

Island-Based Wildlife Exploration

Galápagos Wildlife Walking Adventure



Classic
JOURNEYS™



“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

— *Travel + Leisure*

“Best Wildlife Encounter” - AFAR magazine

Blue-footed boobies do their slap-happy dance for you. Galápagos penguins dart under your sea kayak. A pod of sea turtles performs their graceful ballet around you. Baby sea lions paddle up for a better look. The giant land tortoises? They're close enough to touch. If you go wild for wildlife, you've found it. AFAR magazine named our Galápagos trips "Best Wildlife Encounter"... in the world. Join our island-based adventure to skip the cramped confines (and back and forth zodiac rides several times a day) of a cruise ship to get up close and personal with the creatures you came to see. Naturalist guides lead you to extraordinary wildlife experiences, minus the flocks of tourists. You have abundant chances to walk, kayak, snorkel - and sip the occasional poolside cocktail. Then we take you a few steps farther - to the rim of the world's second largest volcanic caldera, and much more. Throughout, you stay in luxury waterfront boutique hotels. And you can feel great knowing that we follow 'Leave No Trace' environmental standards and our close ties to the islands means this Classic Journey supports more than 50 local residents and their families.

DAY 1

GUAYAQUIL

- Relax or explore Guayaquil
- Stroll through colorful neighborhoods

Situated along the beautiful Guayas River, cosmopolitan Guayaquil is the largest city in the country. In addition to being an active port city, it's filled with scenic and interesting landmarks that include the Metropolitan Cathedral, Tower Morisca, and Malecon 2000. Stretch your legs, you can go for a stroll through colorful neighborhoods, like Las Peñas, and charming parks, such as Las Iguanas. When you're hungry, follow in the footsteps of the indigenous cultures who have for centuries-old brought together ingredients from the Andes, Amazon and Pacific coast to create mouth-watering dishes to enjoy at street markets, local eateries and highly regarded restaurants.

Overnight: Guayaquil

DAY 2

GUAYAQUIL / SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

- Transfer to Baltra Island and explore Santa Cruz
- Venture into the highlands to interact with the 500-pound giant tortoises
- Accept an invitation to a coffee plantation for a tasting

Fueled from breakfast, you'll transfer to the Guayaquil airport to meet your guide at the departures check-in counter. Together you'll travel onwards to Baltra and begin your Galapagos adventure on Santa Cruz Island, where you'll have the remarkable experience of walking among some of the oldest animals in the world.

The island is home to giant tortoises that can grow up to 500 pounds and live for 175 years or more. To see them, follow your guides along a scenic trail to the tortoises' natural habitat in the highlands at El Chato Reserve. It's an easy walk of an hour or so. Happily, it's too far for cruise ship passengers on a tight schedule. (They settle for a smaller crowded site near the coast.) So, when you reach the watering hole, it's just you with a couple of dozen tortoises. There are no fences or moats between you and these amazing creatures, and your naturalist guides see to it that you get so near that you can hear them breathe and chomp on grass. It's a close encounter like you've never had before.

The same rich volcanic soil that the animals love is perfect for growing coffee, sugar cane, and fruit, as you'll discover on a visit to a family-owned plantation owned by our friend Adrianno. You'll spend time with the family and workers, learn about their organic, sustainable operation, and taste products grown and made on the property.

Your day ends at your waterfront resort. Claim a chair under an umbrella on the bayside terrace. It's a perfect spot to sip on something cold and watch the world go by.

Overnight: Santa Cruz

Meals: L

DAY 3

SANTA FE ISLAND

- Snorkel and barbecue
- Explore one of the most unique of the Galápagos islands

From Santa Cruz Island your cinematic view stretches to Santa Fe Island, the oldest of the Galápagos islands and a terrific microcosm of what the archipelago is all about. Santa Fe has its own species of iguana that's found nowhere else. And, it's home to groves of Opuntia cactus that look like trees with huge, prickly paddle-shaped leaves. As you'll find when you join your guide to boat to it for a day of snorkeling and barbecue, the island is a non-stop photo op with plenty of chances to spot an incredibly wide variety of wildlife, from sea lions and sea turtles to Galápagos hawks, Nazca boobies and so much more.

