oceanSpray

The Ultimate Galapagos Experience

5Days/4Nights

Itinerary

2016

5 Days / 4 Nights
Ocean Spray
Itinerary Outline

Tuesday
AM: Baltra Arrival and Transfer
PM: Bartholomew - Pinnacle Rock

Wednesday
AM: Genovesa - Darwin Bay
PM: Genovesa - El Barranco

Thursday
AM: Santiago – Buccaneer Cove/ Espumilla Beach
PM: Santiago - Egas Port

Friday
AM: North Seymour
PM: Santa Cruz – Highlands/Charles Darwin Station

Saturday
AM: Mosquera Islet
PM: Transfer to Baltra Airport

Terms to Know

Landings – Landings are how you arrive to the visitor sites. Each site is visited by dinghy, also known as zodiac or panga.

Panga – Panga is the Spanish term for dinghy or zodiac. You will hear this word often.

Dry Landing –Upon arrival to the visitor site you will not have to enter the water when exiting the zodiac or dinghy.

Wet Landing – Upon arrival to the visitor site you will exit the dinghy by entering the water first, then walking ashore.

No Landing – There will be no landing because activity will consist of panga ride or snorkeling.

Dinghy Ride – The dinghy ride is a simple ride on the water around the visitor area. This is done when there is no landing permitted or to get a better view of nearby wildlife or landscapes.

Possible Activities – All activities are to be ultimately decided by the guide considering weather, sea conditions, and other factors. The activities listed in all itineraries are the final decision made by the Galapagos National Park officials with the best interest of the islands in mind. These cannot be altered in any way.

Day 1 (Tuesday) – Arrival & Bartholomew

ARRIVAL TO BALTRA ISLAND (GALAPAGOS)

Assistance will be provided upon your arrival by An Ocean Spray representative after passing through immigration and baggage claim. When ready, you will be transferred to the yacht. You will then be shown to your cabin where you will have some time to settle in before the welcome briefing and lunch.

PM: Bartholomew

Bartholomew Island: Bartholomew is another satellite island that derives from Santiago Island. It is home of the famous Pinnacle Rock and is named after James Sullivan, a friend of Charles Darwin who was also aboard the *HMS Beagle.* Of all the islands, this is the most photographed and is also featured in the 2003 movie "Master and Commander".

Pinnacle Rock: Pinnacle Rock is a volcono cone formed by magma expelled by an underwater volcano. The sea cooled the hot lava and as it exploded from contact, the pieces formed together this huge rock of many, many layers of basalt. The huge rock also has a beach where a small population of green sea turtles will nest. Galapagos penguins gather here and swimming can offer beautiful sights of colorful schools of fish and curious sea lions.

Bartholomew Island

Possible Activities: Hike, Snorkel, Panga Ride
Difficulty: Easy
Type of Landing: Wet Landing
Highlights: Pinnacle Rock, Galapagos penguins, panoramic views, awesome photography opportunities, swimming. Snorkel – sea lions, rays, sea turtles, sharks, many different fish.

Day 2 (Wednesday) – Darwin Bay & El Barranco

AM: Genovesa Island – Darwin Bay

Genovesa Island: This horse-shoe shaped island was formed by the eruption of a shield volcano with large slopes formed by gradual lava flows. It is known as "Bird Island" due to the wide variety of birds that can be seen. The only reptile on the entire island is the marine iguana and it is one of the very few places red-footed boobies gather in one large mass.

Darwin Bay: Darwin Bay is the result of the shield volcano where one of the sides of the caldera collapsed after years of erosion. It is one of the places in the Galapagos where red-footed boobies can be guaranteed to be seen. Over 200,000 red-footed boobies are estimated to be living in the trees and bushes of Genovesa.

DARWIN BAY

Possible Activities: Hike, Kayak, Panga Ride, Snorkel
Difficulty: Easy/Moderate
Type of Landing: Wet Landing
Highlights: Nazca Boobies, Red-footed Boobies, Swallow-tailed Gulls, Mangroves, Coral Pebbles Beach. Snorkel - Rays, colourful reef fish and hammerhead sharks.

PM: El Barranco

El Barranco: Better known as Prince Phillip's Steps, a steep and rocky path leads up to a cliff with a marvelous view. There is also a Palo Santa forest that is home to nesting red-footed boobies and other birds.

EL BARRANCO (*Prince Phillip's Steps)*

Possible Activities: Hike, Kayak, Panga Ride, Snorkel
Difficulty: Moderate
Type of Landing: Dry Landing
Highlights: Spectacular view, red-footed boobies, wedge-romped storm petrels, Galapagos doves, short-eared owls, Palo Santo forest. Snorkel – fish, sea turtles, rays, sharks, and sea lions.

