

...a wild adventure

nature • adventure • culture



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TRIP PLANS: Ecuador and Galapagos Islands - 13-Day Adventure Group #2

Apr 30, 2026 - May 13, 2026

12-nights Quito, Ecuador and Galapagos Islands Adventure
Land Tour, Small Group

Trip Summary

April 30 - Thu/Quito - Optional Pre-Night in Quito (late night arrival)

Optional Night - Late Night Arrival

Check in at Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel - Mercure Alameda Quito

May 1 - Fri/Quito - Free Day

Meals Included:

Day of rest and exploration?

Quito - The City

Quito - Sightseeing

Quito - Attractions - Plaza de la Independencia, Plaza San Francisco, Museo del Banco Central

May 2 - Sat - Exploring Otavalo, Cotacachi & Peguche Wasi

Meals Included:

Check out of Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel

Morning - Cotacachi Volcano & town

Afternoon - Peguche

Evening - at leisure

Check in at Hacienda Hosteria Chorlavi - 1 night stay - Hacienda Hosteria Chorlavi

May 3 - Sun - Otavalo Market & Papallacta Hot Springs

Meals Included:

Check out of Hacienda Chorlavi

Otavalo - Otavalo

Morning - Otavalo Market

Afternoon - Termas de Papallacta Hot Springs

Check in at Hosteria Pampallacta Termas - 1 night stay - Hosteria Pampallacta Termas

May 4 - Mon - Papallacta to the Amazon - Huasquila Lodge

Meals Included:

Check out from Hosteria Pampallacta Termas

From Papallacta to the Heart of the Amazon at Huasquila Lodge

Check in EARLY Huasquila Amazon Lodge - 1 night stay - Huasquila Amazon Lodge

The Rainforest - Guided Hike ecological reserve

Evening - Storytelling & Cannibal Lessons.

May 5 - Tue - Huasquila- Pailo del Diablo; Manto de la Novia

Meals Included:

Check out of Huasquila Amazon Lodge

Exploring Baños' Natural Wonders and return to Quito

Morning - Devil's Cauldron; Manto de la Novia Double Waterfall by Cable Car

Afternoon - Drive back to Quito (3 hours)

Check in to Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel - 1 night stay

May 6 - Wed - Flight to Santa Cruz Island; Charles Darwin Research Station

Galapagos Islands - The Region

Meals Included:

Check out of the Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel

Fly to the Galapagos - TCC fee

Arrival to Baltra Airport - Galapagos Park Fee

Afternoon - Charles Darwin Research Station; Fausto Llerena Breeding Center

Check in to Coloma Hotel, Santa Cruz Island - 1 night stay

May 7 - Thu - Ferry to Isabela Island; Wetlands Exploration by Bike; Tintoreras

Meals Included:

Check out of Coloma Hotel

Morning - Ferry to Isabela

Afternoon - Tintoreras; Guided Bike Ride

Check in to Hotel Cally Isabela - 2 nights

May 8 - Fri/Isabela - Snorkeling at Los Tuneles & Afternoon at Leisure

Meals Included:

Morning - Snorkel Los Tuneles

Afternoon/Evening - free to relax

May 9 - Sat/Isabela - Tintoreras; flight to San Cristobel

Meals Included:

Check out of Cally Hotel

Isabela Island/Tintoreras and flight to San Cristobel

Morning - Tintoreras

Afternoon Flight/Evening

Check in to Algarrobos Hotel, San Cristobal - 3 nights

May 10 - Sun/San Cristobel - Exclusive Excursion to Lobos Island; Interpretation Center

Meals Included:

Morning & Afternoon - Lobos Island; Interpretation Center

Late Afternoon & Evening - free to relax & explore Puerto Baquerizo Moreno

May 11 - Mon/San Cristobal - Day at Leisure on - Optional Kicker Rock Snorkeling

Meals Included:

Day at leisure on San Cristobal Island

OPTIONAL Kicker Rock (not included) approx \$250pp

May 12 - Fly to Ecuador Mainland - Afternoon Free in Quito

Meals Included:

Check out of Algarrobos Hotel

Morning Flight back to Quito

Late Afternoon - at leisure

Overnight in Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel - 1 night stay (last night)

May 13 - Wed/Quito - Historic Quito, Equator Line, Cable Car & Farewell to Ecuador

Meals Included:

Check out of Mercure Hotel

Tour of Quito and not-to-miss sights...

El Mitad del Mundo - El Mitad del Mundo

Transfer to Airport & Dinner

Info from Pre-Trip Party



SSSC Galapagos Adventure!

13-day Land trip

Small Group goal: 17 – 18 per group

Trip Info, video, flyer, itinerary and more: <https://www.awildadventure.com/sssc-galapagos>

Detailed Itinerary: https://www.awildadventure.com/_files/ugd/a91de6_4bc27b01db694de7b8f9237466789f70.pdf

NEW INFO!

Packing: Our inter-island flight has a luggage limitation of **max 35 pounds TOTAL per person**, including ONE checked bag & a backpack or sachel/tote.

No second piece of “overhead” luggage is permitted. There is NO overhead on the one small flight we take.

Please pack lightly (it’s hot – so should be easy) one 35# bag. Buy a 4 pound bag (ditch that old heavy one!)

If this is an issue – you can put a light unconstructed duffel bag in the bottom of your luggage, and when we leave Quito on Day 7, you can leave some luggage behind (the duffel bag with what you do not need in the islands). We will be back in Quito – same hotel - for our last night – and you can retrieve it then. :)

Remember: Light rain jacket, maybe also a hoodie or fleece for the plane & Quito? c

Water shoes (Tevaz or similar)

Sneakers for boats and walks

Bathing suit for Hot Springs and snorkel

NO hiking shoes needed. NO heavy clothes

Trip Plans App:

You can print the updated latest Itinerary from Trip Plans to have a hard copy if you prefer. Wait until the week we leave – as it is still being updated with juicy info :)

Transfers upon arrival

See Trip Plans

Everyone has the extra pre-night – FYI

Flights listed in Trip Plans

Diamox - *It's kinda high there – will I be OK?* YIKES 9,350 feet. If you haven't been skiing – I would strongly suggest you get Diamox from your GP doctor. You take 2 pills daily for 2 or so days before the trip, and the first day you are there. No altitude sickness.

- **Accelerated Acclimatization:** *Diamox acts as a prophylactic to prevent and treat acute mountain sickness (AMS), reducing the severity of headaches, fatigue, and dizziness.*

Will there be bottled water??? Yes, but please bring **a reusable bottle to refill** everywhere (save the environment :)
Our beautiful planet is totally littered with plastic bottles and bags everywhere – please help.

