

5 days - 4 nights

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These cruises can be combined with Diving program extensions and additional nights in Galapagos (upon request).

B WEST EXPEDITION

Wednesday - Sunday

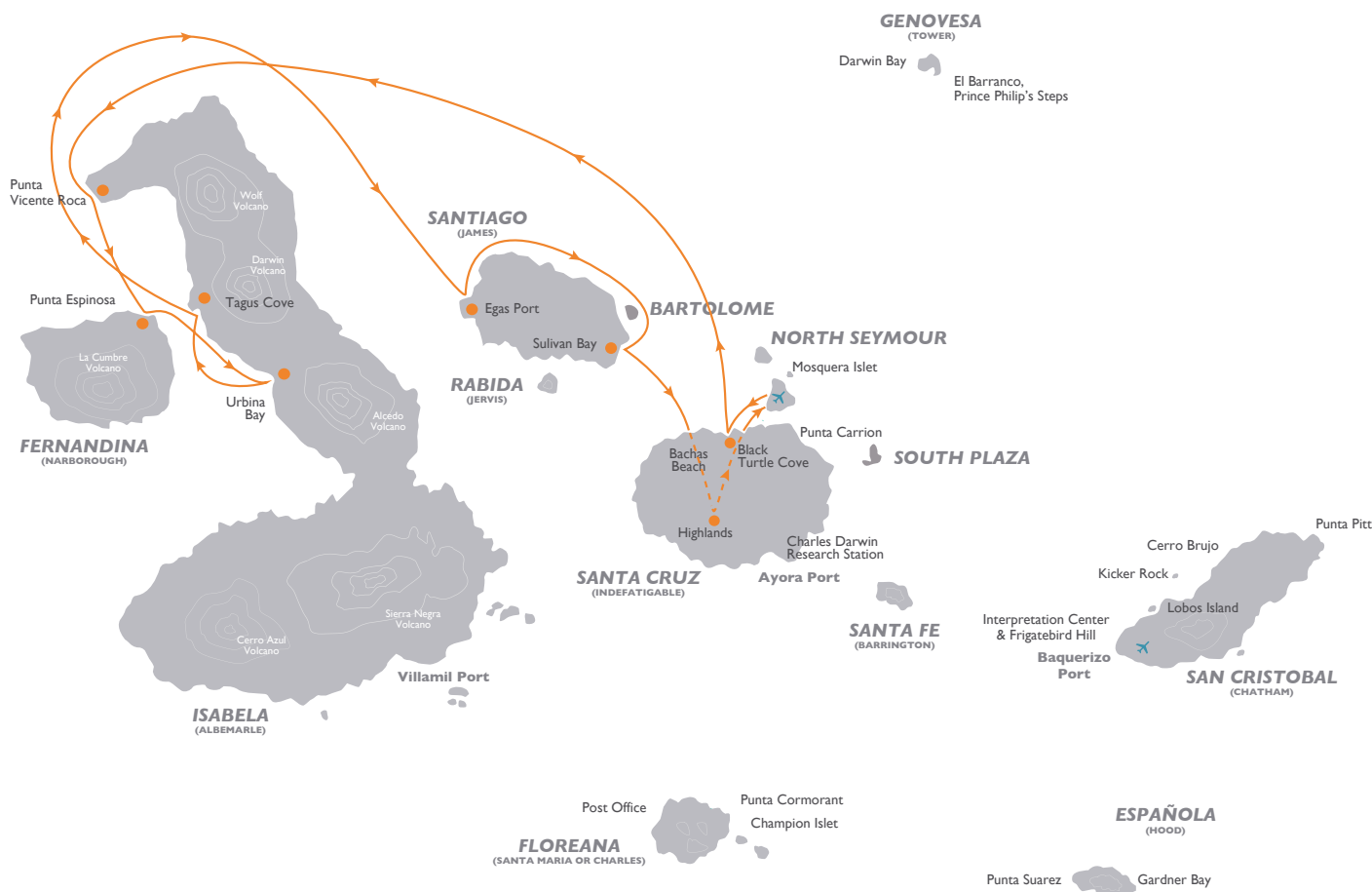
✈ Baltra Airport
pm. Black Turtle Cove (Santa Cruz Island)

am. Punta Vicente Roca (Isabela Island)
pm. Punta Espinosa (Fernandina Island)

am. Urbina Bay (Isabela Island)
pm. Tagus Cove (Isabela Island)

am. Egas Port (Santiago Island)
pm. Sullivan Bay (Santiago Island)

am. Highlands Tortoise Reserve 🐢
(Santa Cruz Island)
✈ Baltra Airport





DAY 1 -WEDNESDAY

am – Baltra Airport

Departure from Quito or Guayaquil to Baltra Island (2 ½ hour flight). Arriving in the Galapagos, passengers are picked up at the airport by our naturalist guides to take advantage of the time in the archipelago.



am – Black Turtle Cove (Santa Cruz Island)

Here we can find four species of mangrove in the extensive tidal lagoon system that stretches for almost a mile inland. During our *panga* ride through the labyrinth we will spot many turtles, herons of several species, sharks and rays. The experience is otherworldly and seems to transport us back to the beginning of time.

