

# DAY BY DAY ITINERARY OF THE YACHT QUEEN OF GALAPAGOS

## MONDAY:

### San Cristobal:

#### PM: Arrival at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, San Cristobal, Galapagos



Your flight from Quito (via Guayaquil) to the Galapagos will land at San Cristobal Airport. Upon arrival, your guide will be waiting for you. He will collect your luggage and escort you on the short bus ride to the harbor. Motorized rafts, called 'Pangas' will transport you to the M/Y QUEEN OF GALAPAGOS.

The crew will welcome you on board. After a briefing and a light lunch the first site is visit.

#### PM: Visit to Loberia



A short 10 minute bus ride from Puerto Baquerizo is La Lobería. La Lobería home to a large sea lion colony and nursery. There are frequently dozens of sea lions visible at any time. Low tide is one of the best times to visit however, since it is when the mother's bring the pups into the tide pools for swimming lessons.

## TUESDAY:

### AM: Cerro Brujo:

A boat ride along rocky shoreline brings us to Cerro Brujo's white coralline beach with rewarding



bird watching. Highlights ashore include the Chatham (San Cristobal) Mockingbird and Lava Lizard; both species are endemic to this island and are not seen elsewhere in the Galapagos. We may also spot Yellow Warblers, Galapagos Flycatchers, and with luck, a Vermillion Flycatcher (endemic subspecies to San Cristobal). These are the same shores that Charles Darwin walked on, back in September 1835, as San Cristobal was the first island where he set foot in the Galapagos.

### AM: Kicker Rock:



We travel by motorized boat to Kicker Rock, also known as the "Sleeping Lion" because of its resemblance. Kicker Rock, rising almost 500 feet from the ocean, is a volcanic tuff cone eroded by thousands of years of sea and wind forces. Waves have carved this volcanic structure, formed by two rocks side by side with vertical walls and a small channel in between. The rock is an important nesting place for tropical birds, Blue-footed Boobies, Nazca Boobies, and frigate birds. Sea lions and fur sea lions may be observed as well. The surrounding waters are clear for underwater viewing of rock walls and marine life.

**PM: Lobos Island:**



About 1 hour travel across a small channel, will take you to Isla Lobos. The name means Sea Lion Island, which is certainly appropriate since many sea lions frolic, leap and make their homes here. This island is also a great place for snorkeling opportunities as well as to view blue-footed boobies

**WEDNESDAY:**

**Española:**

**AM: Punta Suárez:**



We'll walk a trail that leads through a Blue-footed Booby nesting colony and the only known nesting site of the enormous Waved Albatross. Along the way we will marvel at Marine Iguanas, watch Sally Lightfoot Crabs scurry over the lava, and keep an eye out for Galápagos Hawks perched on the low vegetation. The trail leads toward the cliffs where we will watch albatross and other seabirds soaring and see the famous blowhole, a fissure in the lava where water spurts high into the air like a geyser

**PM: Gardner Bay:**



Here we'll see Galápagos Sea Lions will greet us at Gardner Bay. Ashore, we will meet the endemic Hood Mockingbird, known for its tendency to follow tourists, Yellow Warbler, American Oystercatcher, Wandering Tattler, and some of the thirteen species of Darwin's finches including Large Cactus Finch and Warbler Finch.

**THURSDAY:**

**Floreana:**

**AM: Punta Cormorant**



It is a beach tainted green, due to the accumulation of olivine crystal mineral. The trail leads inland to a brackish lagoon where flamingos and migratory birds can be observed. Later you will arrive at a beach with sand so fine that it has been dubbed 'Flour Sand Beach'. Here you see green sea turtle nests high on beach and can wander in the shallows observing baby sting rays and even baby sharks.

### PM: Post Office Bay/ Devil's Crown



We'll visit the famous Post Office, which has been in operation since 1793 when Captain James Colnett installed an empty rum barrel to serve as a post box. Sailors and pirates would leave letters in the barrel, where they would be picked up by the next sailing crew who could take them to their destination. Devil's Crown is a half-submerged volcanic cinder cone, considered to be one of the most outstanding snorkeling sites of the Galapagos Islands offers encounters with sea lions, white tips sharks, turtles and an array of reef fish. On this tour look out for:



Flamingos, Sea lions, Lava lizards, Shearwaters, Marine iguanas, Great frigate birds, Blue footed boobies, Brown noddie terns, Brown pelicans, White tip sharks, Sting rays, Sea turtles, Yellow tailed surgeonfish, Mexican hogfish, Sergeant major fish and occasionally Penguins

## FRIDAY

### Santa Cruz Island

#### AM: Charles Darwin Station



This afternoon, we'll visit the Charles Darwin Research Station where we'll learn about the land iguana captive breeding programs and all about the efforts to protect the islands' rare population of giant tortoises, including the island's most famous resident, a 70-year-old tortoise-known as "Lonesome George," thought to be the last surviving member of a subspecies from Pinta Island. Also we'll see the tiny new born tortoises and sit alongside the huge adults in their corrals. We'll continue with a walk through a giant prickly-pear cactus forest, followed by a stroll along the main street of Puerto Ayora where merchants display a variety of handicrafts.

