

Ecuador - Classic Southern Islands | Grand Queen Beatriz

Trip Code

ECTSCGSI

Departure

Excluded Saturdays

Duration

10 Days

Locations

Ecuador, Galapagos Islands, South America

Introduction

This 10-day Galapagos trip aboard the Grand Queen Beatriz sees you sailing the **Galapagos** archipelago to the southernmost island of **Espanola**, as you encounter spectacular landscapes and a myriad of wildlife from blue-footed boobies to land and marine iguanas. From the colony of white-tipped reef sharks at **Las Tintoreras** to the world's largest breeding site of waved albatrosses to Galapagos giant tortoises in their natural habitat, you will be mesmerised by the incredible and often unique wildlife of the islands. Walk through mangroves and across lava flows, past Galapagos sea lions basking on an olive-green beach to lagoons filled with flamingos, pintails and stilts. Snorkel in an eroded volcanic cone and discover the history of **Post Office Bay**.

Check out some of the other cruise itineraries on the Grand Queen Beatriz: [10 Day Central Southern Islands](#), [6 Day Southern Islands](#), [7 Day Southern Islands](#), [6 Day Central Islands](#), [10 Day Central Eastern Islands](#)

Itinerary

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Duration

10 Days

On arrival at Quito's Mariscal Sucre

International Airport you will be met and

transferred to your hotel. The remainder of

the day will be at your leisure. A welcome

meeting will be held in the evening at either

5pm or 6 pm when you meet others

travelling with you on your cruise to the

Galapagos Islands. Please check with hotel

reception or check the reception notice

boards for the time and place of the meeting

for your trip. As today is an arrival day, you

can arrive at any time as there are no

activities planned until this important

meeting. If you can't arrange a flight that

will arrive in time, you may wish to arrive a

day early so you're able to attend. We'll be

happy to book additional accommodation for

you (subject to availability). Quito sits at

high altitude under the towering Pichincha

volcano. It is a beautiful city, arguably one

of the most beautiful in South America. The

city stretches along the valley and is

surrounded by the Andes. The Old Town of

Quito is awash with history, with more than

30 churches to explore, and a number of

fascinating museums. La Compania de Jesus

is considered to be the most beautiful and

ornate churches in the Americas. The city's

oldest street, Calle La Ronda, is well worth

exploring. As this trip spends very little time

in Quito, we recommend you spend a few

extra days before or after your trip to

experience all the city has to offer. You may

even wish to explore further beyond the city

and visit Otavalo, Cotopaxi, the Cloud

Forest or the Equatorial Monument.



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Duration

10 Days

This morning you will be transferred to the

airport for your flight to the Galapagos

Islands. Please note the pick-up time will

usually be as early as 4:30 am (a boxed

breakfast will be provided), as the airport is

a one-hour drive away and you must allow

for delays and check-in times. (Your tour

leader will confirm this time with you at the

Welcome Meeting on Day 1). The flight to

the Galapagos will make one stop in

Guayaquil to pick up other passengers.

(Total flight time is about 3.5 hours). On

arrival in the Galapagos, you will be met in

the arrival hall of the airport (look out for

'Grand Queen Beatriz' signs) by a transfer

guide and transferred to our catamaran -

'M.Y. Grand Queen Beatriz', anchored on

the other side of Santa Cruz Island. Our

transfer guide will take you on a short trip

via airport bus to board a public ferry

across the Itabaca Channel to Santa Cruz

Island. Once you reach the Island, you will

board a private bus to Puerto Ayora, the

main port of the island. Here, there will be

two dinghies to transport you and your

fellow travellers to the 'MY. Grand Queen

Beatriz'. Once on board, cabins will be

assigned and there will be a welcome

briefing and safety drill. You will then get to

meet our crew members and get to know

your naturalist guide while enjoying a

delicious lunch. (Please note that all

transportation costs are included). Your first

stop in the afternoon will be Punta Carrión,

located on the eastern side of the Itabaca

channel that separates the islands of Baltra

and Santa Cruz. This is a shallow and

protected cove, ideal for your first snorkel

and swim in the Galapagos! From a boat

ride, wildlife is plentiful - keep your eyes

peeled for occasional sights of blue-footed

boobies, Galapagos herons, great blue

herons and underwater swim among rays

and white-tipped reef sharks. Tonight, enjoy

a welcome cocktail and crew presentation

on board. Please note the Transit Card &

National Park Fees are not included in the

cost of the trip as they need to be paid

locally: There is a US\$20 Galapagos Islands

transit card fee that needs to be paid at the

airport in Quito prior to departure to the

islands. All visitors must pay the Galapagos

National Park fee of US \$200 upon arrival at

the airport in the Galapagos. If your trip

visits Isla Isabela, there is also port fee of

US\$10 which is to be paid locally. These

fees are to be paid in cash.



