Eagle-Eye Tours

# Galápagos Cruise Itinerary

Link: Galápagos Cruise

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## Tour Overview

Embark on a breathtaking adventure through Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands, beginning in Quito, a UNESCO World Heritage city rich with colonial history and vibrant culture. Explore historic neighborhoods, marvel at architectural wonders like La Compañía and San Francisco Churches, and savor Andean cuisine. Journey to the Middle of the World to stand on the Equatorial Line before dining at the renowned Casa Gangotena. Your adventure continues with a flight to the Galápagos, where you will board La Pinta and sail to North Seymour Island, encountering diverse wildlife such as sea lions, iguanas, and an array of bird species.

Discover the natural wonders of the Galápagos Islands with expert guides, exploring the stunning landscapes and unique ecosystems of Isabela, Fernandina, Rábida, Santa Cruz, and Floreana Islands. Enjoy activities such as snorkeling, kayaking, and hiking, while observing remarkable wildlife including giant tortoises, green sea turtles, Galápagos penguins, and flamingos. Visit the Charles Darwin Research Station to learn about conservation efforts, and participate in the intriguing tradition at Post Office Bay. Conclude your unforgettable journey with a return flight to Quito, leaving you with lasting memories of Ecuador’s extraordinary natural and cultural heritage.

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## Itinerary

**Day 1: Quito, Ecuador**

Welcome to Quito, Ecuador's picturesque capital city! Your adventure begins here. Upon your independent arrival in the city, make your way to the hotel's welcome desk. Take the opportunity to get acquainted with your journey’s host, settle in, and prepare for the exciting adventure ahead.

**Day 2: Quito, Ecuador**

Discover the cultural richness of Quito, a UNESCO World Heritage city, with its historic neighbourhoods, outstanding museums, and tantalizing flavours. Marvel at the breathtaking views from the Panecillo, a hill that rises on the southern limit of the Old Town, providing a privileged viewpoint of Quito's beauty. Take a stroll through the historic San Roque neighbourhood and catch a glimpse of the daily lives of the locals in this traditional barrio. Journey to Independence Square, the main plaza that pulses with folklore, history, and the vibrant rhythm of everyday life. Be captivated by the architectural splendour of La Compañía Church, bathed in gold leaf from tip to toe, a true jewel of Ecuador. Step inside the iconic San Francisco Church and Monastery, where the Baroque church, extensive museum of Colonial religious art, and enchanting choir await your discovery. Indulge in the flavours of the Andean region with a delectable lunch at the Middle of the World, where you can stand on the Equatorial Line and learn about the significant 1736 Geodesic Mission. Later, savour a memorable dinner at Casa Gangotena, featuring their Cocina Mestiza, a fine example of Ecuadorian cuisine. This will be a signature Taste of Place event.

**Day 3: Flight to Galápagos and North Seymour Island**

Your adventure continues as you embark on a morning flight to the Galápagos, touching down on Baltra Island. This flat island was chosen for its substrate and became the site of the airport in the 1940s. Upon arrival, you'll board La Pinta, your home for the rest of the journey. Settle into your cabin after an introductory briefing and boat drill. As we sail along the coast and interior of North Seymour Island, keep your binoculars handy to observe the abundant bird colonies, sea lions, and iguanas that call this area home. Your journey may also include opportunities for coastal exploration by panga (Zodiac), giving you a closer look at the unique ecology and geography of the region.

**Day 4: Punta Vicente Roca, Isabela Island and Punta Espinoza, Fernandina Island**

Join our expert guides as we set out on the pangas for an exploration of the coast, providing you with a unique and firsthand view of the area's remarkable geology. Depending on ocean conditions, get the opportunity to snorkel along the cliffs keeping a lookout for magnificent green sea turtles and a myriad of other marine animals. Prepare to be amazed as we set foot on Fernandina, the archipelago's youngest and most pristine island. At Punta Espinoza, witness the remarkable juxtaposition of the barren landscape with the abundant wildlife. Look out for hawks, Galápagos penguins, and flightless cormorants, all against the backdrop of astounding volcanic vistas that dominate the surrounding landscapes.

**Day 5: Urbina Bay and Tagus Cove, Isabela Island**

Journey to Urbina Bay on the western island of Isabela. Discover an underwater wonderland of vibrant corals and exquisite shells, while keeping an eye out for Galápagos land iguanas and giant tortoises. In the nearby Bolívar Channel, there are excellent opportunities to spot a variety of whale species. Visit the secluded Tagus Cove, once favoured by pirates and whalers, for thrilling snorkelling or kayaking adventures. Conclude with a hike to the saltwater-filled Darwin Crater, embracing the untamed beauty of the surroundings.

