



GALAPAGOS
Sea Star
JOURNEY

ITINERARY 2016

11 DAYS/10NIGHTS



Thursday to Sunday
(every 15 days)



11 DAYS / 10 NIGHTS DAY BY DAY

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Day 1 - Thursday

Upon arrival at Baltra Airport, travelers pass through an airport inspection point to insure that no foreign plants or animals are introduced to the islands, as well as to pay the park entrance fee of \$100 (unless it has been prepaid). A representative of our Galapagos Sea Star Journey, will meet you, help you collect your luggage, and escort you bus ride to Puerto Ayora Village and then embark on board our yacht



PM: Charles Darwin Station, Santa Cruz Island

Although the great majority of Galapagos visitors come here to observe and appreciate natural wonders, it is also interesting to learn how the protection and conservation of the islands are carried out. The main attractions are the National Park information center, the Van Staelen Exhibition Hall, the Breeding and Rearing Center for young tortoises and adult Galapagos tortoises in captivity.



Day 2 - Friday

AM: White Tipped Reef Shark Canal, Isabela Island

A delightful place reached by a nice zodiac ride. "Tintoreras" are small islands in front of Puerto Villamil coast.

There is Heron lava on the lookout on mangrove branch, and Galapagos Penguin and sea lion often pop out on shore. White-tipped reef sharks are fairly common in the archipelago. Their name in Spanish is Tintorera, thus the name of this site as they are always found here resting in the shallow waters.



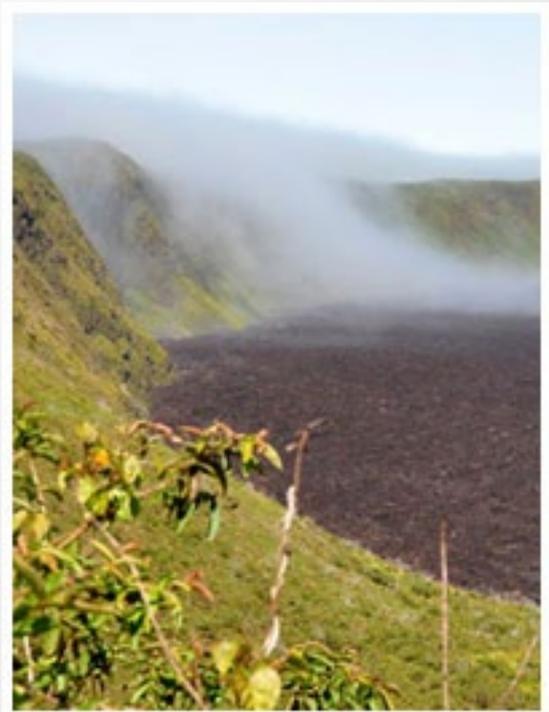


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PM: Sierra Negra Volcano, Isabela Island

Isabela Island is the largest and one of the youngest islands in the Galapagos archipelago. We land in Puerto Villamil, which has the second smallest population in Galapagos with approximately 3000 hab. We head up to the highlands from Puerto Villamil to Sierra Negra slope, and later we will do some hiking on uneven terrain until we arrive to the Sierra Negra volcano rim. Sierra Negra is the second widest crater in the world. From this viewpoint, you have fantastic sights to the 6 x 5 -mile-wide crater, the rest of the volcanoes, and Perry Isthmus, a 12 Km wide lava field. From here we can hike to Chico Volcano to watch the striking lava formations, examples of the geological occurrences that have created the Galapagos Islands.



Day 3 – Saturday

AM: Punta Moreno, Isabela Island

Punta Moreno is located on the north coast of Isabela Island between the volcano Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul volcano. The trail runs along a lava flow Pahohoe (solidified lava in the form of corrugated or an accordion) into a complex of coastal lagoons, its main attraction are several species of birds which can be found around this lakes and mangroves.



PM: Elizabeth Bay, Isabela Island

This is a marine visitor site, the excursion is carried out in a zodiac and so there is no landing point. Your zodiac ride starts with a visit to the Marielas islets where there is the largest and most important penguin colony in the Galapagos Islands.