Currency: US dollar

Electric: US electric

Laundry: Mid way thru the tour, we stay at Cally Hotel for 2 nights.

They offer laundry service. Yipppeeeee

Tipping: Lunch “Tap & Go” = no tip

Sit down meal with service – 5% tip - 10% if great service

NO Visa needed

There is 1 TCC fee, 1 Dock Fee and 1 Park Permit. See *Trip Plans* for more information

- Quito Transit Control Card (TCC or TCT) – Fee handled by Deborah. See *Trip Plans April 22 or May 6*
- Ferry to Isabela – Dock Fee upon arrival. Fee handled by Deborah. See *Trip Plans April 23 or May 7*
- **Galápagos National Park entry fee**

This one we each have to pay IN CASH upon arrival:

from Trip Plans April 22 or May 6:

As of August 1, 2024, the Galápagos National Park entry fee for most international tourists (ages 12 and older) is **\$200 USD cash**.

Credit cards are not accepted.

This is additional to your tour and can not be included, as all payments must be handled personally by each visitor.

Please bring \$200 in US cash, in clean, fresh untern 20's, for the entrance fee.

US cash needed: per person

Bring \$200 for the Park fee + probably around \$200 more
Bring lots of ones and fives for local spending

Breakdown:

\$200 (in clean untern 20's) for Galapagos Entry

Guide Tip:\$60 - \$70 tip for 2 week trip

Misc Tips:\$30 - \$40 ?? Bring fives

7 Lunches (6 are provided) \$70 - \$125 (depending on adult beverages). Bring ones & fives

Dinners – can easily use credit card

Souvenirs? – street vendors probably will not take credit cards. Bring ones & fives

The good thing is that they use US dollar.

You can never have too many ones and fives

You can always hit a bank ATM if you need more cash – but you'll get 20's.

Information & Documents**PASSPORT**

Due to airline security measures, **your passport name must match your airline ticket name** or you may be denied boarding.

Your **passport's expiration date must be at least six months after your return** from your trip; if it is not, you should renew your passport.

It is your responsibility to ensure the validity of all travel documents! We recommend that you make copies of your important documents and papers (insurance cards, etc.). Leave a copy at home and have a copy with you. In the unfortunate situation that you lose your original documents, having copies facilitates the replacement process.



Quito has a subtropical highland climate. The city has a fairly constant cool climate due to its elevation and proximity to the equator. The average temperature during the day is 66°F (19°C), which generally falls to an average of slightly below 50°F (10°C) at night. The average temperature annually is 64°F (18°C). There are only two obvious seasons in the city: dry and wet. The dry season (summer) runs from June to September, and the wet season (winter) is from October to May.

SSSC Galapagos Adventure!

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April 30 - Thu/Quito - Optional Pre-Night in Quito (late night arrival)



Optional Night - Late Night Arrival

All of the group is arriving on either United or American Airlines.

Arrival American Airlines:

30-Apr AA 10:24p

Karen Smith
 Kim Chadourne
 Rita George
 Kim Miller
 Susan Flynn
 Linda Driscoll

Please wait in the *Arrivals Hall* for the group, arriving one hour behind you.
 Our Guide may already be there, looking for you :)
 They may have a sign that says Deborah Haling, or Scottsdale Ski, or A Wild Adventure (???)

**Arrival United Airlines:
 30-Apr United 11:25pm**

Joan Hanke
 Kathleen Munsterteiger
 Barbara Seltzer
 Karen Johnson
 Barbara Uit den Bogaard
 Deborah Maxcy
 Alan Sedell
 Karen Sedell
 Thomas Ohlmacher
 Sharon Ohlmacher
 Steven Bown

There will be **ONE** transfer at Midnight (approx).
 After luggage pick-up and Customs, please meet in the Arrivals Hall.

**Check in at Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel
 Location**

The Mercure Hotel Alameda is located right in the heart of Quito - just steps away from the Artisan Market on Quito's showcase shopping street, Avenida Amazonas, within the district of Mariscal Sucre.

The Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel has an elevator and features 147 rooms. The friendly staff at the reception desk are happy to answer any questions.

Amenities include a baggage storage service, a safe and a currency exchange service.

Wireless internet access allows guests to stay connected while on vacation.

The tour desk offers assistance with booking on-your-pwn excursions.

A garden provides extra space for rest and relaxation in the open air.

Further services and facilities include a 24-hour security service, medical assistance, a transfer service, room service, a laundry service, a hairdresser, a coin-operated laundry, a hotel doctor and a hotel shuttle bus.

Complimentary newspapers are available.

The business center is on hand for guests' business requirements and provides a fax machine.





Mercure Alameda Quito

Calle Ramón Roca & Avenida Amazonas, Quito, Ecuador

May 1 - Fri/Quito - Free Day



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel



Day of rest and exploration?

Today is a free day designed for acclimatization and relaxation. Quito sits at 2,850 meters (9,350 feet) above sea level, so this gentle start will help your body adapt comfortably.

You may choose to relax at the hotel, explore the surrounding neighborhood at your own pace, visit a nearby café, or take a light walk to enjoy your first deeper impressions of the city and the majestic Andes. The day is yours to enjoy as you wish.

There is a lot of Quito to explore.

You may choose to explore using the Double-Decker bus, or take a free walking tour. Or wander on your own thru Old Town exploring the charming streets filled with colonial buildings, cute cafes, and major landmarks like the presidential palace at Plaza Grande.

Ideas: Climb the Basilica towers, explore Indigenous art, taste Quito's signature snacks and sweets, visit Old Town landmarks, end with a traditional canelazo.

Free City Sponsored Walking Tours: just give gratuity of \$10 - \$20 pp

www.GuruWalk.com

www.freewalkingtourecuador.com

www.FreeTour.com

There are MANY great tours available - all the guides will be certified from the city.

These sights we will be visiting on our last day in Ecuador - so skip these today:

- the Equator Line at Mitad del Mundo,
- a ride on the TeleferiQo cable car, offering panoramic views of the city and surrounding Andes.
- Middle of the World Monument (Mitad del Mundo)
- Intifran Museum, where science and folklore meet at the equator. Participate in fun, gravity-defying experiments and enjoy panoramic views.



Quito - The City

Tucked between the green, misty peaks of the Andes and blessed with a warm, welcoming character, the lively city of Quito brings rich history together with modern energy. Those who visit will find everything from overflowing market stands and shamanistic healers to a nightlife that features, among other things, upscale clubs, charming lounges and salsa dancing.

