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## BEST OF THE GALAPAGOS - 5 DAYS



**COUNTRIES VISITED: ECUADOR**

### HIGHLIGHTS

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- Visit the Sierra Negra Volcano
- Snorkelling with sea turtles, rays, penguins and sea lions
- Kayaking
- Tintoreras & Lava tunnels
- Charles Darwin research station
- Encounters with wild giant tortoises.

### INCLUDES

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- 3-star hotels on the Galapagos Islands
- All transport and transfers per the itinerary
- Roundtrip Domestic flights between Quito and Galapagos Islands
- Day 1 Airport Transfer from central location
- Services of Naturalist Local Guide whilst in Galapagos
- Snorkelling Gear (masks, fins & life vest)
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary

## EXCLUDES

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- International flights (available on request)
- Accommodation in Quito
- Quito airport transfers on days 1 & 7
- Visa fees
- INGALA transit card: USD 20 p/p
- Galapagos National Park fee USD 200 p/p
- Wetsuit Hire USD 20 p/p
- USD \$10 pier-use fee at Puerto Villamil
- Travel insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tipping
- Any other items not mentioned above

## ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

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### ARRIVAL & ACCOMMODATION

On the Galapagos Islands, we use comfortable 3-star properties. Please see the accommodation tab for details of the hotels most commonly used on this tour (specific hotels are subject to change).

Hotel accommodation is based on twin or double en-suite rooms. All couples will stay in a private double room.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

### PRE-DEPARTURE MEETING

On the morning of day 1, a transfer from a central location will be provided to Quito Airport for your flight to the Galapagos Islands. We will have given you your flight times and details in advance. You may also join a pre-departure meeting the previous evening (normally at 6pm) - to ensure you are fully prepared for your time in the Galapagos, we strongly recommend joining this meeting. Details will be provided before you arrive.

Locations for both the pre-departure meeting and airport transfer will be provided prior to departure.

### POST TRIP ACCOMMODATION AND AIRPORT TRANSFERS

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Post-trip accommodation can be requested and booked by the Oasis Office before your trip commences, please email [southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk](mailto:southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk). Post-tour services can be arranged with your tour guide, however we recommend booking any required services prior to departure to avoid disappointment.

## FLIGHT INFORMATION

On Day 1 of your trip you will be picked up from a central location by our local representative and transferred to the airport for your flight to the Galapagos. We will have given you your pickup location and flight times and details in advance.

You may also join a pre-departure meeting the previous evening (normally at 6pm). Details will be provided before you arrive. It is strongly recommended that you attend this meeting.

Departing flights: we recommend booking a flight which leaves Quito at least 1 night after arriving back from the Galapagos.

There are many online flight search engines such as [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net) or [www.ebookers.co.uk](http://www.ebookers.co.uk) flights can also be booked direct with airline websites or through travel agencies. Please inform us of your flight details through your online account, as airport transfers can be arranged for various trips.

**One way ticket:** If you intend to travel on a one way ticket to meet up with one of our trips, without possessing an onward flight ticket - we recommend that you have a copy of your payment confirmation/receipt (that you will be sent at time of your balance payment) available at immigration to assist easy entry.

## PASSPORTS

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months AFTER your trip finishes. This is a general requirement for all of the countries we travel to on our trips.

If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport for the entire trip. It is your responsibility to ensure you have all the relevant visas you require.

## VISAS

### Passports:

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months AFTER the date your trip finishes. This is a general requirement for all of the countries we travel to on our trips. If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport for the entire trip. It is your responsibility to ensure you have a valid passport.

**Visas:**

Many nationalities (including UK, European, Australian, New Zealand, South Africa, USA) can travel to Ecuador visa free for stays of up to 90 days in each 12 month period. Other nationalities should check with their local consulate or embassy.

**Galapagos Islands:**

Please refer to the section with our tour notes titled 'Galapagos fees & permits' to ensure you are fully prepared for your time in the Galapagos.

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Many nationalities (including UK, European, Australian, New Zealand, South Africa, USA) can travel to Ecuador visa free for stays of up to 90 days in each 12 month period. Other nationalities should check with their local consulate or embassy.

**Galapagos Island Fees:**

When visiting the Galapagos Islands, you should be aware of additional fees and permits which are required, please find details below:

**INGALA Transit Card - USD 20 per person (cash only):**

In essence, this is simply a fee to obtain authorization to visit the Galápagos Islands.

