



## QUITO, EIGHT DAY GALAPAGOS EXPLORER II CRUISE, AND NAPO WILDLIFE CENTER

15 Days/14 Nights from \$4,789



Travel in comfort to the Galapagos Islands and Ecuador's Amazon Basin with an eight day cruise on the Galapagos Explorer II and a four day excursion to Ecuador's most luxurious jungle lodge. Your tour begins in Quito with a city tour and visit to the Middle of the World Monument and continues on to the Galapagos Islands, where you will observe plant and animal species that are found nowhere else on Earth. At Napo Wildlife Center, highlights include parrot clay licks, canopy towers, and a visit to a native community.

The **Galapagos Explorer II** is a 289 ft. expedition ship designed to provide comfort and scientific information to 100 passengers. It is air conditioned throughout, and each of its 50 ocean view suites has lower beds, vanity dressers, large closets, a seating area with sofa bed, TV, mini-bar, and private bathroom. Its social areas include a restaurant, conference room, Jacuzzi, and wildlife observation deck. Snorkeling equipment (\$20) and shorty wetsuits (\$25, advanced registration required) can be rented on board.

**ACTIVITIES:** Cultural/historical sightseeing, wildlife viewing, hiking, snorkeling, diving (which can be purchased separately).

**ELEVATIONS:** Quito is 9,350 feet above sea level.



**DEPARTURE DATES:** Monday departures throughout the year.

**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 (Mon): Quito.**

Depart to Quito. After passing through immigration and customs, proceed to the reception area, where our representative will be holding a sign with your name on it. You will be greeted and then transferred to your hotel. Overnight in Quito.

### **DAY 2 (Tue): City Tour of Quito/Middle of the World.**

In the morning, you will have a city tour of Quito. You will explore the bustling streets and squares of the largest historical centre in the Americas, and visit some of its most important churches such as the majestic La Compania and iconic San Francisco, guardians of a stunning multi-ethnic artistic and cultural heritage. You will drive through the traditional neighborhood of San Juan and finish the morning at the Panecillo hillside, with its breathtaking views of the old and modern parts of the city.

Following the city tour, you will be driven to the “Middle of the World City” complex, which is located 11 miles north of Quito. Here, you will see the monument of the equatorial line, a 98 ft high stone trapezoidal monument with a brass globe on top. The monument forms the focal point of a park and leisure area with gift shops and restaurants. Overnight in Quito. (B)

### **DAY 3 (Wed): Quito/Puerto Baquerizo Moreno (San Cristobal)/Wizard Hill.**

Morning transfer to the airport for your flight to the Galapagos. Passengers arrive in **Puerto Baquerizo Moreno**, the provincial capital of the Galapagos and are transferred to the Galapagos Explorer II. Check-in and suite assignment, followed by lunch.

**Wizard Hill** (wet landing). In the afternoon, you can swim or snorkel with sea lions. Overnight aboard the Galapagos Explorer II. (B,L,D)

### **Day 4 (Thu): Punta Suarez/Gardner Bay (Esapanola).**

**Punta Suarez** (dry landing) is located on the western end of Esapanola, the southernmost island of the archipelago. A two km trail takes you through masked and blue-footed booby colonies, and marine iguanas fighting for turf or sunbathing on the beach, before reaching a large waved albatross colony, the highlight of the island. There is also the “blow hole” that ejects water up to 20 meters in the air.

**Gardner Bay** (wet landing) is located on the east side of the island. It has a wide, white sand beach with sea turtle nesting sites. It is a good site to swim and observe a sea lion colony. You can also see hood mocking birds and marine iguanas. Overnight aboard the Galapagos Explorer II. (B,L,D)

## **Day 5 (Fri): Charles Darwin Research Station/Puerto Ayora (Santa Cruz)/Rabida.**

In the morning, you will visit the **Charles Darwin Research Station** (dry landing), which contains a national park information center, museum in the Van Straelen Exhibition Center, and baby tortoise house, and a walk-in adult tortoise enclosure. The visit lasts about one and one-half hours. Afterwards, you can walk around Puerto Ayora, the main town on Santa Cruz, where most of the residents live and the tourists stay.

