

FIX DEPARTURE PROGRAM

ECUADOR MAINLAND & GALAPAGOS ISLAND HOPPING



DAY	ITINERARY
1	QUITO (Airport) – Arrival transfer
2	QUITO CITY LINE
3	QUITO – OTAVALO – CUICOCHA
4	OTAVALO – COTOPAXI NATIONAL PARK – BAÑOS
5	BAÑOS - RIOBAMBA
6	RIOBAMBA – DEVIL´S NOSE TRAIN – INGAPIRCA - CUENCA
7	CUENCA CITY TOUR
8	CUENCA - CAJAS NATIONAL PARK - GUAYAQUIL
9	GUAYAQUIL (Airport transfer) - Flight to Galapagos - SANTA CRUZ HIGHLANDS
10	DAILY TOUR (Alternatives: South Plazas, or North Seymour, or Isabela, or Floreana, or Santa Fe, or Bartolome)
11	PUERTO AYORA: Charles Darwin and Tortuga Bay
12	FREE DAY GALAPAGOS
13	SANTA CRUZ – BALTRA (Airport) - Flight to Quito or Guayaquil

**The Galapagos itineraries are subject to change due to climatic, logistical or security reasons or due to decisions of the National Park etc.*



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

DAY 1: QUITO (Airport) – Arrival transfer

Arrival to the Capital of Ecuador (2850mts.). Your guide and transport will be waiting for you at the International Terminal of Quito's Airport to take you directly to your hotel. After one-hour drive, you will be accommodated at your hotel. Overnight. (-,-,-)

DAY 2: QUITO CITY LINE

Today, you will have a visit to downtown Quito, one of the most beautiful and historical cities in South America, which was declared by UNESCO a "World Cultural Heritage". You will start the tour visiting modern and colonial districts. You will start the tour visiting modern and colonial districts. First, the "Balcon Quiteño", the Legislative Palace, the colonial center, the Independence Plaza, the Carondelet Palace (Government Palace) the Metropolitan Cathedral, "La Compañía" and "San Francisco" churches and a drive to "El Panecillo". Here, you will have the best views of Quito and the surrounding snowcapped volcanoes!



You will continue towards the Middle of the World. There, you will find a monument, where you can put one foot in the North Hemisphere and the other foot on the South Hemisphere. Just outside the Middle of the World, there is an interesting open-air museum called Inti-Ñan. It explains the solar system; the effect of the equator position has on gravity and ancient cultures and their peculiarities. This is worth a visit! Overnight. (B,-,-)

DAY 3: QUITO – OTAVALO

In the morning, you will be picked up from the hotel. In about two hours you reach Otavalo. This town is famous for its weaving, music and culture. The Otavalo's indigenous community is one



of the most prosperous in Ecuador. Nowadays, you find their handicrafts and music all over Ecuador and the world. The town of Otavalo is the heart of their culture and at the marketplace you will find all possible souvenirs at cheap prices. On Saturdays, there is also an animal market taking place just outside town.

In the afternoon, you will visit the main sites in the surroundings of Otavalo and the town of



Cotacachi, famous for its leather products. Afterwards, you will visit the Lake of Cuicocha. This lake is situated in an old crater of a still active volcano. There, you will have beautiful views of the Imbabura and Cotacachi volcano, as well as, the surrounding valley with the cities of Otavalo and Ibarra. Overnight. (B,-,-).

DAY 4: OTAVALO – COTOPAXI NATIONAL PARK – BAÑOS

You will be driven by a private transport towards the Volcano Avenue. The first stop will be the Cotopaxi National Park, this natural reserve lies at the foot of the world's highest active snow-capped volcano (5897 m.). You will continue your way into the park and stop at the Limpiopungo Lake at 3800 mts., here you can make an acclimatizing walk while observing semi-wild horses, a variety of ducks and hummingbirds and the Andean gull and lapwing. On clear days you have the most incredible views up here.



