

8 Days Quito & Galapagos Loop

Day 1: ARRIVAL IN QUITO – TRANSFER IN

Transfer from the airport to the hotel. A bilingual guide will pick you up from the airport and will transfer you to the hotel. He/ She will be able to assist you in anything you may need. Accommodation in Quito.

Accommodation: Swissotel 5*

Hilton Colon Hotel 4*

Rio Amazonas Hotel 3 *

Day 2: CITY TOUR & MIDDLE OF THE WORLD (B,L)

The tour begins visiting the Quito's downtown, one of the biggest in South America, our first point is the oldest street of the city, La Ronda, that used to be the home of musicians, poets and politics back in time. Here we will encounter with the traditions of the city first by stopping in the gastronomic capsule, to have an explanation of the different local spices that are used for the typical Ecuadorian gastronomy. Continuing we will visit the house of handicrafts made of metal and wood most of them designed for the traditional churches and made by hand for furniture decoration. After we are done with la Ronda we will visit the Independence Square, surrounded by important historical buildings. Visit the Cathedral (XVI Century), the Presidential Palace, El Sagrario Church (XVII Century), and La Compañía de Jesus (XVII Century), one of the most beautiful baroque churches in South America, Not to be missed are the Church of San Francisco and Monastery, built a few months after the arrival of the Spaniards (XVI Century). Finally we will drive to the viewpoint at the Penecillo hill, where is located the virgin of Quito, the unique winged virgin of the world. You will have a wonderful view over the city and the surrounding mountains and volcanoes.

Afterwards we will drive 30 km north of Quito, towards the Middle of the World where the equatorial line divides the northern and southern hemispheres. We will visit the main monument built in honor of the French scientific expedition that arrived in Ecuador in the XVIII century to determine the correct location of the equator line. Here you will have the opportunity to visit the Inti Ñan Museum, a scientific and cultural museum, located in the exact crossing of the Equator Line. Lunch at the Crater Restaurant. Return and accommodation in Quito.

Accommodation: Swissotel 5*

Hilton Colon Hotel 4*

Rio Amazonas Hotel 3 *

Day 3: QUITO – OTAVALO – PAPALLACTA (B,L)

Early in the morning, you begin the exciting and colorful journey to Otavalo, in Imbabura province. Your first stop will be at Calderon, a small town where marzipan figures of different designs, shapes and colors are made, perfect to start buying souvenirs. Your next stop will be at Guayllabamba, here you can find "chirimoya", a traditional fruit that you can try if you want to. Continuing your way, you will arrive to the "Mirador de San Pablo", where you can appreciate the unique landscape of the lake that sits at the foot of Imbabura volcano. In the afternoon you will arrive to Otavalo, a the handicrafts market of the city, known as "Plaza de Ponchos", on this site you'll find carpets, wool coats, bags and pottery made by the natives Otavalo Indians (Otavaleños). Also you will visit he village of Cotacachi, famous for the production of leather articles. We will continue to Papallacta Hot springs. Lunch at Hacienda Pinsaqui.

Accommodation: Termas de Papallacta Spa and Resort 4*

Day 4: QUITO – GALAPAGOS (B,D)

Breakfast: at hotel

Transfer to the airport - flight to the Galapagos Islands.

When you land in Baltra a guide will be waiting for you. You will arrive at Santa Cruz Island crossing the Itabaca Channel, it is a waterway that connects two islands, (Baltra and Santa Cruz), in 10 minutes.

Then you will take a private bus to take you to the Silberstein Hotel. During the trip, we can admire the different environments, from a rocky red surface in the north to the green landscape of wildlife in the south. Once at the hotel reception your room will be assigned.

In the afternoon, you will visit Charles Darwin Research Station. This station has a museum of history and development of the Galapagos Islands, as well as information on the protection of natural heritage. Here you can watch the endemic giant tortoises from the islands.

Later you will have free time to explore the town of Puerto Ayora, where you can several souvenir shops.

Accommodation: Finch Bay Hotel 5*

Solymer Hotel 4*

Silberstein Hotel 3*

DAY 2 – 3 – 4 (B,L,D)

From the second-day the excursion may change depending the availability. Visits to the islands are confirmed one week before arrival. Visits will be made to the following islands:

North Seymour Island North Seymour is a small island near to Baltra Island in the Galapagos Islands. It was formed by uplift of a submarine lava formation. The whole island is covered with low, bushy vegetation. This island is home to a large population of blue-footed boobies and swallow-tailed gulls. It hosts one of the largest populations of frigate birds in Galapagos. North Seymour has a visitor trail approximately 2 kilometers (1.2 mi) in length crossing the inland of the island and exploring the rocky coast.

North Seymour is an extraordinary place for breeding birds, and is home to one of the largest populations of nesting blue-footed boobies and magnificent frigate birds. Pairs of blue-footed boobies can be seen conducting their mating ritual as they offer each other gifts, whistle and honk, stretch their necks towards the sky, spread their wings, and dance—showing off their bright blue feet.

