



# CATAMARAN ARCHIPELL I

## ITINERARY A - MONDAY TO THURSDAY

### 4D / 3N - DAY BY DAY PROGRAM

---

#### DAY 1: MONDAY

##### AM - ARRIVAL AT SAN CRISTOBAL AIRPORT (SCY)

Arrival at San Cristóbal airport (SCY) Upon arrival at the San Cristóbal Airport, travellers pass through an airport inspection point to make sure that no foreign plants or animals are introduced to the islands, and to pay the park entrance fee of \$100 (unless it has been prepaid). A guide will meet you, help you collect your luggage, and escort you on a short bus ride to the harbour.

##### PM - COLORADO HILL / TORTOISE BREEDING CENTER

Cerro Colorado Tortoises Protection and Growing Center, located at 40 minutes approximately by bus to the south east of the island, was built to improve the status of the population of the island tortoises. The center includes a large corral, a Visitors center, breeding center and an interpretative trail. Along this trail, it is possible to see different species of native and endemic plants as well as birds like the San Cristobal Mockingbird, Yellow Warblers, many species of finches and the Galapagos flycatcher.

On your visit to Colorado Hill, you will get to discover the amazing and emblematic Giant Galapagos Tortoises in the Tortoise breeding center, and maybe even get to see one hatch (seasonally)! In addition, you will get to see how much hard work is put into save the last local giants of San Cristobal.



#### DAY 2: TUESDAY

##### AM - SOUTH PLAZA

South Plaza is located at the east of Santa Cruz Island, and forms part of two islands known as Islas Plazas. Despite its small size, some of the most interesting and outstanding species of the Galapagos are found here. The Plazas land iguanas are smaller than its relatives found on other islands. There are several hybrid iguanas, a result of crossing a male marine iguana and a female land iguana; they are unique, recognizable at first glance by their black/gray color, with a land iguana's crest, but face and tail of the marine iguana. The big population of iguanas is due to the presence of tunas, their favorite food. Swallow Tailed Gulls nesting in the rugged cliffs are seen along with other sea birds such as Audubon shearwaters, red-billed tropicbirds, frigate birds and brown pelicans.

##### PM - SANTA FE

Located in the southeastern part of the Galapagos, this island was formed from an uplift instead than from a volcanic origin; this is why it is mostly flat. There are some theories that assure that this could be the oldest island in the Archipelago. Santa Fe is the home of a number of endemic species like the Galapagos Hawk, Galapagos snake, Galapagos mockingbird, rice rats and one of the two species of land Iguanas of the islands.

After disembarkation in the beautiful and clear waters, you will be in contact with one of the many sea lion colonies. Along the trail, many saltbushes can be seen, as well giant Prickly pear cactus. There are great possibilities of snorkeling with playful sea lions and tropical fishes.

## **DAY 3: WEDNESDAY**

### **AM - CHAMPION ISLET (FLOREANA)**

Bottlenose dolphins frequently escort our passage to Champion Islet and you can see them from nearby jumping the wakes! Underwater, Galapagos sea lions are playful acrobats that become the number one attraction. There are also lots of reef fish, and perhaps a green Pacific turtle.

An inflatable dinghy ride along the shoreline of this islet offers sightings of lots of sea birds that are endemic to the archipelago, including Galapagos penguins, blue-footed boobies, magnificent frigate birds and red-billed tropicbirds, swallow-tailed gulls and lava herons.

A bird watchers wish is to get a glimpse of the Charles mockingbird on top of prickly pear cacti. This mockingbird is a scientific and historic key species, because it put Darwin on track of his theory of 'adaptive radiation'.

### **PM - LOBERIA & ASYLUM OF PEACE (FLOREANA)**

The Asylum of Peace Island is a historical interest for guests. This hike goes past a mesmerizing cave and visits a fascinating freshwater spring. La Loberia beach is an ideal spot to enjoy the ocean, as well as the cute sea lions that habit there.

## **DAY 4: THURSDAY**

### **AM – CHARLES DARWIN RESEARCH STATION**

Although the great majority of Galapagos visitors come here to observe and appreciate natural wonders, it is also interesting to learn how the protection and conservation of the islands are done. The main attractions are the National Park information center, the Van Staelen Exhibition Hall, the Breeding and Rearing Center for young tortoises, and adult Galapagos tortoises in captivity.

### **PM – TRANSFER OUT TO SEYMOUR ECOLOGICAL AIRPORT**

Assisted by the naturalist guide and some crewmembers, the dinghy will bring you and your luggage to the Seymour Ecological Airport, where we will take the shuttle back to the airport.