



Galápagos Islands Active Adventure

11 Days



Day 1 | Arrival

Reset and Refresh

This adventure includes a convenient one night pre-trip stay at the Wyndham Quito Airport Hotel. As most North American-based flights arrive late in the evening, this will allow you time to reset and refresh for the next day's early departure to the Islands. No activities or meals are scheduled on this day, though you are free to connect and make independent plans with your fellow Wild Women at the hotel.

Please note: This pre-trip accommodation is considered Day 1 of the trip. Dependent on the month you are traveling, your pre-trip night at the Wyndham Quito Airport Hotel will be: February 17, April 13, August 17, October 12 or November 23, 2024.

Accommodations

Wyndham Quito Airport Hotel



Day 2 | Into the Galápagos

Mingling in Manglecito

We meet in the domestic terminal of Quito Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO) for our domestic flight to the capital of the province of Galápagos, Puerto Baquerizo Moreno (SCY) on San Cristobal Island, Galápagos. Our Wild Women guide will be waiting for us at the airport in San Cristobal.

Upon arrival, we take a shuttle to a local restaurant for lunch and trip debrief to get into the Galápagos groove! A boat will transfer us to Manglecito Beach, where we spend two nights immersed in nature with the constellations above and a lapping wave soundtrack to lull us to sleep. Before that, we have a thorough introduction to tandem kayaking in the sheltered indigo bay by our campsite. This fun and interactive session will cover correct techniques and essential safety procedures. Expect to paddle six nautical miles!

Included Meals

Lunch and dinner (*light breakfast options will be provided at the hotel)

Accommodations

Manglecito Beach Camping Island, San Cristobal

The Paddle

6 nautical miles (3–4 hours)



Day 3 | Kicker Rock

The Sleeping Lion

Our day will begin with a paddle along the dramatic coast towards Puerto Grande camp. Here, we have some time to walk the shoreline of Puerto Grande's porcelain-white sand beach before a boat ride towards the iconic Kicker Rock (it's also known as León Dormido for its sleeping lion resemblance). The eroded remnants of the volcanic tuff cone is a popular perch for blue-footed and masked boobies and frigatebirds.

We take full advantage of the biodiversity here and check out the underwater world by snorkel. Be on high alert for hammerhead, Galápagos and white-tipped reef sharks, eagle rays, curious green sea turtles and a colorful reel of reef fish.

In the afternoon, we return to our campsite at Manglecito. If clear skies permit, we might be able to see the Southern Cross. The "Crux" (Cross) is composed of five shimmering stars that are rarely visible in the Northern Hemisphere.

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

Manglecito Beach Camping Island, San Cristobal

The Paddle

6 nautical miles (3–4 hours)



Day 4 | San Cristobal Island

Pirates of the Seas

This morning we climb into our kayaks and log another six nautical miles before lunch. We observe the antics of blue-footed boobies as they torpedo into the water in pursuit of fish and look for sea turtles poking their heads up like periscopes.

In the afternoon, we climb Cerro de las Tijeretas (Frigatebird Hill) to take in the coastal panoramas and watch the namesake seabirds cruise the thermals. The “pirates of the seas” brazenly steal food from distracted boobies. The frigatebirds’ deeply forked tails, hooked beaks and fleshy crimson red balloon sacs give them a foreboding, otherworldly appearance.

The hiking trail loops us back to the horseshoe-shaped Punta Carola beach. A huge colony of sea lions and marine iguanas are found here.

We pause to take in another gorgeous Galápagos sunset as the equatorial sky fades to black behind the candy red-and-white lighthouse of Punta Carola.

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

Blue Marlin Hotel Island, San Cristobal

The Paddle

6 nautical miles (3–4 hours)



Day 5 | Highlands of Santa Cruz

Taking Things Slow

We board a motorboat to the “big city” of Puerto Ayora on Santa Cruz Island. Here, we visit the highlands of Santa Cruz to get up close and personal with the Galápagos giant tortoise.

Wild tortoises can be seen along the roadway too—they sometimes create traffic jams with their slo-mo crossings. Have your camera at the ready to snap a pic of the tortoise crossing caution signs!

At the sanctuary, we have an intimate encounter with the tortoises, especially if they’re having a “spa day.” They can be found submerged in muddy ponds to help combat skin parasites and regulate their body temperature on blistering hot days.

We also explore the incredible volcanic origins of the island on a short walk through a lava tunnel. In recent years the tunnel has been home to a few barn owls who like to purr in the inky darkness for visitors.

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

Ikala or similar, Santa Cruz Island

Travel

Motorboat (2–3 hours), van shuttle



Day 6 | Tortuga Bay Beach

Lounge Lizards

After breakfast, we have a short ride to Tortuga Bay Beach on Santa Cruz Island. On this shoreline, we are in the company of sunning iguanas and possibly, flamingoes. The landscape here is a startling contrast of dunes, cacti, salt bushes, Palo Santo trees, salt flats and tangles of mangroves full of Darwin's finches.

