



QUITO, FIVE DAY GALAPAGOS EXPLORER II CRUISE, AND SACHA LODGE
12 Days/11 Nights from \$3,519



The Galapagos Islands and Ecuador's Amazon Basin offer incredible wildlife viewing opportunities. This tour includes the colonial city of Quito, with its spectacular views of the Andes and nearby volcanoes, a five day Galapagos Islands cruise aboard the Galapagos Explorer II, where you will observe plant and animal species that are found nowhere else on Earth, and

Sacha Lodge, which features a canopy walkway, numerous hiking trails, a canopy tower, and a butterfly house.

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 (\$15) and shorty wetsuits (\$20, advanced registration required) can be rented on board.

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

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



DEPARTURE DATES: Thursday 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 (Thu): 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 (Fri): 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 (Sat): Quito/Baltra Airport/Dragon Hill (Santa Cruz).

Morning transfer to the airport for the flight to Galapagos. Passengers arrive in Baltra and are transferred to the Galapagos Explorer II. Check-in and suite assignment, followed by lunch.

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 4 (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 5 (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 6 (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 7 (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 8 (Thu): Quito/Coca/Sacha Lodge.

Morning transfer to the airport for the 30 minute flight to Coca in Ecuador’s Amazon Basin. Upon arrival, you will have lunch in Sacha Lodge’s private house, and then board covered canoes for the two hour journey down river. The canoe ride is followed by a 30 minute hike through the rainforest to Lake Pilchicocha and another canoe ride across the lake to Sacha Lodge (3:00-3:30PM arrival).

Swim in Lake Pilchicocha, observe various bird species common around the lodge on the mini tower, or visit the butterfly house with your naturalist guide to view the beautiful colors of the many different species of butterflies. After dinner, you can accompany your guide on a night walk through the rainforest to view the hundreds of different species of animals that can only be found at night, or go on a canoe ride on the lake to view the spectacled and black caimans with their glowing orange eyes as you silently paddle across the lake to get a closer view. Overnight at Sacha Lodge. (B,L,D)

DAY 9 (Fri): Sacha Lodge/Canopy Walk.

Morning activity starts between 6:00 and 7:00 AM (full-day/ box lunch). Begin walking on trail Liana Chica and arrive at the canopy walk, for spectacular views of the rainforest canopy and the many different species of vibrantly colored birds. Designed to be a self-standing rigid suspension canopy walk, it is one of only a few in the world! Located within Sacha Lodge’s private reserve, two miles from the shores of the Rio Napo and one mile from the lodge, the bird walk gives guests the opportunity to get an up close and personal view of the rainforest canopy. Two of the three towers have observation decks every 12 meters making towers accessible for everyone. The canopy walkway is at 36 meters high and 275 meters long, giving guests a “birds eye view” of all the wonders and beauty the tropical rainforest has to offer. The canopy walk is designed as a sturdy walkway enabling guests to casually move along while enjoying the spectacular views.

After the canopy walk, you will hike along the Liana Grande trail through terra firma and igapo forest habitats where native guides will explain the many different species of medicinal plants that have been used in their culture for hundreds of years. Liana Grande will turn into the Higueron trail, which will take you through pristine primary forest with huge Kapok and Fig trees towering hundreds of feet above your head. Higueron will eventually lead to the Finca where an excellent lunch prepared especially for long day trips, will be served while you listen to the many species of

birds around the Finca and enjoy the coolness of the covered picnic tables. From the Finca, you may choose to take a leisurely hike along the Rio Napo, or choose a little more challenging hike on Leoncillo trail to try and spot the elusive dusky titi monkey. Either way the trails will lead you back to the main boardwalk for your final hike and canoe ride back to the lodge. Overnight at Sacha Lodge. (B,L,D)

DAY 10 (Sat): Sacha Lodge/Lake Lagartococha/Canopy Tower.

Leaving the lodge after breakfast, you begin your hike on Lagartococha trail. This trail offers you the chance to learn more about the native people and their relationship with the forest. Learn about the trees where native people believe the spirits of their ancestors live, and the mysterious “dwende” or devil-man of the forest. After arriving at Lake Lagartococha, take a tranquil canoe ride through a natural swamp, which is the home of anacondas, caimans, and capybaras. After the canoe ride, a walk on the other side of Lake Lagartococha may give you the opportunity to spot capuchin or squirrel monkeys playfully jumping through the trees. Return from the walk or canoe ride and head back to the lodge for a refreshing dip in the lake, or a nice relaxing nap in your personal hammock on your private balcony.