#### PM: Highlands



During your visit to the highlands of Santa Cruz Island, you will walk through tunnels formed by rivers of red hot lava, gaze down into giant pit craters formed by collapsed magma chambers, trek through lush green cloud forest observing many colorful species of birds, and, seek out giant Galapagos Tortoises in the wild

The two gigantic pit craters offer another dramatic and exciting insight into the formation of these islands. Nestled in a cloud forest in the highlands of Santa Cruz this visitors site offers great bird watching, plant identification and nature trails. Los Gemelos are in fact surface magma chambers that

were once filled with red hot, liquid magma. This magma was expelled or drained away leaving huge empty chambers just below the land surface. Over time, the ceilings of these caverns weakened and collapsed leaving two enormous holes in the forest that had grown over the top of them.

You'll see the lush green forest of endemic Scalesia and Galapagos Guava Trees is a cool and refreshing change from the heat of the coast. The

forest is shrouded in clouds (or garua, a light mist) most of the year and so lush green vegetation is abundant as are a wide variety of birds including the bright red Vermillion Flycatcher, many species of Darwin Finches, Galapagos Doves and Yellow Warblers.

You'll have the opportunity to see a Galapagos Giant Tortoise in its natural habitat. These enormous creatures roam freely between the national park areas and the agricultural zone. This visit offers the ideal opportunity to view these ancient creatures munching on lush green vegetation or wallowing in the mud of the seasonal pools that attract them from the lowlands during the dry winter season. Many bird species may be observed too, including migratory shore birds at certain times of year!

## SATURDAY:

### AM: North Seymour



Located slightly to the north of the airport island of Baltra, North Seymour is a low, flat island, formed as a result of the uplift caused by magma build up below. It is covered with low, bushy vegetation and contains the largest colony of Magnificent frigate birds in the Galapagos. Land iguanas are common here too. There is also a population of blue-footed boobies that perform an amusing courtship dance when nesting conditions are right, making this one of the highlights of the visit.

### PM: Bartolome Island



Bartolome Island itself is famous for its 'Pinnacle Rock' - probably the most photographed volcanic formation in the islands. Climb up a long wooden staircase comprising 360+ steps to the viewpoint on the summit that offers breathtaking views to nearly all the central islands in the archipelago. A short dinghy ride after the walk will allow you to photograph the Galapagos Penguins that live along the coastline. The orange beach and surrounding coastline is great for swimming and snorkeling and there is the opportunity of seeing penguins, sea lions, rays, reef fish and white-tipped reef sharks. Lunch will be served with one of the most amazing volcanic backdrops found anywhere in the archipelago.

On this tour look out for: Penguins, Lava lizards, Snakes, Marine iguanas, Frigate birds, Blue footed boobies, Brown noddie terns, Brown pelicans, White tip sharks, Sting rays, Sea turtles.

## SUNDAY:

### AM: Bachas Beach



Las Bachas is a white sand beach that is a major egg-laying site for sea turtles, and the name Las Bachas refers to the indentations left in the sand by laying turtles or departing hatchlings. On the sandy white beaches of Las Bachas we will get a close look at a sea turtle nesting area and a lake frequented by leggy pink flamingos and other migratory birds. Bachas is located at the northwest part of Santa Cruz Island, it is a memorable swimming location.



#### **PM: South Plaza**

A small but in the winter season a very colorful uplifted island just off the east coast of Santa Cruz Island. South Plaza has a unique landscape of Sesuvium plants and Opuntia cacti and provides some of the most interesting plant and wildlife observation spots in Galapagos. Land iguanas are easily seen from the trail, normally lazing in the shade of the cacti. Swallow-tailed gulls and frigate birds use the rising air off the sea to glide effortlessly over the escarpment. Towards the far end of the island a 'bachelor colony' of male sea lions can be observed. You will eat lunch anchored close to the rocky seashore inhabited by a large colony of playful sea lions.

#### **MONDAY:**

#### **San Cristobal:**

#### **AM: Interpretation Center:**



San Cristóbal is the easternmost island in Galapagos; on its southwestern side is the own town of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the capital of the providence of Galapagos. On Puerto Baquerizo Moreno is the Interpretation Center newly opened by the Galapagos National park in 1998, which is truly an extraordinary contribution to the information and education of the islands communities and the travelers; its 80% is focus in the anthropology of the Galapagos, the 20% is scientific.



**Transfer to the Airport to take your flight to Mainland**

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