Galapagos Natural Life

Luxury Class - Yachts Galapagos

SANTA CRUZ II YACHT

DAY BY DAY

ITINERARY W

Itinerary 5 days/4 nights Western Galapagos

Day 1 - THRUSDAY

Baltra Island

We arrive by plane at Baltra Island and transfer to the dock to board the Santa Cruz II where we receive our welcome introductory briefing, boat drill and lunch.

Cerro Dragón (Dragon Hill) (Santa Cruz Island)

The north shore of Santa Cruz hosts the fascinating landscapes of Cerro Dragón (Dragon Hill). The first part of our walk passes a brackish-water lagoon frequented by shorebirds, ducks and American flamingos, while further inland, the trail offers a beautiful view of the bay and the western islands of the archipelago, as well as the chance of observing land iguanas.

Day 2 - FRIDAY

Punta Vicente Roca (Isabela Island)

After breakfast, we explore the coast by panga, while our naturalist guide explains the dramatic geology of the area, a nesting place for several Galapagos highlights: flightless cormorants, Galapagos penguins, fur seals, boobies, etc. Depending on weather conditions, we can snorkel along the cliffs of this area rich in marine life, seasonally-visited by green sea turtles and oceanic sun fish (*Mola mola*).

Punta Espinoza (Fernandina Island)

The afternoon is dedicated to exploring the youngest island of the archipelago, Fernandina, which, having no introduced mammals, boasts a very unique environment with a very high density of marine iguanas, who share their space with sea lions, Sally light-foot crabs, hawks, penguins and the flightless cormorants.

Day 3 - SATURDAY

Puerto Ayora and the Charles Darwin Research Station (Santa Cruz Island)

In the morning, we disembark (dry landing followed by a brief bus ride) for our visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station's giant tortoise Breeding Centre within an impressive giant prickly-pear cactus forest, home to many land birds. These are the headquarters of scientific investigation, conservation and the National Park administration. Following our visit, we board our transport to enjoy lunch in the cooler highlands of Santa Cruz Island, a completely different ecosystem.

Santa Cruz Island

We have several options available for the afternoon, which can be discussed in advance with your Expedition Leader. Options include beach walks, kayaks, walks along the tortoise reserve, etc. At the end of the afternoon's activities, we return to Puerto Ayora and embark on the Santa Cruz II.

Day 4 - SUNDAY

Baroness Tower – Post Office Bay (Floreana Island)

After breakfast, panga ride along the maze of channels on Floreana's north shore can be enjoyed. We follow this visit by continuing to Baroness Cove with its breathtaking views of Floreana. We land at Post Office Bay to visit the historic barrel that has served as a post office in the archipelago for over two centuries and where postcards are traditionally left for guests from other vessels to hand-deliver to their destinations. Snorkelling off the beach. We then head back on board for lunch.

Champion Islet – Punta Cormorant (Floreana Island)

Following lunch and a siesta, we take the pangas and glass-bottom boat to explore the underwater wonders around Champion Islet, an extinct shield volcano, regarded as one of the best snorkelling spots in the archipelago. From there, it's on to Punta Cormorant, beginning with a wet landing on the olivine-crystal beach for an easy walk that includes a brackish-water lagoon where bird species such as American flamingos, pintail ducks, common stilts, herons, sandpipers, and others gather. We continue our walk over to a white-sand beach, where sea turtles emerge from the sea at night to nest (from December to May).

Day 5 - MONDAY

Baltra Island

We disembark at Baltra Island in order to transfer to the airport to take the flight back to the mainland.

Notes

IMPORTANT NOTE:

• Please remember that the exact route and programme may vary according to weather and ocean conditions and the wildlife we encounter. It's also subject to change without previous notice due mainly to readjustment of the National Park policies and regulations.

Dry landing: guests step from the panga (dinghy) onto rocks or a dock.

Wet landing: as the dinghy edges onto a sandy beach, guests step into around 20 cm (8 inches) of water and wade ashore.

Recommendations

PACKING CHECK LIST

• 1 Small backpack

• Comfortable walking shoes

• Sneakers with rubber soles

• Shorts

• Long pants

• T-shirts

• Long and Short sleeved shirts

• Wind breaker

• Bathing suit -wetsuit for snorkelling in

cold months

• Hat or cap

• Toilette kit (biodegradable shampoo

please)

• Sun block

• Sunglasses

• Binoculars

• Camera & camcorder

• Any medicine you may be taking

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