

WILDLIFE WALKING ADVENTURE

# Galápagos

## Island-Based Wildlife Exploration

CLASSIC JOURNEYS  
THE WORLD'S FINEST WALKING TOURS





“

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

TRAVEL + LEISURE

## Awarded “Best Wildlife Encounter” - AFAR magazine

AFAR magazine named our Galápagos trip the “Best Wildlife Encounter” in the world. 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. Join our island-based adventure to skip the cramped confines of a cruise ship and get up close to the creatures you came to see. Naturalist guides lead you to extraordinary wildlife experiences, minus the flocks of tourists. Enjoy getting to walk, kayak, snorkel – and sip on a poolside cocktail at your waterfront boutique hotel. We proudly follow ‘Leave No Trace’ environmental standards and support more than 50 local residents.

## The Classic Journeys Difference

- ACTIVE HIKING & WALKING
- LOCAL WELL-CONNECTED GUIDES
- PREMIERE HOTELS
- FOODIE FOCUSED
- HANDCRAFTED TRIP DESIGN
- MORE IS INCLUDED

## What's Included

- All breakfasts, 5 lunches and 1 dinner
- 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
- Award-winning ocean-front boutique hotels that provide you unlimited access to the wildlife you came to experience

## Above & Beyond Benefits

### → INVISIBLE CHECK-IN

When your group arrives, we whisk you and your bags to your room immediately. No waiting – no tipping.

### → PRIVILEGED ACCESS EVENTS

One-of-a-kind access to remarkable people, places and activities arranged just for you.

## Terrain

Easy to moderate on good trails and coastal paths.

CLASSIC JOURNEYS ITINERARIES MAY BE SUBJECT TO SLIGHT CHANGES, HOTEL SUBSTITUTIONS, AND OTHER MODIFICATIONS.

DAY 1 »

## Quito

Embark on your Galapagos adventure with ease and convenience. Whether you choose to fly into Quito or Guayaquil, you're ensured a seamless and turnkey experience throughout.

Quito, the capital city of Ecuador, is a captivating blend of history, culture, architectural and culinary delights. With the day at leisure, you can relax at your hotel, or explore on your own its legacy that dates to pre-Columbian times, as you'll see by the Incan ruins and indigenous markets. The heart of the city pulsates with Spanish colonial architecture, notably seen in the majestic Plaza de la Independencia and the ornate interiors of the Iglesia de San Francisco. And its rich cultural tapestry is woven through its vibrant neighborhoods, including La Ronda, where traditional music and dance echo through cobblestone streets. If you're a foodie, you'll love its culinary diversity, from street food delicacies like empanadas and ceviche to Ecuadorian specialties like llapingachos and locro de papa in local eateries.

OVERNIGHT: QUITO

DAY 2 »

## Galapagos / Santa Cruz Island

Fueled from breakfast, you'll make a short transfer to Quito airport for your flight to the Galápagos. After arriving on Baltra Island, you'll begin your Galápagos adventure on Santa Cruz Island, where you'll have the chance to see the islands' geologic history up close on foot at eye level.

Begin your time on Santa Cruz with a walk that surrounds you in stunning natural beauty. The path winds through a wild landscape of volcanic rocks and cacti as you follow a footpath to the lava cliffs of Las Grietas. The stretch of emerald green water at the base of the cliffs is fed by an underground river from one end and ocean water from the other. The impressive series of volcanic caves were formed during the cooling of molten lava. This is a great opportunity to spot blue-footed boobies flying overhead and diving for fish.