Enjoy the incredible picture opportunities and the spectacular scenery at walls of ice and deep crevasses. In the afternoon, you will visit a nice Rose Plantation. At this farm, you will see the famous Ecuadorian rose and its entire lifecycle. This is an opportunity to learn not only about all the diversity and colorful roses that Ecuador produces; but also a chance to see all the interaction that companies have with the communities. Finally, you will be driven to Baños. Overnight. (B,-,-).

DAY 5: BAÑOS – RIOBAMBA

Today, you will visit one of the most beautiful waterfalls in Ecuador, “El Pailon del Diablo”, which is located through the “Route of the Cascades”. Baños is the entrance of the Amazon region and the temperature is already changing after 15 minutes. You will visit the Agoyán waterfall; the ports of heaven, which is a symbol for the entrance to the jungle, the waterfall and tarabita “Manto de la novia” (the veil of the bride) and the tarabita of San Pedro. Baños has a nice center to stroll around, look for souvenirs, or simply enjoy a delicious meal in one of its many restaurants. This marvellous town has also healthy thermal baths to relax. In the afternoon, you will travel to Riobamba. The city is surrounded by mountains and while sitting at the foot of Chimborazo volcano, one gets the world’s highest view from the center of the Earth. Riobamba is an important historic and cultural landmark of Ecuador. It was the first city founded by the Spaniards in what is now Ecuador, founded in 1530. Riobamba was completely destroyed by earthquake in 1797, but rebuilt a few years later 14 km (9 miles) away from its original location, near a village named Cajabamba. Overnight. (B,-,-).



DAY 6: RIOBAMBA – ALAUSI- DEVIL’S NOSE TRAIN – INGAPIRCA – CUENCA

Early in the morning, you will travel to Alausi where the train experience start. Several plans were made to build the railway from Guayaquil to Quito, since 1860 until 1874, this project was called at that time “the most difficult railway built in the world” because the tracks reached a huge obstacle, an almost perpendicular wall of rock, called the “Devil’s Nose”. Many lives were shed in the building of what until now is called a masterpiece of railway engineering: a zig-zag carved out of the rock, which allows the train, by advancing and backing up, to reach the necessary height to the town of Alausí.



After the train experience, you will continue to visit the Ingapirca ruins, located in the province of Cañar. Ingapirca means “Incas stone wall”. It is believed today that Ingapirca was both a religious and administrative center, as well as a fortress. The Incas built the complex on top of an old Cañari settlement. The vast archeological complex of the ruins includes a roofless fortification, courtyards, terraces, temples, houses and a “castle”, possibly the “Temple of the

Sun”. Finally, you will continue to Cuenca. Overnight. (B, -, -).

DAY 7: CUENCA CITY TOUR

Early in the morning, you will start a city tour through the Colonial Cuenca. This city is one of



Ecuador's colonial jewels, with orderly classified cobblestone streets, houses and buildings characterized by their elegant and unique metal balconies, adorned with abundant spring plants. Typical markets and stores show the region's cultural wealth, a heredity of its Indigenous ancestors. Cuenca is one of Ecuador's most visited cities. You will admire lovely balconies, tiles, pink marble stone and wood with which most of its fantastic

houses are built. The city tour ends with a walk around the ancient city, where you will find enchanting churches, cloisters, museums, and houses. Overnight. (B, -, -)

DAY 8: CUENCA - CAJAS NATIONAL PARK - GUAYAQUIL

A day tour through one of Ecuador's most impressive areas covered by mysterious lakes and enchanted forests!. You will notice the change of vegetation, leaving the valley of Cuenca and crossing Andean cloud forests which lead you to the high and abandoned moor with many grass, crystalline streams and rocky peaks. You will start on one of the highest points in the park from where you will descend through the diverse vegetation with many colourful flowers such as gentians and chuquiraguas. Further on you will get to a small Polylepis forest extension. The Polylepis tree, with its funny paper-like barks of a red-brownish color, is one of the oldest and highest growing tree species in the world. Once in the forest you will have the feeling to be in the middle of fairy tale like surroundings.



On the way, you will stop on a cocoa farm to know more about its production. The cocoa beans from Ecuador are very famous for its specific fine aroma. Cocoa plays a very important role in Ecuador's history and economy due to this country produces the 4% of the world production, however from the fine upper class cocoa, the country is responsible for 70% of the world production. Cocoa is a symbol product of Ecuador, since it has been part of the history since 1800's. On this visit you will observe the process of

transforming the fermented, dried cocoa almonds into fine chocolate bars.

