



**EIGHT DAY GALAPAGOS ISLANDS CRUISE ABOARD THE SANTA CRUZ  
8 Days/7 Nights from \$3,709**



Built exclusively for Galapagos Islands cruising, the M/V Santa Cruz accommodates 90 passengers in its 44 cabins. The ship is air conditioned throughout, and is recognized for its superb service, expert crew, and international and Ecuadorian cuisine. Each spacious cabin features twin or double beds, private bathrooms, and a safe. Four public decks offer a dining room, bar, library, sun deck, and Jacuzzi. Snorkeling equipment is provided free of charge, and wet suits can be rented for \$30 for the week.

**ACTIVITIES:** Wildlife viewing, hiking, snorkeling, and glass bottom boating.



**DEPARTURE DATES:** Friday departures throughout the year. A Monday to Monday 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): Puerto Baquerizo Moreno/Cerro Brujo (San Cristobal).**

Arrival by plane to San Cristobal Island and transfer to the MV Santa Cruz, which will be anchored at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the provincial capital of the Galapagos

Islands. Cabin assignment and lunch. After lunch, introductory welcome talk and boat drill.

A dinghy ride along the shores of tuff-stone layers will bring us to **Cerro Brujo's** white coralline beach. Wet landing. The area will show us good views of seabirds like blue-footed boobies, Nazca boobies, herons, frigate birds, and some shore birds. Also, look for Galapagos sea lions. The beach is a great open walking area, with rewarding birdwatching. Highlights ashore include the Chatham (San Cristobal) Mockingbird, Chatham Lava Lizard; both species are endemic to this island, and seen nowhere else in Galapagos. We may also spot Yellow Warblers, Galapagos flycatchers and with luck a Vermillion flycatcher (endemic subspecies to San Cristobal). These are the same shores that Charles Darwin walked upon, back in September 1835, as San Cristobal was the first island where he set foot in the Galapagos. Back on board for a briefing on the next day's activities, followed by a cocktail offered by the Captain and dinner. (L,D)

### **DAY 2 (Sat): Punta Suarez (Española)/Punta Cormorant (Floreana).**

Morning outing at **Punta Suarez** (dry landing) for an exciting walk on lava/boulder terrain to visit its unique sea bird colonies, including the waved albatrosses (April-December), Nazca (masked boobies), blue-footed boobies, swallow-tail gulls, and the famous blowhole. Among its land birds, the Hood island mockingbird, and three species of Darwin's finches are common highlights. Also, look for red-green-black marine iguanas, and of course a rookery of sea lions right at the landing site. Back on board for lunch.

Disembark at **Punta Cormorant** (wet landing) at an olivine-crystal beach for an easy walk that includes a brackish water lagoon where bird species like Greater flamingos, pintail ducks, common stilts, herons, sandpipers, and others may be observed. This outing also includes a white-sand beach where sea turtles come out at night for nesting (December-May). Possibility of snorkeling from the beach, or join our Glass Bottom Boat or advanced snorkeling panga if conditions permit. Briefing and dinner. (B,L,D)

### **DAY 3 (Sun): Punta Espinoza (Fernandina)/Punta Vicente Roca (Isabela).**

This morning brings us to the youngest island, Fernandina. Disembark (dry landing) for a one-mile walk. **Punta Espinoza** has an amazing combination of barrenness with lots of wildlife. Having no introduced mammals, Fernandina has a very unique environment with the highest density of marine iguanas, sharing their island habitat with sea lions, sally-light foot crabs, and hawks. Lava terrain calls for good walking shoes. Back on board for lunch. As we sail along the Bolivar Channel, astonishing views of the Galapagos' youngest volcanoes can be seen. The nutrient-rich waters of the west can also bring surprises like encountering sea birds feeding, dolphins, and possibly whales.