You pay a small fee of 20 USD in cash at the INGALA booth at the airport in Quito or Guayaquil to receive a "Transit Control Card" (TCC or TCT in Spanish). This card tracks your entry and exit from the islands, helping to protect the delicate ecosystem from unauthorized immigration.

Introduced in 2012, this system is a requirement for all non-resident visitors. If you're taking a cruise, you can often pre-book this card through the cruise line, and a representative will meet you at the airport with it.

Remember to keep your Transit Control Card safe throughout your trip, as you'll need to present it upon departure.

**Galapagos National Park Fee - USD 200 per person (cash only):**

To visit the Galápagos Islands, all tourists must pay an entrance fee, which varies depending on age and nationality. Most foreign adults pay \$200, while children pay \$100. Visitors from certain South American countries enjoy reduced rates (these are updated rates which came into force on 1st August 2024).

While the fee may seem high, it's crucial to remember that these funds directly support the conservation of the islands' unique biodiversity. The Galápagos National Park, along with other agencies, uses these resources to protect the delicate ecosystems, improve local services, and

ensure the sustainability of this natural wonder.

The entrance fee contributes to a wide range of initiatives, from safeguarding marine life to supporting education and healthcare in local communities. By paying this fee, you're not only gaining access to an unforgettable experience but also actively participating in preserving the Galápagos Islands for future generations.

## **Ecuador**

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Ecuador.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

Travellers **must** have physical proof of health care Insurance whilst travelling through Ecuador. You may be asked to provide this at Immigration at the land border or at the airport on arrival - a printed copy of your travel Insurance should suffice.

## **VACCINATIONS AND HEALTH**

It is possible that you may require some vaccinations for your trip, depending on the areas that you are visiting. As we are not medically trained, we are unable to give detailed advice on vaccination requirements. We have worked closely with Nomad Travel Clinics for many years and they offer Oasis travellers a 10% discount on vaccinations, anti-malarial drugs, first aid items, clothing and equipment, just enter discount code OASIS1000 at [www.nomadtravel.co.uk](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk). Alternatively you can check out the [fit for travel website](#) for more travel health information or consult a reputable travel clinic or your GP for information and advice. We suggest that you allow at least 8 weeks to get all your vaccinations.

Health - To join our trips you should be in good general health. Your medical insurance company must be told if you have any pre-existing medical condition / allergy or if you are on any regular medication, otherwise you may not be covered under your policies for these. Our crew will need to know of any medication or conditions you may have. For general health advice log onto [www.nathnac.org/travel/](http://www.nathnac.org/travel/)

## **TRAVEL INSURANCE**

It is a compulsory requirement that you have adequate travel insurance before you join any Oasis Trip & at the very least are insured for all necessary medical & repatriation costs incurred.

You will be asked to provide the following details in [My Oasis Account](#) if you have not already done so: travel insurance name, insurance policy number & insurance emergency telephone number. You will also be required to give a copy of your policy with this information to your Tour Leader on arrival with confirmation that the policy duration is sufficient to cover you for the entire duration of your trip. It is also wise to leave a copy of your insurance policy with a friend or relative for safe keeping.

We believe that your safety and holiday enjoyment are very important. It is a mistake to think that "it will never happen to me". It is also very important that you are covered for all the activities that you may wish to undertake while on our trip. It is extremely important that you check the full extent of your cover related to 24 hour Medical Emergency Assistance. In the event of you needing medical treatment you want to know that you have the best cover available to you. Your policy should include adequate Medical Emergency and Repatriation cover as well as Cancellation, Baggage and Personal Liability cover. You need to be aware of EXACTLY what activities your policy covers you for. Please note that skiing is not usually covered in most insurance policies.

We offer tailor made Overland Adventure Travel Insurance that covers most of the adventure and sporting activities on our trips.

For further information on the insurance we offer, the activities covered and costs, check out the [Travel Insurance](#) section of our website. You can purchase our insurance by logging into My Oasis Account and click 'Buy Insurance' or through the following [link](#).

## **MONEY, BUDGETS AND LP**

### **Spending Money**

From past trips and travellers feedback £20 to £30 per day per person, should cover costs such as meals not included, soft drinks and beers, email & communications, souvenirs and other general spending. Personal spending habits & budgets differ greatly from person to person. Budget on optional activities separately (see optional excursions page).

