

INTRODUCTION

This 10-day western and central islands Galapagos adventure is aboard the Reina Silvia Voyager, starting and ending in Ecuador's interesting capital, Quito. The Reina Silvia is a small and highly comfortable vessel accommodating up to 16 passengers so is an intimate way to explore the beautiful Galapagos archipelago. From Quito, transfer to Santa Cruz where the journey will begin. Over the coming days, the itinerary will sail you to the islands of Floreana, Isabela, Santiago and back to Santa Cruz. En route, you will be on the look out for sea turtles, flamingos, sea lions, rays, sharks and marine iguanas – just a few of the myriad creatures inhabiting the islands. Walk, snorkel and cruise your way around this wildlife wonderland.

Please enquire for rates, dates and applicable departures. Prices are subject to change and availability. Terms and conditions apply please contact us for more details.

* Itinerary is subject to change depending on weather conditions and government regulations.

ITINERARY

TRIP CODE

ECCAWCRQ

DEPARTURE

Departs Select Fridays

DURATION

10 Days

LOCATIONS

Galapagos Islands, Ecuador



DAY 1: Quito

Arrive at Quito at any time, the day will be spent at your leisure. Arrival transfers are included. Sitting at 2,850 metres above sea level high in the Andean foothills lies Quito, the capital of Ecuador. The city, a short distance from the Equator and with an amazing backdrop of snow-capped mountains, is known for its stunning colonial architecture and art-work. Founded in the 16th century on the ruins of an Inca city, Quito has one of the largest, least-altered and best-preserved historic centres in the Americas. It was declared a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 1978. **Please note that the round trip flight to the Galapagos Islands is included.*



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DAY 2: Quito & Puerto Ayora

Transfer early to the airport for the flight to the Galápagos Islands. Upon arrival, meet the Naturalist Guide and cross to Santa Cruz islands to visit the highlands and the Charles Darwin Research Station before boarding the boat in the late afternoon from Puerto Ayora. After arrival in Baltra, visit of 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, particularly the famous Woodpecker Finch. We will then visit the Fausto Llerena Breeding Center and Charles Darwin Research Station to learn first hand of the conservation and research efforts in the islands. There, you'll see several subspecies of adult tortoises, lots of hatchlings, and learn of the repatriation programs that are saving several subspecies of tortoises and iguanas from extinction.



GALAPAGOS ISLANDS - WESTERN & CENTRAL ISLANDS | REINA SILVIA VOYAGER

DAY 3: Punta Cormorant & Post Office Bay

Land at Punta Cormorant on Floreana Island. Guided walks to observe the bird and wildlife and learn about the natural history. Snorkelling excursion at Champion Islet. In the afternoon visit Post Office Bay and a pirate cave in the highlands for great views of the island. In the morning, you will head to Punta Cormorant. Here you will enjoy a hike to a salt-water lagoon which is home to flamingos. Afterwards, you will snorkel Champion Islet, named after the whaler Andrew Champion, located just offshore from Floreana Island in the southern part of the Archipelago, considered as one of the most beautiful places on Galapagos for snorkeling. After lunch, you will visit the famous Post Office Bay. You will land on the beach and head to a spot where 18th century whalers placed a wooden barrel for use as an unofficial mailbox. The custom continues to this day with Galapagos visitors. So do not forget your postcards, and do not be surprised if the postcard arrives to its destination before you even get home! In the afternoon, you will visit The Asilo de la Paz. This is a hill 450m high that is behind Straw Hill in the agricultural area of the island. The main attractions are of a historic type: one is the cave of pirates and the other is the freshwater spring. The two sites are located at the base of the hill.



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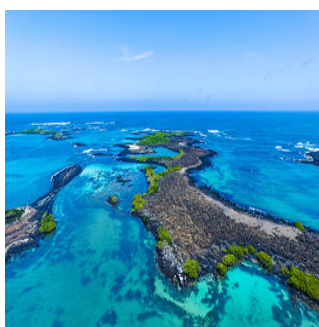
DAY 4: Punta Moreno & Elizabeth Bay

Morning landing at Punta Moreno on the southwest coast of Isabela to see lava formations, flamingos, and amazing views of the three most active volcanoes in the Galápagos Islands. In the afternoon visit Elizabeth Bay, which offers amazing bird and marine life viewing opportunities. Head out on the zodiacs and explore the shallows and mangroves to look for sea turtles and penguins. In the morning you will visit Punta Moreno located southwest of Elizabeth Bay. A dry landing here is possible onto what was once flowing lava. The lava has left craters in its wake which formed crystal tide pools. By looking into these pools, you can peer into another world as the marine life drifts by your window. In the brackish pools of this area, if you're lucky, you may see pink flamingos, white-cheeked pintails, and common gallinules. If you look carefully into the pools, you may see white-tip reef sharks and some sea turtles. In the afternoon, you will visit Elizabeth Bay, is located on the east coast of Isabela Island. Cruise on the zodiacs through the mangroves to see pelicans and an abundance of marine life in the clear water. The area is perfect for snorkeling and viewing schools of colorful fish, sea lions, and perhaps even sharks.