In the afternoon, depending on the conditions of the ocean, we will schedule a snorkeling outing along the cliffs of partly-sunken Ecuador Volcano, in the northern tip of **Isabela Island**. Since there is no landing site at this location, we will include a

coastal exploration by dinghy, where our naturalist guides will commit to explaining the dramatic geology of the area with remains of lava flows and tuff stone layers. This is the nesting place for flightless cormorants, the only existing marine birds in the world other than penguins that have changed their condition of flying birds to diving birds. Wildlife here also includes Sea lions, Galapagos Fur seals, Galapagos Penguins, Blue-footed and Nazca Boobies and noddy terns. This area has a very rich marine life, and is seasonally visited by green sea turtles. Details about the next day's activities before dinner. (B,L,D)

#### **DAY 4 (Mon): Baltra/Dragon Hill (Santa Cruz).**

Morning at **Baltra** Island. Our ship will briefly stop at this location, mainly for voyage-related purposes. As the plane brings in our new guests, it also provides us with fresh supplies. This morning can be a unique opportunity to grab your favorite book for an extended amount of time, write postcards, enjoy the Jacuzzi, plain rest, or worship the equatorial sun. If you prefer to get out and enjoy the island spirit, there is a beautiful coralline beach called Aeolian Beach (wet landing). This is a great place for swimming and snorkeling (plenty of sea turtles to be seen from December through March). From time to time flocks of plunging blue-footed boobies will delight beach combers. Other options at Baltra Island may be planned by the Expedition Staff; these will be announced accordingly. Lunch on board. Before and after lunch, we will brief our newly arrived guests on the Galapagos' basics and perform our official boat drill.

The landscapes of the central islands are worth photographing, as we gently sail towards the northern coast of Santa Cruz Island. Time to be up on deck, as we get ready for our afternoon adventure. The north shore of Santa Cruz hosts **Cerro Dragon (Dragon Hill)**. Dry landing and a walk that includes a brackish water lagoon frequented by lagoon birds, including stilts, pintail ducks, sandpipers, sanderlings, and more. Further inland, the trail offers a beautiful view of the bay and the western area of the archipelago. This area is a natural nesting site for land iguanas, which is constantly monitored and assisted by the Charles Darwin Research Station. The arid-zone vegetation can be a rewarding location for bird watching, where Darwin's finches, Galapagos mockingbirds, the endemic Galapagos flycatcher, and yellow warblers are regular sightings. Tonight our expedition plan will reveal the interesting sites of the day ahead. (B,L,D)

#### **DAY 5 (Tue): Bartolome/Puerto Egas (Santiago).**

Disembark at **Bartolome** Island (dry landing) for a hike to the summit. Great way to start the day. This is a steep climb aided by a wooden staircase; the view from the top is worth the effort. Dinghy ride around colossal Pinnacle Rock, time to enjoy the beach (wet landing) and snorkeling. Chance to snorkel next to Galapagos Penguins. There is also the possibility to ride on the glass bottom boat for great views of the underwater world. Lunch on board.

Afternoon outing at **Puerto Egas** (wet landing). This is a great location to see particularly shore birds, while land birds can be observed a little more inland. The pitch black shores are great places for watching sea birds and their foraging duties.

The trail brings us to a colony of the endemic Galapagos fur seals. At low tide, marine iguanas graze upon emerald green algae beds. Outstanding snorkeling and swimming from the beach before the walk. Briefing. Weather permitting, stargazing on deck. (B,L,D)

#### **DAY 6 (Wed): Rabida/North Seymour.**

Disembark at **Rabida** Island (wet landing) on a red-colored beach, due to the unusually high content of iron in the volcanic material. A gratifying stroll along the beach of this small island (1.9 sq. mi.) allows the observation of a large colony of sea lions, marine iguanas, mockingbirds, yellow warblers and several species of Darwin's Finches. Very close to the beach, hidden behind a strip of green saltbush, is a salt pond where at times Greater Flamingos migrate to. This is a great place to snorkel from the beach, both for beginners as well as for experienced snorkelers, due to the unique combination of underwater species and submarine landscapes. During navigation to our next island, we will keep our eyes open for dolphins.

Today's afternoon starts with a dry landing for a view of the coast and the interior of **North Seymour** Island, one of the few uplifted islands in Galapagos Archipelago. The trail leads guests to explore colonies of blue footed boobies, Magnificent frigate birds, and swallow-tail gulls. The sandy shore teems with Galapagos sea lions and marine iguanas. Vegetation is made up of cacti, Palo Santo trees and Salt Bushes. Expedition plan for tomorrow's outings. (B,L,D)

#### **DAY 7 (Thu): Highlands/Charles Darwin Research Station (Santa Cruz).**

A morning bus ride will take guests to the **highlands of Santa Cruz** Island for a special opportunity to view the islands' most famous reptile: the giant tortoises in their wild habitat. What a privilege to see an endangered species roving in this lush environment! The vegetation of the area includes the Scalesia Forest (an endemic giant daisy tree) and birds such as the vermilion flycatcher, will delight everyone with its scarlet feathers against an emerald green forest. Look for Darwin's finches (most of them from the tree-finch group), particularly the famous Woodpecker Finch. Lunch in a charming restaurant in the lush highlands of the island.