### **Changing money**

Change your money only at banks, hotels, airports or forex bureaus. It is illegal to change money on the street, as these people will normally be opportunistic thieves or undercover police. Your crew will advise you where & when you can change money & with what means. It is also a good idea to have a small CASH emergency fund, to allow for the unexpected.

### **Credit & Debit Cards**

Many businesses in the Galapagos Islands don't accept credit or debit cards, therefore we don't recommend relying on these types of cards whilst travelling on our tours here. In larger towns some

stores may accept this form of payment

## Pre-Paid Travel Currency Cards

These cards are similar to normal Credit and Debit cards but they can be pre loaded with cash before you travel with a set amount allowing you to withdraw this cash using the card at normal ATMs. It is a more secure way to access cash on your trip and easier to use than travellers cheques, but again do not rely on these as your sole means of funds on a trip - (please refer to the ATM section). Several banks and companies now offer these cards, but be sure to look into the rates for withdrawing cash when making your decision.

## ATMs

These are available in larger towns in the Galapagos, however we recommend bringing on enough cash to avoid needing these. We discourage you from relying on your ATM card as a primary source of funds in case it is lost/stolen/swallowed, or the machine isn't working. Besides memorising your PIN, it is also important to be aware of your daily withdrawal limit and bank withdrawal costs.

## Tipping

Whilst the amount you tip should ultimately be determined upon your satisfaction of the service you've received whilst on tour, we are often asked for advice on this. For the team involved in operating your tour on the ground (from drivers to guides), we would recommend budgetting approximately 20 USD per person per day for tips, though it is at your discretion if you wish to tip more or less than this.

## WHAT TO TAKE

Equipment	Toiletries - Most available to buy on trip
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Sleeping Bag</b> - recommended for trips departing Nov-April</li><li>• <b>Sleep Sheet</b></li><li>• <b>Small day-pack or small bag to carry daily items</b></li><li>• <b>Soft rucksack, holdall or suitcase</b></li><li>• <b>Water bottle - for personal use - we recommend Water-to-Go (see below Responsible Travel)</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Soap, shampoo, toothbrush/paste, antibacterial hand wash, lip balm &amp; moisturiser</li><li>• Sun block 35 + after sun, hat &amp; sun glasses<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tampons (can buy in most places)</li><li>• Contraception</li></ul></li></ul>
Clothes	Personal Effects

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One pair of trainers or boots</li> <li>• Sandals/flip flops/jandals/thongs</li> <li>• Underwear/socks</li> <li>• T shirts/shirts</li> <li>• Shorts/swimwear</li> <li>• Jeans/trousers/jog pants/leggings</li> <li>• Skirt or dress</li> <li>• Sweat shirt/jumper</li> <li>• Jacket/fleece &amp; waterproof jacket</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camera with protective case, spare batteries, film/memory card <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Torch and spare batteries (head torch is best)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Travel adaptor plug/charger (for cameras and mobile phone batteries) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Money belt</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Personal stereo - iPod/MP3 etc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Towel and/or sarong</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommended Medical Kit List</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antiseptic ointment/Antihistamine cream &amp; tablets</li> <li>• Nurofen or equivalent pain-killer</li> <li>• Eye-drops/bath</li> <li>• Anti-diarrhoea treatment</li> <li>• A couple of bandages (elasticated &amp; triangular)</li> <li>• Medication for personal allergies/asthma etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insect repellent containing Deet</li> <li>• Re-hydration sachets/vitamin tablets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assorted plasters</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Some suitable antibiotics as recommended by your doctor for infected cuts or to treat severe dysentery</li> <li>• We advise you to bring a small personal medical kit for general everyday use, as well as any personal over-the-counter medicines that you may wish to keep with you. Our guides are familiar with the nearest pharmacies, doctors and hospitals throughout the trip if you need to seek medical attention. It will be your own responsibility to carry your medical kit on included excursions and optional activities as some local operators may not have medical kits to hand.</li> </ul>
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## PHOTOGRAPHY AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

**Cameras (incl. Digital & Video Cameras)** - An easy to use 'point and press' will get you some good photos. For memorable shots, it may be worthwhile investing in an SLR camera, but be sure to get some practice in before the trip! Most towns and cities have internet cafes where you can download onto CD/internet sites - but don't rely on it.

