

ESPAÑOLA ITINERARY

DAY 1

Arrive at Baltra Island

Upon arrival at Baltra airport, you will clear immigration and be met by your guide, who will escort you on a short bus ride to the harbor. A motorized dinghy will then transfer you to the M/C Athala II, where the captain and crew will welcome you aboard.

Sombrero Chino Island

Sombrero Chino means "Chinese Hat", a name that makes perfect sense as soon as you take a look at its unique shape. There are several interesting geographical formations that are ideal for scenic photos, and these are home to various marine species, such as Sally Lightfoot crabs and sea lions. Keep an eye out for different species of Darwin's finches as well.

Difficulty level: Easy

DAY 2

Santa Cruz Island - Dragon Hill

As the name implies, Cerro Dragon (Dragon Hill) is known for its healthy population of land iguanas. Other locals include common stilts, pintail ducks and occasionally flamingos. A short walk up the hill leads you to a land iguana nesting site, with breathtaking views of the bay. You will have the chance to go snorkeling after the walk.

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

Rábida Island

Rábida is a small island with red volcanic rocks surrounding a beautiful red sand beach, where there is a colony of sea lions and a pelican nesting site. The trail leads to a salt-water lagoon where shore birds can be seen. Activities include snorkeling, swimming, kayaking or dinghy ride.

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

DAY 3

Isabela Island - Puerto Villamil

There are many unique and exciting opportunities on your visit to Puerto Villamil and its spectacular surrounding areas. Hike up to Sierra Negra Volcano, visit the tortoise breeding center, the wetlands or the infamous "Wall of Tears". You can stroll through town and mingle with the locals, or just lie on the beautiful beach and do nothing at all.

Difficulty level: Easy

DAY 4

Floreana Island - Post Office Bay & Baroness' Viewing Point

Post Office Bay is home to a unique "post office" inspired by 18th century pirates and buccaneers who used a wooden barrel as an unofficial mailbox. The tradition continues today as visitors leave addressed postcards in the barrel and sort through left mail to deliver at home. The Baroness' Viewing Point is the ideal place to take in the unique scenery that defines Floreana.

Difficulty level: Easy

Floreana Island - Champion Islet & Cormorant Point

After snorkeling at Champion Islet, you will visit Cormorant Point, where there is a beautiful lagoon that is home to flamingos, stilts and pintail ducks. A great site for bird-watching.

Difficulty level: Easy

DAY 5

San Cristobal Island - Cerro Brujo & Leon Dormido

In addition to the magnificent scenery, there is wonderful swimming and a dinghy ride at this visitor site. Cerro Brujo's spectacular beach is home to a large colony of sea lions, and it is famous for being the first place in the archipelago that Charles Darwin visited. Later, you will sail by Leon Dormido, a 500 ft high rock formation that is a hangout for many bird species.

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

Lobos Island

Visitors may have close encounters with sea lion pups, especially while snorkeling. However, this small islet offers much more, including blue-footed boobies, frigatebirds and even a glimpse at the second type of sea lion species found in the Galapagos: the fur sea lion.

Difficulty level: Easy

DAY 6

Santa Cruz Island - Puerto Ayora & Highlands

On your visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station you will gain insight into the extensive efforts underway to preserve the Galapagos Islands. You will also encounter the famous Galapagos tortoises that are the islands' namesake. After the visit we will drive to the lush highlands of Santa Cruz to search for giant tortoises in their natural

surroundings. In the afternoon you will have free time for shopping or mingling with the locals, or you can simply relax on board.

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

For those on our 5-night itinerary, this will be your departure day. In the morning you will visit the highlands of Santa Cruz to see giant tortoises in the wild, followed by a transfer to Baltra airport for your flight back to the mainland.

DAY 7

Española Island - Punta Suarez

Punta Suarez is home to large populations of Nazca and blue-footed boobies, as well as the beautiful waved albatross (seasonally). The 10,000 to 12,000 pairs of albatross on Española represent the entire population of this species on the planet. They perform one of the most spectacular courtship rituals of the animal world.

Difficulty level: Moderate to Difficult

Española Island - Gardner Bay

Gardner Bay offers the chance to enjoy a pristine white sandy beach. In addition to being a nesting site for sea turtles, it is home to one of the most important colonies of sea lions in the archipelago. Activities include swimming snorkeling and kayaking.

Difficulty level: Easy

DAY 8

Daphne Island

Visitors are not allowed on this island due to its fragile ecosystem, but your guide will point out the island's birdlife from the vantage point of the yacht's deck and explain the important research that is underway.

Difficulty level: Easy