

## Galapagos Natural Life

CORAL I & CORAL II

Luxury Class - Yachts Galapagos



# Itinerary "A"

4 Days – 3 Nights

## Day 1: Sunday

### AM – Baltra Airport

Departure from Quito or Guayaquil to Baltra Island (approx. 2½-hour flight). Arriving in the Galapagos, passengers are picked up at the airport by our naturist guides and taken on a ten-minute bus drive to the pier to board the **M/Y Coral I or M/Y Coral II**.

### PM - Charles Darwin Research Station (Santa Cruz Island)

Dry landing. Visit to the Galapagos giant tortoises breeding program, where the famous Lonesome George (last surviving specimen of Pinta Island) lived for decades. The center is conducted by the Galapagos National Park (GNP) staff with the collaboration of scientists from the Charles Darwin Station (CDS). Here, eggs taken from Pinzon, Santiago and Santa Cruz Islands hatch without the danger of introduced species. After artificial incubation; the “galapaguitos” (newborn tortoises) are reared until the age of 5, when they are released in their native habitats, having the capabilities to survive alone. Since the 70s, more than 2000 specimens have returned to their own islands. In addition, the Darwin Station works in several scientific

projects, botanical research, providing environmental education to communities, schools within the Islands and tourists. If there is enough time, it is possible to visit Puerto Ayora.

## Day 2: Monday

### **AM - El Barranco Prince Philip's Steps (Genovesa Island )**

Be marvelled at the variety of sea life that uses the crevices of the lava cliffs for shelter. Red-billed Tropicbirds fly overhead, switching between their nests and the bay, and a small colony of fur seals may be found near the landing site. You will be dropped off at a steep stairway that begins on rocks at the foot of a path that leads through a seabird colony full of Nazca and Red-footed Boobies. At the plateau, the trail continues inland allowing you to see more nesting booby colonies in the thin Palo Santo forest. Near the end of the trail, over a rocky lava plain, Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrels can be observed flying in all directions. If you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse of a Short-eared Owl.

### **PM – Darwin Bay**

Disembark onto a small sand and coral beach. A short trail heads west along a tidal lagoon and then up a rocky hill that leads to a point overlooking the cliffs and Darwin Bay. Along the trail near the tidal lagoon, visitors will see pairs of Swallow-tailed Gulls, Lava Gulls, Yellow-crowned and Lava Herons. The trail continues through Palo Santo trees, Opuntia cacti, and Saltbushes inhabited by Great Frigate birds and Red-footed Boobies. This is one of the few places in the islands where visitors are guaranteed to see Red-footed Boobies. It is estimated that more than 200,000 Red-footed Boobies live in the trees and bushes of Genovesa.

## Day 3: Tuesday

### **AM– Rabida Island**

Also known as Jervis Island in English, Rabida is one of the most diverse in terms of volcanic activity as it lies at the very heart of the archipelago's volcanic origin. In this deep red beach, surrounded by cliffs and steep slopes of volcanic cinder cones it is usual to find nesting colonies of brown pelicans, as well as, nine species of Darwin finches, fur seals, and Nazca boobies.

Snorkel off the coast, where marine life is particularly active and colorful.

### **PM – Bartolome Island**

Dry or wet landing. We discover a fascinating landscape formed by different volcanic parasitic cones —lava bombs, spatter, cinder cones — that resembles the moon. Going up to the summit there will be an impressive views of the surrounding islands, including the eroded tuff cone Pinnacle Rock. We also encounter marine iguanas, lava lizards, and blue-footed boobies. Beach time is a great opportunity to do snorkeling and see the famous Galapagos Penguins, sea turtles

and White-tipped Reef Sharks among a great variety of colorful fish. For many visitors, this may turn out to be the best snorkeling experience. Crystal clear water is the perfect spot to appreciate the incredible marine life it has to offer. Due to its geographical location, the lack of vegetation is immediately noticeable however, there are pioneer plants including the endemic *Tiquilia nesiotica* and *Chamaesyce* (known as sand mat or spurge in English), lava cactus, and *Scalesia* bushes.

## Day 4: Wednesday

### **AM – Black Turtle Cove (Santa Cruz Island)**

On the north shore of Santa Cruz Island, accessible only by sea, four species of mangrove crowd form an internal lagoon. Turtles visit the calm waters, peaking their heads above the surface, while the fish and rays circle below. White-tipped reef sharks can be seen beneath the boat, plus seabirds including pelicans, herons, and egrets feed from the cove.

This cove has been declared as a “Turtle Sanctuary.”

### **PM- Baltra Airport**

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

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**Quito - Ecuador - South America**