**Photography** - Be aware of your surroundings when taking photographs and filming. Some locations will be sensitive or have local laws banning photography. For example it is usually forbidden to use cameras at borders or around government buildings, military installations, bridges and airports or to take photos of local officials. If you do take photos or film where it is not permitted you may find yourself being questioned by irate officials who may decide to confiscate your camera or instruct you to delete all the images/footage on your device. If in doubt ask for permission, or if there is no-one to ask use some common sense.

**Drones** - As the use of drones becomes more common, countries throughout the world are gradually updating their laws and restrictions on usage. The specific regulations will vary from one country to another, so do check the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice for the latest information. As with cameras, use your common sense if you do use a drone and avoid operation in sensitive areas. If you plan to bring a drone on your trip with us please contact us first to ensure there will be a suitable place to store it while on your trip.

**Electrical charging & power supply** - It may be difficult to find a power source for charging at times, so a spare battery is a must. Log onto [www.whatplug.net](http://www.whatplug.net) for information regarding the different electrical plugs and voltage used in each country.

## CONTACTING HOME

The internet and WiFi are available in many towns / cities you will visit. Do bear in mind that the connections can be unreliable and will not always be as fast as you are used to at home. If a lot of people try to use the internet at the same time the speed will be slower still, especially if trying to make Skype calls or upload photos / videos. During periods of the trip where we are wild camping, internet will be less common.

Some travellers choose to take an unlocked mobile phone with them and buy local SIM cards in each country, allowing them to use mobile data. If you particularly want or need regular internet access this may be a good option. Telephone calls can be expensive usually £1 to £5 for a three minute call.

Online Diaries - A great variety of free "travel blogs" are now available online, they are a good way of keeping relatives and friend up to date with what you are doing and a good place to upload photos, collecting messages as well as keeping a record for yourself.

## RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

### Before you go

- Remove unnecessary packaging before you go - waste disposal facilities are often stretched or non-existent in the places we visit. To avoid unnecessary pollution of local water supplies take environmentally friendly toiletries with you.
- Why not invest in a wind-up or solar-powered torch or media player before you travel or at least rechargeable batteries.
- Learn some of the local language and read up on the local history/culture before you go. You'll get so much more out of your trip.
- Why not pack some pens/pencils exercise books in your rucksack and they can be donated to a local school or project while you're away. You can also purchase these items cheaply, locally which will help local businesses.
- Take a sturdy water bottle with you from home that you can re-use throughout your trip. We carry large quantities of purified water with us on our Expedition vehicles and it is much better for the environment if you drink this, rather than purchase bottled water along the way. (It also saves you money).
- Water-to-Go: Oasis Overland have partnered with Water-to-Go to help reduce the number of plastic water bottles consumed during a trip. Water-to-Go is a filtration system that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants including viruses, bacteria, chemicals and heavy metals from any non-salt water source. Click [here](#) and enter the code OASIS15 to purchase your [Water-to-Go](#) products at 15% discount. Water-to-Go will then donate a further 15% to Oasis Overland Charity projects.

### While you're travelling

From experience gained in running trips, we have developed our own practical and manageable environmental policy which all of our crew practice on the trips we operate, and they will share this information with you at the start of your trip. We welcome your input on this, plus any new ideas you may have, to improve our existing procedures. As a guide here's a few tips to bear in mind.

- Don't waste water. It is a scarce resource in many of the places our trips visit. On all our Ultimate and Overland Expeditions we carry large quantities of purified water with us. We encourage you to

refill your own water bottles from this supply, rather than purchase bottled water along the way- much more environmentally friendly and saves you money.

