

Route D Galaxy

SATURDAY: BALTRA ISLAND – SANTA CRUZ: HIGHLANDS

Arrive to Baltra Island. This island is known to be inhabited by militaries only. On this island is located one of our main Galapagos airports. Once you arrive your guide will be waiting for you. Transfer to Santa Cruz Island, we cross the Itabaca Chanel (from airport to this place is around 15 minutes), after this we take our private bus to Puerto Ayora.

Once we arrive to Puerto Ayora, we will go direct to Galaxy Yacht: cabin accommodation and take lunch. After lunch, our first visit is HIGHLANDS OF SANTA CRUZ, where we have a trekking and we will find the giant tortoises in their natural habitat, this is a natural spectacular. For this visit we recommend to use sport shoes, long pants, raincoat, hat and sun block. Back to Puerto Ayora. At the night we have a welcome cocktail and the formal presentation of our crew by Capitan. Briefing for next day.

SUNDAY: ISABELA ISLAND

TINTORERAS: Located in the bay of Puerto Villamil, this small island surrounded by calm turquoise waters has an easy trail with great landscapes and very interesting fauna. Along the trail we will see large numbers of Marine Iguanas basking in the sun, lava lizards, herons, gulls and sea lions. In the coves, it is easy to find Sea Turtles, rays and even Penguins. Among the many cracks and channels in the coast sometimes we can see White-tipped Reef Sharks (in Spanish "Tintoreras"). After the visit, we will snorkel in a sheltered area where it is possible to see many tropical fish, Rays, Sea Turtles, Reef sharks and with a bit of luck, penguins. Return on board for lunch.

PM BREEDING CENTER – HUMEDALES & WALL OF TEARS: The Breeding Center is located 1.5 Km from Puerto Villamil. This place is dedicated to the reproduction of several species of tortoises in captivity; we will find 330 tortoises between youthful and adult. The Breeding Center has beautiful gardens composed by native plants. Visit Humedales: complexes of paths which include sites like: The Orchilla Hill, from this viewpoint you can admire the bay, Puerto Villamil, Volcano Sierra Negra, islets and rocks. El Estero, Poza Escondida, Poza Redonda, Tunel Del Estero are others paths located in Humedales area, each one with its beautiful landscape and characteristic. After that we have a walking to Wall of Tears, a big wall build by prisoners; in our pathway to this site, we will see land tortoises.

MONDAY: ISABELA ISLAND

ELIZABETH BAY This is one of the island's breeding sites for penguins. Located on the west coast of Isabela, Elizabeth Point is a marine visitor site. Visit red mangrove cove: Brown pelicans, flightless cormorants, spotted eagle rays, golden rays and sea lions are often seen. Lunch E35K08

URBINA BAY: This place is located at the base of Alcedo Volcano between Elizabeth Bay and Tagus Cove. Wet landing. Trail length is around 3.20 Km; during this walking we can observe land iguanas, hawks, tortoises; also it is possible to see red and blue lobsters.

TUESDAY: ISABELA ISLAND & FERNANDINA

ISABELA ISLAND: TAGUS COVE: It is located at west of Darwin Volcano in Isabela Island. During our walking we will find several inscriptions (names of boat's pirates) since 1800. Tagus Cove name has its origin of an England ship which crossed the island looking for Galapagos tortoise to feed the crew. From this area we can admire the Darwin Lake which has salt water and its deep is 9metes approximately, there are no fishes. It is very easy to see different species of birds. Lunch

FERNANDINA ISLAND – ESPINOZA POINT: Fernandina is the 3rd island bigger of Galapagos and has just one visit place: Espinoza Point.

Espinoza Point is famous site because you will find big colonies of marine iguanas and to be the unique place where the flightless Cormorant lives, Galapagos penguin, hawk, snakes of Galapagos and many other. From Espinoza Point we can admire Fernandina Island and its volcano which last eruption was on May 2005.

Fernandina is the only island that doesn't have any mammal introduced and the open areas are very fragile. In nesting time of marine iguana (January to June) we have a lot care when we are walking. Return to Galaxy.

