

Galapagos Natural Life

CORAL I & CORAL II

Luxury Class - Yachts Galapagos

Itinerary "D"

5 Days – 4 Nights



Coral I



Coral II

Day 1: Wednesday

AM- San Cristobal Airport

Departure from Quito or Guayaquil to San Cristobal (2 1/2 hours flight). Arriving in Galapagos, passengers are picked up at the airport by our naturalist guides and taken to the pier to board the **M/Y Coral I** or **M/Y Coral II**.

PM - Interpretacion Center & Tijeretas Hill (San Cristobal Island)

Dry landing in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the capital of the Galapagos Islands. Passengers visit the Interpretation Center, an excellent place to learn about islands' history in The Museum of Natural History which displays information about the volcanic origins of the islands, their remoteness from the continent, ocean currents, climate, the arrival of the different species and their colonization, among other points of interest. The human history is also showcased, chronologically narrating the most significant events related to the discovery and the island's colonization.

Tijeretas Hill

Involves a high-intensity walk amidst beautiful landscapes and a magnificent view at the foot of a frigate bird nesting colony.

Day 2: Thursday

AM - Cerro Brujo (San Cristobal Island)

Wet landing. Cerro Brujo is an eroding tuff cone that is composed of AA lava formations; it is close to a beautiful white sandy beach which is great for snorkeling and sunbathing. Nearby a lagoon ideal for migratory bird species can be seen, including black-necked stilts, ruddy turnstones, whimbrels, sandpiper, and white- cheeked Pintails. Cerro Brujo offers beautiful views of Kicker Rock, an islet in the adjacent southern coast of San Cristobal.

PM - Pitt Point & islet (San Cristobal Island)

Wet landing followed by a high-intensity hike on rocky terrain. The trail includes a 90 meters long, olivine beach and a path that climbs to the top of a volcanic tuff, through several magnificent viewpoints. This is probably the only site where the three booby species of the Galapagos can be seen together, as well as, two species of frigate birds and a sea lion colony. It is also excellent for dinghy rides and snorkeling, where a good range of sea birds can be observed.

Day 3: Friday

AM - Suarez Point (Española Island)

Dry landing. An island of geological interest, being one of the oldest in Galapagos, it has a high percentage of endemism due to its isolation from the rest of the islands. Due to the great variety of wildlife, this is one of the most attractive spots in the Galapagos. Here, it is possible to explore volcanic formations and see large colonies of sea lion and seabirds including the Española mockingbird, Nazca boobies, and the spectacular red-billed tropicbirds. Here, the singular marine iguanas have a turquoise color with reddish parts during the breeding season, lava lizards, and the colorful Sally light-foot crabs. A somewhat lengthy hike brings visitors to nesting grounds that sometimes overlap the trail. Other birdwatchers favorites include the Galapagos dove, the Galapagos hawk, swallow-tailed gulls and the world's largest colony of waved albatross, an unequivocal highlight during mating season (April-December). Admire the island's dramatic backdrop, featuring the famous "Soplador," a seaward blowhole that shoots water up to 23 m. (75 ft.) into the air.

PM - Gardner Bay, Osborn or Gardner Islets (Española Island)

Wet landing. Gardner Bay is a beautiful white coral sandy beach guarded by a colony of sea Lions. Here, there are no trails, so visitors stay along the shore, spotting the Galapagos hawk, the American oystercatcher, the Galapagos dove, hood mockingbirds, yellow warblers, lava lizards, marine iguanas, and three species of Darwin finches , cacti finch (*Geospizafuliginosa*), the small ground finch (*Geospizafuliginosa*) and the warbler finch (*Certhideaolivacea*). Swimming and snorkeling offers a great variety of Galapagos marine wildlife: king angelfish, creole fish, damsel fish and parrot fish.

Day 4: Saturday

AM - Cormorant Point / Devil's Crown/ Champion (Floreana Island)

Wet landing, on an olivine green, sanded beach. We hike from the black mangrove beds to a brackish lagoon, which usually holds one of the largest flamingo populations in the Galapagos. This island features some endemic plants such as *Scalesia villosa*, white and black mangrove, and holy stick. The trail continues to a beautiful white sandy beach, one of the most important nesting sites of Green Pacific Sea Turtles. It is important to avoid walking in the water due to the Sting Rays that may be hiding in the sand, which can be dangerous if accidentally stepped on. From the beach, one can spot sea turtles, blue-footed boobies plunging into the water, and small reef sharks floating along the shoreline in the search for food.

This coral-sand beach marks the end of our trail, and we head back to the olivine beach we landed on, to swim or snorkel amongst sea turtles, reef fish, sea lions and, on a good day,

white-tipped reef sharks. A small colony of penguins resides on Floreana and can sometimes be observed as well.

PM – Post Office (Floreana Island)

Wet landing. Located on the north side of Floreana, the bay was named because in 1793 Captain James Colnett installed a wooden barrel which served as an informal post office for sailors passing through, who would take letters with them back to their destinations. Today, visitors continue the tradition by placing unstamped postcards inside the barrel, hoping that some other traveler, going to the letter destination, will take it back for free. The chances are that the letter posted can take a long time to arrive at its destination. However, there have been cases where it has arrived before the sender.

We may also encounter Darwin's finches, Yellow Warbler and Lava Lizards. Great snorkeling opportunities with Green Pacific Sea Turtles. As well, the island is best known for its endemic vegetation: *Scalesia villosa*, *Lecocarpus Pinnatifidus*, and the Galapagos Milkwort. Snorkelers can practice on the main beach among playful sea lions.

Day 5: Sunday

AM – Highlands Tortoise Reserve (Santa Cruz Island)

Dry landing. In the mountains of Galapagos is possible to admire different kind of birds, such as: tree and ground finches, vermilion flycatchers, paint-billed crakes, yellow warblers, and cattle egrets (usually standing on the tortoises' shell). The journey to the reserve offers great opportunities to see the contrasts that the island offers in reference to the variety of ecosystems. The road goes from the coast through the agricultural zone and straight up to the dense humid forests. Often, Galapagos Giant Tortoises are also seen on the way, wandering through pastures in the paddocks. This spot is a birdwatchers' haven, since almost every land bird present on the island lives or migrates here.

OR (for Extended Cruises only)

Pit Craters (Santa Cruz)

The Pit Craters, geologically speaking, were not directly formed by volcanic action. They were created as a result of the collapse or sinking of surface materials into cracks or manholes. It's a great place to spot vermilion fly catchers as we walk inside an endemic *Scalesia* forest. Great opportunity to observe giant tortoises.

Baltra Island Airport

After the visit, passengers will be transferred to the airport for their return flight to Guayaquil or Quito.

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