



# TRAVEL THE UNKNOWN

TAKE THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

**GALAPAGOS CRUISE - WESTERN ISLANDS**

**8 days**



## Tour Highlights

- Visit the many islands of the Galápagos
- Participate in a centuries-old traditional of hand-delivering postcards
- Mysterious tales behind the island of Floreana
- Visit Isabela, the largest of the Galápagos Islands
- Dramatic landscape of Fernandina
- Majestic volcanoes and breath-taking landscapes of Santiago
- Endemic birds on North Seymour
- Sea lions of Mosquera Islet

## Places visited

Galápagos Islands • Santa Cruz • Floreana • Isabela • Fernandina • Galápagos Islands - Santiago

## What's included

- Transfer from Quito/Guayaquil hotel to the airport
- Transfers to/from the ship in the Galápagos Islands
- Domestic flights
- Accommodation on the Galápagos cruise ship

- Full board while on the ship
- Tea, coffee, water
- Snorkelling equipment (snorkel, mask, fins)
- Kayaks
- English-speaking guides
- Ingala transit card
- Galápagos National Park entrance fee

## What's not included

- Meals not mentioned in itinerary
- Alcoholic and soft drinks
- Wetsuits (available to hire for an additional charge)
- Visa fees
- Tipping
- Camera / video camera fees
- Personal items (laundry, telephone, etc.)
- Medical expenses
- Any services not mentioned in itinerary

## Notes

Please note that the Western Islands itinerary is an extension option for our 9th April 2019 and 8th October 2019 Classic Ecuador group tour. Alternatively, you can cruise the Western Islands throughout the year after a private tour of Ecuador or on a tailor-made basis. Just ask our Travel Specialists for more information.


The 9th April 2019 departure has a £200 per person supplement (due to high season), so the tour price is £4,595 per person.

*All accommodation subject to availability. Final accommodation choices will be confirmed after booking.*

## Your Itinerary Explained

Date	Place visited	Meals
	<p>The first part of the text in each day is the itinerary schedule and will explain what you will normally see/do during this day of your itinerary.</p> <p>---</p> <p><i>The part of the day's text in italics (and comes after the three dashes "---") is background information on the places or sites on that day of your itinerary. It is not part of your itinerary and may mention places that will not be visited on your itinerary. If you have any questions please ask us. Travel times where noted are only meant as a guideline.</i></p>	<p>B: Breakfast</p> <p>L: Lunch</p> <p>D: Dinner</p>

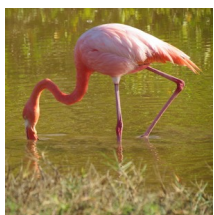
## Tour Itinerary

Day 1	Arrival - Santa Cruz	Meals
 <p>Flight</p>	<p>Fly from Quito or Guayaquil to Baltra Airport in the Galápagos Islands, where you will be met by a Travel The Unknown representative to begin your exploration of these incredible islands. Visit the Santa Cruz Highlands and Charles Darwin Research Station before transferring to the ship.</p> <p>---</p> <p><i>Formed by a series of volcanic eruptions between 3 and 5 million years ago, the <b>Galápagos Islands</b> are an archipelago of 19 islands and several dozen islets. Left untouched for millions of years, plants and animals thrived on the islands, and today they are famous for their rich biodiversity. Human beings only arrived in the 19th century, including Charles Darwin in 1835, whose observations of finches inspired his theory of evolution. In order to protect the islands' fragile ecosystem, the Galápagos became Ecuador's first national park in 1959. Many rare species can be found on the islands, including the world's only marine lizard, and the only penguin to be found breeding in the tropics.</i></p> <p><i><b>Santa Cruz</b> island is situated at the centre of the Galápagos archipelago. Santa Cruz is the second-largest island, after Isabela, and was formed millions of years ago by the eruption of a large volcano. The capital city of the island is Puerto Ayora, which is the most populated urban centre on the island.</i></p> <p><i>The <b>Santa Cruz Highlands</b> offer a surprising contrast to the beaches and rocky outcrops of the Galápagos Islands. The lush highlands are home to the iconic giant tortoises, where the cool climates and dense vegetation provide the perfect habitat for them to thrive.</i></p>	<p>D</p>

The **Charles Darwin Research Station** is based in Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz and houses an extensive collection of preserved specimens of Galápagos plant life. The research centre serves as the headquarters for the Charles Darwin Foundation and is used to conduct scientific research and promote environmental education.

