



NEOTROPIC
EXPEDITIONS

| *Beyond Adventure*

GALAPAGOS
JOURNEYS



GALAPAGOS WALKING JOURNEY 7 DAYS

Hike into an incredible world of natural history! Our walking tour is focused on world-class hikes through the diverse ecosystems of the Galapagos. Head off the beaten path through landscapes of lava rock, picturesque coastlines, endemic forests, and volcanic highlands. Along the way, you'll meet the famous wildlife of the Galapagos, including giant tortoises, marine iguanas, sea lions, penguins, frigate birds, blue-footed boobies, and endemic plants. In addition to hiking, we'll snorkel the vibrant seas and relax on the pristine white sand beaches of these enchanted islands. Our naturalist guide will be your liaison with nature and make sure every activity is fun and safe.

Hike the wonders of the Galapagos and get in touch with amazing wildlife with the Galapagos Walking Tour!

Trip Highlights:

- Get off the beaten path on remote trails to discover incredible places most tourists miss.
- Unique hikes take you into an incredible variety of environments and ecosystems.
- Hike the rim of a massive, active caldera and discover amazing lava formations.
- Stroll down sandy beaches filled with sea lions and marine iguanas.
- Walk through endemic Scaevola and Miconia forests unlike anywhere else on earth.
- Watch frigate birds bathe in the only permanent freshwater lake in the Galapagos.
- Snorkel crystal-clear waters with sea turtles, sea lions, sharks, rays, and tropical fish.
- Learn about the evolutionary history of endemic wildlife from native naturalist guides.
- Small group size ensures a high level of personal attention and an enhanced experience.
- Protect the environment – we value sustainable practices in all aspects of our tours.
- Support the local economy and get in touch with the local vibe with our land-based tours.
- Flow between islands and activities with minimal transit time and maximum contact.
- Enjoy the exceptional service, facilities, and dining of the finest hotels in the Galapagos.

Effort: Easy to moderate. No experience required.

Activities: Hiking, swimming, snorkeling, and wildlife interaction.



DAY 1: Interpretation Center, hike Frigate Hill

We pick you up at the airport and head to our Hotel, where we share a quick briefing over lunch. Before heading into the wild, we stop to visit the Interpretation Center, where we will learn about the unique natural history, human history, and social dynamics of the Galapagos.

After learning about the natural history of the Galapagos, and how San Cristobal fits in, it's time for our first hike to see for ourselves! We set out toward Frigate Hill along trails of lava rock. Along the way, our guides will teach us about the Galapagos cotton, palo santo, acacia, and cacti surrounding the trail, as well as blue-footed boobies, pelicans, herons, gulls, warblers, mockingbirds, finches, and the frigate birds that lend Frigate Hill its name. As we gain elevation, we will take in postcard-worthy views of the rocky coastline and the tranquil town of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno.

We stop at beautiful Carola Beach to cool off in the calm water. Here we can swim and snorkel with sea turtles, sea lions, and marine iguanas and take in a beautiful sunset. As evening sets, we return to our hotel for a delicious seafood dinner in the oceanfront dining room. After dinner, we take a short stroll from the hotel down the boardwalk to visit the local colony of endemic Galapagos sea lions. (-, L, D)

DAY 2: Highland volcano hike & North Coast snorkeling

We start our second day with a morning exploration of the coastal bays and coves of San Cristobal's north coast, full of blue footed boobies, frigate birds, sea lions, and sea turtles. 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.

In the afternoon, we will go on a short hike to the only permanent freshwater lake in the Galapagos. Fresh water is necessary for the local frigate birds to survive as they must wash the salt from their feathers in order to remain light enough to fly. The lake lies in an extinct volcanic crater and is home to a host of bird life, including gallinules, white-cheeked pintail ducks, and magnificent frigate birds. The walk provides superb views as well as an introduction to the Galapagos highland ecosystem and its endemic plant species. After a full day of hiking and snorkeling, we head back to our hotel for dinner and a well-earned rest. (B, L, D)



DAY 3: Hike the coastline & explore Tintoreras

Today we take a short small aircraft flight on to Isabela, the largest island in the Galapagos.

Isabela is one of the most volcanically active spots on the planet, with six active volcanoes continually forming the island. After a quick flight over, we embark on what is perhaps the most scenically varied hike in the Galapagos. The trail will take us along white sand beaches, shady mangroves, brackish lagoons, and a cavernous lava tube. Along the way, we'll see giant tortoises, flamingos, and other wildlife.