- Never buy endangered species or endangered habitat products. Apart from the fact of it being illegal it also encourages the trade to continue.
- Look after and preserve the areas we visit. Be careful about stepping on coral reefs or trekking on undesignated tracks.
- Buy locally made crafts and products helping to support the local economy.
- Don't feel when bargaining that you have to get the cheapest price possible just for the sake of it. Pay what the item is worth to you & don't worry about what someone else has paid.
- Try the local food and drinks - this will help to support local farmers and food sellers. Sitting in a local cafe is also a great way to meet local people.
- Dispose of litter appropriately on your trip. This includes cigarette butts. Not only does litter look unsightly it can be lethal to wildlife.
- Where any toilet facilities exist, however unsavoury they might seem to you, they should be used. Where they do not, always bury your waste and make sure it is never near (at least 30m) a water source.
- When game viewing do not encourage your guides to get too close to the wildlife so that their natural behaviour is impeded.
- Respect local customs, traditions and beliefs of the people in the different regions that you travel through.
- Do not take photos of people, ritual events or special places unless you have asked first. Dress appropriately according to local codes and show respect around religious festivals.
- Recycling is almost non-existent in many of the areas and countries we visit - we do the best we can with limited resources & space on our vehicles.
- For books dedicated to travelling more responsibly & ethically see: [www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)

**Community Projects** - Oasis are active in raising awareness and providing support to a number of projects and local schools where we believe we can make a positive difference. More information on the [projects we support](#).

## SECURITY

The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) offer country-specific advice, regarding not only security but also entry regulations, local laws and customs and health. We strongly recommend all travellers visit the FCO website, or the equivalent in their home country, to familiarise themselves with local conditions and issues in the countries they plan to visit before committing to a trip with us. You can view their website here.

If you have any questions at all about the safety or security of your trip, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be happy to discuss your trip in more detail.

Oasis does not take responsibility for clients' personal items and we advise you to not take items of value that are not essential for the journey.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a compulsory requirement that you have adequate travel insurance before you join any Oasis Trip, and at the very least are insured for all necessary medical & repatriation costs incurred if you need them.

You will be asked to provide the following details on the Traveller Information Form that you send in to us after making your booking. If you have not already done so: travel insurance name, insurance policy number & insurance emergency telephone number. You will also be required to give a copy of your policy with this information to your Tour Leader on arrival with confirmation that the policy duration is sufficient to cover you for the entire duration of your trip. It is also wise to leave a copy of your insurance policy with a friend or relative for safe keeping.

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For further information on the insurance we offer, the activities covered and costs, check out the [Travel Insurance](#) section of our website. UK residents can purchase the insurance we recommend directly through [Campbell Irvine](#).

## RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

### Before you go

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- Learn some of the local language and read up on the local history/culture before you go. You'll get so much more out of your trip.

- Why not pack some pens/pencils exercise books in your rucksack and they can be donated to a local school or project while you're away. You can also purchase these items cheaply, locally which will help local businesses.
- Take a sturdy water bottle with you from home that you can re-use throughout your trip. We carry large quantities of purified water with us on our Expedition vehicles and it is much better for the environment if you drink this, rather than purchase bottled water along the way. (It also saves you money).
- **Water-to-Go:** Oasis Overland have partnered with Water-to-Go to help reduce the number of plastic water bottles consumed during a trip. Water-to-Go is a filtration system that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants including viruses, bacteria, chemicals and heavy metals from any non-salt water source. [Click here](#) and enter the code OASIS25 to purchase your Water-to-Go products at 25% discount.

## While you're travelling

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- Dispose of litter appropriately on your trip. This includes cigarette butts. Not only does litter look unsightly it can be lethal to wildlife.
- Where any toilet facilities exist, however unsavoury they might seem to you, they should be used. Where they do not, always bury your waste and make sure it is never near, (at least 30m) a water source.
- When game viewing do not encourage your guides to get too close to the wildlife so that their natural behaviour is impeded.
- Respect local customs, traditions and beliefs of the people in the different regions that you travel through.

- Do not take photos of people, ritual events or special places unless you have asked first. Dress appropriately according to local codes and show respect around religious festivals.
- Recycling is almost non-existent in many of the areas and countries we visit - we do the best we can with limited resources & space on our vehicles.
- For books dedicated to travelling more responsibly & ethically see: [www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)

## WHAT TO EXPECT

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### LIFE ON THE ROAD

You will be travelling within a group size ranging from 2-12 people, so come with an open mind and ready to make new friends! You will be accompanied on your adventure with an experienced Local English speaking guide. They are knowledgeable and passionate about the Galapagos Islands.

### Accommodation & Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. On our trips to the Galapagos Islands, we include the cost of a roundtrip flight between Quito and the Galapagos Islands. Whilst travelling between the Islands of the Galapagos, we'll make use of local ferries and speedboats.