Plazas Island South Plaza is a small island off the east coast of Santa Cruz in the Galapagos Islands. It has an area of 0.13 km and a maximum altitude of 23 metres. South Plaza was formed by lava up streaming from the bottom of the ocean. Despite its small size it is home to a large number of species and it is famous for its extraordinary flora. That is why this island is very popular with visitors. On the steep banks it is possible to see a great number of birds such as nesting Red-billed Tropicbirds and Swallow-tailed Gulls, but most of all, enjoying the beautiful view from atop the steep banks or strolling along the base of the cliff is an extremely pleasurable experience. Very attractive are the beautiful prickly pear cactus trees (*Opuntia echios*) and of course the large colony of Galapagos Land Iguanas. Depending on the season, the *Sesuvium* ground vegetation changes its colour from intense green in the rainy season to orange and purple in the dry season.

Bartolome Island Bartolome Island is a volcanic islet in the Galápagos Islands group. It is a volcanic islet just off the east coast of Santiago Island. It is one of the "younger" islands in the Galápagos archipelago. With a total land area of just 1.2 km², this island offers some of the most beautiful landscapes in the archipelago. The island consists of an extinct volcano and a variety of red, orange, green, and glistening black volcanic formations.

Bartolome has a volcanic cone that is easy to climb and provides great views of the other islands. Bartolome is famous for its Pinnacle Rock, which is the distinctive characteristic of this island, and the most representative landmark of the Galápagos.

It has two visitor sites. At the first one, you may swim and snorkel around Pinnacle Rock; the underwater world there is really impressive. You can snorkel with the penguins, marine turtles, white-tipped reef sharks, and other tropical fish.

Isabela Island Isabela Island is the largest island of the Galápagos with an area of 4,640 square kilometers (1,790 sq mi), and length of 100 kilometers (62 mi) nearly 4 times larger than Santa Cruz, the next largest of the islands.

One of the youngest islands, Isabela is located on the western edge of the archipelago near the Galápagos hotspot. Isabela is also interesting for its flora and fauna. The young island does not follow the vegetation zones of the other islands.

The relatively new lava fields and surrounding soils have not developed the sufficient nutrients required to support the varied life zones found on other islands. Another obvious difference occurs on Volcano Wolf and Cerro Azul; these volcanoes loft above the cloud cover and are arid on top.

Isabela's rich animal, bird, and marine life are beyond compare. Isabela is home to more wild tortoises than all the other islands.

Floreana Island Floreana is famous for its mystery stories evolving around its first inhabitants, Doctor Ritter and Dora Strauch and the Wittmer family. One of the spots to visit is the "Cave of the Pirates" which is located near a fresh water

fountain and served as only source of fresh water for the families that lived there and was called the Asylum of Peace by the Wittmers. The incredible stories of these inhabitants come to life during your trip, which is also the perfect opportunity to spot birds, such as the medium tree finch, endemic to this island, the vermilion flycatcher and the Maria canary bird. Once you arrive in town, you will visit the breeding center for Galapagos Tortoises and will have lunch in a small restaurant nearby. In the afternoon you will be taken to the “Lobería” to see colonies of sea lions and to do some snorkeling in one of the best places for this activity.

Santa Fe Island This island is the home to several land iguana species, as well as one endemic type of this specie, the Conolophus Pallidus, that only inhabits Santa Fe and has a pale yellow color and is of a bigger size than other land iguanas. You can also find four different types of endemic rodents, but being night active, they will probably not show themselves during the tour. Nevertheless, they are of great importance for the proper function of the food chain. Several studies talk about Santa Fe as one of the oldest islands of the archipel, being over 3 million years old. The turquoise water around the island is perfect for snorkeling and known as one of the best spots for this activity with a high probability of seeing sea turtles, sea lions, tropical fish and squids.

Accommodation: Finch Bay Hotel 5*

Solymer Hotel 4*

Silberstein Hotel 3*

Day 8: GALAPAGOS - TRANSFER AIRPORT FLIGHT BACK (B)

After breakfast transfer to the airport for your flight back home!

End of the Program

Quito and Galapagos Loop			
1-3 pax	SGL	DBL	TRPL
Mainland Ecuador+Galapagos program, 3* hotels	\$ 5.298	\$ 3.424	\$ 3.265
Mainland Ecuador+Galapagos program, 4* hotels	\$ 7.077	\$ 4.420	\$ 3.937
Mainland Ecuador+Galapagos program, 5* hotels	\$ 8.729	\$ 5.361	\$ 4.919

*Price per person in USD,

**SGL price – for one passenger travelling

Single supplement (for 2-3 pax) – USD 1021 for 3* hotels, USD 1509 for 4* hotels, USD 2135 for 5* hotels

INCLUDED:

Private transportation and tours with English Speaking Guide in Mainland Ecuador

Shared transportation and tours with English speaking guide at the Galapagos Islands as described on the itinerary

Accommodation as listed on the itinerary

Meals as listed on the itinerary

Entrance fees as listed on the itinerary

NOT INCLUDED:

International flights

Travel insurance

Flight to/from Galapagos Islands USD 600 pp (subject to change)

Galapagos National Park Entrance Fee / USD 120 pp (subject to change)
Ingala Transit Control Card / USD 25 pp (subject to change)
Personal expenses
Items not specified

NOTE: RATES AND ITINERARY subject to change without prior notice

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(ADA-25/07/2019)