Overnight in S/S Mary Anne, Galápagos Islands

Day 2	Floreana	Meals
-------	----------	-------



Floreana - Punta Cormorant

Explore Floreana Island, visiting Punta Cormorant and Devil's Crown in the morning. After lunch, visit Post Office Bay to collect and post letters or postcards.

B L D

---  
**Floreana** is a small island with a colourful past - from mysterious tales of early inhabitants to historic pirate caves. It remains one of the few inhabited islands today, which offers a wealth of winding jungle trails all leading to beautiful views across the Galápagos Islands. Floreana is a bird lover's paradise, whilst the waters teem with tropical marine life.

**Punta Cormorant** is located on the north coast of Floreana. A trail winds its way past a lagoon, with a large population of flamingos, along to a beautiful coral sand beach, which is a nesting area for sea turtles.

The **Devil's Crown** is a ring of jagged rocks that jut from the waters beyond the shoreline, named such as the rocks are thought to resemble a crown from a distance. The Devil's Crown was formerly a volcanic crater which, following years of erosion, now comprises just a few rocks. This is arguably one of the best snorkelling sites across the Galápagos Islands, with currents bringing species such as hammerhead sharks, whitetip reef sharks, sea turtles and manta rays to the area.

**Post Office Bay** was established by whalers in the 18th century, who used the Galápagos Islands as a stop-off point to restock food and water. Sailors decided to place a barrel on Floreana, where they could leave letters to be delivered home. This mailing system worked without payment or postage stamps and the tradition continues today, with thousands of postcards and letters being left and hand-delivered each year.

Overnight in S/S Mary Anne, Galápagos Islands

Day 3	Floreana - Isabela	Meals
-------	--------------------	-------



Floreana - Playa Negra

Today we visit the historically significant Playa Negra on Floreana, before setting sail for Isabela. The afternoon of sailing is dedicated to dolphin- and whale-watching; the waters of the Galápagos form the second largest marine reserve in the world, and species we may spot include humpback whales, Bryde's whales, orca and bottlenose dolphins, amongst others.

B L D

---  
**Floreana's Playa Negra** (Black Beach) is composed of eroded lava rock from the Galápagos' basaltic shield volcanoes. It is home to a variety of wildlife, including sea lions, marine iguanas and red Sally Lightfoot crabs. The site is also of historical significance, and is believed to be where the first Galapagueño (person originating from the Galápagos) was born.

*Isabela is the largest of the Galápagos Islands, being almost four times larger than Santa Cruz - the second largest island in the archipelago. The island was named after Queen Isabella of Spain and has a recognisable seahorse shape. It is one of the youngest islands, formed by the merger of six volcanoes approximately one million years ago.*

*Overnight in S/S Mary Anne, Galápagos Islands*

Day 4	Isabela	Meals
-------	---------	-------



Isabela - Urbina Bay

Today we discover the dramatic pahoehoe lava at Punta Moreno then visit Urbina Bay on the southeast side of Alcedo Volcano.

---

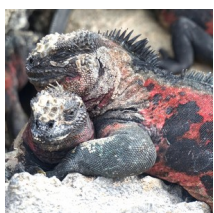
***Punta Moreno** is situated on the north coast of Isabela Island. The trail is about 2,100 metres long and runs along solidified lava flows and unique coastal lagoons. The site offers striking panoramic views of three volcanoes and dark volcanic rocks. The rocky mangroves of Punta Moreno are home to three kinds of cacti, along with native bird and marine species.*

***Urbina Bay** is located on the southeast side of Alcedo Volcano on Isabela Island. The land here was forced upwards from beneath the sea by volcanic activity in 1954, leaving unique marine rock formations in its place. Urbina Bay is home to endemic plant species, including the thin-leaved Darwin's shrub and manchineel tree, along with native fauna such as penguins and blue-footed boobies.*

*Overnight in S/S Mary Anne, Galápagos Islands*

B L D

Day 5	Isabela - Fernandina	Meals
-------	----------------------	-------



Fernandina - Punta Espinoza

Our first stop of the day is the historical pirate hideaway of Tagus Cove on Isabela, before we set sail for Fernandina to visit Punta Espinoza.