History buffs will enjoy the Old Town, where the architectural influence of Spanish colonisation shows in the red-tiled roofs lining steep, cobblestoned streets. The area is a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site and visitors will relish seeing its ornate buildings and vibrant plazas. Bustling New Town has a more eclectic, business-oriented atmosphere, with its clubs, cafe-lined streets, hotels, offices and shopping centres. The diverse food scene features everything from local Ecuadorian dishes to international fare, and the area has a variety of art galleries and live music venues.

Quito is the cultural centre of the country and Indigenas make up a large proportion of the population. Evidence of their culture is all over the city, from the handicrafts displayed on street corners and ramshackle shops selling traditional everyday goods to the women in thick woollen clothing and felt hats queuing for bus tickets. The Quechuan language rings through streets and central plazas throughout the city.

The destination is rich in historical churches, monasteries and convents, many of which house religious paintings and sculptures dating back to the 16th century. There are also a few museums worth visiting in Quito. Among them, the Museo del Banco Central (beautiful pre-Colombian artifacts), the ethno-historical Museo Mindalae, and the contemporary art museum Museo Guayasamin stand out.



Quito - Sightseeing

Set on the equator, yet surrounded by ice-capped volcanoes, the uniquely beautiful Quito dates back to Incan and perhaps even pre-Incan times. Little of that ancient history remains but the city's Spanish heritage is far clearer, with the best examples of colonial architecture including the 16th-century La Compañía de Jesús Church; the white homes of La Ronda, Quito's most picturesque colonial neighborhood; the St Francis Church and monastery, thought to be the oldest in South America; and the Plaza de la Independencia, which is lined with grand old buildings.

If travellers only visit one museum in Quito, they should make it the Museo del Banco Central, as the impressively housed modern institution is full to bursting with ancient cultural artifacts. Other worthwhile museums include the Museo Manuela Saenz, the Museo de la Ciudad, and the Guayasamin Museum. Quito is also home to some of Ecuador's best-loved natural wonders, and the best way to experience them is to take a ride on the Teleferico, a cable car that carries people from the base of Volcan Pichincha to the top of Cruz Loma. The views are breathtaking.



Quito - Attractions



Plaza de la Independencia



Plaza San Francisco



Museo del Banco Central

May 2 - Sat - Exploring Otavalo, Cotacachi & Peguche Wasi



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel

Lunch at Pambamesa



Check out of Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel

Please meet in the hotel lobby, with your luggage by the assigned time (to be announced). Remember to "Check Out" of the hotel - give them your key card, and pay any bill if needed.



Morning - Cotacachi Volcano & town

After an incredible breakfast [included], your journey begins with a scenic drive north **to Cuicocha Lagoon, a crater lake formed in the collapsed caldera of the Cotacachi Volcano**. The name Cotacachi has many meanings. In "Cara" it means **"lake with women breast"** which refers to the general shape of the island in Cuicocha lake; in Quichua it means powder salt.

Later, visit the picturesque town of Cotacachi, famed for its leather artisans. A short walk along its rim offers breathtaking views of the turquoise waters and surrounding peaks. Wander its quaint streets, browse handcrafted goods, and enjoy free time to shop.



Afternoon - Peguche

Continue to the Peguche community, where you'll meet a local couple who will lead you through a spiritual and culinary experience: The Pambamesa, a traditional Andean meal shared communally as a symbol of unity and gratitude.



Evening - at leisure

Tonight's accommodation is in a beautifully restored Andean hacienda, rich in character and surrounded by rolling hills.



Check in at Hacienda Hosteria Chorlavi - 1 night stay

Hacienda Chorlavi is located in the province of Imbabura, 110 km from Quito, capital of Ecuador.

Legend has it that in these lands more than five centuries ago the great Inca Huaynacpac, met and fell in love with Princess Caranqui Pacha. On the Caranqui tongue Chorlavi means "Nest of Love" Chorlavi was the first property that the Jesuits bought in the region, in 1620. It was then acquired by the Tobar Family.

In 1971 the property was transformed into a hotel. Now we have 52 rooms, large gardens with centuries-old trees, large rooms for corporate or social events, Restaurant, Spa & Swimming Pool, Gym, Grilled Area, Mini Golf, and many other services and spaces that will delight the visitor with the aroma of the past.

Wireless internet access is provided in public areas.

A fireplace creates a cozy atmosphere.

Film lovers are sure to find just what they're looking for in the cinema's listings. There are a number of shops as well.

The grounds of the hotel feature a playground and a lovely garden. Additional amenities include a TV room, a playroom and a library. Further services and facilities include a 24-hour security service, medical assistance, a transfer service, room service, a laundry service, a coin-operated laundry and a hotel shuttle bus. Active guests can make use of the bicycle rental service to explore the surrounding area. The business center is on hand for guests' business requirements and provides a fax machine.



Hacienda Hosteria Chorlavi

Carretera Panamericana Norte Km 4.5, Ibarra, Ecuador

May 3 - Sun - Otavalo Market & Papallacta Hot Springs



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel



Check out of Hacienda Chorlavi

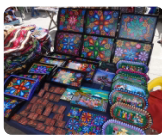
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Otavalo

Ecuador is famous for its colourful, indigenous markets, and the best known of these is the market at Otavalo. It dates back to pre-Incan times, when jungle products were brought up from the lowlands to be traded for highland goods. Every Saturday, visitors will find a wonderful sprawling mix of rich colour, smells, and the sounds of energetic bargaining, an essential part of trade and an art in itself. Spread over three plazas and the surrounding streets, thousands of local otavaleños in striking traditional dress sit among their wares, doing hard business with tourists and locals alike. The Plaza de los Ponchos is the main area for crafts such as woollen blankets, bright ponchos and jerseys, colourful bags and woven tapestries.





Otavalo

Morning - Otavalo Market

The Otavalo Market, located in the Plaza de los Ponchos in Ecuador, is the largest indigenous market in South America, famous for textiles, alpaca clothing, and artisan crafts. It operates daily, but Saturday is the largest, most vibrant day. It is a must-visit, worthwhile experience for authentic, affordable handmade goods.

Key Aspects of the Otavalo Market:

- **Best Time to Visit:** The market is open daily (approx. 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.), but Saturday is the main market day with the widest selection and most vendors.
- **What to Buy:** Famous for alpaca wool blankets/ponchos, colorful, intricately designed textiles, hand-painted leather goods, jewelry, and traditional musical instruments.

Continue toward the Quitsato Solar Clock, a fascinating equatorial marker built with astronomical precision, a cultural monument built precisely on the equator line where you'll uncover Incan and pre-Incan knowledge of astronomy.

Afternoon - Termas de Papallacta Hot Springs

By the afternoon, you will arrive in Papallacta, famous for its therapeutic hot springs.

