

## Itinerary D

### The Western and Central Islands Galapagos tour , 6 days (5 nights ) from Baltra to Baltra

#### **1 Day: Wednesday**

Your flight arrives at noon from Quito or Guayaquil in Baltra. After a short drive you will cross the channel Itabaca and reach the north of the island of Santa Cruz. Then on to the highlands of the 864 meter high volcano Cerro Crocker. On clear days you can enjoy a wonderful view of the surrounding islands. You will learn about the typical Galápagos vegetation for example, tree ferns, and visit the famous giant tortoises in El Chato. Dinner and overnight on board.

#### **2 Day: Thursday**

In the early morning you reach the fishing village of Puerto Villamil in the south of , Isabela island. With an area of 4588 km<sup>2</sup>, it takes more than half the land area of the archipelago. Nevertheless, this island is comparatively rarely visited. In the early morning you see on the barrier island Tintorerías sea lions and white-tip sharks. Then continue to the " Muro de las Lágrimas ," the Wall of Tears - a moving, man-made monument. This eight meters high and two hundred feet long stone wall was built in the 1940s by convicts of the penal colony settled here from basalt boulders. Our hike then leads through a wetland of brackish lagoons where flamingos are often seen. In the sanctuary for giant tortoises, you can look at some of them up close. Or, on days with good weather conditions you will hike in the afternoon to the crater of Sierra Negra. Dinner and overnight on board.

#### **3 Day: Friday**

Punta Moreno Isabela is a bay with small lagoons, where flamingos often stay. Other water birds live here, including Bahamian ducks. In the early afternoon you reach the island of Fernandina, the youngest of the archipelago. On the south coast at Punta Mangle, you visit one of the best snorkeling sites of all Galapagos. It's an excellent site for seeing penguins. Dinner and overnight on board.

#### **4 Day: Saturday**

In the morning visit Punta Espinoza in the north of Fernandina. A fascinating lava scenery with cacti and individual mangrove vegetation. Besides penguins, flightless cormorants and sea lions, the largest marine iguanas of the Galapagos are among its attractions.

In the afternoon visit of Tagus Cove on the west coast of Isabela. The feet of Darwin volcano was a popular anchorage site for pirates and whalers. Some have written the names of their ships on the rock walls. After a 2 kilometer walk, you will reach a small cave, where inscriptions are dating from about 1800. Charles Darwin also visited Tagus Cove on his voyage on the Beagle. In the deep blue bay breed, penguins, flightless cormorants, Noddi - terns, share waters with blue-footed boobies A steep path through dry forests and cactus leads to the salty, green crater lake of Laguna Darwin. During the short hike you will discover the beauty of this island. It also offers the opportunity for a snorkel excursion. Dinner and overnight on board.

**5 Day: Sunday**

Also on Santiago there are still traces of the pirate times. The richly structured volcanic island offers long walks always new views. In Puerto Egas was until the sixties a salt mine. Some abandoned buildings are still there. In the rock pool marine iguanas are taking sun with the glowing red crabs on the rocks. Three species of Galapagos herons are living here, together with pigeons and oystercatchers . Moreover, this is one of the best places to see migrating shorebirds. At the end of the path Galapagos fur seals and sea lions are awaiting you. In the afternoon you are at Sombrero Chino, close to the coast of Santiago Island. Topped by a perfectly formed crater, this island resembles the silhouette of "Chinese hut". Only specialized plants can live between the fragile lava. Sea lions inhabit the white, coral beach, fringed by salt bushes. Dinner and overnight on board.

**6 Day: Monday**

A board the dinghy you explore the brackish lagoon Caleta Tortuga Negra with its many sea turtles and schools of all gold rays and sharks  
At midday return flight to the Continent, to Guayaquil or Quito.

Changes in the itinerary are possible.