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ECTSCGSI

Departure

Selected Saturdays

Duration

~~10 Days~~ 13 - Isabela - Las Tintoreras - Tortoise

Breeding Cente

Locations

Ecuador, Galapagos Islands, South America

Today you will wake up on the south coast

of Isla Isabela (Isabela Island), the largest of

the Galapagos Archipelago. Isabela was

formed by five giant volcanic craters, all of

which are still considered active. The island

is located in one of the youngest geological

areas in the world, having been formed less

than 1 million years ago. Please note that

there's a US\$10 fee to be paid upon landing

on Isabela Island. This southern coast of

turquoise blue waters has the largest area

of beaches in the Galapagos. You will visit

Las Tintoreras, where from the viewing

walkway you can look down into this narrow

channel to see a colony of white-tipped reef

sharks swimming and sleeping, and the

occasional playful sea lion among them!

Blue-footed boobies and penguins, marine

iguanas and crabs also make their home

here. Enjoy a nice long walk on a gravel

path through 'Ahh-ahh' lava flow and see

plenty of marine iguanas. The natives of the

islands call white sharks 'tintoreras', hence

the name of this spectacular site. In the

afternoon we visit the Arnaldo Tupiza

Tortoise breeding center. We have a

leisurely walk through a coastal lagoon,

where you might see Flamingos. This

mangrove-lined path leads to Isabela's Giant

Tortoise Breeding Center (Arnaldo Tupiza)

where you'll observe giant tortoises in all

stages of development. Here you can see

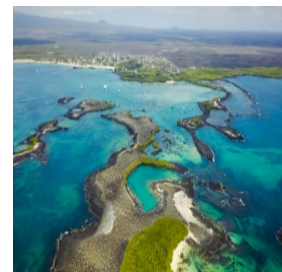
the five sub species of tortoises from Isabela

Island, some of which are bred in captivity.

You will then have the choice for optional

swimming at the beach or out for some

shopping in Puerto Villamil.



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Trip Code

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Departure

Selected Saturdays Office Bay - Devil's

Duration

10 Days

The island of Floreana is a highlight of any

Galapagos cruise, rich in natural wonders

and wildlife. Enjoy a panga ride around the

island to observe marine iguanas, sea lions

and crabs before taking a leisurely walk to

Post Office Bay, where 18th century whalers

used a barrel as an unofficial mail drop. This

custom continues to this day with visitors to

the Galapagos - post one of your own, or

see if there are any you could deliver back

home! You will also have the chance to go

snorkelling with sea turtles. Today is also

one of your finest opportunities to see pink

flamingos and other water birds wading in

the lagoons, including pintails and stilts.

Just offshore, the Devil's Crown is an old

eroded volcanic cone and a popular roosting

site for seabirds such as boobies, pelicans

and frigates. Red-billed tropicbirds can also

be seen nesting in the rocky crevices. The

centre of the cone is an outstanding

snorkelling spot, perhaps the most

remarkable in the entire archipelago, full of

sea lions and colourful fish. You will go

ashore at Punta Cormorant where the sand

is made up of fine olivine crystals, a glassy

volcanic mineral, giving the beach an olive-

green colour. It is the best place to see

Galapagos sea lions.



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Departure

Selected Saturdays Charles Darwin - Santa

Duration

10 Days

Today you will visit Santa Cruz, the second

largest island in the Galapagos. The small

town of Puerto Ayora is the economic centre

of the archipelago, and home to the Charles

Darwin Research Station. As well as

undertaking vital conservation work, the

station also makes for interesting

exploration and offers the best

opportunities for close encounters with

giant tortoises. You will also observe baby

tortoises and land iguanas. Afterward you

will head up into the highlands for a total

change of scenery. Beginning at the coast

you'll travel across Santa Cruz through the

agricultural region and into the misty

forests with the journey taking about 45

mins. This is a lush humid zone containing

miconia bushes, scalesia and inactive

volcanic cones. Santa Cruz has more

endemic plants than any of the other islands

and you are likely to see Galapagos giant

tortoises in their natural habitat and

perhaps even the bright red feathers of a

vermillion flycatcher! Today there will be

some passengers leaving the tour and some

new passengers joining.