WEDNESDAY: SANTIAGO ISLAND

SANTIAGO ISLAND: EGAS PORT: In this site we find a black sand beach; at south of this beach there is a volcano called Pan de Azucar, it has volcanic deposits which have contributed to the formation of this black sand beach.

The crater of this volcano has a salt lake which in warm time becomes dry and it is possible to appreciate a salt mine. Between 1928 and 1930 there were some explorations to this mine but they didn't function; additionally, it caused damages to the environment because of workers use endemic woods. It is not allowed go down to salt mine.

Return to Galaxy. Lunch

SANTIAGO ISLAND: ESPUMILLA BEACH & CALETA BUCANERO: One of the main attractions of this site is a Palo Santo wood, the beach and landscape; the beach is a very important site for tortoises because they use this place for nesting.

Once time, the pigs were the main predatory of tortoise's eggs; pigs were eradicated with the creation of Isabela Project.

THURSDAY: DAPHNE MAYOR OR DRAGON HILL – SANTA CRUZ ISLAND: BLACK TURTLE COVE

DAPHNE MAYOR: is a volcanic tuff cone, formed by successive explosions produced by the mixture of lava and water. Galaxy will navigate around the Island.

OR

DRAGON HILL: The visitor's site at Dragon Hill is located in northwestern Santa Cruz Island, and consists of a trail that runs through three different environments at just 1,600 m long.

It gets its name because in 1975, was one of the only places in the Santa Cruz Island where there were land iguanas (*Conolophus subcristatus*) in healthy state. That same year, the Galapagos National Park and the Charles Darwin Foundation initiated a program to conserve land iguanas. In the lagoons at this site, there is

shrimp (*Artemia salina*), the same as is the food of flamingos; at certain times of year they are more abundant and therefore the population of these birds is larger.

BLACK TURTLE COVE: Welcome on board. After lunch our first visit is to Black Turtle Cove which is situated in the northern of Santa Cruz. This bay is surrounded by mangroves and is accessible by dinghy only. The superficial cove is a safe refuge for marine life. Black-tip reef sharks, marine turtles, and a variety of rays are often spotted here.

FRIDAY: RABIDA ISLAND – CHINESE HAT

RABIDA ISLAND: The visitor site is located on the east coast of Rabida Island, consists of a red sand beach, a coastal lagoon behind the beach, and a loop trail. The approximate distance of the trail is 1.1 kilometers.

The color of the rocks and sand on the beach is due to the very porous volcanic material, which with the help of environmental factors (rain, salt water and sea breeze, has acted as an oxidizing agent. The main attraction of the place is the red sand beach, scenery, aside from the vegetation of the arid zone and the presence of native and endemic species.

CHINESE HAT: A small islet located near the south-east coast of Santiago. It's shaped like a Chinese hat when seen from afar. It is an island consisting of a cone type "Splatter" (lava ejected as drops and falls close to where it came from, which forms a cone inclined) that forms the summit and many lava tubes that go down to the coast.

On the west you can see pillow-type lava formations, which are an indicator that the flows were formed under the sea and have been raised upward, which is why coral heads are found on the lava. This visit provides an excellent opportunity for the interpretation of geological features such as lava tubes and lava flows.

The trail is 700 m (round trip) and the minimum time it takes this trek is half an hour.

SATURDAY: NORTH SEYMOUR ISLAND – MOSQUERA ISLET

NORTH SEYMOUR: This Island was formed by the lifting of volcanic marine lava. Marine fossil where found in this island; the fossil dates from Pleistocene.

In 1932 the Capitan Alan Hancock and his crew took 72 land iguanas from Baltra Island and the iguanas were introduced in North Seymour Island; the reason of this change was that the iguanas could live in better conditions than in Baltra. The crew of Capitan Hancock found malnourished iguanas in Baltra; in 1934 colonizing people verified that the iguanas were in good conditions. Transfer to the airport.

**** ITINERARY IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE ****