

Quito & Galapagos Experience (Santa Cruz Islands) / 8 days – 7 nights

This program has been specially crafted for **Panamericana de Viajes**

DAY 1 | ARRIVAL TO QUITO

As soon as you arrive at Quito an airport representative will be waiting for you at your airplane gate; he/she will assist during the migration and customs procedures. After customs, a Link Experiences representative will be waiting for you with a special welcome gift and to accompany you during the transfer to the hotel near to the airport. Quito's airport is located 45 minutes approximately to the city.

- **Accommodation in Quito at the hotel of your chosen category**
- **Private Transfer**
- **Meals:** n/a

DAY 2 | MIDDLE OF THE WORLD & HERITAGE CITY CENTER (B, L)



Your local guide will pick you up from your hotel and take you to visit the Middle of the World Monument, situated at 0°0'0" latitude. Take a picture with your feet on both hemispheres! Continue the tour to the Intiñan Museum where you can see various demonstrations of natural phenomena, gravity and balance manifested in the equatorial zone. This is a really fun and interactive museum.

Have lunch at the top of the Pululahua crater or at a local Hacienda with an artisanal brewery.

After lunch, you will discover Quito's beautiful Historic Center, named World Heritage Site by the UNESCO. Quito is a city with a rich history, hiding the most fascinating legends, forbidden love stories, political insurrection plans, and more. Learn about the different architectural styles in the Old Town, stroll through cobblestone streets and meet some artisans who've kept traditions alive for centuries. Enjoy a private visit to La Compañía, San Francisco and Basilica churches. Experience an exclusive tasting of the best chocolate in the world! After all, you will return to your hotel.

- **Accommodation in Quito at the hotel of your chosen category**
- **Private tour and transfer with an English-speaking guide**
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3 | FLIGHT TO GALAPAGOS & SANTA CRUZ HIGHLAND (B, L)



Early in the morning you will be picked up at your hotel by a Link Experiences representative who is going to transfer you to Quito's airport in order to assist you in the check-in process for both your domestic flight to Baltra Airport and the Galapagos Directorate.

Once you arrive at Baltra Airport and pass through the Galapagos National Park custom and check-in, you will meet your naturalist guide, who is going to transfer you to one of the Tortoise Ranches located in the highland while he/she explains you more about the Galapagos Giant Tortoises behavior as well as Santa Cruz history and contemporary way of life.

Later, after you enjoy your first meal in the ranch surrounded by nature and wildlife, you will continue the journey for about 30 minutes to Puerto Ayora, the most populated town in the archipelago. Then, you will check-in at your hotel, and you will have the rest of the afternoon for leisure.

- **Accommodation in Puerto Ayora (Santa Cruz Island) at the hotel of your chosen category**
- **Private tour and transfer with an English-speaking guide**
- **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4 & 6 | NAVIGABLE DAY TOUR TO ONE OF THE NEARBY ISLANDS (B, L)

These two days, after your breakfast, you will be picked up at your hotel to travel to one of these iconic islands near Santa Cruz.

Important Note: the day tour may vary depending on availability, Galapagos National Park changes and/or instructions or weather conditions.



1. **Bartolome Island Tour:** After the breakfast, yacht day to Bartolomé Island. This is a fantastic place to admire the Galapagos' volcanic landscape. This will include a moderately steep climb aided by a wooden staircase, resting

platforms and handrails – the view from the top is worth the effort! During this visit, you will do some hiking, snorkeling and time to relax by the beach. In the afternoon, return to the hotel.

2. **North Seymour Tour:** After the breakfast, yacht day to North Seymour. This island was lifted from the ocean floor by a volcanic event, and its origins as a seabed give the island its low, flat profile. A tiny forest of silver-grey Palo Santo trees stands just above the landing (dry landing), usually without leaves, waiting for the rains to burst into bloom. This is a great introductory site to the islands and their wildlife, full of bird colonies of blue-footed boobies, two species of frigate birds, swallow-tailed gulls, as well as sea lions and marine iguanas. In the afternoon, return to the hotel.

 3. **Plazas Islands Tour:** After breakfast, yacht day to South Plaza Get ready for an adventure with sea lions, hybrid and land iguanas and a unique landscape of cactus forest. Disembark in this channel, whose turquoise waters contrast brilliantly with the white sand and black lava of the shoreline. Beyond, a carpet of scarlet sesuvium succulents serves as groundcover for a grove of luminescent green prickly-pear cactus. Yellow-grey land iguanas sit beneath these, waiting patiently for pears to drop. Along the coastline one finds sea lion colonies, while frigates, swallow-tailed gulls and shearwaters glide, playing with the thermals. During this visit, you will do some hiking, snorkeling and time to relax by the beach. In the afternoon, return to the hotel.

