

Route B4 – 4 days Yolita II

Day 1 – Thursday

Upon arrival at Baltra Airport, you will first pass through an airport inspection point where your TCT (Transit Control Card) will be checked and stamped (please keep this carefully with your passport as you will need to show it again when you leave Galapagos). Here you will also pay the Galapagos National Park entrance fee of USD 100 (unless it has been prepaid). To ensure that no foreign plants or animals are introduced to the islands, your luggage will be inspected as well. At the arrival hall a naturalist guide will meet you and escort you on a short bus ride to the Itabaca canal. A short ferry ride will take us to the northern side of Santa Cruz Island. Here we will travel by bus to Puerto Ayora, the main town to be found on Santa Cruz Island, in approximate 50 minutes. We will be driven straight to Puerto Ayora's dock, from where we take a dinghy to the yacht.

PM: Highlands, Santa Cruz Island

The road to the highlands leaves from Bellavista, a small village located at a 15 minute drive from Puerto Ayora and passes through the agricultural zone, near the National Park boundary, the Miconia Zone, and then goes to the Fern and Sedge zone. With clear weather (unpredictable) this area affords beautiful scenes of rolling hills and extinct volcanic cones covered with grass and lush greenery all year round. Here you will visit the Twin Craters, which are two pit craters. You will visit as well a local ranch where we can observe the Giant Tortoise specie of Santa Cruz Island in its natural habitat. After our Highlands visit, we will return to Puerto Ayora and the yacht.

Day 2 – Friday

AM: Punta Cormorant, Floreana

This site offers probably the best Flamingo lagoon in the Galapagos; it is also one of the largest in the islands. It's situated between two tuff lava cones that give the area a special atmosphere. There are various species of shorebirds to observe besides flamingos; the most frequent are common stilts, white-checked pintail ducks and other migratory birds. It is very interesting to see the two distinct beaches: "The Green Beach" (due to its high percentage of olivine crystals in the sand) and the "Flour Sand Beach" which is made up of coral. After our visit of Cormorant Point we will continue with our yacht to the nearby islet known as Corona del Diablo (Devil's Crown), where we can enjoy some great snorkeling.

PM: Post office bay & Baroness Lookout, Floreana

Historically, Post Office Bay is the location of a wooden barrel that was placed in the 18th century by the crew of a whaling ship. Since this time it has been used by mariners and tourists as a post office. The idea is to carry letters or postcards to their destination by hand. Apart from being the Post Office Barrel, this site was the landing area for some of the first colonists. We will continue to the north of the island and ascend to an elevated slope to enjoy a beautiful view from the Baroness Lookout. It is said that Baroness Eloisa von Wagner loved this place and spent several hours watching the horizon. Within walking distance (30 m) are the ruins of what is known as her House. From this lookout, the landscape covers the coastline from the Enderby islet to Post Office Bay, as well as Cerro Pajas, the pool of flamingos and wide forest of Palo Santo.

DAY 3 – Saturday

AM: Chinese Hat

This is a small islet (1 sq km) located just off the southeastern tip of Santiago Island. It is a recent volcanic cone, shaped like a Chinese hat when seen from north side. On the west side lava formations may be observed, formed under the sea and raised upward, this is why coral heads are found on the lava. This is an excellent visit for interpretation of geological features such as lava tubes and lava flows. The landscape is covered by sea lions colonies, marine iguanas and Galapagos penguins.

PM: Dragon hill, Santa Cruz Island

The visitor site at Dragon Hill has been open for visits since 1993. This site is located in northwestern Santa Cruz Island and consists of a trail that leads to a hyper-saline lagoon behind the beach, frequented by flamingos, pintail ducks and other species of birds. This site has been re populated with land iguanas from Seymour, Isabela and Santa Cruz islands. There is a short walk to the Hill, which offers a beautiful view of the bay.

Day 4 – Sunday

AM: Black Turtle Cove

This little cove is located at the northern side of Santa Cruz Island, this is a red mangrove lagoon very calm and quiet which makes it an ideal place as nursery for many sharks and rays. Its crystal waters permits to observe large groups of white-tip reef, black tipped reef and hammer heads sharks, schools of golden rays and spotted eagle rays. There are no landing sites so the visit is done by zodiac. Sea turtles are frequently seen and sometimes they are seen mating in the mangrove-lined waters. Pelicans and Herons are also seen in this area. Transfer to Baltra airport for your flight back to Guayaquil or Quito.