After lunch, your guide will teach you how to fish for the infamous razor-toothed piranha. Keep in mind that piranhas will never attack a person and swimming at the same time is perfectly safe and fun! Around 4:00 PM you will begin what many think is the best trail at Sacha Lodge, a silent canoe ride through the flooded Amazonian forest. You have a good chance of being surrounded by troops of squirrel, capuchin, and howler monkeys. Keep your eyes peeled for the shy and elusive river otter as well as the incredibly well camouflaged three-toed sloth! After your eye-popping ride through the flooded forest, you will arrive at Sacha Lodge’s 135-foot wooden tower built around an ancient Kapok tree. Get close up views of vibrantly colored birds through Sacha Lodge’s powerful telescopes, and watch the sun set with an amazing view of Mount Sumaco, a volcano, and possibly a view of the snow-capped Andes! Leaving the tower just before or after sunset will give you an experience not soon forgotten. A canoe ride back through the flooded forest at night will be an awe-inspiring experience. Listen to the symphony of frogs and insects as you navigate through the narrow flooded forest trail, keeping your eyes open for caimans. Watch the several species of bats flying over your heads and listen to the many species of nocturnal birds making their eerie nighttime calls. Finally, after your mesmerizing canoe trip through the Amazon, you will arrive back at Lake Pilchicocha and the welcoming lights of Sacha lodge. Overnight at Sacha Lodge. (B,L,D)

DAY 11 (Sun): Sacha Lodge/Coca/Quito.

After breakfast, you will depart the lodge for your return trip to Coca and Quito. Upon arrival in Quito, you will be transferred to your hotel. Overnight in Quito. (B)

DAY 12 (Mon): Quito.

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

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

ABOUT SACHA LODGE

Sacha Lodge is located on the shores of Lake Pilchicocha, in the midst of a 5,000 acre private reserve in Ecuador's Amazon Basin. The lodging was carefully designed to offer comfort to the traveler yet preserve the environment and rainforest ambience. All of the cabins, with high thatched roofs and private shaded terraces, are constructed with traditional materials and are nestled into the lush surroundings. Each of 26 the rooms, which include single, double and (upon request) triple accommodations, provides a private bathroom with flushing toilet and hot shower. All cabins are screened against insects, and contain ceiling fans above two comfortable double beds. During free time, visitors may overlook the jungle from hammocks and often report seeing wild fauna such as toucans, agoutis and monkeys right from their own cabin! Guests may also enjoy a raised lookout above our main bar and lounge, which offers a scenic view of Lake Pilchicocha and excellent bird watching opportunities.

Groups are no larger than six and are led by a naturalist guide. Special attractions include a 135 ft. observation tower constructed around an ancient Kapok Tree, a 900 ft. long canopy bird walk, and a butterfly house featuring 40 local butterfly species.

PRICE PER PERSON (in U.S. Dollars)

Low Season

	Single	Double	Triple
Classic Suite (Magellan/Columbus)	\$6,079	\$3,519	\$3,359
Premium Suite (Marco Polo)	\$6,439	\$3,719	\$3,549
Deluxe Suite (Erickson)	\$7,039	\$4,059	\$3,859
Renaissance Suite (Explorer/Erickson)	\$7,359	\$4,229	\$4,019

High Season

	Single	Double	Triple
Classic Suite (Magellan/Columbus)	\$6,319	\$3,659	\$3,489
Premium Suite (Marco Polo)	\$6,719	\$3,879	\$3,689
Deluxe Suite (Erickson)	\$7,359	\$4,229	\$4,019
Renaissance Suite (Explorer/Erickson)	\$7,689	\$4,419	\$4,199

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.
- 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 Sacha Lodge 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 (\$104 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. 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. 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 \$700 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, Five Day Galapagos Explorer II Cruise, and Sacha Lodge

3715 Piccadilly Street, Hollywood, FL 33021
Phone: 954-966-2374 • Fax: 954-966-2560 • Toll Free: 888-268-9753
Email: info@savacations.com • www.savacations.com