 4. **Santa Fé Tour:** Enjoy a yacht day in Santa Fé, one of the oldest islands located in the center of the archipelago. Here you will be able to find an abundant number of sea lions and search for the island-endemic Santa Fe land iguana, paler than it's cousins on other islands. Discover the giant Opuntia cacti, also an island endemic. Galapagos hawks and even endemic rice rats are also things to look out for. During this visit, you will do some hiking, snorkeling and time to relax by the beach. In the afternoon, return to the hotel.
- **Accommodation in Puerto Ayora (Santa Cruz Island) at the hotel of your chosen category**
 - **Shared basis tour with an English-speaking naturalist guide**
 - **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5 | TORTUGA BAY & CHARLES DARWIN STATION (B, L)

Today you will be picked up at your hotel after breakfast by your Guide for visiting Tortuga Bay and then the Charles Darwin Research Station.

First of all, Tortuga Bay is located to the southwest of Puerto Ayora, on Santa Cruz Island. Its name means “turtle”, and the island received this moniker because it is sea turtles’ favorite place to lay their eggs. The stunning white sand beach is considered by many the most beautiful in the Galapagos archipelago. The beach is reached via a marked and cobbled two-kilometer path that starts at the west end of Charles Binford Street. It is a great place to kayak, snorkel, and surf!

Later, it will be your time for visiting the famous scientific station. The headquarters of the Galapagos National Park Service and The Charles Darwin Research Station are located side by side on the outskirts of Puerto Ayora. There is an interpretation center open to the public and also one may view the tortoise rearing program. A visit to the Centre will expand your knowledge of this unique, iconic Galapagos animal.

- **Accommodation in Puerto Ayora (Santa Cruz Island) at the hotel of your chosen category**
- **Private tour with an English-speaking guide**
- **Meals included:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 7 | TRANSFER TO BALTRA AIRPORT & ARRIVAL TO QUITO (B)

You will be picked up early in the morning by a Link Experiences representative who is going to transfer you to Baltra Airport as well as assisting you with the check-in process of your domestic flight to Quito.

At your arrival in Quito, take the shuttle to a hotel near to the airport for your last night in Ecuador.

- **Accommodation in one of the hotels near to Quito's Airport in your chosen category**
- **Meals included:** Breakfast

DAY 8 | FLIGHT BACK HOME – END OF SERVICES

Take the shuttle to Quito's Airport for your international flight back home.

END OF SERVICES

RATES 2023

INCLUDED

TOUR GUIDE / QUITO:

- English-Spanish speaking guide/driver on a private basis.

ACCOMMODATION:

- 2 nights of accommodation with daily breakfast in Quito at the category chosen.
- 4 nights of accommodation with daily breakfast in Puerto Ayora (Santa Cruz Island) at the category chosen.
- 1 night of accommodation with daily breakfast near to Quito's Airport at the category chosen.
- **Important Note:** Accommodation is subject to availability until confirmation.

TRANSPORT:

- All transfers & private ground transportation as mentioned in the itinerary.
- Assistance with the check-in procedure at Quito & Baltra Airports.

ENTRANCE FEES AND ACTIVITIES:

- Baltra – Itabaca Bus (Lobito).
- Itabaca Channel Ferry.
- All excursions as mentioned in the itinerary with bilingual speaking naturalist guide (English & Spanish)
- Meals as detailed on the program, Ecuadorian and international gastronomy.
- Personalized assistance 24/7

NOT INCLUDED

- Flight Quito – Galapagos – Quito.
- International air tickets to Ecuador.
- Galapagos National Park Fee (USD\$ 100 p/pers).
- Galapagos Transit Control Card (USD\$ 20 p/pers).
- Personal expenses.
- Tips.
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.
- Meals not stated in the program.

- Additional activities or tours not mentioned in this itinerary.
- Medical services.
- Personal travel insurance.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Itinerary is subject to change in case of force majeure caused by exceptional and natural circumstances.
- All rates are per person and apply only to foreign passengers.
- Prices may change without warning and can only be guaranteed once the reservation has been made.
- Bookings shall include the passenger's full name, nationality, passport number, age, and birthdate.
- Any deposit or payment made by the Client to the Company, for the services that the Company will provide, constitute acceptance for any person that will receive the services of the Company of the Terms and Conditions described at <http://www.linkexperiences.com/index.php/terms-conditions>
- Galapagos itineraries are subject to change due to weather conditions or Galapagos National Park regulation.
- Although Galapagos wildlife is rich, observation of specific species can never be guaranteed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the domestic flight to Galapagos, each passenger may bring one checked luggage of 23kg + carry-on baggage of 8kg.

The checked allowance is:

- Weight: 23kg
- Dimension: 158cm/62in

The carry-on allowance is:

- Weight: 8kg.
- Dimension: 55cm x 35cm x 25cm

Comfortable and light clothes, windbreaker jackets, bathing suits, and comfortable walking shoes are convenient when visiting the Amazon, while warmer clothes are required for stays in Quito and Andean mountain areas. Visitors should not wear sleeveless shirts, shorts, short skirts or skimpy clothing when visiting religious or official buildings. Sun protection, sunglasses, one small backpack, a hat and mosquito repellent can be very useful during your stay.