



GALAPAGOS ISLAND HOPPING JOURNEY 6 DAYS

Experience the best of San Cristobal and Santa Cruz, including their beautiful landscapes, amazing wildlife, and laid-back beach towns, then get a taste of the remote as you visit two of the unpopulated islands of the Galapagos. The tour is led by top naturalist guides who add insight to the activities and surroundings. Enjoy the attractions of four very different islands in only six days!

Trip Highlights:

- Snorkel with sharks, marine iguanas, rays, and sea lions
- Walk amongst giant Galapagos tortoises in their natural habitat
- Relax on beautiful beaches with playful sea lions and countless marine iguanas
- Embark on exciting day trips to two of the tiny, uninhabited islands of the Galapagos
- Enjoy the exceptional service, comfort, and cuisine of the finest hotels in the Galapagos
- Top naturalist guides serve as your liaison to the local culture and wildlife
- Protect the environment with our sustainable, eco-friendly activities and green hotels
- Support the local economy and get in touch with the local vibe with our land-based model

Effort: Easy. No experience necessary.

Activities: Snorkeling, hiking, relaxing on the beach, and wildlife interaction.

DAY 1: Interpretation center, walk and snorkel Tijeretas

After a morning flight from the mainland to San Cristobal Island, we continue to our hotel for an energizing lunch, introductions, and a short overview of our trip. Our Galapagos adventure starts with a visit to the local Interpretation Center, where we learn about the unique wildlife, geology, natural history, and social dynamics of the Galapagos.

Now that we know a little more about the islands, we make our way to our first destination, with a relaxed walk to Frigate Hill along natural lava rock trails. Along the way, our guides will provide insight on the Galapagos cotton, palo santo, acacia, and cacti surrounding us, as well as the blue-footed boobies, frigate birds, pelicans, herons, gulls, warblers, mockingbirds, and finches who make this unique landscape their home. We'll also take in scenic views of the sea cliffs and the vibrant beach town of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno.

On the way back, we stop for a refreshing snorkel at beautiful Carola Beach, where we will swim with sea turtles and sea lions and take in a gorgeous sunset.

We recommend you set out to explore the laid-back town and take a leisurely walk down the boardwalk to view the colony of endemic Galapagos sea lions right next door. (L, D)



DAY 2: Snorkel the northern coast of San Cristobal

Today we take to the water with our snorkels and fins to meet some of San Cristobal's

marine residents. We hug the coastline on the way to Isla Lobos, searching the coves and cliffs for sea turtles, sea lions, frigate birds, blue-footed boobies, and Nazca boobies. In these tranquil waters, we'll swim with spotted eagle rays, golden rays, 3 Galapagos sharks, starfish, clams, and seemingly infinite species of tropical fish. We might even have the chance to spot some hammerhead sharks! We may visit Leon Dormido (Kicker Rock), Punta Pitt or Cerro Brujo. The visiting site will depend on the week day and Galapagos National Park regulations. After a full day spent exploring the seas, we head back to our hotel for a delicious gourmet dinner and a laid-back evening overlooking the bay. (B, L, D)

DAY 3: Explore the highlands, visit research station

A refreshing speedboat ride takes us onward to Santa Cruz Island. If we're lucky, whales or dolphins might join us for the trip. After checking in, we head to the highlands, this time to El Chato, home to scores of Galapagos giant tortoises. The sensation of walking amongst these ancient creatures, which can live to over 175 years old, is indescribable. The giant tortoises share their habitat with pintail ducks, Darwin's finches, frigate birds, egrets, and the vibrant vermilion flycatcher.

Our next stop is a group of cavernous lava tunnels frequented by the pirates that once roamed the Galapagos and, according to legend, a perfect hiding spot for their plundered Inca gold. We then carry on to Los Gemelos, a pair of massive volcanic sinkholes at the high point of the island. We explore the surrounding forest of endemic Scalesia trees covered in ferns and epiphytes, home to the beautiful but shy short-eared owl. This quiet highland forest exudes a still, spooky feeling.

