



**QUITO AND FIVE DAY GALAPAGOS ISLANDS CRUISE ABOARD THE GALAPAGOS EXPLORER II  
8 Days/7 Nights from \$2,409**



This tour combines colonial Quito with a five day Galapagos Islands cruise on the Galapagos Explorer II, 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:** 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 except for the airport transfers in Quito and the City Tour of Quito/Middle of the World excursion, which are private.

### **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).**

Early 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 Archipeligo, 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).**

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. Overnight in Quito. (B)

**DAY 8 (Thu): Quito.** Transfer to the airport for your return flight to your final destination. (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>
Classic Suite (Magellan/Columbus)	\$4,409	\$2,409	\$2,259
Premium Suite (Marco Polo)	\$4,769	\$2,609	\$2,449
Deluxe Suite (Erickson)	\$5,369	\$2,949	\$2,759
Renaissance Suite (Explorer/Erickson)	\$5,689	\$3,119	\$2,919

**High Season**

	<b>Single</b>	<b>Double</b>	<b>Triple</b>
Classic Suite (Magellan/Columbus)	\$4,649	\$2,549	\$2,389
Premium Suite (Marco Polo)	\$5,049	\$2,769	\$2,589
Deluxe Suite (Erickson)	\$5,689	\$3,119	\$2,919
Renaissance Suite (Explorer/Erickson)	\$6,019	\$3,309	\$3,099

**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.
- Private airport/hotel transfers including baggage handling in Quito.
- Three 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.
- All meals scheduled on board and others as indicated on the itinerary.
- Two daily excursions to the islands conducted by bi-lingual naturalist guides.
- Evening briefings and lectures.

**PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:**

- International airfare.

- Round-trip airfare from Quito to Galapagos.
- Ecuadorian departure tax (Quito \$44.30).
- Meals not indicated on the itinerary.
- Fuel surcharge of \$130 per person.
- 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 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 \$700 per person plus the cost of the international airfare (if we arrange it for you).

Quito and Five Day Galapagos Islands Cruise Aboard the Galapagos Explorer II

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