



## Galapagos Islands Cruise Onboard the Athala or Nina

### DETAILED ITINERARY

#### Day 1:

##### **INTERNATIONAL ARRIVAL TO QUITO OR GUAYAQUIL**

Meet and greet at the airport by our representative and transfer to selected hotel. Overnight at a deluxe class hotel.

#### Day 2 (Saturday):

##### **FLIGHT FROM QUITO or GUAYAQUIL TO THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS**

Transfer out from hotel in Quito or Guayaquil to airport for Galapagos flight connection. Assistance at the airport by our representative.

You will arrive at Baltra Island in the morning. After passing through immigration and baggage pick-up you will be met by Athala or Nina staff and transferred to the yacht. You will be shown to your cabin where you will have some time to settle in before lunch and a welcome briefing.

In the afternoon, you will visit **Bartholomew Island**, home of the famous Pinnacle Rock. Bartholomew consists of an extinct volcano with a variety of red, orange, black and even green volcanic formations. You will take a trail of stairs to the summit of the volcano (about 30 or 40 minutes) where you will get one of the best views of the islands! You will also visit a small, beautiful beach, surrounded by the only vegetation found on this barren island. The beach is perfect for snorkeling where you may even get to see the resident Galapagos penguins.

#### Day 3 (Sunday)

##### **ISABELA & FERNANDINA ISLAND**

**Isabela Island:** The largest in the archipelago, this seahorse-shaped island is also one of the youngest and most volcanically active as it sits right on a volcanic hotspot.

This morning, your visit is to **Punta Vicente Roca**, located on the northwestern end. Comprised of two separate coves, this site is a large bay which, for the lucky few who get to visit, has a combination of cold currents which bring in abundant plankton, and in turn small fish. And where there are little fish, there are big fish, which is why, although there is no land visit allowed here, Punta Vicente Roca is a spectacular snorkel site. Keep an eye out for seahorses, sea turtles, and the strange yet fascinating mola mola (or sunfish).

**Fernandina Island:** This is actually the youngest and one of the most pristine of the Galapagos Islands. Not many visitors are allowed to this site as no foreign species have ever invaded this island and it claims to be one of the world's most pristine island ecosystems. Your visit here may be

to a different island compared to visitors that may have been there recently as it is still very active and changes in the landscape occur relatively often!

Across the channel that divides Isabela Island from Fernandina is **Punta Espinosa**, your afternoon visit. Your landing leads to a trail filled with what may be considered as interesting obstacles: loads of marine iguanas, so watch your step, as they expect you to move around them and not the other way around. Pay close attention to your guide's instructions as the iguanas have nesting sites here. This spectacular trail will eventually lead to flightless cormorant nesting sites as well with much to observe and enjoy in between.

## Day 4 (Monday)

### SANTIAGO ISLAND

**Santiago Island:** Your visit is to a site called Egas Port. Here, you will enjoy a hike over a dry trail known for being a hang-out for curious Galapagos hawks and quick-footed Galapagos lava lizards. The trail will then lead you to the coastline where you will visit the gorgeous tide pools and grottos which are full of fauna and to observe the shy Galapagos fur sea-lions. You will also get to snorkel at Egas Port beach.

Your afternoon visit, **Rabida Island**, is one of the most colorful and volcanically varied islands in the archipelago as well as a great snorkeling site. We start on Rabida's famous maroon sandy beach and after an easy hike we arrive to a stunning lookout to enjoy the amazing landscapes.

## Day 5 (Tuesday)

### ISLA LOBOS & SAN CRISTOBAL INTERPRETATION CENTER

**Isla Lobos** is your morning visit. The name of this island means "Sea Lion Island". This aptly named island is ripe with noisy, frolicking, jolly sea lions who will welcome you to their home with open, well... open fins. This island also offers great snorkeling opportunities as well as the chance to see blue-footed and nazca boobies.

In the afternoon, you will visit the **Interpretation Center** on **San Cristobal Island**. The Center opened in 1998. This very educational visit offers exhibits that include the island's natural history, human interaction, ecosystems and flora and fauna.

## Day 6 (Wednesday)

### ESPAÑOLA ISLAND

**Española Island** is the southernmost island of the Galapagos and is the breeding site of nearly all of the waved albatrosses in the entire world. Española is densely populated with mockingbirds, blue-footed and nazca boobies, Darwin finches, Galapagos doves, hawks, red and green marine iguanas, and loads of sea lions.

In the morning, you will visit the spectacular **Gardner Bay**. After landing, walk across a lovely white sand beach amongst a busy sea lion colony or dive into the water to swim with sea lion pups.

**Suarez Point** starts on a trail where you will have the chance to see blue-footed boobies, albatrosses and nazca boobies. We will also visit a beautiful site on the ocean front where there is a cliff that the large albatrosses use as a launching pad!

## Day 7 (Thursday)

### FLOREANA ISLAND

You will visit two sites on **Floreana Island**. In the morning, you will visit the famous **Post Office Bay**. You will land on a beach and head to a spot where 18th century whalers placed a wooden barrel for use as an unofficial mail box. The custom continues to this day with Galapagos visitors. So, don't forget your postcards, and don't be surprised if the post card arrives to its destination before you even get home!

In the afternoon, you will head to **Cormorant Point**. Here you will enjoy a hike to a salt-water lagoon which is home to flamingos.

You will also get to swim in the crystal clear waters of the **Devil's crown**. This extinct volcano peaks out of the waters just off of Floreana's coast and offers a magnificent snorkeling experience.

## Day 8 (Friday)

### SANTA CRUZ ISLAND & SOUTH PLAZA ISLAND

**Santa Cruz Island** is the archipelago's main tourist and cultural center. In the morning, you will visit the **Charles Darwin Research Station**. Here, visitors can observe and learn about tortoise research and important breeding programs. This is also the home of Lonesome George, one of the most popular creatures on the planet, and the last of his species.

In the afternoon, you will head to **South Plaza Island**. This small island with steep cliffs was formed by uplifted lava and is now covered by *Opuntia* cacti. It is also home to one of the largest sea lion colonies as well as colorful yellow and red land iguanas.

## Day 9 (Saturday)

### NORTH SEYMOUR ISLAND & FLIGHT TO MAINLAND ECUADOR

In the morning, before heading out to the airport, you will have the opportunity for one more wonderful visit. This time, you will head to **North Seymour Island**. Here you will be able to see Galapagos sea lions, blue footed-boobies and magnificent frigate birds.

After this final visit, you will be transferred to Baltra Island's airport in time to catch your flight back to the mainland.

Transfer IN: from Quito or Guayaquil airport to hotel and overnight at a deluxe class hotel.

## Day 10:

### INTERNATIONAL DEPARTURE

Transfer OUT: Quito or Guayaquil hotel to airport for international flight connection

**Please note:** Itineraries are unlikely to change significantly but are subject to change. Weather, wildlife breeding, instructions from the National Parks, actions or omissions of other pertinent authorities, specific abilities and interests of guests as well as operational matters may cause your guides or captain to change the times or nature of visits. Your guide will always endeavor to select the best itinerary within these limits.

**Meals included in your Galapagos Islands Cruise onboard Athala or Nina**

Meals:	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Day 1	no	no	no
Day 2	yes	yes	yes
Day 3	yes	yes	yes
Day 4	yes	yes	yes
Day 5	yes	yes	yes
Day 6	yes	yes	yes
Day 7	yes	yes	yes
Day 8	yes	yes	yes
Day 9	yes	no	no
Day 10	yes	no	no