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The excursion continues into the cove that is surrounded by red mangroves where you can admire their red roots and green leaves. It is here that you are able to observe sea turtles, flightless cormorants, spotted eagle rays, golden rays, brown pelicans and sea lions. Frequently visitors have been able to see Galapagos Hawks soaring overhead whilst schools of Pompano and Dorado fish swim below



DAY 4 – Sunday

AM: Punta Espinoza, Fernandina Island

Fernandina is the third largest island in the archipelago and has a single visitor site: Punta Espinoza located at the northeastern tip of the island. Just across Tagus Cove, is a visitor site where some of the unique species of Galapagos can be seen. Marine iguanas conglomerate in larger groups than in any other island. They bask around in the sand, swim near the shore and some time block the way at the landing dock. Among the unique species found here, is the Flightless Cormorant.



A bird that due to the lack of predators, had to adjust their way of survival and improve their skills of finding food in the ocean. Their wings, tails and feet progressively adapted for swimming. To see these birds, is to witness evolution happening right in front of you. Stay within 2m of the cormorants and penguins.

PM: Tagus Cove, Isabela Island

Tagus Cove, a tour along the cliffs in a zodiac will give the visitors a good chance to see the Galapagos penguin, the flightless cormorant and other sea birds.



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From the landing dock it is about a 30 minute hike along the trail up to the top of the cliff from where you can view Darwin Lake, an uplifted ultra-saline lake saltier than the sea. You can also see several volcanoes from this location. Look carefully at the graffiti on the surrounding cliffs of the cove, it has been written by pirates, whalers and buccaneers in past centuries.



DAY 5: Monday

AM: Espumilla Beach, Santiago Island

Espumilla beach is located in northern coast of Santiago Island in James Bay. During the last presence the El Niño phenomenon, one of the two lagoons in this site, underwent a process of sedimentation, thus causing the disappearance of a representative colony of flamingos. The main attractions are the Palo Santo forest and the marvelous. The beach is an important site for nesting marine turtles.



PM: Puerto Egas, Santiago Island

Its black beach is located at the west side of the island and is the main attraction of the island. Their volcanic tuff deposits have favored the formation of this special black sand beach.

This site is called Puerto Egas, because there was an attempt of company of Hector Egas, to start the exploitation of salt, which failed because the price of salt in the continent was very cheap, and did not justify its exploitation in Galapagos. The project was abandoned and they left their infrastructure.





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DAY 6 - Tuesday

AM: Isla Lobos, San Cristobal

This little island is reach at approx 1 hour by panga from Port Baquerizo Moreno, the capital of the Island. The trail will lead across a dry vegetation zone, substrate of volcanic rocks and sandy areas. There is a small population of blue-footed boobies and frigate birds, which nest in this site. At the beach you will see a large colony of sea lions. It is common to see shorebirds.



PM: Cerro Colorado, San Cristóbal

In the afternoon, visit to Cerro Colorado Tortoises Protection and Growing Center, located at 40 minutes aprox by bus to the south east of the island. This center was built to improve the status of the population of the island tortoises. The center includes a large corral, a Visitors center, breeding center and an interpretative trail. Along this trail is possible to see different species of native and endemic plants as well birds as the San Cristobal Mockingbird, Yellow Warblers, and many species of finches and the Galapagos flycatcher.





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Day 7 – Wednesday

AM: Española Island, Gardner Bay

Located on the north-eastern coast of Hood, Gardner Bay provides an excellent beach for relaxing, swimming, snorkeling, kayaking, and the opportunity to observe sea lions. Here we can also observe sharks in the crystal clear ocean waters.



PM: Española Island, Punta Suarez

This rocky land spot sustains one of the most impressive and varied colonies of sea birds in the Galapagos. Along its southern shore, high cliffs rise up from the sea affording the visitor spectacular views of soaring birds and of the blow hole where water spouts up to 50-75 feet into the air according to the intensity of the surf.



Day 8 – Thursday

AM: Punta Cormorant, Floreana

This site offers probably the best Flamingo lagoon in the Galapagos; it is also one of the largest in the islands. It's situated between two tuff lava cones that give the area a special atmosphere. There are various species of shorebirds to observe besides flamingos; the most frequent are common stilts, white-checked pintail ducks and other migratory birds.