Difficulty level: easy
Type of terrain: none
Duration: 1-hour dinghy ride



DAY 2 - THURSDAY

am - Punta Vicente Roca (Isabela Island)

Great deep-water snorkeling at one of the richest marine havens on Earth, the Bolivar Channel. Accessible by water, we take a dinghy ride along the coast to observe a great diversity of sea and coastal birds; Nazca and blue-footed boobies, noddies, brown pelicans, penguins, flightless cormorants. The upwelling of cold water currents in this part of the Galapagos gives rise to an abundance of marine life, a perfect place for deep snorkeling.

Difficulty Level: moderate / high
Type of terrain: water
Duration: 1-hour snorkeling / 1-hour dinghy ride



pm – Punta Espinosa (Fernandina Island)

Dry landing. From Espinosa Point, is possible to admire a wide view of Isabela Island across the Bolivar Channel, an area that boasts some of the highest diversity of endemic sea fauna in the Galapagos. Here the largest, most primitive-looking marine iguanas are found mingling with sea lions and Sally Lightfoot crabs. Fernandina displays a wonderful opportunity to encounter flightless cormorants at their nesting sites, Galapagos penguins and the "King" of predators on the islands, the Galapagos hawk. Pa-hoe-hoe and AA lava formations cover the majority of Fernandina terrain. Vegetation is scarce inland, with few brachycereus cacti. In the shore mangrove can be found.

Difficulty level: intermediate
Type of terrain: flat/semi rocky
Duration: 1 ½-hour walk / 1-hour snorkeling





DAY 3 - FRIDAY am – Urbina Bay (Isabela Island)

Wet landing (might be difficult due to the tide). Volcanic black beach, depending on the season, it is possible to find giant tortoises, land iguanas, and the unusual flightless cormorant. After a short walk inland it's snorkeling time, a chance to swim with sea turtles, sea lions, and countless tropical fish. Urbina Bay features a wide variety of plants with the different range of colors in flowers, attracting different insects, birds, and reptiles. One of the highlights of the island is the uplifted coral reef that resulted from the 1954 seismic activity; here the views of Alcedo Volcano are remarkable. When navigating from Urbina to Tagus Cove whale watching is usual in May – December.

Difficulty level: intermediate
Type of terrain: flat & rocky
Duration: 1 ½-hour walk / 1-hour snorkeling



pm – Tagus Cove (Isabela Island)

Dry landing on Galapagos' largest island where we will learn about the eruption of the five volcanoes that form it. The trail leads to Darwin's salt-water crater lake and excellent views of lava fields and volcanic formations. We will return by the same path for a dinghy ride along a shoreline full of marine wildlife, where we will admire a variety of seabirds, such as Blue-footed Booby, Brown Noddy, terns, Flightless Cormorant and depending on the season, a large number of Galapagos Penguins which are only 35 cm tall; the only penguin species in the world to live in the tropics.

The population of penguins on the islands is about 2,000 individuals, most of which live on this western portion of Isabela; others are scattered further south. We will have an opportunity to snorkel in deep water. Graffiti believed to have been left by 19th-century pirates is a curious reminder of an intriguing past.

Difficulty level: intermediate/difficult
Type of terrain: steep/steep
Duration: 2-hour walk / 40-minutes dinghy ride / 1-hour deep water snorkeling



DAY 4 - SATURDAY am – Egas Port (Santiago Island)

Wet landing. Egas Port is a black volcanic sand beach, visited by Darwin in 1835. The first section of the trail is formed of volcanic ash (eroded tuff) and the other half is an uneven terrain of volcanic basaltic rock. The unique, truly striking layered terrain of Santiago shore is home to a variety of animals including the bizarre yellow-crowned night heron and marine wildlife including lobster, starfish and marine iguanas grazing on algae beds alongside Sally light-foot crabs. It is easy to see colonies of endemic fur seals swimming in cool water volcanic rock pools.

Difficulty level: intermediate
Type of terrain: flat & semi-rocky
Duration: 1 ½-hour walk / 1-hour snorkeling



pm – Sullivan Bay (Santiago Island)

Wet landing. This site located at the southeastern portion of Santiago Island is of important geologic interest. It features extensive relative young pa-hoe-hoe lava flows formed during the last quarter of the 19th century. In the middle of the lava flow, older reddish-yellow-colored tuff cones appear. Mollugo plants with their yellow-to-orange whorled leaves usually grow out of the fissures. Walking on the solidified lava gives the impression of been in another planet. Tree molds are found, indicating that in that position large size plants grew in small crevices, until the lava flow of past eruptions burned down the flora of the island.

Difficulty level: difficult
Type of terrain: flat volcanic lava
Duration: 1½-hour walk / 1-hour snorkeling / beach time





DAY 5 - SUNDAY

am – Highlands Tortoise Reserve (Santa Cruz Island)

Dry landing. In the mountains of Galapagos is possible to admire different kind of birds, such as: tree and ground finches, vermillion flycatchers, paint-billed crakes, yellow warblers, and cattle egrets (usually standing on the tortoises' shell). The journey to the reserve offers great opportunities to see the contrasts that the island offers in reference to the variety of ecosystems. The road goes from the coast through the agricultural zone and straight up to the dense humid forests. Often, Galapagos giant tortoises are also seen on the way, wandering through pastures in the paddocks. This spot is a birdwatchers' haven, since almost every land bird present on the island lives or migrates here.

Difficulty level: easy

Type of terrain: flat & muddy (depending on season)

Duration: 45-minute drive / 1 ½-hour walk



am – Baltra Airport

After the visit, passengers will be transferred to the airport for their return flight to Guayaquil or Quito.