**Charles Darwin Research Station** and the rearing in captivity program for the giant tortoises. Here we witness the efforts and results of all the field work done in the name of science. Impressive giant prickly-pear cactus forest and many land birds can be also seen. Then, a stroll along the main street of Puerto Ayora will allow you to see how Galapaguenos live in this magical paradise. Browse in the many handcraft shops. Return aboard the MV Santa Cruz for tonight's expedition plan for next day's adventure. (B,L,D)

#### **DAY 8 (Fri): Puerto Baquerizo Moreno (San Cristobal).**

Disembark at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno. This small attractive port is the provincial capital of the Galapagos Islands (population 4,000), along a crescent-shaped bay. Visit the San Cristobal Interpretation Center, located in a natural setting, where it allows visitors to obtain information that will help them understand more the natural

history of the Galapagos, with a great emphasis on human history and conservation. Afterwards, you can stroll through Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, where souvenir shops and Internet cafes welcome world travelers who are willing to catch up with the world, and share the many wonders witnessed, before heading back to the mainland.

Transfer to the airport to take the flight back to the continent. (B)

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

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

**Low Season**

	<b>Single</b>	<b>Double</b>	<b>Triple</b>
Main Deck Twin Standard	\$5,569	\$3,709	\$3,409
Upper Deck Twin Standard	\$5,869	\$3,909	n/a
Boat Deck Twin Standard	\$6,419	\$4,279	\$3,919
Boat Deck Standard Plus Twin	\$6,709	\$4,469	n/a
Boat Deck Single Standard	\$6,419	n/a	n/a
Boat Deck Superior Twin/Double	\$6,999	\$4,669	n/a
Boat Deck Junior Suite Twin	\$7,319	\$4,879	\$4,479
Boat Deck Master Suite Double	\$8,429	\$5,619	\$5,149

**High Season**

	<b>Single</b>	<b>Double</b>	<b>Triple</b>
Main Deck Twin Standard	\$5,769	\$3,849	\$3,529
Upper Deck Twin Standard	\$6,059	\$4,039	n/a
Boat Deck Twin Standard	\$6,609	\$4,409	\$4,039
Boat Deck Standard Plus Twin	\$6,899	\$4,599	n/a
Boat Deck Single Standard	\$6,549	n/a	n/a
Boat Deck Superior Twin/Double	\$7,189	\$4,799	n/a
Boat Deck Junior Suite Twin	\$7,519	\$5,009	\$4,599
Boat Deck Master Suite Double	\$8,629	\$5,749	\$5,269

**High Season:** April 18-25, December 19-January 02.

**NOTES:**

1. The above prices are valid until January 02, 2012.
2. There is one cabin available for single use (Boat Deck Single Standard). Twin/Double cabins for single use have a surcharge of 50%.
3. Triple rates are based on one child under 12 sharing cabin with two adults paying full fare.

**PRICE INCLUDES:**

- South American Vacations' expert pre-departure planning services and documentation.
- Transfers in the islands, and transfers in and out from select hotels in Quito and Guayaquil to/from Galapagos on the date of the cruise.

- Accommodations on board the M/V Santa Cruz.
- All meals scheduled on board.
- Two daily excursions to the islands conducted by bi-lingual naturalist guides.
- Evening briefings and lectures.
- Snorkeling equipment.

**PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:**

- International airfare.
- Domestic airfare.
- Ecuadorian departure tax (Quito \$40.80, Guayaquil \$30.16).
- Hotel nights before/after the cruise.
- Fuel surcharge of (\$168).
- Galapagos National Park entrance fee (\$100/\$50 child).
- Transit control card (\$10).
- Gratuities to ship crew and guides.
- Bar, gifts, and personal items.
- Travel insurance.

**We will be happy to quote the cost of international and domestic 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.asp](http://www.savacations.com/insurance.asp). 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 \$500 per person.

Eight Day Galapagos Islands Cruise Aboard the Santa Cruz

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