

# 10 Day Galapagos Adventure With Pioneer Expeditions



# OVERVIEW

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Experience the famed volcanic Galapagos Islands with this action-packed adventure! The islands offer endless opportunities to witness a unique abundance of wildlife in a setting unlike any other on the planet. This is one of the few places on earth that allows such close and intimate contact with wildlife. The tour also provides many benefits to local communities and is socially and environmentally responsible. Be part of an educational and inspirational journey of a lifetime in one of the most fiercely protected marine wilderness' in the world!

## UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

- ♦ Kayak searching for penguins

## TRIP ACTIVITIES

- ♦ Biking
- ♦ Culture
- ♦ Kayaking
- ♦ Snorkeling
- ♦ Trekking
- ♦ Wildlife

## Day 1. Quito arrival day

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Welcome to Quito! The largest, best-preserved colonial city of America – declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978.

The city is considered the Cultural Capital of South America and is located on the equator in a valley at the foothills of the Pichincha volcano. Depending on arrival time, you can spend your day exploring the old town of Quito and the surrounding area.

### SERVICES INCLUDES

Accommodation Sheraton Quito Hotel o similar  
Meals included In flight



## Day 2. San Cristobal Island

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Today we get ready to explore the most amazing archipelago on the Pacific coast and the place where Charles Darwin based his theory of the evolution of species.

We will board a morning flight from Quito to the island of San Cristóbal. Once we arrive, we have a transfer to the hotel in the town of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno and a short briefing about the next days, before the adventure begins. In the afternoon we will head to “La Loberia”, which is a home beach for large Galapagos sea lions.

We will hike for approximately 1 hour. The ground in this hike is flooded along the shoreline at high tide. It is a fairly leisurely walking activity that takes you through a lot of lava rocks and some mangroves. During this excursion, we will have the possibility to spot the red-billed tropicbird, blue-footed boobies, and Nazca boobies.

### SERVICES INCLUDES

Accommodation Blue Marlin Hotel o similar  
Meals included Breakfast

We also get to see yellow warbler birds, frigate birds, and several species of Darwin's finches along the beach. In between the rocks, we can find marine iguanas, which you can only see in Galapagos.

After that, we will enjoy a shallow water snorkeling activity to spot sea lions and sea turtles. Sea lions are very curious and approach to swim next to you underwater.

They may also be lazing over rocks or just lazy dozing in the sand. We also have the time to go for a refreshing swim, explore the waters with our snorkel equipment and enjoy the beach.





## Day 3. Kicker Rock - Snorkel

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In the morning, we will take a boat to Kicker Rock, located off the coast of San Cristóbal, also known as the Sleeping Lion (Leon Dormido) because of some resemblance.

This is the remains of a lava cone eroded by the sea, two vertical rocks rising 500 ft (150 m) above the ocean form a small channel that is navigable by small boats.

This Galapagos Island's natural monument has become a spectacular site due to the many tropical birds, frigate birds and boobies that fill the sky in this area.

### SERVICES INCLUDES

Accommodation Blue Marlin Hotel o similar

Meals included Breakfast, Lunch

Beneath the sea, the crystal waters offer a brilliant show of colorful fish, such as rainbow fish and sharks, like the hammerhead and white tip. After lunch, we will spend some time on the beach and travel back to the hotel.



## Day 4. Isabela Island - Biking

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In the morning, hop to Isabela Island, the largest island in the archipelago, and where the most of the volcanic activity in the Galapagos is reported.

The island was formed by six shield volcanoes, Alcedo, Cerra Azul, Darwin, Ecuador, Sierra Negra, and Wolf; five of them are still active which makes the island one of the most volcanically active places on earth.

In the afternoon, we will explore the beautiful coastline on an exclusive trail on our bikes, taking us through an incredible ecosystem with a wide variety of wildlife including flamingos, marine iguanas, and giant tortoises.

We start with a visit to the Wall of Tears, a massive wall built with lava rocks.

### SERVICES INCLUDES

This site dates back to the 1950s when Isabela was used as a penal colony and prisoners were forced to build the wall to keep them from going mad, because of the isolation they experienced.

As we continue our ride along the coast, we will explore pristine, white sand beaches, mangrove forests, and lagoons.

This area is filled with a plethora of birdlife, including American oystercatchers, herons, flamingos, finches, and many other shorebirds, as well as the ubiquitous sea lions and marine iguanas.



Accommodation Isamar Hotel or similar

Meals included Breakfast

## Day 5. Isabela Island - Snorkel at Lava Tunnels

Explore the amazing formations of lava created by the last eruptions of the volcanic island along the seashore. This magical place has historically been filmed by BBC and National Geographic for their documentaries.

It is a labyrinth of lava arches made of crystal clear water full of sea turtles, eagle rays, sea lions, sharks and more. The turtles navigate their own highway from the mangroves to the open sea through "Los Tuneles".

### SERVICES INCLUDES

Accommodation [Isamar Hotel or similar](#)

Meals included Breakfast, Lunch.

Here, we will have the best snorkeling opportunity with all these beautiful animals, including the curious Galapagos penguins playing around.