Later in the afternoon, you can choose your adventure. Get a scientific grounding into the Galápagos' fascinating history with a visit to the Charles Darwin Research Center. Here you'll learn all about the incredible species that call the islands home, including some of the oldest animals in the world, the giant tortoise, as well as Darwin's favorite finch. Or, choose waterside. Go for a swim or relax under an umbrella with a water view, sipping on something cold and watching the world go by.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: SANTA CRUZ

DAY 3 »

## Santa Fe Island

From Santa Cruz Island your cinematic view stretches to Santa Fe Island, at four million years the oldest of the Galápagos islands and a terrific microcosm of what the archipelago is all about. Santa Fe has its own species of land iguanas that are 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 barbeque, the island is a non-stop wildlife immersion with plenty of opportunities to interact with an incredibly wide variety of wildlife, from sea lions and sea turtles to Galápagos hawks, Nazca boobies and so much more.

Mid-afternoon, your captain navigates the boat back to Santa Cruz Island, but not before anchoring along the way at Playa Escondida. This beautiful and isolated beach can only be accessed by water. Join your guides on a naturalist walk to spot Blue Footed Boobies and Sally light foot crabs. And then plunge back into the water to snorkel with spotted eagle rays, golden rays, sea turtles and even white-tipped sharks that inhabit this pristine area.

An additional benefit of exploring with Classic Journeys is our regenerative approach to travel, where we work with an amazing family of locals to make sure that you receive the most genuine and authentic experience while also keeping money in the local economy. Today is a real-life example, as our boat captain used to be a fisherman who now uses his expert knowledge of these waters to introduce you to the octopus and other sea life he knows so well. (And ask us to send you the YouTube link to the video of a group of Classic Journeys guests rescuing two sea turtles caught by illegal fishing lines. You'll catch yourself smiling through tears of joy!)

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: SANTA CRUZ

DAY 4 »

## Santa Cruz Highlands

This morning after breakfast, 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. And you'll see them on foot at eye level in a way that is truly 'only with Classic Journeys'. Follow your guides along a scenic trail to the tortoises' natural habitat in the highlands at El Chato Reserve. Happily, the walk of an hour or so is too far for cruise ship passengers on their tight schedules. (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 the family-owned plantation of 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.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: SANTA CRUZ

DAY 5 »

## Isabela Island

This morning, transfer to Isabela, the largest of the Galápagos Islands. Isabela straddles the equator, and at one million years old, is also the youngest of the islands. There's no waiting for wildlife sightings. This afternoon, you experience two ways to get close to the amazing wildlife. First, enjoy a scenic, naturalist 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. Next, 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 cruise passengers zodiac back out to their ships, you'll be relaxing at your perfectly-sited boutique hotel.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: ISABELA

DAY 6 »

## Volcan Sierra Negra

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 on foot at eye level as you 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. Verdant ferns, 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.

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.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: ISABELA

DAY 7 »

## Las Tintoreras

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, 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 genuinely an incredible experience. The waters of the lagoon also draw green sea turtles, vividly-colored reef fish and fearsome-looking but utterly harmless marine iguanas.

This afternoon, 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 forests. Along the way, the wildlife spotting opportunities are equally 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.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: ISABELA

DAY 8 »

## Departure

After a leisurely morning, transfer to Baltra Island for your return flight back to mainland Ecuador.

MEALS: B



## Tour Hotels



### [GO Quito Hotel](#)

This perfectly-sited hotel boasts the most spectacular views of Quito. Designed with natural beauty and inspired by the cultural richness of the Andes, this property offers comfortable rooms with modern amenities and excellent service.

NIGHTS: 1 nights



### [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'.

NIGHTS: 3 nights



### [Iguana Crossing](#)

The ocean laps at this beautiful eco-friendly hotel, with beach access out front and a National Park nearby. Enjoy staying in their comfortable rooms with modern amenities and swimming in their outdoor pool or roof-deck jacuzzi.

NIGHTS: 3 nights



# Arrival & Departure

## → ARRIVAL DETAILS

START LOCATION: **Go Quito Hotel**  
START CITY: **Quito**  
START TIME: **Upon arrival into airport. Airport transfer to first night hotel included.**

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## → DEPARTURE DETAILS

END LOCATION: **Baltra Airport**  
END CITY: **Baltra Island - Santa Cruz**  
END TIME: **1:15 PM**