Day 3 (thursday) – Buccaneer Cove/Espumilla Beach & Egas Port

AM: Santiago Island - Espumilla Beach / Buccaneer Cove

Santiago Island: The second Island visited by Charles Darwin was originally named after England's King James the second. The island was a good source of salt, water and food for whalers and buccaneers passing. There was a salt mine inland that was used to salt fish and tortoise meat. Land iguanas used to populate the island but are now extinct. From Darwin's own notes he wrote that land iguanas were thriving quite well since there was no place to even pitch a tent. Santiago Island today is now one of the most visited islands.

Buccaneer Cove: This cove is better known for excellent snorkeling opportunities and was once known as a refuge for British buccaneers or pirates. The underwater formations are amazing and many different species of fish gather here.

ESPUMILLA BEACH/BUCCANEER COVE

Possible Activities: Snorkeling and swimming, short walk along the beach (less than 0.6 mi / 1 km)
Difficulty: Easy
Type of Landing: Wet Landing
Highlights: Snorkeling, sea birds, historical site, and rock formations.

PM: Egas Port

Egas Port: Egas port is also known as James Bay. It is home to quick footed Galapagos lava lizards, Galapagos fur seals along the grottos and tide pools and is a great snorkeling site.

EGAS PORT

Possible Activities: Snorkeling, hike (1.2 mi / 2km)
Difficulty: Easy/Moderate
Type of Landing: Wet Landing
Highlights: Fur sea lions, Galapagos sea lions, tidal pools and "Grottos", Galapagos Hawk, Oyster Catchers, marine iguanas, and finches. Snorkeling: Reef sharks, turtles, rays, and beautiful underwater formations.

Day 4 (Friday) – North Seymour & Highlands/Charles Darwin St.

AM: North Seymour Island

The island was named after English nobleman Lord Hugh Seymour. Formed by uplifted submarine lava, the island is home to a huge colony of about 2,500 land iguanas and large populations of sea lions, blue-footed boobies, common noddies and frigatebirds. Along the coast it is possible to see land and marine iguanas and the biggest colony of Magnificent Frigatebirds.

North Seymour Island

Possible Activities: Snorkeling, Panga Ride, Hike
Difficulty: Moderate/Difficult
Type of Landing: Dry Landing
Highlights & Animals: Land and marine iguanas, frigate birds, Blue-footed boobies, common noddies, and sea lions. Snorkel – Rays, reef shark, fish, garden eels.

PM: Highlands/Charles Darwin Stations

Highlands: The Highlands of Santa Cruz is a very interesting site due to the rich wildlife, hills, ferns, volcanoes and lava tubes present. Exploring the lava tubes is a surreal and unique experience. Here you can see all the different agricultural zones that are present in the Galapagos in one place. The variety of birds makes this a bird watchers delight.

Highlands

Possible Activities: Hike
Difficulty: Moderate
Type of Landing: Dry Landing
Highlights: Lava tunnels, interaction with wild turtles, and Tortoise Breeding Center.

Charles Darwin Research Station: The station conducts many different research projects and provides assistance to other researchers and governmental institutions and agencies, especially the Galapagos National Park. Many of the results are later published online, in magazines, and popular scientific journals. The research station also plays a big part in educating the community and public schools in Galapagos. There is also the longtime running Giant Tortoise restoration program that includes various stages of the giant tortoise from eggs, hatchlings and adults.

Possible Activities: Walk
Difficulty: Easy
Type of Landing: Dry Landing
Highlights: See the latest advances in research at the Charles Darwin Research Station. Also see Giant Tortoises and land iguanas.

Day 5 (Saturday)- Mosquera Islet & Departure/Transfer to Airport

AM: MOSQUERA ISLET

Mosquera Islet: This islet is located between the islands of Baltra and North Seymour. It is a reef of rocks and coral (the result of an uprising) and a great white sand beach. Its narrowest width reaches about 160 meters and has an estimated length of 600 meters. In most of the perimeter there is a base of lava rocks, as evidence of the lava uprising, except in the southwest side where the landing occurs.

This island has one of the largest populations of sea lions. You can also observe several species of shorebirds. There have been occasional reports at this site of Orcas (Orcinus orca) feeding on sea lions.

Mosquera Islet

Possible Activities: Walk
Difficulty: Easy
Type of Landing: Wet Landing (This may be complicated by low tide or when there is heavy swell, during the months of December to March mainly)
Highlights: sea lions, shorebirds

Transfer to Baltra Airport

Your cruise has officially come to an end. We hope you enjoyed your Galapagos Cruise! We will now transfer you to your scheduled departure from Baltra Airport to mainland Ecuador. Safe travels!

IMPORTANT:

Itineraries and activities are subject to change without prior notice depending on weather conditions, water currents, and sea conditions.

The wildlife described above is not guaranteed to be seen during your visit. Please remember to respect your distance between any and all wildlife.

Please stay on marked trails and heed the directions of your Naturalist Guide.