We have time to take five, swim or wade along Tortuga Bay's precious stretch of beach. Be on the lookout for reef sharks, skittling Sally Lightfoot crabs, brown pelicans and marine iguanas. From here, it's a two to three hour boat ride (depending on conditions) to Puerto Villamil on Isabela Island.

At our 4-star beachside hotel we have an afternoon of pure leisure. The hotel's location is close to several shops and bars in the small port's village—provided we can pull ourselves away from the loungers and endless sea views from the hotel's deck.

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

IsaMar Hotel, Isabela Island

Travel

Van shuttle, motorboat (2–3 hours)



Day 7 | Sierra Negra

Lessons in Lava

We drive to the highlands of Isabela and see the shift from prickly pear and endemic candelabra cacti to bright bursts of bromeliads and epiphytes (air plants). A path snakes to the rim of the active Sierra Negra volcano at 4,888 feet (1,490 m). It's the second largest caldera in the world, spanning approximately 6.5 miles (10 km), and the 2018 eruption left a black duvet of volcanic lava over the area.

On the path to Volcano Chico, we learn about fumaroles (gas and steam vents in the earth's crust) and odd-looking lava formations like aa (sharp, jagged basaltic lava) and the braid-like pahoehoe lava. The volatile steam and vapor beneath our feet whispers the evolutionary story of one of the world's most inhospitable environments.

After the Sierra Negra walk, we can explore the area around our hotel and enjoy dinner at a restaurant of our choosing.

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

Isamar Hotel, Isabela Island

Travel

Van shuttle (1 hour)



Day 8 | Tuneles and Finado

Snorkeling with Reef Sharks

We transfer by boat to Los Tuneles. The unusual and remarkable lava formation consists of underwater arches and caves that were produced by the drastic change in temperature when lava met the ocean water about one million years ago.

We navigate the labyrinth of rocks and tunnels in search of seabirds, eagle rays and whitetip reef sharks. We can take a short walk along the shore to observe boobies resting on the rocks and marvel at the giant opuntia and candelabra cacti. Short boat rides take us to two superb snorkeling spots with crystal clear water.

The shallow inlet of El Finado is surrounded by lava rocks and the knotty root system of red mangroves. We see rays, rainbow wrasse and caves where whitetip reef sharks like to rest.

An al fresco lunch will be served on board before we return to town. The remainder of the day is free!

Included Meals

Breakfast and lunch

Accommodations

Isamar Hotel, Isabela Island

Travel

Motorboat (1 hour, one way)



Day 9 | Isabela's Tortoises

Paddling with Penguins

Today we paddle around Isabela's beachfront and bay in search of penguins. This endemic species is a genuine thrill to see in the wild, whether waddling on land or swimming like

decorated Olympians beside the boat. At just 12 inches (30 cm), they are fast and accomplished swimmers.

In the afternoon, we visit the dynamic Tortoise Breeding Center. This national park initiative focuses on conservation programs, breeding Isabela's tortoises and rewilding efforts.

After our enlightening visit, we walk through the marshlands (known as *humedales*) and along the serene talcum sand beach of Puerto Villamil back to our hotel. Tonight, we swap stories, reflect and share laughs during our farewell dinner with our Wild Women and naturalist guide.

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

Isamar Hotel

Travel

Ask the penguins! They will determine today's time in the kayaks.



Day 10 | Farewell

Planes, Trains and Ferries

It will be a full day of travel—boats, ferries, shuttle buses and planes! Be sure to have a second cup of coffee to charge your batteries.

First, we have a two-hour boat ride back to Puerto Ayora to catch a 40-minute shuttle to the Itabaca Canal. From Itabaca, we board a 10-minute public ferry to Baltra Island and then take a shuttle to the airport. We fly back to Quito and transfer to our hotel. Dinner at the hotel is included, and so are the catnaps on the plane!

Included Meals

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Accommodations

San Jose Puenbo Airport Hotel

Travel

Boats, ferries, shuttle buses, planes!



Day 11 | Quito Onwards

Homeward or Jungle Bound

Today, we take a 20-minute shuttle from the hotel to the airport for flights back home. Or, if we are eager to keep our adrenaline levels, bird sightings and panoramas at the MAX level, there's a four-day Wild Women Amazon Rainforest extension!

Included Meals

Breakfast



Trip Details

Know Before You Go

For all of the logistical details you'll need to know prior to departure—including the packing list, arrival and departure details and suggested tipping information, click [HERE](#).

Itinerary version as of April 5, 2024.