---

***Tagus Cove** is a beautiful, protected cove that lies sheltered between two volcanic craters. The cove was historically a pirate hideaway, which has been used as anchorage by ships for over 300 years. It was common for crews to paint or carve the name of their ships onto the cliffs, and much of the writing left by the US Navy during the mid 1900s can still be seen today, along with the names of some more ancient vessels.*

***Fernandina**, formerly known in English as Narborough Island, is home to an active shield volcano that has been erupting since 2009. Due to this volcanic activity, the island has a dramatic, rocky surface and little plant life. The island is a great place to spot Galápagos penguins and marine iguanas, among other species.*

***Punta Espinoza**, on the northern coast of Fernandina, is one of the most pristine places on our planet. Although the island may appear barren at first sight, the area of Punta Espinoza has the highest population density of marine iguanas in the archipelago, as well as countless sea lions, Sally Lightfoot crabs and sea turtles.*

*Overnight in S/S Mary Anne, Galápagos Islands*

B L D

Day 6	Santiago	Meals
-------	----------	-------



Santiago - Playa Espumilla

Today is a full day's exploration of Santiago, with stops at Puerto Egas, Buccaneer's Cove and Playa Espumilla.

B L D

---  
**Santiago**, also known as *San Salvador* or *James Island*, was formed millions of years ago by two overlapping volcanoes. The rocky island is home to species including marine iguanas, sea lions and fur seals, and marine birds use the cliff sides to nest.

**Puerto Egas** is the site of a salt mine, which offers hiking opportunities along scenic shorelines. Visitors can see native birds, marine iguanas, sea lions, Sally Lightfoot crabs and the Galápagos fur seal.

**Buccaneer's Cove** is located on the northwestern side of Santiago. Its name comes from its earlier role as anchorage for sailors, pirates, whalers and buccaneers (landless hunters). The cove is home to a variety of native birds, sea lions and fur seals.

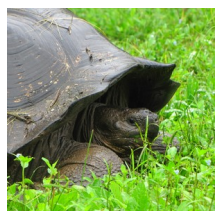
**Playa Espumilla**, meaning *Foam Beach* in English, is named after the waves that break along its sandy shores. Green turtles nest in the mangroves of Playa Espumilla and lagoons lie behind these mangroves, which, although they have dried up, are home to flamingos, pintail ducks and common stilts.

Overnight in S/S Mary Anne, Galápagos Islands

## Day 7

### Santiago - North Seymour

Meals



Galápagos Islands

We disembark today at Sullivan Bay, a fascinating volcanic site. We then set sail for North Seymour, where we will see the myriad flora and fauna that inhabits the island.

B L D

---  
**Sullivan Bay** is a striking volcanic formation on Santiago. The last major eruption in the early 1900s engulfed the land with pahoehoe lava, creating a unique and dramatic landscape with little life other than small, hardy plants and cacti.

**North Seymour** is a small, volcanic island in the Galápagos archipelago, named after an English nobleman, Lord Hugh Seymour. It is home to large populations of endemic birds, including blue-footed boobies and swallow-tailed gulls.

Overnight in S/S Mary Anne, Galápagos Islands

## Day 8

### Mosquera Islet - Departure

Meals



Flight

On our final day in the Galápagos Islands, we visit one of the smallest islands in the archipelago before transferring to the airport for our flight back to the mainland.

B

*Despite being one of the smallest islands in the archipelago, **Mosquera Islet** holds one of the largest sea lion colonies in the Galápagos. Covered in sand and barren lava rock, there is very little vegetation, though several species of shorebirds can be found on the island, including nesting lava gulls and blue-footed boobies, as well as marine iguanas and Sally Lightfoot crabs. Surrounded by coral reefs, it has excellent snorkelling sites, with tropical fish, turtles, rays and barracudas all commonly seen in the area.*



## Accommodation

### Galápagos Islands : S/S Mary Anne (Cabin on a Cruise)

**7 nights**



The S/S Mary Anne is one of the few sailing ships operating in the Galápagos Islands today, and the only ship able to navigate by wind power alone. The sails are hoisted at least once on every itinerary, and passengers are assured of an intimate sailing experience as the ship carries a maximum of 16 guests. It is also one of the few ships to offer single cabins with no supplement. On board, guests can enjoy Ecuadorian cuisine and spacious deck space from which to marvel at the incredible scenery of the Galápagos Islands.

Address : Navigating the Galápagos Islands

Website : [www.visitgalapagos.travel/sailing-cruises/mary-anne](http://www.visitgalapagos.travel/sailing-cruises/mary-anne)

*All accommodation subject to availability. Final accommodation choices will be confirmed after booking.*