



ANDES WORLD TRAVEL

ITINERARY B4

(4 DAYS/3 NIGHTS)

DAY 1: TUESDAY

AM – BALTRA AIRPORT

Upon arrival at Seymour Ecological Airport, a check-up is carried out first, to ensure that no foreign plant or animal species are introduced into the islands. Furthermore, your TCC (Transit Control Card) is stamped; this must be kept safe during your trip, as it has to be presented again on your return flight. In addition, entrance to the Galapagos National Park is due for entry (US \$100), if this has not yet been paid. Your guide will meet you at the airport, assist you with the luggage, and accompany you on the short bus ride to the harbour of Puerto Ayora. Here you will climb aboard the M/Y Aqua! After greeting the crew and the captain, your cabins will be assigned to you and then you will enjoy your first lunch on-board.

PM – NORTH SEYMOUR

This islet is one of most visited sites, and it is teeming with birdlife. An easy circular path takes you through the archipelago's most extensive colonies of blue-footed boobies and frigate birds. At the beginning of the breeding season, adult frigate bird-males blow up their vivid red pouches to impressive football-sized balloons. This is one of the few spots where you can compare the magnificent and the great frigate bird breeding next to each other.

DAY 2: WEDNESDAY

AM – SOUTH PLAZAS

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 their 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, recognisable at first glance by their black/grey color, with a land iguana's crest, but face and tail of the marine iguana. The large population of iguanas is due to the presence of tuna, their favourite food. Swallow-tailed gulls nesting in the rugged cliffs are seen along with other seabirds such as Audubon shearwaters, red-billed tropicbirds, frigate birds and brown pelicans.

PM – SANTA FE

Located in the south-eastern part of the Galapagos, this island was formed from an uplift rather than being of volcanic origin, which is why it is mostly flat. There are some theories which claim that this could be the oldest island in the Archipelago. Santa Fe is home to a number of endemic species like the Galapagos Hawk, Galapagos snake, Galapagos mockingbird, rice rats and one of the two species of lands iguanas of the islands.

After disembarking into the beautiful and clear waters you will be in contact with one of the many sea lion colonies. Along the trail, many salt bushes can be seen as well as the giant prickly pear cactus - gigantism is a characteristic of oceanic islands. There are many possibilities to snorkel with playful sea lions and tropical fish.



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DAY 3: THURSDAY

AM – CC FAUSTO LLERENA

After discovering and learning about the difference of Espanola Island tortoises with those from other islands, you will have the opportunity to take amazing photographs of the tortoises at the breeding center!

The tour starts at the information booth of the GNP. The trail continues to the Van Straelen interpretation Center, the breeding center and from there will be a path- this is where you can see the tortoises of Española Island, ending in the tortoise exhibit corral. Tortoises of this corral are accustomed to humans; it is an excellent spot to be photographed with them!

PM – CORMORANT POINT

The peninsula of Cormorant Point forms the extreme north cape of Floreana, which formed from 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 which have been blown out by the surrounding tuff cones. The 'flour sand' beach on the southern side of the peninsula is made up of even finer white coral sand which feels very smooth on the feet. Parrotfish have pulverised it, grinding the calcareous skeletons of living coral. You can spot schools of stingrays who love the sandy bottom to hide themselves. During the first months of the year, Pacific green turtles come ashore to bury their eggs.

DAY 4: FRIDAY

AM – DRAGON HILL

Dragon Hill boasts two key-species which are very likely to be seen during every visit to the Galapagos, though not too commonly distributed throughout the islands: Galapagos land iguanas and American flamingos. You will climb a hill with giant opuntia cacti where these 'dragons' feed and breed. Although they are quite shy and elusive, you stand a fair chance of seeing the success of this project with your own eyes.

The short walk crosses the coastal vegetation zone, as well as the somewhat higher arid zone with vulnerable tropical dry forest. In the warm and wet season in the first half of the year everything turns green. Evergreen giant prickly pear cacti with internal reservoirs used a different survival tactic in this dry climate to the leaf dropping palo santo trees; in the end both were successful. Moreover, this is a very photogenic spot as well, with breathtaking panoramas over the bay and towards an intriguing steep volcanic spout of red lava that overlooks the area. Dragon Hill has become popular because of its saline lagoons behind the beach; these contain algae and shrimp and attract seasonally foraging American flamingos. Dragon Hill is the best location on Santa Cruz to observe them.

PM – BALTRA AIRPORT

It's time to say goodbye to Galapagos! It's been a pleasure accompanying you on this unique trip and hope to see you again very soon!

Assisted by the naturalist guide and some crew members, the dinghy will bring you and your luggage to the Seymour Ecological Airport, where we will take the shuttle back to the airport. In case you have booked your trip for a longer stay with us, we would be welcoming any potential new fellow passengers to the yacht, and continue our trip to the next visiting site!