## Day 6. Hike Sierra Negra - Kayak at Tintoreras - Snorkel at Concha y Perla

After breakfast, at around 08h00, you will depart to Sierra Negra Volcano. You will drive to the highlands of Isabela, where you would normally start hiking. The volcano, with its height of around 1,500 meters and an outer diameter of approximately nine kilometers, is the second biggest lava dome in the world.

You will have lunch at a local restaurant in town at around 13h00. Enjoy a delicious meal prepared at a lava rock grill, and after lunch, enjoy some leisure time exploring the surroundings or resting on the beautiful islands. We then make our way back to the pier, arriving at 14h30, where, after a short briefing, we will start kayaking at the bay, where we can enjoy the local wildlife.

On the way, we can observe penguins, blue-footed boobies, pelicans, iguanas, Marinas, sea turtles, sea lions, eagle rays, and sometimes Sharks "Tintoreras" juveniles. To finish this day, at 16h30, we will have a short visit to Concha y Perla, a small beach in Puerto Villamil, where we will snorkel.

A short, beautiful walk through the mangroves on a boardwalk will lead you to the spot with turquoise waters and wildlife galore! You can expect to see plenty of other tourists alongside colorful fish, sea lions, sea turtles, pelicans, mockingbirds, and maybe even marine iguanas!

### SERVICES INCLUDES

Accommodation [Isamar Hotel or similar](#)

Meals included Breakfast, Lunch

Hiking time: 4 hours both ways

Hiking distance: 6 miles (9.6 km) (10 miles -16 km- optional to Volcán Chico)

Hiking elevation gain: 950 feet (289.5 meters)

Maximum elevation while hiking: 3687 feet (1124 meters)

Kayaking time: 2 hours

Snorkeling time: 1 hour

**What to wear today for hiking:** shorts, t-shirt, tennis shoes, rain jacket, hat, buff, sun cream, mosquito repellent.

**What to wear today for kayaking and snorkeling:** sandals, shorts, water long sleeve t-shirt, bathing suit, hat, sun cream, mosquito repellent



## Day 7. Santa Cruz Island - Charles Darwin Station - Highlands (Hike with giant tortoises)

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In the morning, traverse from Isabela to Santa Cruz Island to visit the Charles Darwin Research Station. Once we arrive, we will check in at the hotel.

We will then visit the Charles Darwin Research Station to learn more about many of the endemic species seen in the wild, as well as the ongoing conservation and management efforts on the Galapagos Islands.

Later, we will continue by car to our first stop in the highlands of Santa Cruz. The highlands are home to the iconic giant Galapagos tortoises.

### SERVICES INCLUDES

Accommodation [La Isla](#) or similar

Meals included Breakfast.

Here you will visit a private ranch where you will enjoy lunch before heading out for a walk in search of the giant tortoises.

During this visit, you will also visit some lava tubes, which are formed when the surface of a lava stream solidifies.



## Day 8. Santa Cruz Island Free Day - Optional Diving

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Today, you can experience the Galapagos at your own desire, whether that be scuba diving (request in advance) or just time to relax on the beach!

As an option, you can go on a self-guided exploration walk through a dry forest to Tortuga Bay (3.5 mi/ 5.6 km), a beautiful white sand beach and a nesting site to thousands of marine turtles.

This beautiful place invites swimming or snorkeling.

### SERVICES INCLUDES

Accommodation [La Isla](#) or similar

Meals included Breakfast.

Alternatively, take advantage of other optional activities available at an extra cost. These include trips to Floreana Island, Bartolome Island, or a full-day scuba diving adventure, among others. Whatever you choose, this day offers you the opportunity to make the most of your Galapagos experience.





## Day 9. Flight back to Quito

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After our final breakfast on the Galapagos Island and the last photos taken of sea lions, we have a transfer to Baltra's airport in time to catch the flight back to mainland.

### SERVICES INCLUDES

Accommodation Sheraton Quito Hotel or similar.

Meals included Breakfast.



## Day 10. Departure

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Today our trip will end and you will have your International departures.

Take with you your memories and photos and leave a piece of your heart, as you will want to return to Ecuador soon to experience more of this enchanted land. We wish you a "buen viaje"!

### SERVICES INCLUDES

Meals included Breakfast.





# IMPORTANT TRAVEL TIPS

It is our intention to adhere to the itinerary described; however, due to our travel style, on occasions it may be necessary or desirable to make small changes. Weather conditions and unpredictable local circumstances may lead us to make alterations to the route and/or travel times. Hotels and flight schedules might change according to availability. Any mention to specific wildlife in the itinerary or trip details is not a guarantee that it will be seen during the trip.

## FLIGHT TIME

2h 45min each way from Quito to Galapagos. Regular size aircraft. About 140 passengers.

45 min from San Cristobal to Isabela. Small size aircraft. 9 passengers.

## DRIVING TIME

45 min Airport transfers in Quito.

45 min Airport transfers in Galapagos.

45 min each way in Sierra Negra.

## BOAT TRAVEL TIME

2 hours from Isabela to Santa Cruz

45 minutes each way - Lava Tunnels

45 minutes each way - Kicker Rock

## SEASON

All year

## PROVINCE

Pichincha and Galapagos.