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Trip Code

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Departure

Selected Saturday Isla Plaza Sur

Duration

10 Days

Locations
Ecuador, Galapagos Islands, South America

Santa Fe Island is home to many sea lions and these ones are very eager for swimming partners! It's a lovely place to take a dip, offers a dense concentration of wildlife, and

is a fantastic place to see many of the stars

of the Galapagos in one relatively small

area. Expect to see Galapagos hawks, land

iguanas, a variety of finches, Galapagos

mockingbirds, sea lions, marine turtles,

frigatebirds, Galapagos doves and lava

lizards. It's a naturally beautiful island as

well with one of the most attractive coves in

the archipelago and the jade-green waters

are ideal for snorkelling. A trail follows the

coast into the opuntia forest, where you see

Santa Fe's trees - the largest in the

Galapagos. The island is also home to a

unique sub-species of land iguanas. Hiking

towards the cliffs on Santa Fe will lead you

to a forest of prickly pear cactus. A member

of the cactus family, their name comes from

the pear-shaped fruit the plant produces.

Santa Fe is home to endemic land iguanas.

Once back at the beach you will have free

time to snorkel back in the lagoon. Playful

sea lions pups and florescent fish make for

fascinating company. A small island, Plaza

Sur is nonetheless a place of great beauty,

where you will get close to sea lions and on

to trails past one of the Galapagos' largest

land iguana populations, resting amid cacti

and volcanic landscapes coloured bright red

and green by sesuvium. The island's rugged

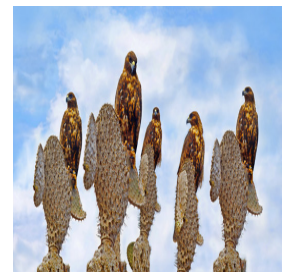
southern cliffs are an excellent place to spot

tropicbirds and swallow-tailed gulls, as well

as the 'Gentlemen's Club', a gathering of

male sea lions either too young or too old to

be beachmasters!



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Departure

Selected Saturday Bahia Gardner -

Punta Suarez

10 Days

After an overnight sail you will wake up

near Isla Espanola - the southernmost

island of the Galapagos (and one of the most

spectacular). Because of its remote location,

this island has a large population of

endemic fauna. It is the breeding site for

nearly all of the world's 12,000 pairs of

waved albatrosses and also home to

colonies of blue-footed and Nazca boobies.

Trails from the golden beaches, where sea

lions and marine iguanas bathe, will lead

you right through the middle of booby

colonies, Galapagos doves and

mockingbirds. You will also pay a visit to

Punta Suarez, home to a large and varied

wildlife population. A walk along its trails

will take you to a cliff top viewpoint, where

you'll gain a scenic view of the island.

Boobies line the rocky shoreline beneath

you, while frigate birds may be seen

overhead, and nearby male sea lions can be

seen lounging around. Albatross use the

cliffs as their 'runway', helping become

airborne by the southeast winds that blow

across this part of the island. If you're

lucky, you'll see the elaborate courtship

rituals performed by albatross before the

female chooses her lifelong mate. Stop at

Bahia Gardner (Gardner Bay), considered by

many as one of the most beautiful beaches

in the Galapagos Islands, full of sea lions

and hood mockingbirds. Walk along the

pristine white sands or take another

opportunity to swim with sea lion pups and

lots of fish. The rocks off the coast provide

an excellent spot to snorkel, with their

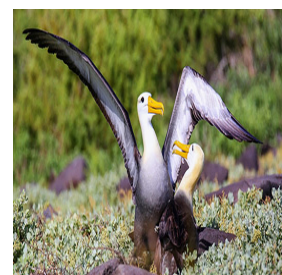
abundance of reef sharks, turtles and many

species of tropical fish, including surgeon

and angelfish. The small white-tipped reef

sharks are also often spotted resting under

the rocks.



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Departure

Selected Saturdays Leon Dormido - Isla

Duration

10 Days

This morning you will visit Punta Pitt on the

eastern end of San Cristobál Island. Walk to

the top of the volcanic hill for expansive

views of the sparsely vegetated area. A

variety of seabirds nest here, including blue-

footed boobies and frigates. On a 'panga'

ride you can observe the three varieties of

boobies nesting in the Galapagos and enjoy

a snorkel from the beach. Close by you will

pass through Leon Dormido (Kicker Rock),

the magnificent basalt remains of a crater in

the middle of the sea, the shape resembles a

sleeping lion. The rock rises 150 metres

above the surface and is divided into two

parts by a narrow channel. You cruise

through the channel with nesting seabirds

on either side of the boat, tropic birds

overhead, marine iguanas in the water and

many sea lions present including many

resting on the rocks. Snorkelling gives us

the opportunity to see Galapagos sharks,

and possibly a hammerhead shark among

sea turtles and an incredible biodiversity of

invertebrates on the rock wall. You will also

visit Isla Lobos, a tiny island almost

touching San Cristobál Island. This is the

perfect time to witness the always friendly

sea lions as they play in the calm shallow

waters here. Blue-footed boobies, frigate

birds and marine iguanas are also easily

seen.