In the afternoon, we stop for a visit at the Charles Darwin Research Center. Scientists at the Research Center rear endemic plants and animals for educational, scientific, and conservation purposes. Here we'll learn about the ongoing conservation efforts to protect the future of the Galapagos. After a full day, we make our way back to the hotel, where we sit down to a delicious dinner and enjoy secluded views of the bay, coastline, and town. (B, L, D)

DAYS 4 & 5: Wildlife tours to nearby small islands

For the next two days, we'll embark from Santa Cruz on day trips to two of the nearby

small islands: Plazas, Bartolome, or North Seymour. Boats depart to different islands on a weekly schedule, so our destinations depend on the days of travel. The boat rides should take between one to two hours each way, and we'll enjoy activities like hiking, snorkeling, bird watching, and natural history interpretation. We'll enjoy delicious breakfasts and dinners at our hotel each day, and field lunches during our day trips. (B,L,D)

Small island destinations:

Plazas: The Plaza Islands are a pair of crescent-shaped islands off the east coast of Santa Cruz. The natural, sheltered bay formed between them has very calm waters and is home to a large sea lion population. We'll spend some time snorkeling with these rambunctious locals before landing on South Plaza Island and heading out for a scenic hike. South Plaza is famous for its diverse flora and fauna, including land iguanas, red-billed tropicbirds, and prickly pear cacti.

Bartolome: Bartolome Island is a volcanic islet just off the east coast of Santiago Island, to the north of Santa Cruz. Bartolome offers some of the most beautiful lava formations in the Islands. Before hiking to the top of Bartolome's volcanic cone, we'll do some snorkeling around Pinnacle Rock, where we'll see sharks, sea turtles, penguins, and



thousands of tropical fish. From the top of the cone, we'll enjoy magnificent views of Santiago Island, the turquoise water, and the surrounding splatter cones.

North Seymour: North Seymour Island is a small island located to the north of Baltra Island. It is one of the view Galapagos Islands not of volcanic origin, instead created by seismic uplift. The main attraction here is the incredible bird life. North Seymour is home to large colonies of blue-footed boobies and magnificent frigate birds. Here we will observe these birds hunt, interact, and best

of all, engage in flamboyant mating rituals. During a short hike inland, we will also observe palo santo, land iguanas, and many other bird species.

DAY 6: Transfer to baltra for flight to mainland

Finally, it's time bid a fond farewell as we transfer to Baltra Island for our return flight to the mainland. Your guest coordinator will facilitate your airport transfer. (B)

INCLUDED	NOT INCLUDED	NOTE
Accommodations in comfort or premium hotels, all meals as listed (B = breakfast, L = lunch, D=dinner), private bilingual Galapagos naturalist guide, shared bilingual guide for small island day trips, all sea and land transportation.	Airfare to/from Galapagos, Galapagos National Park Entrance Fee, Galapagos Transit Card and restaurant beverages.	<i>This itinerary is subject to change without notice due to seasonal changes, inclement weather conditions, and adjustments of Galapagos National Park policy.</i>

▶ IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Boat travel time: Two to three hours per boating day

Season: Year-round

Weather: During the warm season from January to May, air temperature is around 77 to 83 F (25 to 28 C) at sea level. During the cool season from June to December, air temperature is around 70 to 75 F (21 to 24 C) at sea level. Temperature decreases with altitude.

Water temperature: During the warm season from January to May, water temperature hovers around 77 F (25 C). During the cool season from June to December, average water temperature is about 72 F (22 C). Water temperature also varies significantly by location.

Suggested items to pack: Walking shoes, rain jacket, water bottle, non-cotton trekking clothes, sunblock, sun hat, and repellent.

CONTACT US: info@neotropicexpeditions.com
 PHONE: (593-2) 604.6800/ TOLL FREE: 1-888.234.3413
www.neotropicexpeditions.com