We use good quality 3-star properties whilst in the Galapagos. Please see the accommodation tab for details of the hotels most commonly used on this tour (specific hotels are subject to change). Hotel accommodation is based on twin or double en-suite rooms. All couples will stay in a private double room. Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

Please note that some of our trips in the Galapagos include inter-island flights. Where these flights are included in the itinerary the included luggage allowance on this flight is 25 lbs. (20 lbs. for check-in baggage and 5 pounds for carry-on baggage equals 25 pounds total). Extra baggage USD 2.00 per extra pound - it can be paid directly to the airline at check-in.

### Vegetarians / Vegans / Coeliac / Gluten & Lactose intolerance

Our Tour Leaders will always do their best to cater for any dietary requirement or intolerance whenever possible. However we don't cater for fussy eaters. It must be remembered that the variety of dishes available may not be the same as available to meat eaters. If there is anything in particular you require in your diet or because of an allergy or would miss from home, it would be best to bring these with you. Remember that when eating out in local restaurants & hotels sometimes being vegetarian or food allergies / intolerances are still not widely known about or understood by many local people. i.e. Vegetarians or Vegans will often be offered fish or chicken in error. Most large towns and cities, or areas used to tourists, will often have more choice but please be aware that it will probably not be as varied as you are used to when eating out at home.

## Galapagos

When visiting the Galapagos Islands, you should be aware of additional fees and permits which are required, please find details below:

### **INGALA Transit Card - USD 20 per person (cash only):**

In essence, this is simply a fee to obtain authorization to visit the Galápagos Islands. You pay a small fee of 20 USD in cash at the INGALA booth at the airport in Quito or Guayaquil to receive a "Transit Control Card" (TCC or TCT in Spanish). This card tracks your entry and exit from the islands, helping to protect the delicate ecosystem from unauthorized immigration. Introduced in 2012, this system is a requirement for all non-resident visitors. If you're taking a cruise, you can often pre-book this card through the cruise line, and a representative will meet you at the airport with it. Remember to keep your Transit Control Card safe throughout your trip, as you'll need to present it upon departure.

### **Galapagos National Park Fee - USD 200 per person (cash only):**

To visit the Galápagos Islands, all tourists must pay an entrance fee, which varies depending on age and nationality. Most foreign adults pay \$200, while children pay \$100. Visitors from certain South American countries enjoy reduced rates (these are updated rates which came into force on 1st August 2024).

While the fee may seem high, it's crucial to remember that these funds directly support the conservation of the islands' unique biodiversity. The Galápagos National Park, along with other agencies, uses these resources to protect the delicate ecosystems, improve local services, and ensure the sustainability of this natural wonder.

The entrance fee contributes to a wide range of initiatives, from safeguarding marine life to supporting education and healthcare in local communities. By paying this fee, you're not only gaining access to an unforgettable experience but also actively participating in preserving the Galápagos Islands for future generations.

## TRIP ITINERARY

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### **Fly to Baltra Island and take a boat to volcanic Isabela Island**

Today, we embark on an adventure to the remarkable Galapagos Islands, the Pacific archipelago that inspired Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. Our journey begins with a morning flight from Quito to Baltra Island (please note that this flight normally makes a touch down Guayaquil, though no change of aircraft is required). Upon arrival, we'll transfer to Puerto Ayora, the largest town in the Galapagos, and then hop on a short boat ride to Isabela Island, the archipelago's largest and most volcanically active island.

Isabela Island owes its existence to six shield volcanoes, five of which remain active, making it one of the most volcanically dynamic places on Earth. Keep in mind that reaching these remote islands,

located 600 miles off the Ecuadorian coast, requires a combination of air, land, and sea travel.

Overnight: Isabela Island hotel

### **Lava tube snorkelling and kayaking with penguins, sea lions and turtles**

Prepare to be amazed as we venture along the seashore to witness the awe-inspiring lava formations sculpted by Isabela Island's volcanic eruptions. This captivating landscape, featured in BBC and National Geographic documentaries, is a mesmerizing labyrinth of lava tunnels filled with crystal-clear water teeming with sea turtles, eagle rays, sea lions, sharks, and other marine life.

Here, you'll encounter "Los Tuneles," a natural highway where turtles journey from the mangroves to the open ocean. Snorkel through this underwater wonderland for an unparalleled opportunity to swim alongside these magnificent creatures, including playful Galapagos penguins.

