



**Galapagos Islands Itinerary A & Quito Ecuador
7 night Galapagos cruise & 5 nights Quito, Cotopaxi, Otavalo**

- Wednesday: Fly to Quito Ecuador, transfer in upon arrival
Overnight Hotel Le Parc
- Thursday: Tour the Historical city of Quito
Mitad del Mundo or El Teleferico, overnight Hotel Le Parc
- Friday Cotopaxi National park including lunch, return to Quito
Hotel Le Parc
- Saturday: Otavalo market, lunch La Mirage, return to Quito
Overnight Hotel Le Parc
- Sunday Quito to Pto Baq. Moreno, San Cristobal Aerogal 36 8:55AM
Playa Ochoa (SN, KY)/ Leon Dormido (PR) SAN CRISTOBAL
- Monday: Punta Pitt, (SN, PR, KY) SAN CRISTOBAL
Cerro Brujo (SN, PR, KY) SAN CRISTOBAL
- Tuesday: Punta Suarez, ESPANOLA (Hood)
Gardner Bay (SN, PR, KY) ESPANOLA (Hood)
- Wednesday: Punta Cormorant (PR), Devil's Crown or Champion (SN), FLOREANA
Post Office Bay (PR), FLOREANA
- Thursday: Humedales & Muro de Lagrimas or Tintoreras, ISABELA
Sierra Negra Volcano, ISABELA
- Friday: Bachas or Mosquera (PR, KY), SANTA CRUZ
Bartolome (SN, PR)
- Saturday: South Plaza Island
Darwin station or highlands of SANTA CRUZ
- Sunday: San Cristobal to Quito on Aerogal 2k37 4:30PM
Overnight Hotel Le Parc
- Monday: Quito – Home



**7 nights Galapagos Islands Itinerary A & 5 nights Quito, Cotopaxi, Otavalo
Day-by-day detailed itinerary (12 nights)**

WEDNESDAY: Welcome to Quito, colonial Capitol set in the Middle of the World and a UNESCO Cultural Patrimony of Mankind and World Heritage Site. Surrounded by snowcapped volcanoes, yet only 14 miles from the Equator line, the quaint capital of Ecuador boasts a spring-like climate all year round. Located in a huge valley in the Andes Mountains at an altitude of 9,455 feet, visitors can feel the crisp air while enjoying the city's rich colonial architecture, churches, monasteries and museums. Upon arrival, you are met at the airport for transport to Hotel Le Parc for overnight.

Hotel Le Parc *****

A new concept in hotels for Quito, the hip, upscale Le Parc opened in 2007 and is a symphony to cool, contemporary chic from its ground floor lobby bar and restaurant Blu with water moat and 5-foot horizontal gas fireplace – to the tip of its stunning rooftop terrace bar. Truly exclusive with 30 unique suites with king size beds (there is even a pillow menu), spacious bathroom with stand alone tub, L'Occitane amenities, Plasma TV, and Concierge services. The hotel has a compact gym, sauna and L'Occitane Spa with treatments and products. The hotel is within walking distance to the Parque Carolina with jogging trails and Botanical Gardens. Complimentary wireless internet, airport shuttle service is provided by SUV

THURSDAY: After buffet breakfast at Hotel Le Parc, our English speaking local guide meets you at the hotel for a tour of Quito. Discover the historical part of the city – stroll down cobble stone streets and through flowering plazas while admiring the old colonial architecture of Independence square, including the House of Congress, the Presidential Palace and the Metropolitan Cathedral. Visit the church of La Compania, built in 1605, or the elegant cathedrals of San Francisco or San Augustin, Quito's oldest monastery. We stop for lunch at a local restaurant to experience Ecuadorian cuisine. In the afternoon chose between visiting the equatorial monument known as Mitad del Mundo or taking a ride on a cable car or Teleferico to the top of the mountain from where you get a beautiful view of the entire city of Quito. Placed precisely at latitude –0– , the monument known as Mitad del Mundo marks the spot where an 18th century French and Spanish geographic expedition located the position of the Equator. Proximity to this geographic feature gave Ecuador its name. Straddling the line puts one in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres at the same time. Visit the Monument and Ethnographic Museum.

FRIDAY: Drive through the scenic Andean countryside to reach the foot of Cotopaxi Volcano named for the 19,700-foot peak that dominates the area. The National Park is an ecological sanctuary of 36,000 hectares surrounding the highest active volcano in the world. You'll have time to explore the National Park, home to high altitude birds such as the Puna Hawk, Carunculated Caracara and with some luck, the Andean Condor. Lunch is at Hosteria LA CIENEGA, built in the 1600's. La Cienega is located in the valley at the foot of the volcano and belongs to the descendants of its original owner, the Marquis of Maenza, dating back to the 17th century. The Manor House was built in 1838 and is

accessed via an avenue flanked by fragrant eucalyptus trees. It's mighty stone walls have witnessed important events in Ecuador's history. Return to Quito, Overnight Hotel Le Parc.