Our next stop is Tintoreras, a group of small, rocky islets that conceal many hidden coves and beaches. The main attraction of Tintoreras is the peculiar, endemic Galapagos penguin, and we'll also see reef sharks, sea turtles, and sea lions. At the end of the day, we'll retire to our Hotel, where we can relax in the modern infinity pool, stroll down the neighboring white sand beach, and wander the sand streets of Puerto Villamil. (B, L, D)

DAY 4: Active volcano trek in Isabela's highlands

Today we head into Isabela's volcanic highlands on one of the most impressive hikes in the Galapagos. After driving up until the road ends, we don our daypacks and hike into a surreal world of volcanic terrain and endemic plants. As we hike up, airy views of the surrounding volcanoes and sea are revealed. When we arrive at the rim of Volcan Sierra Negra, we are rewarded with a truly one-of-a-kind vista. This is the second largest active caldera on the planet, six miles across at its widest point. We'll continue our hike along the rim of this enormous crater, taking in the view.

The next leg of our hike continues on to the otherworldly landscape of Volcan Chico, where spectacular lava formations are painted in vibrant hues by sulfur deposits

and puffing fumaroles vent volcanic gases. As we head back, we stop for lunch at an idyllic restaurant on the slopes of Sierra Negra that also acts as a private giant tortoise reserve. After spending our day in this volcanic terrain, we return to paradise on earth to spend our last afternoon on Isabela soaking up the island atmosphere of Puerto Villamil and relaxing on the beach. (B, L, D)



DAY 5: El Chato, lava tunnels, volcanic sinkholes

After an early breakfast, we will go to Santa Cruz Island. Along the way, we keep a lookout for whales and dolphins. We head to El Chato nature reserve in the Santa Cruz highlands to find the giant tortoise in its natural habitat. It is truly an honor to hike alongside these fascinating giants, who can live to be over 175 years old. We will also see pintail ducks, finches, frigate birds, egrets, and the dazzling vermillion flycatcher. Next, we continue on to some incredible lava tunnels, and as we walk into their depths, our guides regale us with stories of the pirates who once used these caves to hide from Spanish ships and stash their booty of Inca gold. We then carry on to Los Gemelos, two deep volcanic sinkholes at the high point of the island, created by the collapse of huge pockets of magma. Along the way, we will

hike through a forest of endemic Scalesia trees, home to the elusive short-eared owl. The Scalesia trees are covered with ferns and epiphytes, and the quiet forest exudes an eerie feel. (B, L, D)

DAY 6: Hike Cerro Crocker and Tortuga Bay

This morning, we set out on a hike into the incredible cloud forests of Santa Cruz. Our objective is Cerro Crocker, the highest point on the island at 864 meters (2,834 feet). On the way up, we will pass through another endemic forest, this one of Miconia trees, keeping an eye out for giant tortoises and vermillion flycatchers. The cloud forest is a particularly unique ecosystem that has a mysterious feeling and lush greenery due to the humidity that forms dense clouds of mist. As we arrive at the summit, we can admire the picturesque coastline far below. After enjoying the view, we move on and attempt to summit the tiny but steep Volcan Puntudo, a peculiar, symmetrical cinder cone that provides for a strenuous but very enjoyable climb. As we hike, we get a magnificent view of the Media Luna crater.



After a nourishing lunch, we will explore the Charles Darwin Research Station to learn about conservation and management efforts in the archipelago. Then we continue our adventure to Tortuga Bay, one of the most beautiful beaches in the Galapagos. Its calm waters and soft, fine sand make Tortuga Bay a preferred nesting site for the black turtle, hence its name. The hike there takes us through a unique dry forest, where we will find

flocks of birds and many interesting plants. We enjoy the rest of the afternoon relaxing on the white sand beach. (B, L, D)

DAY 7: Transfer to Baltra and return flight

Today we say goodbye to the Galapagos Islands, we finally transfer to Baltra Island for our airport connection back to the continent. (B)

INCLUDED	NOT INCLUDED	NOTE
Accommodations in comfort or premium hotels, all meals as listed (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner), bilingual Galapagos naturalist guide, bilingual adventure guide, all sea, land, and inter-island air transportation.	Airfare to/from Galapagos, Galapagos National Park Entrance Fee, Galapagos Transit Card, restaurant beverages and tips.	<p><i>This itinerary is subject to change without notice due to seasonal changes, inclement weather conditions, and adjustments of Galapagos National Park policy.</i></p> <p><i>The Weight restriction per person for the Inner Island flight from San Cristobal to Isabela is 25 pounds in one piece of luggage.</i></p>

▶ IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Boat travel time: Two hours

Small aircraft flight time: 40 minutes

Hike duration: Two to four hours per hike

Season: Year-round

Altitude: 0 – 3,688 feet (1,124 meters) above sea level

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: Hiking shoes, rain jacket, water bottle, non-cotton trekking clothes, sunblock, sun hat, and repellent.

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