Termas de Papallacta is a renowned hot springs spa and resort located in the high Andes of Ecuador, roughly 1.5 hours from Quito. Situated at 3,250 meters near the Cayambe Coca Ecological Reserve, it features therapeutic volcanic pools, a full-service spa, on-site restaurant and the "Chacana Bar" , and hiking trails, offering a relaxing escape in a mountain-cloud forest setting.

The waters are heated naturally by the nearby volcanoes, providing, according to [Wikipedia](#), a rich mineral content beneficial for circulation and stress relief. Temperatures range from 36–38°C.

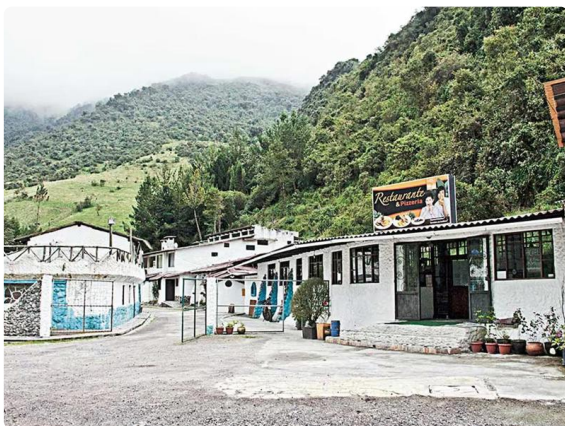
Situated in the Andean highlands, the resort provides dramatic views, Often surrounded by clouds, creating a unique "spa in the clouds" experience

Later, you will check in at your lodge, which also features its own smaller thermal pools on site, allowing you to continue enjoying the soothing hot springs in a more private and tranquil setting.



Check in at Hosteria Pampallacta Termales - 1 night stay

Escape to the tranquil Hosteria Pampallacta, where you can savor a free breakfast of local cuisine and unwind in the garden. Unwind with a hike or bike ride, then soak up relaxation at one of the hotels smaller thermal pools on site, allowing you to continue enjoying the soothing hot springs in a more private and tranquil setting.



Hosteria Pampallacta Termiales

Via Interoceánica Km 61, Papallacta, Ecuador

May 4 - Mon - Papallacta to the Amazon - Huasquila Lodge



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel
Lunch at Lodge
Dinner at Lodge



Check out from Hosteria Pampallacta Termiales

Please meet in the hotel lobby, with your luggage by the assigned time (to be announced). Remember to "Check Out" of the hotel - give them your key card, and pay any bill if needed.



From Papallacta to the Heart of the Amazon at Huasquila Lodge



Check in EARLY Huasquila Amazon Lodge - 1 night stay

The Huasquila Lodge is a complex of bungalows located in the Sacred Valley of Cotundo in the Tena region.

The lodge works on reforesting formerly used pasture land to create a 20-hectare ecological corridor for local wildlife, such as monkeys and sloths.

"Inspired by a dream, we began reforesting former pasturelands. With the support of volunteers from around the world and the natural regeneration of the soil, we have successfully restored 110 hectares of forest. These, along with 60 hectares of primary forest, now make up the Huasquila Reserve. "

A restaurant on-site serves traditional Ecuadorian and international dishes, with meals included in the package.

Activities Offered: The lodge focuses on eco-tourism and adventure, offering:

- **Jungle Hikes:** Guided walks through the rainforest.
- **Waterfalls & Caves:** Visits to Huaysa Yaku, Latas waterfalls, and Jumandi caves.
- **Adventure:** Rafting and kayaking.
- **Cultural Experience:** Chocolate-making workshops and visits to local communities.



Huasquila Amazon Lodge

Via Huasquila km 3,5, Cotundo, Ecuador



The Rainforest - Guided Hike ecological reserve

After breakfast, descend along the eastern slopes of the Andes into the Amazon basin. As you enter the rainforest, you'll begin to notice dramatic changes in vegetation, climate, and biodiversity.

You'll arrive at Huasquila Amazon Lodge, set within a private ecological reserve. Your afternoon includes a guided nature hike through primary forest trails where your guide will introduce you to medicinal plants, unique ecosystems, and native wildlife.

Lunch will be at your Lodge.



Evening - Storytelling & Cannibal Lessons.

Dinner is included at the Lodge

Engage in cultural interactions with the local Kichwa community and enjoy storytelling about ancestral traditions, natural remedies, and jungle survival techniques (Cannibal lessons)

Relax in the lodge's serene setting, surrounded by the sounds of the rainforest.



May 5 - Tue - Huasquila- Pailo del Diablo; Manto de la Novia



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel

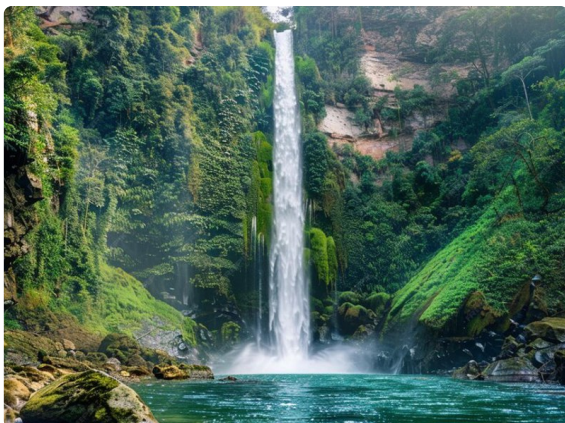


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Exploring Baños' Natural Wonders and return to Quito



Morning - Devil's Cauldron; Manto de la Novia Double Waterfall by Cable Car

Head to the adventure capital of Ecuador: Baños de Agua Santa.

Nestled at the foot of the Tungurahua volcano, this vibrant town is known for its dramatic waterfalls and outdoor thrills.

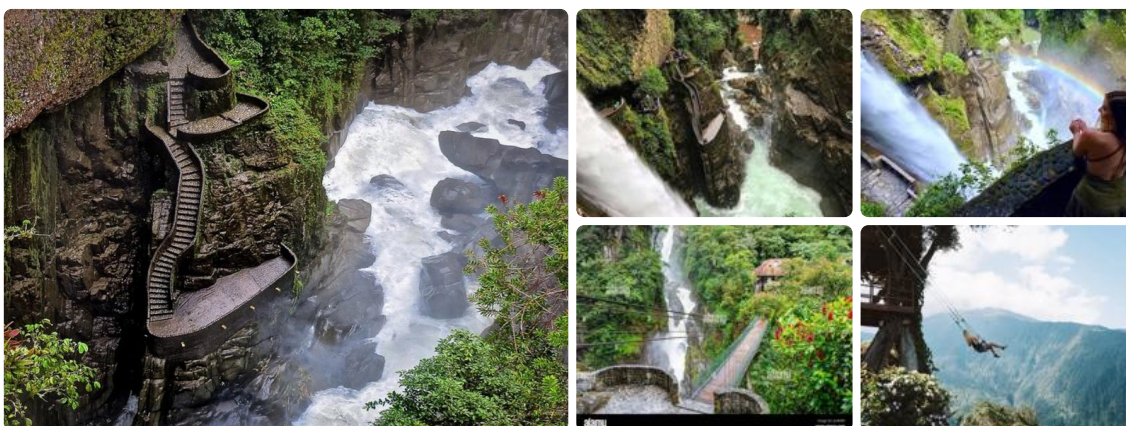
We visit the spectacular **Pailon del Diabo waterfall** via a well-maintained, steep, and narrow trail, often wet from the intense mist, leading to balconies and a suspension bridge for dramatic, close-up views.

