



## EIGHT DAY GALAPAGOS ISLANDS CRUISE ABOARD THE GALAPAGOS JOURNEY I

8 Days/7 Nights from \$3,379



The M/C Galapagos Journey I is a 91 ft. power catamaran that was built in 2006. It accommodates 16 passengers in eight comfortable air conditioned cabins. Each cabin features ocean view picture windows, lower beds, private bathrooms, a locker and closet. On board, there are nine crew members, one naturalist guide, and a cruise director. Social areas include a

dining room, outside bar, library, Jacuzzi, and sun deck. Wetsuits can be rented on board (\$30).

**ACTIVITIES:** Wildlife viewing, hiking, snorkeling and sea kayaking.



**DEPARTURE DATES:** Friday departures throughout the year. A Tuesday to Tuesday version of this cruise is also available.

**GROUP/PRIVATE:** All services included in this tour are operated on a group basis.

### DETAILED ITINERARY

**Note:** The route and program may vary according to National Park policies and regulations, weather conditions, seasonal changes, safety reasons and wildlife encounters.

**Dry Landing:** Guests step from the dinghy directly onto rocks or a dock.

**Wet Landing:** As the dinghy edges onto a sandy beach, guests step into knee-deep water and wade ashore.

### DAY 1 (Fri): Baltra/Plazas.

Upon arrival at Baltra, travelers pass through an airport inspection point to insure that no foreign plants or animals are introduced to the islands. Guides will meet you,

collect your luggage and escort you on the short bus ride to the harbor. Motorized rafts, called 'Pangas' will transport you to the M/C Galapagos Journey I and our crew will welcome you onboard. After the safety briefing, departure and lunch, the first island visit is made.

**Plazas** is actually two small islets that were uplifted a short distance from the East Coast of Santa Cruz. The unusual vegetation and location of the island create an interesting landscape in which the fauna and flora of Galapagos are enhanced. Moreover, despite its small size, some of the most interesting and outstanding species of the archipelago occur here. It is possible to guarantee the observation of land iguanas that often are in the shade of a cactus. Nesting on the rugged southern cliffs, are usually swallow-tailed gulls, which can be seen along with various other sea birds. The protected rocky seashore is a prime habitat for a large colony of noisy sea lions. The principal attractions of Plazas are the land iguanas, the sea lions and the swallow-tailed gulls. Also, we can see yellow-tailed mullets, Audubon's shearwaters, red-billed tropicbirds, frigate birds, and brown pelicans gliding past the cliff. (L,D)

### **DAY 2 (Sat): San Cristobal Interpretation Center/Isla Lobos.**

The **San Cristobal Island Interpretation Center** was built with the cooperation of the Spanish Science Centre. It gives a very good introduction to the Galapagos islands, its marine and land life, fauna and flora. It is located on the outskirts of the small city of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, which is the capital of the Galapagos Province. The trip to Tijeretas Hill takes approximately 20-40 minutes. Once there, visitors are treated to a spectacular view of the white beaches on one side and the roofs of Puerto Baquerizo on the other. The hill is often visited by Frigatebirds, giving it its name. Here it is possible to see Magnificent Frigatebirds and Great Frigatebirds in the same colony. This is the perfect place to compare and learn to distinguish them. This site offers some safe snorkeling without strong currents. It is great for beginners. You can find sting rays, barber fish and butterfly fish.

**Isla Lobos** (Sea Lion Islet) is a small islet located only an hour by boat from Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, and is separated from the main Island by a narrow stretch of calm water. Upon its rocky shores, blue-footed boobies nest and sea lions rest. The atmosphere is one of tranquility and primitive beauty. This shows a very typical Galapagos environment. (B,L,D)

### **DAY 3 (Sun): Gardner Bay/Punta Suarez (Espanola).**

Located on the northeastern coast of Espanola, **Gardner Bay** provides an excellent beach for relaxing, swimming, and an opportunity to observe sea lions. Here we can also observe sharks on the cristaline waters of the ocean.

**Punta Suarez** 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 whole, where water spouts up to 50-75 feet into the air according to the intensity of the surf. (B,L,D)

#### **DAY 4 (Mon): Cormorant Point/Post Office Bay (Floreana).**

**Cormorant Point** offers one of the largest and best flamingo lagoons in the Galapagos. It is situated between two tuff cones that give the area a special atmosphere. There are various species of shorebirds to be seen besides flamingoes, the most frequent are common stilts, white-checked pintail ducks, and other migratory birds. This is a unique zone due to the high percentage of endemism in the plant life. It is also very interesting because it has two distinct beaches: the “green beach”, due to a high percentage of olivine crystals in the sand, and the “flour sand beach” made up of coral.

**Post Office Bay** 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. (B,L,D)

#### **DAY 5 (Tue): Charles Darwin Research Station/Highlands (Santa Cruz).**

Although the great majority of Galapagos visitors come to observe and appreciate natural wonders, it is also interesting to learn how the protection and conservation of the islands are carried out. You can learn more about this at the **Charles Darwin Research Station**. The Station also has an exhibition center that features photos of recent volcanic eruptions, charts outlining geological formations, and chronological displays of the evolutionary development of endemic species. A corral houses adult Galápagos tortoises, and a nursery provides care for young tortoises until they are about three years.