After an incredible day, your captain drops you back in Puerto Ayora in the late afternoon where there is time to relax or shop and explore the town before dinner.

Overnight: Santa Cruz

Meals: B, L

DAY 4

PUNTA ESTRADA / TORTUGA BAY

- Paddle your kayak along towering lava walls or enjoy a seaside hike
- Walk to a snow-white beach with excellent bird and animal watching options, including sally light-foot crabs and herons

If you're an early riser, join your guide for an optional walk following a footpath that will lead you to the volcanic cliffs of Las Grietas. The stretch of emerald green water is fed underground by a river from one end and ocean water from the other. The series of volcanic crevices were formed during the cooling of molten lava.

Prefer to sleep in? That's fine too. The turquoise water that laps at your front door leads right to Punta Estrada and Divine Bay. You can follow an easy seaside trail with great wildlife spotting. Or, if you like, you can hop into a sea kayak and paddle through towering lava channels. The water is so clear that you can see the manta rays and white-tipped reef sharks gliding below.

An afternoon walk through a unique dry forest pays off with some of the most beautiful waters you've ever seen. Tortuga Bay is widely regarded as one of the best beaches in the Galápagos. The snow-white sand is football-field wide and the waters are great for a swim or even little wave-riding. And as you know by now, there's always a good chance of spotting marine iguanas, light-footed crabs, herons and other incredible wildlife. And, if you prefer an easy afternoon, you can opt to shop and explore the town of Puerto Ayora.

Overnight: Santa Cruz

Meals: B, D

DAY 5

ISABELA ISLAND

- Come face to face with Galapagos penguins
- Spot blue-footed boobies
- Kayak with baby sea lions and green sea turtles

This morning we transfer to Isabela, the largest of the Galápagos Islands. Isabela straddles the equator, and at one million years old, it is also the youngest of the islands.

There's no waiting for your first wildlife sightings! This afternoon, you have two options for how to get close to the amazing wildlife. Enjoy a scenic walk along mangroves and wetlands that are home to spectacular pink flamingos, iguanas the color of the black lava rocks and an incredible variety of migratory birds. Or, take to the water to kayak with sea lions, green sea turtles, and marine iguanas while keeping your eyes sharp for blue-footed boobies in the trees along the shores as well as watching how they hover over the sea and dive for fish.

This evening, about the time when the cruise crowd chugs back out to their ships, you'll be relaxing at your boutique hotel.

Overnight: Isabela

Meals: B, D

DAY 6

VOLCAN SIERRA NEGRA

- Explore one of the largest volcanic craters in the world
- Refresh yourself over a delicious lunch of local specialties at a private hacienda in the highlands

The islands are some of the most volcanically active spots on earth and Isabela was actually formed by the merger of six volcanos. Today, you'll experience that terrain and get a firsthand look at how millennia of eruptions and lava flows have formed the unique Galápagos habitat.

You won't forget this morning's walk along the rim of 500,000-year-old Volcan Sierra Negra. Up here, you get one of the most spectacular views in the islands. The six-mile-wide crater is one of the largest active calderas on the planet, and the scale is awesome. Our guides like to say that with its orange, red and yellow lava formations and puffing fumaroles this is more like walking on Mars than Earth. But the island is surprisingly lush at this altitude. Ferns and papaya trees and angel's trumpets (with blossoms a foot long or more) line the trail. Darwin's finches, hawks, flycatchers and many other birds supply a natural soundtrack.

DAILY ITINERARY

Galápagos: Island-Based Wildlife Exploration | Wildlife Walking Adventure

After refueling over a leisurely lunch at our friends' private hacienda, you have time in the late afternoon to relax by the beach with the local colony of sea lions, or even to stroll the lazy beach town and soak up island life.

