

## ITINERARY A (WESTERN ROUTE)

### 7 DAYS CRUISE – ITINERARY A (SUNDAY – SATURDAY)

#### SUNDAY: BALTRA AIRPORT – CERRO DRAGON (DRAGON HILL)

► **CERRO DRAGON:** After lunch our first visit is to Dragon Hill which is located in the northwestern area of Santa Cruz Island. It consists of a 1,600 m long trail running through 3 different environments. In 1975, it was one of the only places on Santa Cruz Island where healthy land iguanas (*Conolophus Subcristatus*) could be found. That same year, the Galapagos National Park and the Charles Darwin Foundation initiated a program to conserve land iguanas. In the lagoons found here, there are shrimp (*Artemia salina*), the food of the flamingos. At certain times of the year, the shrimp are more abundant and the flamingo population increases. Dinner.

#### MONDAY: BUCANERO – PLAYA ESPUMILLA – PUERTO EGAS

► **ESPUMILLA BEACH & BOUCANIER COVE:** The main attractions include Palo Santo Wood, the beach, and the stunning landscape; the beach is a very important site for tortoises because they use this place for nesting. Once time, the pigs were the main predatory of tortoise's eggs; pigs were eradicated with the creation of Isabela Project. Lunch

► **EGAS PORT:** Here we find a beautiful black sand beach; to the south of the beach is the Pan de Azucar Volcano, whose volcanic deposits have contributed to the formation of the black sand beach. The crater of this volcano contains a saltwater lake that dries up during hot weather. Between 1928 and 1930, explorations to develop a salt mine were carried out, but it was decided that a mine was not feasible. The workers' use of endemic woods also damaged the environment and the development was scrapped. Descent to the salt mine is not allowed. Dinner.

#### TUESDAY: ISABELA – FERNANDINA

► **ISABELA ISLAND: VICENTE ROCA POINT** is comprised of two separate coves, this site is a large bay with spectacular sea life. Keep an eye out for seahorses, sea turtles, and the strange yet fascinating Mola-mola (sunfish). Lunch.

► **FERNANDINA ISLAND – ESPINOZA POINT:** Fernandina is the third biggest island in the Galapagos and has only one visiting site: Espinoza Point, famous for the large colonies of marine iguanas and the home of the flightless cormorant, the Galapagos penguin, snakes, and more. From Espinoza Point, we can admire the beauty of Fernandina Island and its volcano which last erupted in May of 2005. Fernandina is the only island that doesn't have mammals and the open areas are extremely fragile. From January to June, the nesting period of the marine iguana, we take great care when walking. Dinner.

#### WEDNESDAY: ISABELA

► **ISABELA ISLAND – URBINA BAY:** this place is located at the base of Alcedo Volcano between Elizabeth Bay and Tagus Cove. Wet landing. Trail length is around 3.20 Km; during this walk, we can observe land iguanas, hawks, and tortoises. It is also possible to see red and blue lobsters. Lunch.

► **ISABELA ISLAND – TAGUS COVE:** It is located to the west of Darwin Volcano on Isabela Island. While walking, we will find several inscriptions (names of pirates) dating back to the 1800's. From here, we can see Darwin Lake, a salt water lake with a depth of approximately 9 m. It contains no fish. It is very common to see a variety of bird species. Dinner.

#### THURSDAY: ISABELA

► **ISABELA ISLAND – MORENO POINT.** We will disembark at Moreno Point which is located near Elizabeth Bay on the west coast of Isabela Island. The plethora of birds seen during a dinghy ride along the striking rocky shores or a hike along a path through lava rock leading to tide pools and mangroves, create a birdwatcher's delight. In the tide pools, green sea turtles or white-tip sharks can be spotted. Lunch.

**ISABELA ISLAND – ELIZABETH BAY:** After lunch, this is one of the island's breeding sites for penguins. Located on the west coast of Isabela, Elizabeth Point is a marine visitor site. Visit Red Mangrove Cove: Brown pelicans, flightless cormorants, spotted eagle rays, golden rays and sea lions are often seen. Dinner.

#### FRIDAY: ISABELA

► **ISABELA ISLAND – TINTORERAS:** Located in the bay of Puerto Villamil, this small island, surrounded by calm, turquoise waters have an easy trail with great landscapes and very interesting fauna. Along the trail we will see large numbers of Marine Iguanas basking in the sun, lava lizards, herons, gulls and sea lions. In the coves, it is easy to find Sea Turtles, rays and even penguins. Among the many inlets and channels on the coast, we sometimes see White-tipped Reef Sharks (in Spanish "Tintoreras"). Following the excursion, we will return to the boat for breakfast and sail to our next destination. Lunch.

► **ISABELA ISLAND – HUMEDALES:** Los Humedales is one of the Isabela Hidden Gems. "Humedales" translates to Wet Lands and this area is characterized by sandy beaches, rocky shores, and mangroves, which have an extremely important role in the Galapagos as they provide a nursery for young marine animals as well as a nesting site for birds. Following the various paths, you will find a fabulous destination for bird lovers, pink flamingos and migratory birds including black-bellied and semipalmated plovers, whimbrel, osprey, greater and lesser yellowlegs, wilson's phalarope, short-billed dowitcher, common tern, blue-winged teal, to name a few. You can also observe young giant tortoises from the Isabela Breeding Center. Dinner

#### SATURDAY: CHARLES DARWIN – AIRPORT

##### ► **SANTA CRUZ ISLAND – CHARLES DARWIN**

After breakfast, we will visit Charles Darwin Station which is located in the main port on Santa Cruz Island; we will take a private bus to the entrance of the breeding center where we will see tortoises and land iguanas in captivity. This center is the main breeding site on the islands. Animals that were in danger of extinction on the various islands are maintained in captivity. Thanks to the dedicated work of several institutions, some species are being saved. Here lived Lonesome George, the famous last survivor of the giant tortoise species found on Santa Cruz Island.

**Transfer to Baltra airport**

**\*\* This itinerary is subject to change without notice; due to seasonal changes, weather conditions or Galapagos National Park regulations. \*\***