**Day 6: Rábida Island and Cerro Dragon, Santa Cruz Island**

Venture to Rábida Island's mesmerizing, red-coloured beach, where a plethora of wildlife awaits. Watch for marine iguanas, mockingbirds, yellow warblers, and various species of Darwin's finches. Opt to snorkel from the beach or explore the vibrant marine life through a glass-bottom boat cruise. Journey to the north shore of Santa Cruz discovering Cerro Dragón, also known as Dragon Hill. Stroll around a brackish lagoon frequently visited by birds, and hike inland to get a beautiful view of the bay and the archipelago's western islands.

**Day 7: Charles Darwin Research Station, Santa Cruz Island**

Explore the Charles Darwin Research Station, where remarkable efforts are underway to restore tortoise populations in the Galápagos. Wander through the prickly-pear cactus forest, learn about the facility's various research projects, and gain a deep understanding of the crucial conservation efforts taking place in the Galápagos region. Enjoy a delicious poolside lunch at the Finch Bay Eco Hotel before heading to the Santa Cruz Island highlands to see Darwin's finches, endemic Scalesia trees, and giant tortoises in their natural habitat.

**Day 8: Post Office Bay and Punta Cormorant, Floreana Island**

Immerse yourself in the wonders of Floreana Island. Hop on a panga for a thrilling ride along the north shore, arriving at the iconic Post Office Bay where you can participate in the intriguing tradition of letter exchange. At Champion Islet, enjoy opportunities to kayak, snorkel, and ride the glass bottom boat for an up-close view of the island’s marvels. Take a peaceful stroll at Punta Cormorant, observing the magnificent greater flamingo—the largest living species of flamingo—in their brackish lagoon habitat. Venture to the other side of the island where white sandy beaches and sea turtles await your visit.

**Day 9: Baltra Island and flight to Quito, Ecuador**

Conclude your journey on Baltra Island, where we will disembark La Pinta and proceed to the airport for our charter flight back to Quito. Arriving in Quito in the afternoon, we'll say our farewells in Ecuador's second-largest city.

# What to Expect

Our small ship cruising programs allow you to experience the best of the natural world, while enjoying the comforts of our friendly floating hotel. The ship generally makes crossing between islands at night, so every morning you awake to new vistas and discoveries. Every day we offer a combination of interesting shore excursions and fun shipboard activities. You can choose which elements of the program you want to participate in.

This is a general natural history expedition rather than a dedicated birding tour. Travellers can look forward to a mix of wildlife viewing and time to appreciate the region's incredible scenery — with opportunities for birding included along the way.

Quito is located at 2850 m (9350 ft) above sea level, so the high altitude may be a consideration for some people.

You will need a reasonable level and mobility to get up and down the gangway and climb into and out of Zodiacs (with assistance). You will also require a reasonable level of fitness. We will be doing some light hiking up to 2km twice a day.

Our onboard specialists will join us during our shore excursions to provide interpretation and narration to these wonderful landscapes and experiences.

Each evening we will gather in the lounge to recount the days events and share memorable stories. Our onboard musician will provide some lively entertainment during happy hour and the expedition leader will outline the following days's schedule. Our resource staff of naturalists, historians, and other guest speakers will give informative talks at various times throughout the voyage.

Meals in the ship's dining room are a great opportunity to meet new friends and recount the day's adventures. Special diets can be accommodated with advance notice. Safety is also a top priority with Eagle-Eye Tours – our team has extensive experience in the field, and all of our Voyages are run in conjunction with operators with the highest safety standards.

When the ship is underway, it is a wonderful time to join a naturalist on deck, take photos of the stunning scenery, or get caught up on some reading in the library.

We know that everyone travels for different reasons. Over the years, however, we have found one common element among the guest who choose to travel with us – a thirst of knowledge and authentic experience. Knowing this drives us to ensure the highest quality learning experience on our trips, by taking time to carefully design each trip we offer.

# What's Included

**Tour Price Includes**

• All meals from breakfast of Day 2 to breakfast Day 9
• Two nights hotel accommodation in Quito based on double occupancy
• Six-night cabin accommodation onboard “La Pinta” ship.
• All excursions
• Admission to museums and events
• Local guides
• Local transportation
• Internal Flights: (Quito - Baltra Island - Quito)

**Tour Price Does Not Include**

• Travel/Medical insurance
• Items of a personal nature
• Any expenses incurred due to itinerary changes beyond our control
• Alcoholic beverages and laundry
• Flights to / from Ecuador
• Gratuities