SATURDAY: We arrive early to the Otavalo market, the finest and most well known fair in South America. For centuries, regional markets have played an important role in Indian life, providing regular gathering places for trade and socializing. In contrast to other markets, the Otavalenos barter in silence. They wear blue ponchos, white pants and have long braided hair. The colorful local markets are famous for their fine handicrafts. At the central plaza and along side streets, you will find weavings, sweaters, belts, blankets and rugs. Lunch is provided at La Mirage, a luxury resort property. We return to Quito late in the afternoon for check in at Hotel Le Parc.

SUNDAY: Buffet breakfast at Hotel Le Parc, Transfer to the Mariscal Sucre airport for your flight to Galapagos on Aerogal 36 departing QUITO at 8:55AM and arriving to San Cristobal at 11:20AM. Upon arrival to Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, **SAN CRISTOBAL** Island, our crew is waiting at the airport to escort you to your anchored yacht. After the welcome briefing, buffet lunch and safety drill, we set sail for **Playa Ochoa** where we have a wet landing. Here, we can test our snorkeling equipment and at the same time swim with a small colony of sea lions. Behind the beach, there is a tidal lagoon where bird can be spotted including the rare Chatham mockingbird. At sunset, we cruise around **Kicker Rock (Leon Dormido)**, a vertical tuff cone formation that abruptly juts up almost 500 feet out of the ocean. On the cliffs, we spot blue-footed boobies, masked boobies and magnificent frigate birds. This evening, the guides hold a briefing followed by the Captain's welcome party.

MONDAY: This morning, we visit the northeast tip of San Cristobal, **PUNTA PITT**, a tuff formation that serves as a nesting site for many sea birds including Blue footed, Nazca and Red-footed boobies, Frigate birds, Swallow-tailed gulls and Storm petrels. Punta Pitt is considered to be a first class site for birds and equal to Genovesa (Tower) Island. This afternoon we visit **CERRO BRUJO**, a breathtaking white power-sand beach, said to be one of the most spectacular in Galapagos and have an opportunity to snorkel or kayak right from the beach.

TUESDAY: This morning we have a dry landing at **Punta Suarez, ESPANOLA**, where we witness the highest rate of endemic species in Galapagos. Sea lions noisily greet us as we land on their beach. Curious Hood mockingbirds peck at our shoelaces. From April to November, the waved albatross, found only on Espanola, perform their wild mating ritual. Colonies of blue-footed boobies engage in "sky-pointing" to show off for potential mates. Nazca boobies busily care for their young. Stunning swallow-tailed gulls are the only nocturnal gulls in the world. Red-billed tropicbirds take shelter under the cliffs. We also find Darwin's Finches, Galapagos Doves and Galapagos Hawks. Observe a unique species of marine iguana identified with traces of red and green colorings. Colorful sally light-foot crabs crawl along the shoreline near to the famous "blow hole".

In the afternoon, we have a wet landing on **Gardner Bay, ESPANOLA (HOOD)**. Walk along seemingly endless stretches of this white sandy beach where you'll find large colonies of sea lions. There is no trail to follow so this is a chance to explore and you may find a Galapagos Hawk, Darwin's Finches or Hood Mockingbird. Swim with sea lions right from the beach, explore by kayak or just relax. There's an excellent snorkeling site off Gardner Islet with a colorful diversity of sea life near Tortuga Rock, explore caves covered with invertebrates.

WEDNESDAY: This morning we step ashore at **Punta Cormorant, FLOREANA (Charles)**, one of the few populated islands in the Galapagos. Floreana presents a rich history with mystery and intrigue. Set food on a green-sand beach alive with the sounds of sea lions. Follow a trail to a brackish lagoon, home of the pintail ducks, common stilts, and the pinkest Flamingos in the world. Wind your way past a rich variety of plants including Morning Glory, Cut Leaf Daisies, Palo Verdes and Scalesia leading to a beach with power soft sand. Sea turtles lay their eggs in the sand dunes and rays swim in the shallow water. After the walk, we have an opportunity to snorkel at **Devil's Crown or Champion**, a shallow sunken crater colonized by a brilliant array of colorful fish and corral. This afternoon we visit **Post office Bay**, not the most scenic, but probably the most famous sites in Galapagos. Here is where a post barrel was put into use in the late 18th Century by English whaling vessels. You are invited to leave a post card and to pick up any mail from your home area.