Pailón del Diablo (Devil's Cauldron) is a massive 80-meter (265-foot) waterfall near Baños, Ecuador, known as one of the country's most impressive, powerful cascades. Located on the Rio Pastaza, this tourist landmark features steep, carved stone stairs, a suspension bridge, and a narrow passage that allows visitors to get behind the roaring, misty falls.

Next, stop: **Manto de la Novia is a stunning double waterfall** located in the Pastaza canyon near Baños de Agua Santa, Ecuador, named for its resemblance to a white wedding veil. Famous for its 115-foot cascade, it is a key stop on the "Ruta de las Cascadas". Key attractions include riding the scenic cable car (tarabita) and hiking to the base for close-up views and refreshing mist.

Enjoy time to explore the town's shops and cafes or the famous Swing at the End of the World. The Swing at the End of the World is a famous, adrenaline-inducing attraction located at [La Casa del Arbol \(The Treehouse\)](#) in Baños, Ecuador.

Hanging from a treehouse at 2,600 meters (8,500 feet) above sea level, the swing extends over a steep canyon, offering thrilling, panoramic views of the active Tungurahua Volcano.



Afternoon - Drive back to Quito (3 hours)

Return to Quito

The drive is 3 hours - so you can use this time to edit your photos, read or relax and nap.



Check in to Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel - 1 night stay

May 6 - Wed - Flight to Santa Cruz Island; Charles Darwin Research Station



Galapagos Islands - The Region

Renowned for its unique biodiversity and pristine natural beauty, the volcanic Galapagos Archipelago is the second largest marine reserve in the world, comprising 13 major islands and six smaller ones. Its position between three ocean currents means visitors will find a unique climate, and many species that don't occur elsewhere. Photographers and nature enthusiasts will relish the experience.

As the Galapagos Islands are a popular holiday destination, the Ecuadorian government maintains strict control over tourist access to preserve the local ecosystem. A certified tour guide accompanies all visitors, and there are additional restrictions around tour-group size and activities in certain areas. Travellers should make bookings ahead of time.

On land, visitors can pass within inches of mating iguanas, walk between nesting frigate birds and watch thousands of brightly coloured Sally Lightfoot crabs scuttle across black volcanic rocks, among other things. In the sea, they can dive with sharks and turtles, and come face to face with penguins and sea lions. Flamingos, masked boobies, lava lizards and giant tortoises are also part of the wildlife population.

As for plant-life, the islands are volcanic and largely bare of vegetation, though they have some dramatic and strangely beautiful geological features. These include a 30-foot (10m) high cactus forest, exquisitely twisted lava flows, spatter cones and lava tunnels, bizarre rock formations, and red, black and white-sand beaches.

Puerto Ayora is the most developed town in the archipelago. Located on Santa Cruz Island, it's the centre of the Galapagos tourism industry. Most visitors either stay in this friendly little town while arranging a boat tour to the rest of the islands, or anchor in the harbour during their cruise.



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel

Farm Fresh Lunch with locals



Check out of the Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel

Please meet in the hotel lobby, with your luggage by the assigned time (to be announced). Remember to "Check Out" of the hotel - give them your key card, and pay any bill if needed.



Fly to the Galapagos - TCC fee

Flight:

Departure -

Arrival -

The Transit Control Card (TCC or TCT) for the Galápagos Islands costs **US\$20 per person**, payable in cash at the INGALA counter in the Quito (UIO) airport before departure.

Your Guide will accompany you at the airport - and has your \$20 in US cash to be paid. So no worries.

Each passenger will need to personally queue with their passport, as the Transit Control Card is issued individually. This is a government requirement and cannot be processed as a group. Your guide will be there to support you and assist with the payment process, and supply your **\$20 cash per person prepared in advance**, as this will help make the process smoother.



Arrival to Baltra Airport - Galapagos Park Fee

As of August 1, 2024, the Galápagos National Park entry fee for most international tourists (ages 12 and older) is **\$200 USD cash**.

Credit cards are not accepted.

This is additional to your tour and not included, as all payments must be handled personally by each visitor.

Please bring \$200 in US cash, in clean, fresh untern 20's, for the entrance fee.

When you **arrive at Baltra Airport in the Galápagos**, each passenger will go through passport control and must **personally pay the Galápagos National Park entrance fee of \$200 per person in cash**. This payment is also individual and handled directly by each traveler during the arrival process.

From the Galapagos Natl Park website:

For some, this entry tax may seem a bit high, but it is important to keep in mind that these fees are helping to protect the wonderful islands. The Galapagos National Park announces that, "Funds from the entry tax for tourists are used to finance the conservation of biodiversity of flora and fauna, terrestrial and marine, and benefits the local community by improving basic services, education projects, sports, health, environmental sanitation, environmental services and services directly related to tourists."

Although an extra \$200 may seem like a lot of money, rest assured that the fee is for an indispensable cause. By visiting the islands, you are not only enjoying an outstanding and once in a lifetime holiday, but you are also contributing to the conservation efforts protecting the enchanting Galapagos Islands.

Afternoon - Charles Darwin Research Station; Fausto Llerena Breeding Center

Visit the Charles Darwin Research Station, the premier scientific facility operated by the [Charles Darwin Foundation](#) since 1964. It serves as a hub for conservation, research, and education to protect the archipelago's biodiversity, including a famous giant tortoise breeding center.

The station monitors invasive species, rehabilitates injured wildlife, and conducts marine research, including studying sharks, penguins, and flightless cormorants.

The station is operated with the help of numerous scientists, volunteers, and researchers, collaborating with the Galápagos National Park.

Experience the Fausto Llerena Breeding Center, where tortoises are raised in captivity and prepared for release back into the wild. It previously housed the famous "Lonesome George".

You will see exhibitions about the archipelago's, geography, geology, and species, along with a Tortoise Route boardwalk, a baby tortoise house, and land iguanas.