Overnight: Isabela

Meals: B, L

DAY 7

LAS TINTORERAS

- Follow an incredible nature path past white sand beaches, wetlands, lava formations, and mangrove forest
- Explore a cluster of small inlets from the water
- Spot blue-footed boobies, frigate birds, iguanas and the finches that inspired the theory of evolution

Charles Darwin and the HMS Beagle were in the Galapagos during September and October 1835, and Darwin explored several of the islands, collecting the Galapagos species he'd use in his research on his return to England. Isabela was Darwin's final stop before he and the Beagle set sail for Tahiti.

This morning, join your guide on a trail that's the most scenically varied in the Galápagos. Your walk takes you past white sand beaches, wetlands, lava formations, and mangrove forest. Along the way, the wildlife spotting opportunities are incredibly varied, from pink flamingos to giant land tortoises. Like Darwin, you're likely to spot blue-footed boobies, frigate birds, iguanas and the finches that helped inspire the theory of evolution.

This afternoon, stroll to the dock where all of your gear - masks, snorkels, flippers, wet suits - is ready and waiting for you. With your naturalist guide, you'll board a panga (a comfortable, flat bottom fishing boat) to explore Las Tintoreras, a cluster of small islets that are one of the few spots where Galápagos penguins live. The birds are unafraid and even curious - and they're nearly foolproof photo subjects! You'll spot them relaxing on the lava rocks, and if you'd like, grab a mask and snorkel and waterproof camera to see them at water level as they dive into the clear blue waters of the lagoon. It's an incredible experience. The waters of the lagoon also draw green sea turtles, vivid reef fish and fearsome-looking but utterly harmless marine iguanas.

Overnight: Santa Isabela

Meals: B, D

DAY 8

DEPARTURE

- Part company with a return flight to mainland Ecuador

After breakfast, we transfer to Baltra Island for your return flight back to mainland Ecuador.

Meals: B



Tour Hotels



Wyndham Guayaquil

Situated just steps from the historic Santa Ana Hill and its famous Lighthouse, this luxury high-rise hotel offers an ideal location near Guayaquil's many attractions.

OVERNIGHT: Guayaquil | **NIGHTS:** 1



Angermeyer Waterfront Inn

Built of native lava rock and driftwood, this first-class hotel is situated right on the waterfront. Guests enjoy peace and total privacy, plus a perfect chance to experience what the owners call the true 'Galápagos spirit'.

OVERNIGHT: Santa Cruz, Galapagos | **NIGHTS:** 3



Iguana Crossing

The ocean laps at the front door. There's nothing but National Park (with a live volcano) out the back. This hotel is cool, very close to nature and eco-minded. Amenities include a swimming pool, a roof-deck Jacuzzi and its own excellent restaurant.

OVERNIGHT: Isabela, Galapagos | **NIGHTS:** 3

Tour Dates & Prices

To see the full list of dates and prices for this tour, go to our website by clicking [here](#).

Want to travel with just your group on a date of your choosing? Visit [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE](https://www.classicjourneys.com/private) to learn more about Private Journeys.

Trip Essentials

TRIP LENGTH	8 Days, 7 Nights
START	Wyndham Guayaquil - hotel lobby, Guayaquil, Ecuador
END	Baltra Airport , Baltra Island - Santa Cruz, Ecuador
TERRAIN	Easy to moderate on good trails and coastal paths.

What's Included

- Award-winning ocean-front boutique hotels that provide you unlimited access to the wildlife you came to experience
- All breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners
- All activities in the itinerary, including gear for snorkeling and kayaking
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

- Invisible Check-In
- Privileged Access Events

READY TO BOOK?
CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION

Or give us a call

1-800-200-3887

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST
moreinfo@classicjourneys.com

AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to [a whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

**Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

THE Classic Journeys Difference

HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.



At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!


President & Founder



You can expect the highest standards:



Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Galápagos...

- Checking off your bucket list as you spot each of the Galápagos Big Five
- Tasting the brew at a 250-acre, family-owned coffee plantation
- Snorkeling, sea-kayaking and swimming with sea lion pups in the in their natural environment
- Staying in eco-luxe hotels rather than being penned up in a cruise ship offshore
- Exploring with the best naturalist, who always know where to find the giant tortoises, blue-footed boobies and Galápagos penguins