THURSDAY: This morning we visit a hidden gem on Isabela Island called **Los Humedales and Muro de Lagrimas** which translates to "wetlands" and "wall of tears". This area has trails from which you find all four species of mangroves, secluded sandy beaches with rocky shores lava tunnels and natural pools. View migratory birds including Whimbrels, Short-billed Dowitchers, Wilson's Phalarope, Common Tern, Osprey, Semi-palmated Plovers as well as mating Flamingos. The national park has released young tortoises from the breeding center in this area so you may encounter tortoises in the wild. The Wall of Tears was constructed between 1946-1959 when Isabela was a penal colony. In the afternoon, we visit **Sierra Negra Volcano**, located in the Southwest portion of Isabela, and considered the oldest and largest volcano on Isabela. From Puerto Villamil, we travel by motorized vehicle to Santo Tomas. From here, we continue by horseback to the rim of the caldera, traversing a lava field through a series of craters and fumaroles until we reach Volcan Chico. Along the way, you will usually spot the vermilion flycatcher, Galapagos Martins, Whimbrels, Egrets, Galapagos Hawks and possibly the Dark-billed Cuckoo.

FRIDAY: This morning we visit Mosquera, a tiny islet between Baltra and North Seymour with a long narrow beach and large population of sea lions. After a wet landing, we will have time for swimming and snorkeling on this volcanically-formed islet. This afternoon we visit Bartolome, where it seems like we are walking on the moon. This young Island is inhospitable to most plants and animals. After a dry landing, climb 30 minutes up stairs leading to the summit of a once active volcano. Along the way, we pause to marvel at lava bombs, spatter cones and cinder cones. From the top of the wooden stairs, we can gaze out across the island for a panoramic view of the island and "Pinnacle Rock", an eroded tuff cone. Crystal clear water is an invitation to snorkel from the beach or Zodiac with schools of tropical fish and Galapagos Penguins.

SATURDAY: This morning, we visit **SOUTH PLAZA**, a small geological uplift with tall cliffs offering spectacular views. After a dry landing, the trails lead us through Prickly Pear cactus or Opuntia and Sesuvium. Here we can find the Galapagos Land Iguana feeding on the cactus leaves. Toward the end of the hill, we encounter a colony of bachelor sea lions. The dominant bulls are in various stages of recovery from battles lost over prime beach territory. We also find Swallow tailed gulls, Shearwaters and Red-billed tropicbirds who build their nests along the cliffs. Travel by bus to the **highlands of SANTA CRUZ** Island. The scenery gradually changes as we wind our way through all seven vegetation zones found in Galapagos. Here, we visit the tortoise reserve at one of the private farms in the highlands where we encounter giant tortoises in their natural habitat. We visit *Los*

Gemelos, Spanish for "The Twins", a pair of large pit craters where we find the bright red male vermilion flycatcher. We stop at "the tunnels", the largest lava tubes found in Galapagos.

SUNDAY: This morning, we drop anchor in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, **SAN CRISTOBAL**. We visit the Interpretation Center opened in 1999. Here we gain a more complete understanding of the natural and human history of the Islands. Afterwards, we head straight to the airport for our flight back to the mainland departing San Cristobal at 12:30PM on Aerogal37 and arriving to Quito at 4:30PM. A snack is served on the flight. Upon arrival, transfer to Hotel Le Parc for overnight.

MONDAY: QUITO – HOME After breakfast at the hotel, transfer you to the Masical Sucre Airport in Quito for your return flight home.

2012 rates: 7 nights Galapagos Islands & 5 nights Quito, Otavalo, Cotopaxi

\$ 3550.00 Iguana deck cabin 7 night Galapagos cruise
(upgrade to Booby \$3950 or Dolphin deck \$4350 available)
\$ 424.00 airfare Quito-Galapagos-Quito (\$369 in low season)
\$ 110.00 Galapagos park tax + transit card fee
\$ 915.00 Quito extension 5 nights

Total = \$ 4999.00 per person based on 2 guests in a double room

Rate includes:

Cabin accommodation with private bath on the first class 20-passenger M/Y ERIC, FLAMINGO or LETTY for 7 nights including all meals and snacks, non-alcoholic beverages, purified water, guided shore excursions, Captain's welcome and farewell parties, use of snorkeling equipment, wet suits and sea kayaks and transfers in the Islands between the airport to dock.

Roundtrip airfare on AEROGAL Airlines from Quito to Galapagos
Galapagos National Park entrance fee \$100 and transit card fee \$10

Hotel accommodations for five nights at Hotel Le Parc in Quito including taxes, buffet breakfast and welcome beverage and airport transfers provided by the hotel's shuttle private SUV including baggage handling.
City tour of Quito combined with Mitad del Mundo or teleferico with English speaking guide and private vehicle and driver, with lunch included.
Full day tour to Cotopaxi national park including lunch with an English speaking guide, private vehicle and driver.
Full day tour to Otavalo market including lunch at La Mirage, guided visits and tours with English speaking guide, private car and driver.

Rates do not include:

International airfare from your hometown to Ecuador
Gratuities for guides and crew \$175 suggested per person
Dinners in Quito and lunch unless noted