You'll see conservation in action and learn about the archipelago's delicate ecosystems and participate in a reforestation project **by planting a native tree**, directly contributing to ecosystem preservation.



Check in to Coloma Hotel, Santa Cruz Island - 1 night stay

Hotel Coloma Galapagos Puerto Ayora is nestled only a 9-minute walk from Laguna las Ninfas. Located within reach of Visitor Center of Galapagos National Park, the hotel offers views of the courtyard and a swimming pool.

Known for a central location near the pier and fish market, it offers a pool, rooftop bar/lounge, and a complimentary breakfast.

A variety of restaurants and bars are 5 minutes away on foot,



May 7 - Thu - Ferry to Isabela Island; Wetlands Exploration by Bike; Tintoreras

Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel

Lunch during Tour

Check out of Coloma Hotel

Please meet in the hotel lobby, with your luggage by the assigned time (to be announced). Remember to "Check Out" of the hotel - give them your key card, and pay any bill if needed.

Morning - Ferry to Isabela

Ferry to Isabela Island (2 hours) to the largest and most volcanic island in the archipelago.

Visitors to Isabela Island must pay a **\$10 USD dock fee** (cash) upon arrival at the Puerto Villamil pier. The process is simple.

Your Guide will supply you with the \$10 cash dock fee - no worries.

You will only need to queue up and pay the local island entrance tax directly in cash, and passports are not required at that moment.

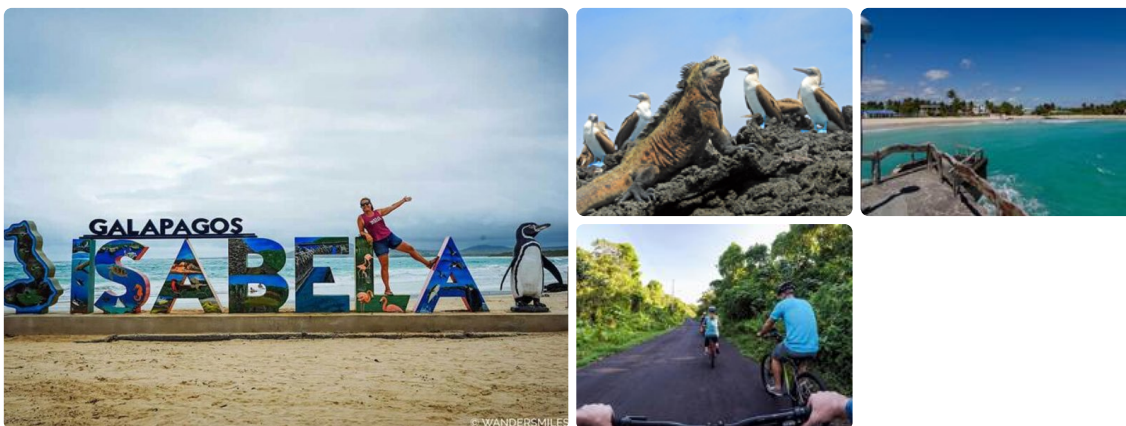
Afternoon - Tintoreras; Guided Bike Ride

Upon arrival, explore Tintoreras Islet, home to Galapagos penguins, sea lions, marine iguanas, and white-tipped reef sharks resting in lava crevices. Snorkel in shallow waters filled with tropical fish.

Lunch will be provided.

Hop on a bike for a guided cycling tour of the Wetlands Trail, stopping to observe flamingos and migratory birds at the lagoons.

Your final destination is the haunting Wall of Tears, a sobering reminder of the island's penal colony past. Enjoy beach time or a seaside walk in Puerto Villamil, a tranquil town with volcanic black sand beaches.



Check in to Hotel Cally Isabela - 2 nights

Hotel Cally is located near the Puerto Villamil center, just a few minutes walk from the beach, the pier, and the town center park where you can find various stores and restaurants.

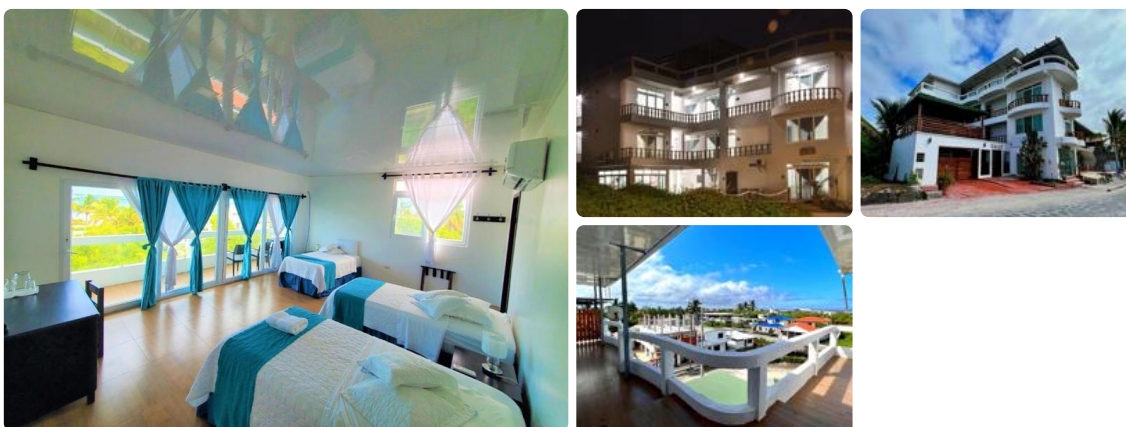
Hotel Cally in Puerto Villamil offers in all rooms air conditioning, private bathrooms, minifridge, hair-dryer, and amenities. The hotel was designed with ample and modern spaces in order to offer an enjoyable stay while in the Galapagos. Each room includes a work desk, complimentary toiletries, and a balcony.

The hotel provides easy access to scuba diving, beach snorkeling, and Stand Up Paddleboarding SUP.

Guests can enjoy the terrace restaurant and bar, and free WiFi in public areas. The in-site restaurant serves local cuisine with vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, and dairy-free options.

Laundry service is available at the hotel (fee).

- Av. Conocarpus S/N vía al embarcadero, Puerto Villamil, Galapagos, 200250 Ecuador
+593 98 969 4162



May 8 - Fri/Isabela - Snorkeling at Los Tuneles & Afternoon at Leisure



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel

Box Lunch



Morning - Snorkel Los Tuneles

Enjoy a guided snorkeling excursion at Los Tuneles, one of the most unique sites in the Galapagos, shaped by ancient lava formations.

