

MARY ANNE, 8 DAYS, WEST

NOTE: Please keep in mind that our west itinerary starts right after you arrive to the islands. If possible, please wear clothes comfortable enough for a visit to the highlands of Santa Cruz Island: comfortable shoes, a hat for the sun, pants or shorts.

You will be reunited with your luggage at around 05:00 in the afternoon when you board the ship at Puerto Ayora (Santa Cruz Island).

DAY 1 – SATURDAY First encounters

PM After arriving at Baltra airport we will be greeted by an Angermeyer Cruises representant to then board a bus which will take us to the highlands of Santa Cruz, the first visit on the islands: the Twin Craters. The Gemelos (twins) are two deep craters located to the side of the road that leads to Puerto Ayora from the other side of the island. These huge holes were probably created in a volcanic explosion or by magma chambers underneath the island's surface.

This is also a good place to see the Galapagos hawk and barn owl of this island and the surrounding forests are filled of birds such as the vermillion flycatcher or the yellow warbler. Something worth mentioning is the contrast of the vegetation of the highlands with the arid coastal zones. From here we will continue to El Manzanillo Ranch to have lunch and then a short hike to a small lagoon where it is usually possible to see the Vermillion flycatcher or some species of Darwin's Finch. This place also offers excellent opportunities for viewing the giant Galapagos Tortoises in their natural habitat.

DAY 2 – SUNDAY

The Baroness' domain

AM We spend the day on Floreana, legendary homestead of infamous Baroness Eloise Von Wagner de Bousquet. Wet landing onto the olivine beaches of **Punta Cormorant**; we will be seeking Greater Flamingos on our way to another special beach with the finest sand you'll set your foot on, a sea turtle nesting ground where sharks and rays also visit regularly. We end the outing on a short panga ride to **Devil's Crown**, a key snorkeling site.

PM After lunch we will visit **Post Office Bay** (wet landing), where you can drop your postcards in the barrel as the whalers did centuries ago.

DAY 3 MONDAY

Tortoises and a white sand beach

AM Dry landing at Puerto Ayora in Santa Cruz Island. We will visit the Fausto Llerena breeding station, located at the Charles Darwin Research Station. Here, we will see tortoises from different islands. The animals are found in large semi natural pens for their protection, but also to ensure an easy view for the tourists. The pens are divided according to four different stages: eggs, neonates, juveniles (held here until they are mature enough to be "repatriated"), and adults.

PM From Puerto Ayora we will walk approximately 45 minutes along a stone paved road which is surrounded by Galapagos coastal vegetation and its most eminent representants: the prickly pear cactus and the holy stick tree. This road, which also presents a very good opportunity to watch birds, especially Darwin finches, will take us to a beautiful, white sand beach known as Tortuga bay. From here it's up to you to decide among the alternatives: swim or snorkel, watch the marine iguanas and other wildlife, explore the coves surrounded by mangrove trees or simply lay back and relax while enjoying the magical landscape.

DAY 4 – TUESDAY

An initiation to the western islands

AM We arrive at Isabela, the largest island in the Galapagos. After breakfast, we step ashore at **Punta Moreno** (dry landing) onto a superb pahoehoe lava flow surrounded by giant shield volcanoes, some still active! From here we will do a short hike to a lagoon where flamingos are usually present.

PM Panga ride in and around **Elizabeth Bay**, a salt-water lagoon surrounded by the largest red mangroves of the Galapagos. Here, it is usual to see sea turtles come near our zodiac to greet us. Flightless cormorants and Galapagos penguins are also more abundant in this part of the archipelago.

DAY 5 – WEDNESDAY

Marine abundance

AM We disembark at **Urbina Bay** (wet landing) onto a black sand beach, nesting site for Green Sea Turtle. We take a brief hike inland in search of land iguanas and giant tortoises (seasonal) that migrate to and from the highlands. At the beach, we will admire the remains of a geological uplift exposing coral heads and marine fossils; and if the sea conditions and time are on our side, we will also snorkel in these waters.

PM We cross Bolivar Channel to Fernandina Island, one of the world's most unspoilt sites, and disembark (dry landing) at **Punta Espinosa**. Strolling along the shoreline, we will be on the look out for Flightless Cormorants, Galapagos sea lions, Galapagos penguins and hawks, sooty-coloured marine iguanas and bright red-orange Sally Lightfoot Crabs.

DAY 6 - THURSDAY

Pirate's abode

AM Dry landing near **Tagus Cove**, historic pirate hideaway where names of countless ships are recorded for posterity on the cliff face. Hike through beautiful Galapagos landscapes to Darwin Lake, a salt-water crater lagoon surrounded by tuff stone.

PM At **Punta Vicente Roca** we will do a panga ride around the beautiful coast line before jumping into the water to enjoy one of the best snorkelling sites of the Galapagos. The underwater cliffs found here are filled with enough colors and life to amaze everyone looking at them for the first time.

DAY 7 – FRIDAY

Grottos and fur seals

AM After three days exploring the fabulous western islands, we head to central Santiago to disembark at **Espumilla** (wet landing), onto a golden-coloured sand Green Sea Turtle nesting site. A forest trail will take us through some of the largest specimens of Palo Santo on the islands to observe Yellow Warblers, the unbelievably tame Galapagos Flycatcher and the ever-intriguing Darwin's finches.

PM At **Puerto Egas** (wet landing) we disembark on a dark sand volcanic beach with an interesting history of human settlement. Sleepy Galapagos fur seals lounge under arches of lava carved by the ocean and occasionally dip into the crystalline pools, also known as "grottos". Walk along the shore and observe the abundant marine life.

DAY 8 – SATURDAY

The bird's den

AM We disembark on **North Seymour** (dry landing), a small uplifted island, where we will walk right up to bird nesting colonies of the two species of Frigatebirds, Blue-footed Boobies and Swallow-tailed Gulls, and experience, depending on season, spectacular displays. After this visit the ship will sail to Baltra where passengers ending their trip will disembark and passengers beginning their cruise will join us on board.

In addition to the land visits we offer a good balance of other activities such as snorkeling, panga rides and kayaking.