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It is very interesting to see the two distinct beaches: "The Green Beach" (due to its high percentage of olivine crystals in the sand) and the "Flour Sand Beach" which is made up of coral.



PM: Post office bay & Baroness Lookout, Floreana
Historically, this site is the location of a wooden barrel that was placed in the 18th century by the crew of a whaling ship. It has been used since this time by mariners and tourists as a post office. The idea is to carry letters or postcards to their destination by hand. Apart from being the Post Office Barrel, this site was the landing area for some of the first colonists. We will continue to the north of the island and will ascent



to an elevated slope to enjoy a beautiful vista at the Baroness Lookout. It is said that Baroness Eloisa von Wagner loved this place and spent several hours watching the horizon. Within walking distance (30 m) are the ruins of what is known as her House. From this lookout, the landscape covers the coastline from the Enderby islet to Post Office Bay, as well as Cerro Pajas, the pool of flamingos and wide forest of Palo Santo.

Day 9 – Friday

AM: Santa Fe

Located in the southeastern part of the Galapagos, this island was formed from an uplift instead than a volcanic origin, this is why is mostly flat. There are some theories which assure this could be the oldest island in the Archipelago.



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Santa Fe is the home of a number of endemic species like the Galapagos Hawk, Galapagos snake, Galapagos mockingbird, rice rats and one of the two species of land iguanas of the islands. After disembarkation in the beautiful and clear waters you will be in contact with one of the many sea lion colonies. Along the trail many salt bushes can be seen as well giant Pickly pear cactus, gigantism is a characteristic of oceanic islands. There are great possibilities of snorkeling with playful sea lions and



PM: Plazas

Plazas is located at the east of Santa Cruz Island, and forms part of two islands known as Islas Plazas. Despite its small size, some of the most interesting and outstanding species of the Galapagos are found here. The Plazas land iguanas are smaller than its relatives found at other islands. Throughout the island are several hybrid iguanas, a result of crossing a male marine iguana and a female land iguana, they are unique, recognizable at first glance by their black/gray color, with a land iguana's crest, but face and tail of the marine iguana.



The big population of iguanas is due to the presence of tunas, their favorite food. Swallow Tailed Gulls nesting in the rugged cliffs are seen along with other sea birds as: Audubon shearwaters, red-billed tropicbirds, frigate birds and brown pelicans.



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Day 10 – Saturday

AM: North Seymour Island

Seymour is an uplifted (as opposed to volcanic) island and so is generally flat and strewn with boulders. There are good nesting sites here for a large population of magnificent frigate birds. Blue-footed boobies perform their courtship dance in the more open areas and swallow-tailed gulls perch on the cliff edges. Despite the tremendous surf that can pound the outer shore, sea lions haul out onto the beach and can be found bodysurfing.

Watch your step, as the boobies don't worry much about where they nest, and you might just step on one. The trees are dotted with male frigate birds trying to attract the attention of the ladies by inflating their bright red skin flaps. They sometimes fly in the air to call more attention to themselves. There's a circular path that takes you through the island to a beautiful, rocky shore where the waves crash a silvery-blue.



PM: Bachas Beach, Santa Cruz Island

These two small beaches are found to the West of Turtle Cove. Their sand is made of decomposed coral, which makes it white and soft, making it a favorite nesting site for sea turtles. Behind one of the beaches there is a small brackish water lagoon, where occasionally is possible to observe flamingos and other coastal birds, such as black-necked stilts and whimbrels. The other beach is longer, but it has two old barges that were abandoned during the Second World War, when the USA used Baltra Island as a strategically point to protect the Panama Channel.





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Day 11 - Sunday

AM: Mosquera Islet

The Mosquera Islet is located between Baltra and North Seymour Islands and it was formed by a geological uplift, in its narrowest width reaches 160 meters approximately. This islet has one of the largest populations of sea lions, visitors can also observe several species of shorebirds, reports of dolphins and orcas has been recorded around this islet.



After this activity, you will be transferred to the Baltra airport for your flight back to the mainland.