seahorse-shape. While entering a dark cave below a spectacular arch, roaring echoes of the waves will accompany you. Just around the corner the collapsed amphitheatre of Volcan Ecuador offers another impressive view. The calmer waters of the coves are well-protected against the ocean swell and are a fairly cold, but great place for snorkelling amongst various species of shark, penguins, puffer fish and even seahorses!



DAY 6 – THURSDAY

AM – Puerto Egas (Santiago)

Puerto Egas is a black beach is located at the west side of Santiago Island. Volcanic tuff deposits have favored the formation of this special black sand beach and this is the main attraction of the Island. This site is called Puerto Egas, because there was an attempt of company of Hector Egas, to start the exploitation of salt, which failed because the price of salt on the continent was very cheap, and did not justify its exploitation in Galapagos. The project was abandoned and they left their infrastructure.



PM – Rabida

After a wet landing on the remarkable red beach of Rábida, there are two short guided walks. Iron oxide particles give rocks and sand their reddish color. The beach wall has a shallow lagoon fringed with green; This oasis is the most fertile spot on the otherwise barren islet, which is covered in palo santo trees. The salty lagoon attracts all kinds of waterfowl, including pintails and sometimes red flamingos. Many species of songbirds hide and breed among the evergreen foliage of the surrounding mangroves. One of the most outstanding attractions is the important breeding colony of brown pelicans, the only pelicans in the world that dive.

DAY 7 – FRIDAY

AM - Las Bachas Beach (Santa Cruz)

These two small beaches are located to the west of Black Turtle Cove, in Santa Cruz. Its sand consists of decomposed corals, which makes it white and soft. This makes it a favorite nesting site for sea turtles. Behind one of the beaches there are small lagoons, where flamingos and other shore birds, such as Galapagos gulls and lapwings, can be seen from time to time. On the second beach, which is the widest, you can explore the remains of two abandoned warships. In World War II, these were left behind by the US, as the island of Baltra was used as a strategic point for the protection of the Panama Canal. The name Las Bachas originated at this time, since the word with which the North Americans called these two boats, "barges", was difficult for the local inhabitants to pronounce and they ended up making it Spanish.

Transfer out to Baltra Airport (GPS)

Transfer to Baltra Airport (GPS) for your flight back to Guayaquil or Quito.



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