

CATAMARAN ARCHIPELL II

Offers space and comfort combined with stability making it perfect for an adventure in the Galapagos Islands.



ITINERARY B THURSDAY - MONDAY 5 DAYS - 4 NIGHTS

DAY	VISIT
THU	AM - Arrival at Seymour Ecological Airport PM - Highlands (Santa Cruz)
FRI	AM - Cormorant Point (Floreana) PM - Baroness Lookour & Post Office Bay (Floreana)
SAT	AM - Gardner Bay (Espanola) PM - Suarez Point (Española)
SUN	AM - Pitt Point (San Cristobal) PM - Witch Hill (San Cristobal)
MON	AM - Interpretation Center (San Cristóbal) PM - Transfer out to San Cristobal Airport (SCY)



All Galapagos itineraries are subject to change without prior notice due to National Park regulations, weather conditions, and majeure.

CATAMARAN ARCHIPEL II

ITINERARY B - MONDAY TO THURSDAY

5D / 4N - DAY BY DAY PROGRAM

DAY 1 - THURSDAY

AM - ARRIVAL AT SEYMOUR ECOLOGICAL AIRPORT (GPS)

Upon arrival at the Seymour Ecological Airport, travelers 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 harbor.

PM - HIGHLANDS (SANTA CRUZ)

The road to the highlands leaves from Bellavista, a small village located at a 15-minute drive from Puerto Ayora and passes through the agricultural zone, near the National Park boundary, the Miconia Zone, and then goes to the Fern and Sedge zone. With clear weather, this area gives you beautiful scenes of rolling hills and extinct volcanic cones covered with grass and lush greenery all year round. Here you will visit the Twin Craters, which are two pit craters, as well as a local ranch where we can observe the Giant Tortoise specie of Santa Cruz Island in its natural habitat.

DAY 2: FRIDAY

AM - CORMORANT POINT - FLOREANA

The peninsula of Cormorant Point forms the extreme north cape of Floreana, which formed by numbers of smaller volcanic cones, covered by tropical dry forest (palo santo). At the landing beach, you will be welcomed by a small Galapagos sea lion colony. The green sand on this beach contains a high percentage of glassy olivine crystals that have been blown out by the surrounding tuff cones. The 'flour sand' beach on the southern side of the peninsula is formed of even finer white coral sand that feels very smooth to your feet. Parrotfishes have pulverized it, grinding the calcareous skeletons of living coral. You can recognize schools of stingrays that love the sandy bottom to hide themselves. During the first months of the year, Pacific green turtles come ashore to bury their eggs.

PM - BARONESS LOOKOUR & POST OFFICE BAY (FLOREANA)

Baroness Lookout & Post Office Bay Post Office Bay is one out of three nearby visitor's sites on Floreana's northern coast. Bring your postcards and post them in the peculiar barrel on this historic site. The barrel commemorates an improvised mail service that was set-up for communication between British 16th-century whalers and poachers. Later we will go to "Mirador de la Baronesa" and your naturalist guide will tell you the murder and mystery legend of the Baronesa. This viewpoint is located on the north of Floreana Island. The climb on the trail is very easy. Steps are placed in this area for security.

DAY 3: SATURDAY

AM - GARDNER BAY (ESPANOLA)

The striking white beach at Gardner Bay is an important breeding site for Pacific green turtles. However, without doubt its main attraction is the Galapagos sea lion colony. Females stay year round in this nursery, suckling their pups up to an age of 3 years, although these start to fish after 5 months of their birth. During the breeding- and mating season, the colony becomes even bigger.

PM - SUAREZ POINT (ESPAÑOLA)

Huge ocean waves bang onto the southern basaltic cliffs of Suarez Point, forming a spectacular blowhole, where the water sprays meters high into the air (depending on the season, the tide and how strong the sea breeze pushes the waves). Take your time for a meditative break in silence on this emblematic viewpoint, and convert this unforgettable moment in a lifetime experience.



DAY 4 - SUNDAY

AM - PITT POINT (SAN CRISTOBAL)

Two wind sculptured tuff cones at Pitt Point make up the extreme eastern end of San Cristobal, and thus, the archipelago as well. These cliffs were the first sight of land when HMS Beagle and Charles Darwin arrived on September 15, 1835. On the small green sand beach, you will be welcomed by a group of barking Galapagos sea lions. This is a bachelor colony, where males usually relax and prepare themselves for fighting and mating.

From saltbush and spiny shrubs behind the beach, a trail leads up to an area of tropical dry forest vegetation: most of the year leafless palo santo trees, yellow cordia shrubs, tiny prickly pear cacti and carpetweed that turns red in the dry season. After the pretty steep climb through a gully to the cliff top, you can wander around the only colony in Galapagos that counts with all three species of boobies: bluefooted, red-footed and Nazca booby; as well as both species of frigate bird (great and magnificent), famous because of their scarlet balloon-sized pouches during mating season. Frigate birds would rather attack returning boobies and conduct aerial battles than fishing for themselves.

PM - WITCH HILL (SAN CRISTOBAL)

The primary attraction of this site is the coral sand beach, an excellent place to swim and snorkel. Witch Hill is the remains of a tuff cone and one of the first sites visited by Charles Darwin. It has an impressive landscape, where it is often possible to see coastal and migratory birds, including pelicans, Blue-footed Boobies and Swallow-tailed Gulls; as well as sea lions and marine iguanas. At times, the lagoon is completely dry and deposits of salt may be found in the bottom. The people of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno used to use the lagoon as a salt mine.

DAY 5 - MONDAY

AM - INTERPRETATION CENTRE (SAN CRISTÓBAL)

The Interpretation Centre just outside the provincial capital Puerto Baquerizo Moreno is a perfect introduction as well as an interesting complement to the field-explanations and briefings of your naturalist guide. Information panels (English/Spanish), pictures, maquettes and true to life dioramas tell the background story of the islands in a different way, which helps you to get an overview and learn what makes the Galapagos so unique. The well-maintained botanical garden with native species from the arid zone (including the giant prickly pear and candelabra cacti) is worth your visit as well; and you will probably spot the Chatham mockingbird, endemic to this island, that put Darwin on track of his evolution theory. The attractive exhibition is quite complete and explains a series of natural circumstances that create the Galapagos' unique environment: such as the volcanic genesis of the islands, their remoteness from the continent, its ocean currents, its special climate, the arrival of different species, and their establishment, among others. It also recounts historic discovery and attempts of colonisation; and shows a diorama with ancient mail barrels from Post Office Bay. Extensively it concludes how times have changed with current conservation and the many ways in which this is being achieved, as well as the environmental challenges that proceed.

PM - TRANSFER OUT TO SAN CRISTOBAL AIRPORT (SCY)

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.