The trail to the **Highlands of Santa Cruz** leaves from Bellavista and passes through the agricultural zone, near the National Park boundary, the Miconia Zone, and then goes to the Fern and Sedge zone. With clear weather (unpredictable), this area affords beautiful scenes of rolling hills and extinct volcanic cones covered with grass and lush greenery all year round. (B,L,D)

#### **DAY 6 (Wed): Chinese Hat/Puerto Egas (Santiago).**

**Chinese Hat** is a tiny Island just off the southeastern tip of Santiago Island that is less than a quarter of 1 sq. km. in size. It is a fairly recent volcanic cone, which accounts for its descriptive name. It has the shape of a down-facing Chinese hat. The hat shape is best appreciated from the north side. Opposite Chinese Hat, on the rocky shoreline of nearby Santiago, Galapagos penguins are often seen. A 400 meter long trail goes around the cove and through a sea lion colony, and marine iguanas cover the landscape. The volcanic scenery is attractive, and there are good views of the cone. There are snorkeling and swimming opportunities in the cove.

James Bay (wet landing), at the western end of **Puerto Egas**, was the site of a small salt mining industry in the 1960s. A hike inland to the salt crater is an excellent opportunity to sight land birds such as finches, doves, and hawks. A walk down the rugged shoreline, especially at low tide, will turn up many marine species. Iguanas

bask on the rocks and sea lions laze in the tide pools. At the end of the trail there is a series of grottoes or sea caves where fur seals and night herons are found resting on shady ledges. For many, this is the only opportunity to see the Galapagos fur seal, once thought to be on the verge of extinction. In addition to the fur seals, James Bay offers the best opportunity for tide-pooling in the Galapagos. (B,L,D)

**DAY 7 (Thu): Santiago/Bartolome.**

This visitor site provides a unique opportunity to view a recent lava flow of approximately 100 years old. The East Side of Santiago Island is known to have barren volcanic landscapes, dominated by black pahoehoe (ropy) lava flows of very young age. On the surface of the lava it is possible to observe some trees that were carried down by the flow of the fresh lava. It is also interesting to see how some Mollugo plants are starting to colonize the small lava fissures.

A small barren island located across Sullivan Bay off Santiago Island, **Bartolome** has two visitors' sites. At one of them it is possible to climb to the summit of the island, from where visitors can observe a variety of volcanic formations, spatter and tuff cones, lava flows and lava tubes. The moon like landscape provides the most scenic panorama in the archipelago. At the other site, the visitor may swim and snorkel from a beautiful beach or walk across the isthmus to another beach that faces south, where swimming is prohibited. Multi-colored fish and occasionally penguins may be seen at the base of the tall pinnacle rock, which dominates Bartholomew's landscape. (B,L,D)

**DAY 8 (Fri): Bachas Beaches/Baltra.**

**Bachas 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 it 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 strategic point to protect the Panama Canal.

Transfer to the airport in **Baltra** for your flight back to Guayaquil or Quito. (B)

**B** = Breakfast, **L** = Lunch, **D** = Dinner

**PRICE PER PERSON** (in U.S. Dollars)

	<b>Single</b>	<b>Double</b>	<b>Triple</b>
Standard Cabin	\$5,909	\$3,379	n/a
Suite	\$6,799	\$3,889	\$3,889

The above prices are valid until December 31, 2010.

**PRICE INCLUDES:**

- South American Vacations' expert pre-departure planning services and documentation.
- Transfers in the islands between the airport and dock on the date of the cruise.
- Accommodations on board the M/C Galapagos Journey I.
- All meals and snacks scheduled on board.
- Two daily excursions to the islands conducted by bi-lingual naturalist guides.
- Evening briefings and lectures.
- Use of snorkeling equipment.
- Sea kayaking.

**PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:**

- International airfare.
- Domestic airfare.
- Ecuadorian departure tax (Quito \$44.30, Guayaquil \$27.75).
- Airport/hotel transfers in Quito/Guayaquil.
- Hotel nights before/after the cruise.
- Galapagos National Park entrance fee (\$100).
- Transit control card (\$10).
- Gratuities to ship crew and guides.
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.
- Gifts and personal items.
- Travel insurance.

**We will be happy to quote the cost of airfare, hotels, land services, and travel insurance, and to make these arrangements for you.**

**IGTOA'S TRAVELER FUNDING PROGRAM**

South American Vacations is an active member of IGTOA (International Galapagos Tour Operators Association). In support of IGTOA's Traveler Funding Program, we contribute \$50 for each passenger that we send to the Galapagos Islands. You'll travel knowing that you support the lasting protection of Galapagos Islands.

Sixty percent of the funding of this program goes directly to the Charles Darwin Foundation for science, conservation, and education. Their work, carried out through the Charles Darwin Research Station and Galapagos National Park, is vital to the preservation of the islands. You can visit their web site to learn more [www.darwinfoundation.org](http://www.darwinfoundation.org). The remainder goes toward IGTOA's mission of creating a model of responsible and sustainable tourism.

**PASSPORT/VISA:** U.S., Australian, Canadian, and EU citizens only require a passport valid for at least six months from date of entry and return ticket for stays of up to 90 days. Citizens of other countries are advised to contact the Ecuadorian embassy in their country before traveling.

**TRAVEL INSURANCE:** In order to protect your travel investment from unforeseen circumstances that may arise before or during your trip, we strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance. We offer **Access America's Classic Comprehensive** and other plans. The Benefits, Coverage Limits, and rates are summarized on our website at [www.savacations.com/insurance](http://www.savacations.com/insurance). Call your travel counselor if you have any questions or to purchase a plan.

**TO BOOK THIS TRIP:** Call or email us to confirm the availability of a cabin on this ship for your desired dates of travel. Once we have confirmed availability, you will need to pay a non-refundable deposit of \$1,300 per person.

Eight Day Galapagos Islands Cruise Aboard the Galapagos Journey I

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