Los Tuneles (Cabo Rosa) on Isabela Island features a unique, surreal landscape of collapsed volcanic lava bridges and tunnels over crystal-clear, shallow, and calm water. It is renowned as a premier, top-tier snorkeling spot where visitors can easily swim alongside Galapagos penguins, sea turtles and rays.

Key Reasons Why Los Tuneles is Special:

- **Surreal Geological Formations:** Thousands of years ago, lava flows solidified on the water's surface, creating a maze of underwater arches, tunnels, and bridges that are now partially collapsed.
- **Top-Tier Snorkeling:** The calm, shallow, and transparent water makes it one of the safest and most spectacular places to snorkel in the Galapagos.
- **Abundant Marine Wildlife:** It is a hotspot for spotting Green Sea Turtles, White-tip reef sharks, Galapagos penguins, golden rays, seahorses, sea lions, and eagle rays.
- **Unique Bird Spotting:** The area is a breeding site for blue-footed boobies, which can often be seen nesting on the lava arches.
- **Calm Underwater Paradise:** Because the area is sheltered, it provides a safe, quiet haven for marine life, allowing for close, intimate encounters for snorkelers.

The only way to experience this location is via a guided boat tour from Puerto Villamil on Isabela Island, typically lasting 5 to 6 hours.

A Box Lunch will be provided.

Why Are So Many Creatures Attracted to Los Tuneles?

Los Tuneles Galapagos is the ultimate hangout spot for a wide diversity of marine life. But, why is this particular area of Isabela so rich in wildlife?

1. **Shelter and Habitat:** The intricate network of tunnels, arches, nooks, and crannies provide the perfect hiding spots and safe havens for marine creatures, protecting them from predators and strong currents.
2. **Rich Feeding Grounds:** Algae, plankton, and other small organisms flourish here, providing a buffet for the marine creatures that feed on them.
3. **Breeding Grounds:** Many marine species use Los Tuneles as a breeding and nursery area. These calm, protected waters are perfect for raising young.
4. **Healthy Coral and Marine Plants:** The clear, clean waters and volcanic substrate at Los Tuneles provide an excellent environment for coral growth and marine plants. These form the foundation of the food chain and attract a variety of fish and other marine organisms.



Afternoon/Evening - free to relax

After the excursion, the afternoon and evening are free to relax, explore at your own pace, or enjoy the coastal atmosphere.

May 9 - Sat/Isabela - Tintoreras; flight to San Cristobel



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel



Check out of Cally Hotel

Please meet in the hotel lobby, with your luggage by the assigned time (to be announced). Remember to "Check Out" of the hotel - give them your key card, and pay any bill if needed.



Isabela Island/Tintoreras and flight to San Cristobel





Morning - Tintoreras

Enjoy a half-day excursion to **Tintoreras**, a stunning islet known for its lava formations and rich wildlife, including marine iguanas, sea lions, and reef sharks.

Tintoreras is a small group of volcanic islets off the coast of **Isabela Island** in the Galápagos, famous for offering a "metaphorical snapshot" of the archipelago's charm in a compact, accessible area. It is particularly special because iconic wildlife can be seen up close, often without even getting into the water. It is one of the most accessible and biodiverse sites in the archipelago.

After the excursion, return to Isabela Island to prepare for your flight to San Cristobal.



Afternoon Flight/Evening

IBB -> SCY Flight 14:00-15:00

Flight

Departure:

Arrival:

Packing: Our inter-island flight has a luggage limitation of **max 35 pounds TOTAL per person**, including ONE checked bag & a backpack or sachel/tote.

No second piece of "overhead" luggage is permitted. There is NO overhead on the one small flight we take.

Please pack lightly (it's hot – so should be easy) one 35# bag. Buy a 4 pound bag (ditch that old heavy one!)

If this is an issue – you can put a light unconstructed duffel bag in the bottom of your luggage, and when we leave Quito on Day 7, you can leave some luggage behind (the duffel bag with what you do not need in the islands). We will be back in Quito – same hotel - for our last night – and you can retrieve it then. :)

Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel and enjoy a relaxed evening at leisure,



Check in to Algarrobos Hotel, San Cristobal - 3 nights

Hotel Los Algarrobos is located in Puerto Banquerizo Moreno, just 328 feet from Playa Mann Beach. Guests enjoy free daily breakfast and free WiFi.

Rooms here will provide you with a TV, a wardrobe and air conditioning. They also boast tiled floors and a private bathroom with a shower and toilet.

At Hotel Los Algarrobos guests will find a 24-hour front desk and tropical gardens. You will also find a games room with a pool table, plus a shared terrace with views of the town. There is a small 24-hour snack area with coffee, tea, water, chocolate and flavored water.

Restaurants and shopping can be found within a 5-minute walk, while San Cristobal Airport is just 0.9 mi from Hotel Los Algarrobos.



May 10 - Sun/San Cristobel - Exclusive Excursion to Lobos Island; Interpretation Center



Meals Included:

Breakfast Included

Lunch



Morning & Afternoon - Lobos Island; Interpretation Center

Embark on a private day trip to Lobos Island, a wildlife haven named for its numerous sea lions. Encounter nesting blue-footed boobies, frigate birds, and possibly marine iguanas.

Snorkel in calm channels where sea turtles glide past and rays rest on the ocean floor.

OPTIONAL kayaking and a scenic hike are available for those seeking a deeper adventure.

Lunch is included

Continue with a visit to the **Galapagos Interpretation Center**.

The Interpretation Center is located in San Cristóbal Island, and its purpose is to offer a thorough history of Galapagos and giving an insight into the unique wildlife and habitats of the islands.

You can see fascinating exhibits covering various topics: the human history in Galapagos and the efforts to preserve natural habitats, the geology of Galapagos and its origins linked to volcanic activity, natural history.



Late Afternoon & Evening - free to relax & explore Puerto Baquerizo Moreno
Return to town with the evening free to relax.

Top Things to Do in and Around Puerto Baquerizo Moreno

Wildlife Spotting on the Malecón: Walk along the waterfront (Marinos Beach) to see hundreds of Galapagos Sea Lions lounging, often right next to the walkway.

Playa Lobería: A white sandy beach located about 2.5 km from town, famous for its large colony of sea lions, snorkeling, and marine iguanas.

Playa Mann: A popular, easily accessible beach near town perfect for a quick swim and watching sunsets.

TIPS:

Wildlife Etiquette: Do not touch the sea lions, even though they are close.

Biking/Hiking: Rent bikes to explore the area surrounding the town.

May 11 - Mon/San Cristobal - Day at Leisure on - Optional Kicker Rock Snorkeling



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel



Day at leisure on San Cristobal Island

San Cristobal Island is special as a crucial Galapagos hub, combining rich, accessible wildlife—like sea lion colonies in town—with significant history as Darwin's first landing spot in 1835. As the easternmost, oldest, and most fertile island, it offers unique, diverse landscapes, including freshwater, and serves as the provincial capital.