**Rabida** (wet landing) is a small island five square km, covered by dry and coastal vegetation, with a central volcano 367 m high. The island is characterized by its red sand and brown waters resulting from lava erosion. There is a colony of sea lions and it is a good place to see pelicans nesting during their breeding season. Behind the beach there is a lagoon where you may be able to see flamingos. There is also good snorkeling here. Stay near the rocks and away from the sharks and rays. Overnight aboard the Galapagos Explorer II. (B,L,D)

## **Day 6 (Sat): Bachas Beach/Dragon Hill (Santa Cruz).**

**Bachas Beach** is a white sand beach where you can see some nesting sites for sea turtles. It is a delightful swimming beach, with a small lagoon behind, where you can see flamingos, marine iguanas, whimbrels, blue heron, pelican, Sally Lightfoot crab, and other species.

**Dragon Hill** (dry landing) is located on the northwest part of Santa Cruz Island. Santa Cruz gets its name from the fact it was the first island that Columbus disembarked on and he stuck a cross (Cruz) in the land, and named it Santa Cruz. Most of the year, you can see flamingoes in a lagoon and some migratory birds. Darwin fishes, mocking birds, and lava lizards can also be seen. The arid vegetation consists mostly of prickly pear cactus, rosewood, or holy stick. The landscape is beautiful when you can clearly see Rabida island to the west and the interior of Santa Cruz to the east. In the beach zone there are lots of native plants and animals such as marine iguanas, sea lions, oystercatchers, pelicans, and small colonies of blue footed boobies. You will walk along a 2km path for about two hours. Return to the ship for a welcome cocktail, dinner, and evening briefing. Overnight aboard the Galapagos Explorer II. (B,L,D)

## **Day 7 (Sun): Bartholome/Puerto Egas (Santiago).**

**Bartolome** (dry/wet landings) is approximately 1.2 square km. and 114 meters above the sea level. It is separated from Santiago Island by a very narrow channel. It is formed like all the islands by basaltic lava. Here you can find a clear example of the colonization and ecological and geological processes of the islands. The unique landscape is similar to photographs of the surface of the moon. In the northeast of the Island, you can enjoy a refreshing bath in the ocean, snorkeling, and penguins, and in the southeast you can frequently see sharks, rays, and turtles.

**Puerto Egas** (wet landing) is located on the west side of Santiago in James Bay. Before becoming a protected zone as part of the National Park, salt was mined

there, leaving behind a crater. There are still signs of the former settlement. Disembarking on the beach, you will walk along the coast over the petrified lava flow covered by coastal vegetation and can observe sparrow hawks, doves, lava lizards, finches, and mocking birds. When the tide is low, you will see on the shore hundreds of live organisms surrounded by a large amount of crabs, marine iguanas, lava herons, night herons, oystercatchers, migratory birds, and sea lions. There is a special zone with a beautiful and colorful setting, a place to practice snorkeling, and swim with sea lions, and watch lots of different varieties of fish in canals. There are some natural bridges made of rocks, and you can see some lava tunnels when diving. Overnight aboard the Galapagos Explorer II. (B,L,D)

### **Day 8 (Mon): Punta Espinosa (Fernandina)/Punta Vicente Roca (Isabela).**

Fernandina Island is approximately 642 square km and is 1,492 meters above sea level with a main volcano that is active. It is a very young island, which is why **Punta Espinosa** (dry landing) has fresh lava and you can see the relatively new growth of plants and animals over the lava. The main attractions on this island are the flightless cormorants, the marine and land iguanas, the penguin colonies, sea lions, blue herons, and sparrow hawks. Available activities include hiking and dinghy tours. The terrain is dry and the paths are moderately difficult.

**Punta Vicente Roca** (Snorkeling opportunity and dinghy tour). Here you can see Galapagos fur seals that are native to the island. Located in the western part of the Galapagos Archipelago, the waters are rich in nutrients due to the Cromwell current, as evidenced by the greenish color of the water. You can observe marine turtles feeding on the algae, and other marine mammals, including whales, dolphins and numerous marine birds that depend on these nutrients. You can also observe the volcanic formation of the islands and appreciate volcanic cones and lava flows. Overnight aboard the Galapagos Explorer II. (B,L,D)

### **Day 9 (Tue): North Seymour/Highlands of Santa Cruz/Lava Tunnels (Santa Cruz).**

**North Seymour** (dry landing). A flat, small island located north of Baltra. The path has a rocky surface at the beginning followed by sand, where you will observe sea lions and marine iguanas resting. In the interior of the island, you will see a small forest of rosewood, holy stick, and prickly pear cactus inhabited by blue footed boobies and magnificent frigate birds. The visit lasts about one and one-half hours.