DAY 5: Isabela & Fernandina

Enjoy a morning visit to Urbina Bay, located at the base of Alcedo Volcano. Keep an eye out for land iguanas. In the afternoon, land at Punta Espinoza on Fernandina, the youngest of the Galápagos Islands. Witness the large colony of sea lions, marine iguanas, and a variety of birdlife. In the morning, you will land at Urbina Bay which presents some fascinating geological formations. In 1954, an uplift from the sea formed the bay which has been characterized by the resulting terrestrial coral reef ever since. Expect to see stingrays and sea turtles swimming near the surface of the water, as well as pelicans and marine iguanas. You will be dazzled by the breathtaking view of the Alcedo Volcano. In the afternoon, you will land at Punta Espinoza and after walking past a colony of marine iguanas and a group of sea lions, you'll reach the island's highlight: the flightless cormorant nesting site (seasonal). This area also provides a great opportunity to see the Galapagos hawk.



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DAY 6: Tagus Cove & Punta Vicente Roca

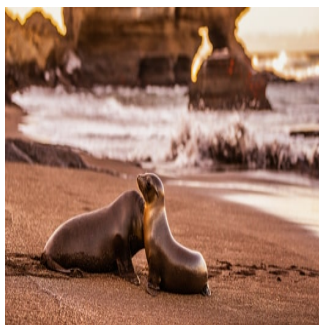
Stop for a visit at Tagus Cove and hike to a lookout to get a stunning view of the bay. Spot old graffiti on the cliffs from whalers and pirates who once visited the the cove. Continue to Punta Vicente Roca, one of the lesser-visited and best snorkelling spots in the Galapagos to spot the abundant marine life. After breakfast, you will visit Tagus Cove which is located across from Fernandina Island, near the Bolivar Channel dividing the two islands. This spot has been frequented by ships since the 1800s, using the area as an anchorage site. Trails winding by Lake Darwin up to a ridge display wonderful views. The afternoon visit is at Vicente Roca Point.

Comprised of two separate coves, this site is a large bay with spectacular sea life. Keep an eye out for seahorses, sea turtles, and the strange yet fascinating Mola mola (or sunfish).



DAY 7: Buccaneer Cove & Puerto Egas

Morning excursion to Buccaneer Cove to witness the towering cliff wall rock formations and nesting seabirds. Continue in the afternoon to Puerto Egas to see the salt crater as well as a dark sand beach and tidal pools. Opportunities for snorkelling to try and spot the abundant marine life like turtles, rays and sharks. In the morning jump in the waters of Buccaneer Cove, an area which is a testament to the fact that Santiago Island was once a refuge for British buccaneers. These pirates would anchor in the protected bay to make repairs and stock up on tortoise meat among other things. The steep cliffs, where hundreds of seabirds perch in front of the dark red sand beach, are a magnificent sight. After lunch, you will go to Egas Port, also known as James Bay, on Santiago Island which is home to the curious Galapagos hawks and quick-footed Galapagos lava lizards. The trail leads to the coastline with gorgeous tide pools and grottos full of fauna. Here the Galapagos fur sea lions bathe in the sun. This is also a great snorkeling site.



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DAY 8: Santa Cruz & North Seymour

Visit the beach on Las Bachas and relax or swim in the crystal waters. Continue to North Seymour for guided walks to observe birds and wildlife, including vast sea lion colonies. More snorkelling opportunities for the chance to see marine life. The morning visit to Bachas Beach which is a swimming beach is located on the north shore of Santa Cruz. One of the few remnants of the U.S. World War II presence in the Galapagos, a floating pier, can be seen here. You may see flamingos, Sally Lightfoot crabs, hermit crabs, black-necked stilts, and whimbrels. Sea turtles also nest on the beach at night (seasonal). In the afternoon, you will visit North Seymour. Here you will be able to see Galapagos sea lions, blue-footed boobies and magnificent frigate birds which are abundant on the Island. The island was formed by a series of submarine lava flows containing layers of sediment that were uplifted by tectonic activity. The island is characterized by its arid vegetation zone.



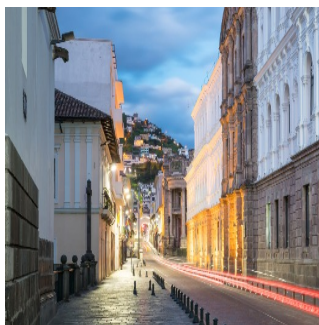
DAY 9: Baltra Island & Quito

Disembark in the morning at Baltra where you will be transferred to the airport for your flight back to Quito. The day at Quito will be spent at your own leisure.



DAY 10: Quito

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before departing at Quito at your own leisure.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