Today you will live as a local, with your time at leisure and in peace. The day is yours to enjoy—whether you prefer a leisurely stroll along the waterfront, exploring the area around your hotel, or simply unwinding and soaking in the stunning scenery. Explore local shops, relax on nearby beaches, or visit the La Loberia trail.

- **Accessible Wildlife:** Sea lions, blue-footed boobies, marine iguanas, and tortoises are easily found, often within the town of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno.
- **Historical Significance:** It is home to the oldest permanent settlement in the archipelago and was the first island visited by Charles Darwin in 1835.
- **Unique Geography & Water:** Unlike many other islands, it features the freshwater lake **El Junco** in its highlands. It is formed by several extinct volcanoes, offering diverse, lush, and hilly terrain.
- **Key Visitor Sites:** Highlights include [Kicker Rock](#) (a towering, split rock formation), Punta Pitt (nesting site for all three types of boobies), and the [Interpretation Center](#).
- **Surfing & Atmosphere:** It is known as a hotspot for surfing (Tongo Reef) and has a more relaxed,, less-touristic feel compared to Santa Cruz.

Top Things to Do in and Around Puerto Baquerizo Moreno

Wildlife Spotting on the Malecón: Walk along the waterfront (Marinos Beach) to see hundreds of Galapagos Sea Lions lounging, often right next to the walkway.

Playa Lobería: A white sandy beach located about 2.5 km from town, famous for its large colony of sea lions, snorkeling, and marine iguanas.

Playa Mann: A popular, easily accessible beach near town perfect for a quick swim and watching sunsets.

Hiking to Playa Baquerizo: A scenic, 1.5-hour hike through rugged terrain leading to a secluded beach with abundant marine life.

Surfing at Tongo Reef: A well-known surf spot located just west of the town.

Day Tours (Kicker Rock & 360 Tour): Book a boat tour to Kicker Rock (León Dormido) for premier diving/snorkeling, or a "360-degree" island tour for beaches, birdwatching, and snorkeling.

El Junco Lagoon: Visit the only freshwater lake in the Galapagos, located in the highlands.

TIPS:

Wildlife Etiquette: Do not touch the sea lions, even though they are close.

Biking/Hiking: Rent bikes to explore the area surrounding the town.

For the adventurous, an **OPTIONAL full-day tour (see below)** to Kicker Rock offers world-class snorkeling among vertical rock walls teeming with marine life, including rays, turtles, and possibly hammerhead sharks.

OPTIONAL Kicker Rock (not included) approx \$250pp

You could take a Full-Day Tour to embark on a once-in-a-lifetime snorkeling trip to Kicker Rock, a volcanic formation rising dramatically from the sea.

Considered the crown jewel of Galápagos snorkeling, this full-day experience offers the most iconic landscapes and richest encounters with marine life. Unlike other excursions with multiple short stops, this tour is designed to give you more time in fewer, unforgettable places — where the real magic of the Galápagos unfolds.

Swim alongside colorful fish, rays, sea turtles, and even sharks in crystal-clear waters. The area's marine life and underwater scenery make it an unforgettable experience. Return to San Cristóbal for the evening.

Ask your Guide to pre-book - approx \$250pp

Meals included: Box Lunch



May 12 - Fly to Ecuador Mainland - Afternoon Free in Quito



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel



Check out of Algarrobos Hotel

Please meet in the hotel lobby, with your luggage by the assigned time (to be announced). Remember to "Check Out" of the hotel - give them your key card, and pay any bill if needed



Morning Flight back to Quito

As the sun rises on your final day in San Cristobal, you savor the last bites of a delicious breakfast, knowing that soon it will be time to bid farewell to this enchanting island. But fear not, for your adventure is not over yet!

Your driver is waiting to whisk you away to the San Cristobal Airport, where you will take your return flight to mainland Ecuador.

As you make your way to the airport, take a moment to reflect on the incredible experiences you've had here on San Cristobal. The pristine beaches, the crystal-clear waters teeming with exotic marine life, the lush forests alive with the calls of exotic birds...it's no wonder that so many travelers have fallen in love with this magical place.

At your arrival in Quito, your transfer Driver and Guide will be waiting for you to go to your hotel in Quito.



Late Afternoon - at leisure

At leisure in Quito City



Overnight in Mercure Alameda Quito Hotel - 1 night stay (last night)

May 13 - Wed/Quito - Historic Quito, Equator Line, Cable Car & Farewell to Ecuador



Meals Included:

Breakfast at Hotel



Check out of Mercure Hotel

Please meet in the hotel lobby, with your luggage by the assigned time (to be announced). Remember to "Check Out" of the hotel - give them your key card, and pay any bill if needed.

Everyone will be checking out of the Hotel - as we have a full day of unique sights to see.

Then we will all be going to the airport around 7 or 8pm, to check in for our flights and grab some dinner



Tour of Quito and not-to-miss sights...

Explore the highlights of Quito with a guided tour that include

- Quito Historic Center
- Mitad del Mundo - where we will stand on the Equator
- a ride on the TeleferiQo cable car, offering panoramic views of the city and surrounding Andes.
- Continue to the Middle of the World Monument (Mitad del Mundo)
- the Intifran Museum, where science and folklore meet at the equator. Participate in fun, gravity-defying experiments and enjoy panoramic views.



El Mitad del Mundo

El Mitad del Mundo (The Middle of the World) is a purpose-built complex of museums and shops that was constructed to mark the equator, the line that gives the country its name. The 96-foot (30m) high Equator Monument is the focus of the square, and is topped by a brass sphere representing the world. A painted line stretches out on either side of the monument marking the equator that divides the world, and the complex into northern and southern hemispheres. A set of weighting scales also lie on the square and illustrate the fact that visitors lose a bit of weight at the equator, as they're subject to a lesser force of gravitational attraction than usual.



El Mitad del Mundo



Transfer to Airport & Dinner

Approx 7:30pm - Your group will be dropped at the Airport early enough to check in comfortably, and have dinner at a restaurant of your choice, while you wait for your flight.

Departure Flight from Quito

American Airlines Departure Flight: 11:40pm

Karen Smith 13-May AA 11:40p

Kim Chadourne 13-May AA 11:40p

Rita George 13-May AA 11:40p

Kim Miller 13-May AA 11:40p

Susan Flynn ???

Linda Driscoll 13-May aa 11:40p

Everyone else United Airlines: 12:35am

Those staying in Quito longer will be dropped in town before we head to the airport, and you can take a taxi to where you are going next.