## ALTITUDE

From sea level (most activities) to 1200m (3,937 ft - Sierra Negra Volcano).

## TERRITORY

Quito City and Galapagos Islands National Park.

## AVG. TEMP.

Day 15-34°C / 59-93°F - Night 12-17°C / 53-62°F

## KAYAK TIME

2 hours

## SNORKELING TIME

1 - 2 hours a day

## BIKING TIME

3 hours total.

## HIKING TIME

Sierra Negra 5 hours total, el Chato Tortoises Reserve 1 hour total.

## DIFFICULTY LEVEL

Moderate to Challenging: This program is located in The Galapagos Islands, includes multisport activities, long hike to the Sierra Negra Volcano, snorkeling almost every day, sea kayaking to view wildlife and biking mostly on flat roads.

## GEAR

Adventure and protective equipment, snorkeling mask, fins, life jackets, mountain bikes, helmets, kayaks and paddle.

## ADVENTURE GEAR

Top of the line Bikes, TREK X caliber 9, 10 speed Shimano Deore, rock shock suspension, hydraulic brakes, 29 inches wheels, Bontrager helmets.

# IMPORTANT TRAVEL TIPS

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## ACCOMMODATION

All prices are based on double-occupancy. If you are traveling solo, you will be matched with another participant of your same sex. If you prefer to have a single room, please contact AJ prior to your departure to arrange your accommodation at an extra cost.

## MEALS

Traveling with Adventure Journeys you will have the possibility to experience and taste local food and snacks. Your guide will help you identify typical food and suggest the best places to enjoy it.

Some meals are not included in order to give you some flexibility about where, what and with whom to eat. You have the option to share these meals with the group, however there is no obligation to do this.

If you have any allergies or food restrictions, please inform AJ prior to your departure. Vegetarians, Vegans and Gluten Free people are very welcome in our trip, our guides are always ready to coordinate with chefs and restaurants for substitute meals for them, as Ecuador is very well known for its great diversity of gastronomy.

## YOUR TRIP LEADERS AND GUIDES

All AJ guides and trip leaders are highly experienced, licensed from the Tourism University to operate in Ecuador and certified as Wilderness Adventure First Aid respondents. They all have approved several extra training courses for kayaking, rafting, biking and horse riding, besides this they all are Ecuadorian and have a fantastic personality.

We always carry a complete first aid kit in our trips. In some locations and for some activities, local guides join the trip leaders to provide an added service and make sure we practice sustainable tourism involving local indigenous people in our operation.

## SUSTAINABLE ECO AND CULTURAL TOURISM

Clients receive interpretation and education about the ecology and conservation of the Andes, Amazon rain forest and Galápagos Islands, and learn about the factors that threaten it. We aim to promote long-term conservation of both local people cultural identity and the environment.

We transport out and recycle all non-organic garbage and we prefer to work with local suppliers. Your visit will encourage the local communities to support responsible eco-tourism as a sustainable alternative for their living.

## HEALTH INFORMATION

Please inform AJ of any existing medical conditions (i.e. pregnancy, diabetes, etc). Yellow fever, Hepatitis B vaccination and Malaria Medication are recommended when traveling to the tropics. Please ask your doctor for advice.

# DETAILS

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## WHAT IS INCLUDED?

- ♦ **Transportation:** Airport transfers (for domestic flights), Intra-flight from San Cristobal to Isabela included (personnel baggage allowance of 25 lbs) (20 lbs for check in baggage and 5 lbs for carry-on baggage equals 25 lbs total) (Extra baggage USD 2,00 per extra pound – it can be paid directly); speed boat from Isabela to Santa Cruz Island; comfortable land transportation.
- ♦ **Accommodation based in double occupancy:** 5\* hotel in Quito, 3\* hotels in Galapagos.
- ♦ **Meals:** 9 Breakfasts & 3 lunches.
- ♦ **Activities:** Snorkeling in Kicker rock, La Loberia and the Lava Tunnels, Biking to the Wall of Tears, Trekking to the top of Sierra Negra active volcano, snorkeling and kayaking in Tintoreras, visit the Charles Darwin Research Station, hiking in Santa Cruz highlands.
- ♦ **Gear:** Snorkeling mask and fins, life vest.
- ♦ **Trip Leader:** Certified AJ expert English-speaking adventure Trip Leader and naturalist local guides in Galapagos National Park.

## WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED?

- ♦ International flights.
- ♦ Airfare Quito – Galapagos – Quito round trip.
- ♦ My Own Room supplement
- ♦ Airport transfer (international flights).
- ♦ Travel insurance (suggested).
- ♦ Meals not described in the itinerary.
- ♦ INGALA transit card: \$ 20 USD per person, cash only (subject to change).
- ♦ Galapagos National Park fee: \$ 200 USD per person, cash only (subject to change).
- ♦ Pier-use fee at Puerto Villamil: \$ 10 USD.
- ♦ Wetsuit for rent: \$ 10 USD.
- ♦ Tips for guides and drivers.