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Trip Code

ECTSCGSI

Departure

Selected Saturdays Cristobal to Quito

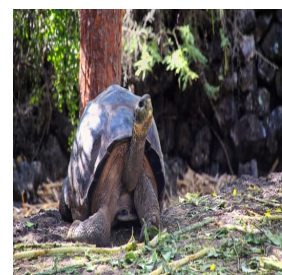
Duration

10 Days

Locations

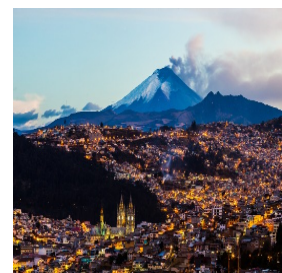
Ecuador, Galapagos Islands, South America

As flights to the mainland from Galapagos depart mid morning, it is an early start for our fast morning on the islands. Depending on the time of our flight, our time spent on this final excursion could be limited. Visit San Cristobal Interpretation Center in the morning. This centre brings the history and geography of the archipelago to life, from its volcanic origins to the present day. The human history exhibit offers an insight into the discovery and colonisation of the Galapagos, and the reality of the problems the islands face today is also explored. This is a great way to complete your time in the Galapagos. This will be your final excursion before you head to the airport in San Cristobál for your flight back to Quito. As you will be leaving the boat this morning, please remember that if you have enjoyed the services provided by your guide and crew, a tip would be very much appreciated by them. As a guideline we recommend each passenger consider US\$15 per day for the crew and US\$10 per day for your guide. You can leave tips in envelopes that are placed in your cabin on this last day of your journey. Upon arrival in Quito Airport you are transferred back to our hotel for an overnight stay.



DAY 10: Quito

Your Galapagos adventure will come to an end today after breakfast. There are no activities planned for the final day so you are able to depart the accommodation at any time. There are many fascinating things to do in and around Quito, so please speak to our customer service representative about any optional activities that might be of interest. They can also assist you in booking a departure transfer to the airport.



Inclusions & Details

Accommodation Cabin on board ship & hotel

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Trip Code
ECTSCGSI
Departure
Selected Saturdays

INCLUSIONS

- Duration
10 Days
Locations
Ecuador, Galapagos Islands, South America
- 1 night Pre and 1 night Post cruise at group hotel in Quito with breakfast
 - Arrival Transfer in Quito (must have flight arrival plans confirmed 30 days prior)
 - Transfers in Galapagos
 - Round trip flight to/from Galapagos
 - Accommodation on board Grand Queen Beatriz in chosen cabin
 - All meals during the cruise
 - Guiding by Galapagos National Park Certified Guide
 - All visits and excursions/landings according to the itinerary*
 - Snorkel Gear (mask, tube and fins)
 - Kayaks
 - Unlimited purified water, coffee and tea onboard the vessel

Inclusions

EXCLUSIONS

- Local Taxes
- Any other airfares unless otherwise specified in the itinerary
- Galapagos National Park Entrance fee (US\$200 per person from Aug 2024 - Subject to change)
- Galapagos Ingala card (USD 20,00 per person - Subject to change)
- Passport & Visa Expenses
- Travel Insurance
- Alcoholic & soft drinks
- Additional visits
- Additional meals
- Excess baggage charges
- Telecommunications charges
- Personal expenses and tips
- Items not specified

Difficulty Rating

2 (light adventure)

Single Surcharge

A single supplement surcharge applies and is subject to availability. Please contact us for more information.

Notes

- Before checking in on a flight from Quito to the Galapagos there is a US\$20 transit fee that must be paid. On arrival in the Galapagos you must pay a US\$200 national park entrance fee per person from August 2024.

- All entrance fees are subject to change without prior notice.
- Please note kayaking and water based activities are subject to weather conditions.
- * Itinerary is subject to change depending on weather conditions and government regulations.

Price Dependent upon Seasonality, fuel surcharges, currency fluctuations and availability at time of booking.

Sustainability