In the afternoon, we'll return to Puerto Villamil for a kayaking excursion in Tintoreras, where you can observe sea lions, penguins, turtles, and marine iguanas in their natural habitat.

Don't miss this extraordinary snorkeling experience with Isabela's diverse marine life. Before or after your adventure, feel free to explore the island at your own pace. Rent a bike, unwind on the exotic white-sand beaches, or visit the nearby giant tortoise breeding center.

*(Breakfast, Lunch)*

Overnight: Isabela Island hotel

### **Hike Sierra Negra, Kayak in Tintoreras and snorkel at Concha y Perla**

Following breakfast, we'll set off for the Sierra Negra Volcano. Our journey takes us to Isabela's highlands, the usual starting point for the hike. This colossal volcano, towering approximately 1,500 meters high with an outer diameter of about nine kilometers, is the world's second largest lava dome.

Later, we'll savour a delightful lunch at a charming highland restaurant; an organic farm where the owners craft delectable dishes using locally grown produce. Indulge in a flavourful meal prepared on a lava rock grill, then take a leisurely stroll through the fruit trails or simply unwind in a hammock beneath a majestic mango tree, breathing in the fresh air.

In the afternoon, we'll return to the pier where we'll gear up for a kayaking adventure in the bay, where we'll encounter a wealth of local wildlife. Keep your eyes peeled for penguins, blue-footed boobies, pelicans, marine iguanas, sea turtles, sea lions, eagle rays, and even the occasional juvenile "Tintoreras" shark.

To conclude this exhilarating day, we'll make a brief stop at Concha & Perla, a picturesque beach in Puerto Villamil perfect for snorkeling. A short, scenic walk through the mangroves on a boardwalk leads to this turquoise haven, teeming with marine life. Here, amidst fellow tourists, you'll encounter

colorful fish, sea lions, sea turtles, pelicans, mockingbirds, and perhaps even marine iguanas!

*(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)*

Overnight: Isabela Island hotel

### **Head to Santa Cruz Island and visit the Charles Darwin Research Station**

This morning, we embark on a scenic journey from Isabela to Santa Cruz Island, where we'll check into our hotel and then delve into the fascinating world of the Charles Darwin Research Station. Here, you'll gain deeper insights into the many endemic species we've encountered in their natural habitats, as well as the ongoing conservation efforts vital to preserving the Galapagos Islands' unique ecosystem.

In the afternoon, we'll venture into the highlands of Santa Cruz, our destination being the 'Primicias' reserve, renowned for its iconic Galapagos tortoises. Hiking through this picturesque landscape alongside these gentle giants is an experience you won't soon forget. Be sure to keep an eye out for other highland wildlife, including pintail ducks, egrets, flycatchers, finches, and frigatebirds, who congregate at a freshwater lake to cleanse their feathers of salt.

Afterwards, return to Puerto Ayora to spend the evening in Galapagos' most populous town.

*(Breakfast)*

Overnight: Santa Cruz Island hotel

### **Free time before flying back to Quito**

Take advantage of a leisurely morning before we return to Baltra Airport for your flight back to mainland Ecuador (please note that this flight normally makes a touch down Guayaquil, though no change of aircraft is required). Your tour will come to an end upon arrival in Quito.

*(Breakfast)*

Overnight: N/A

## **OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS**

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Optional Excursions are paid for on the day and organised during your trip, so you can decide whilst travelling which activity you may want to do. Prices listed are only a guide and may be dependant on fluctuating exchange rates and minimum numbers. Please see below for more details.

### **ECUADOR**

Title	From Price
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We feel that having optional excursions gives a greater degree of flexibility and independence to our group members; independence to decide how much your spending budget can afford; flexibility to decide when and what time of day or with whom to visit a particular site, rather than for example, with the whole group at a pre-ordained time.

You pay for the optional excursions to the local operator, ensuring the money stays with that operator in the local community and this ensures as well, that you are paying the true price for any optional excursions you want to do. This also applies to accommodation costs before and after the trip. Please note that the prices of optional excursions quoted are approximate as local prices can and do change. Please see the relevant trip page for the Optional excursions you can do on that trip and a list of prices.

**Notes downloaded on: 19-04-2026**