**Highlands of Santa Cruz** (dry landing). This afternoon, you will travel by bus for 45 minutes through Scalesia, Miconia, and fern-sedge vegetation zones to the Highlands to observe giant tortoises in their natural habitat. After that, you can trek through giant lava tunnels. Overnight aboard the Galapagos Explorer II. (B,L,D)

### **Day 10 (Wed): Puerto Baquerizo Moreno/La Galapaguera (San Cristobal)/Quito.**

Dry landing at **Puerto Baquerizo Moreno**, the provincial capital of the Galapagos, followed by a 45 minute bus ride to “**La Galapaguera**” the Giant Tortoise Breeding Center. The Center opened in 1998 thanks to a donation from the Spanish government, and has interesting exhibits about the biology, geology, and human

history of the islands. After visiting La Galapaguera, you will return to Puerto Baquerizo Moreno and have time to walk around and shop.

Late morning transfer to Puerto Baquerizo Moreno Airport for your flight to Quito. Upon arrival in Quito, you will be transferred to your hotel. Overnight in Quito. (B)

**DAY 11 (Thu): Quito/Coca/Napo Wildlife Center.**

Morning transfer to the airport for the 30 minute flight to Coca in Ecuador's Amazon Basin. Upon arrival, you will be met at the airport and transferred to Port Francisco de Orellana for the two hour covered motor boat ride down the Napo river to the lodge. Along the way, birds like herons, kingfishers and others can be spotted. Box lunch en route. After arriving at the entrance to the Napo Wildlife Center Reserve, we disembark for a restroom break, then switch to smaller, dugout canoes and are paddled up the blackwater creek to the lake and lodge (no motorized transport is allowed on the creek or lake so that wildlife is not disturbed). There is a good chance to see various monkey species as well as large birds like toucans, parrots, or even macaws. Late afternoon arrival at the lodge on Lake Añangu. Welcome drink. After dinner, optional caiman observation tour around the lake, with a chance to hear the sounds of the rainforest at night. Overnight at Napo Wildlife Center. (B,L,D)

**Note:** Daily departures to Napo Wildlife Center except for Sunday.

**DAY 12 (Fri): Napo Wildlife Center/Parrot Clay Lick/Añangu Community.**

Early morning departure to reach the best and most accessible parrot clay licks in Ecuador, about one hour away from the lodge. Guests arrive just before parrot activity kicks off between 7:30-8:30 AM. A total of 11 species of parrots, parakeets, and macaws can be seen. Although this visit depends on weather conditions, most guests are able to see the licks. Later, you will hike along a forest trail to visit to the Quichua community of Añangu to spend time with a native family and observe their typical activities. Return to the creek and hike through a Terra Firme Forest for about 30 minutes until arriving at a second parrot clay lick. Box lunch at the parrot clay lick observatory. Late afternoon arrival at the lodge. Overnight at Napo Wildlife Center. (B,L,D)

**DAY 13 (Sat): Napo Wildlife Center/Canopy Tower/Terra Firme Trail.**

After an early breakfast, depart from the lodge to experience the finest canopy tower on the Napo River. This 36m high canopy tower opened to guests in November 2004, and is a great way to experience the wildlife above the forest floor. The canopy tower is located about 20 minutes from the lodge deep within the terra firme forest. As you ascend the 12-story tower, you pass through different levels of the forest and emerge on top of a huge Ceiba Tree. Here you cross onto a wooden platform that is actually built into the tree and experience the view formerly reserved only for the birds. The metal tower itself was constructed to the highest standards, galvanized, and carefully inspected by engineers. Safety is the priority. The platform at the top of the tree was constructed by tree platform specialists as well. From top to bottom, there is no finer canopy experience in Eastern Ecuador. Flocks of colorful tanagers pass right through the canopy of the tree, Blue-and Yellow

Macaws fly past, in nearby trees Spider Monkeys search for fruit, two species of large toucans call in the early mornings and afternoons, and the life of the forest canopy opens before you. Birds that are virtually impossible to see from the forest floor far below are suddenly right beside you, oblivious to your presence. The canopy tower opens a whole new world to guests of the Napo Wildlife Center!! Lunch served at the lodge. In the afternoon, you will visit a terra firme trail and hike along primary forest to discover the forest interior. You may find lizards, colorful Manikins, or the unique and endemic Golden Mantle Tamarin Monkeys. After the hike, explore the lake and creeks by dugout canoe, with a good chance of seeing a Giant River Otter family on the way. Overnight at Napo Wildlife Center. (B,L,D)

#### **DAY 14 (Sun): Napo Wildlife Center/Coca/Quito.**

Early departure by canoe back to the Napo River. You may be able to see Giant River Otters, Monk Saki Monkeys, or rare birds. After arriving at the entrance to the Napo Wildlife Center Reserve, we disembark for a restroom break, and switch to a covered motor boat for the two hour ride up the Napo river to the port. Transfer to the airport in Coca for your return flight to Quito. Upon arrival in Quito, you will be transferred to your hotel. Overnight in Quito. (B)

#### **DAY 15 (Mon): Quito.**

Transfer to the airport for your return flight to your final destination. (B)

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

#### **ABOUT NAPO WILDLIFE CENTER**

- The leading luxury Eco-Lodge. Located by the Añangu Lake, South bank of the Napo River, Northeast Amazonian Ecuador. Only lodge within Yasuni National Park, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, the largest tract of intact rain forest in Ecuador. Started operations in early 2003.
- Best accommodations and privacy of all lodges in Ecuador and one of the very best in the entire Amazon. Luxury lodge with 12 large individual cabañas. Each with private lake and forest views.
- 24 hour electricity by a hybrid power system, solar panels - batteries and last generation noiseless diesel engines.
- Unrivalled nature attractions and biodiversity, 2 unique easy access parrot & macaw clay licks, 565 bird species, 11 species of monkeys, Giant Otter family and other large mammals such as Brazilian tapir, White-lipped peccary, all species of caiman including, Black caiman, Anaconda and many others.
- Two solid self standing canopy towers. Carefully engineered to provide maximum safety and enjoyment of wildlife at emergent trees.
- Best option for Ecuador land tour extensions, or additional program.
- Departures available on ANY DAY of the week except Sundays.

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

##### **Low Season**

**Single**

**Double**

**Triple**

Classic Suite (Magellan/Columbus)	\$8,329	\$4,789	\$4,539
Premium Suite (Marco Polo)	\$8,939	\$5,119	\$4,849
Deluxe Suite (Erickson)	\$9,939	\$5,679	\$5,369
Renaissance Suite (Explorer/Erickson)	\$10,419	\$5,949	\$5,619

### High Season

	Single	Double	Triple
Classic Suite (Magellan/Columbus)	\$8,749	\$5,019	\$4,759
Premium Suite (Marco Polo)	\$9,389	\$5,369	\$5,089
Deluxe Suite (Erickson)	\$10,459	\$5,969	\$5,639
Renaissance Suite (Explorer/Erickson)	\$10,979	\$6,259	\$5,909

**High Season:** Jan 1-7, Jan 15-Apr 30, Jun 16-Nov 23, Dec 16-31.

**Low Season:** Jan 8-14, May 1-Jun 15, Nov 24-Dec 15.

The above prices are valid until December 31, 2010.

### PRICE INCLUDES:

- South American Vacations' expert pre-departure planning services and documentation.
- Round-trip airfare from Quito to Coca in economy class.
- Airport/hotel transfers including baggage handling.
- Four nights accommodations at the Swissotel Quito (or similar) including service fees and taxes.
- City tour of Quito/Middle of the World excursion (private).
- Accommodations on board the M/V Galapagos Explorer II.
- Three nights accommodations at the Napo Wildlife Center including service fees and taxes.
- All meals scheduled on board and others as indicated on the itinerary.
- Two daily excursions to the islands conducted by bi-lingual naturalist guides.
- Other excursions as indicated on the itinerary including all applicable entrance fees.
- Evening briefings and lectures.

### PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- International airfare.
- Round-trip airfare from Quito to Galapagos.
- Ecuadorian departure tax (Quito \$44.30).
- Galapagos National Park entrance fee (\$100).
- Transit control card (\$10).
- Fuel surcharge (\$182 per person).
- Yasuni National Park entrance fee (\$25).
- Meals not indicated on the itinerary.
- Gratuities to ship crew and guides, tour guides, drivers, and hotel staff.
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.
- Gifts and personal items.
- Travel insurance.

**We will be happy to quote the cost of international airfare, the Quito-Galapagos airfare, 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 this ship and the domestic airfare for your desired dates of travel. Once we have confirmed availability, you will need to pay a non-refundable deposit of \$900 per person plus the cost of the international airfare (if we arrange it for you). The final balance is due 60 days prior to departure.

Quito, Eight Day Galapagos Explorer II Cruise, and Napo Wildlife Center

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