Then, you will be driven to Guayaquil. This is a populous city in Ecuador; and the nation's main port. The Malecón 2000 is a restoration project of the historic Simon Bolivar Pier. It will be a symbolic center of the city, a mix of green areas and shopping. Las Peñas Neighborhood in the



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northeast corner of the city's center, is the artistic center of the city. Many of the area's 400-year-old houses have been converted into art galleries and several notable artists have studios in the area. Overnight. (B,-,-)

DAY 9: GUAYAQUIL – Flight to GALAPAGOS – SANTA CRUZ HIGHLANDS

Transfer to the airport for individual flight. Flight to Galapagos via Guayaquil to Baltra airport, where your guide will receive you for the first visit. Lunch at a typical restaurant. The highland of Santa Cruz is very well known for its fauna and vegetation. You can see turtles living in their natural way. The climate may vary between cloudy and rainy to sunny and hot, creating more fertile soil and green vegetation. Another very interesting site is the lava tunnels. These tunnels have smooth sides with grooves that show different levels of lava. In the excursion it could also be interesting to see giant turtles in their natural habitat. Trip to Puerto Ayora. Overnight. (-/L/-)



DAY 10: DAILY TOUR (Alternatives: South Plazas, or North Seymour, or Isabela, or Floreana, or Santa Fe, or Bartolome)



The visit to **South Plazas** to begins with a dry landing. The rocky trail circumnavigates the island displaying the combination of dry and coastal vegetation zone. The island is home to enormous prickly pear cactus and the endemic succulent sesuvian. These succulents with almond-shaped leaves are green during the rainy season December-May. Then, become red during the dry season giving the island an unusual appearance. Box Lunch Included. South Plaza

has one of the largest populations of land iguanas in the Galapagos. The iguanas seem to be everywhere once you land.



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Or visit to **North Seymour**. In the north of Baltra is the small islet of North Seymour. The two



islands are very similar in appearance both created from geological uplift and having typical arid vegetation including prickly pear cactus, palo santos trees and salt bushes. The visitor trail on North Seymour is approximately (2 km) in length crossing the inland of the island and exploring the rocky coast. Along the way the trail passes colonies of blue-footed

boobies and magnificent frigate birds. The magnificent frigate bird, a large black bird with a long wingspan, and a hooked beak, is extremely fast and has excellent vision. Frigate birds are known for the large red pouch on their necks. During mating season the males thrown back their heads, inflate the pouch (sometimes to the size of a soccer ball), and shake trying to capture the attention of female frigates.

Or visit Isabela. The first stop will be the Tortoise Breeding Center of Isabela Island which is located 1.5 kilometers from Puerto Villamil. This Breeding Center is reproducing in captivity Galapagos tortoise, in total there are 330 turtles between juveniles and adults.



To the west of Puerto Villamil there are various salt and brackish lagoons which house an impressive variety of coastal and sea birds. Here, visitors can also find the largest concentration of flamingos in Galapagos. The Tintoreras Islet, located a short distance from Puerto Villamil, is home to a great variety of wildlife. Its turquoise, crystalline waters are inhabited by white-tipped reef sharks, Galapagos penguins, marine turtles and sea lions. One of its beaches, surrounded by mangroves is one of the few sites where marine iguanas can reproduce successfully.



Or visit **Floreana**. This island has long been a favorite site of visitors including pirates, whalers and early settlers. It's the oldest islands. Floreana illustrates the aging process of a volcanic island. Unlike the younger western islands, Floreana's volcano has been long extinct and is in the advanced stages of erosion. The erosion process gave the island the nutrients and

soils need to sustain plant life. The combination of this rich soil and a good water supply have given the highlands of Floreana a diversified landscaping of native and introduced flora. You will walk through a place called "Asilo de la Paz" where you can find "La Cueva de los Piratas" (The Pirates' cave). You can also observe the giant turtles in their typical habitat. In the afternoon,



after the box lunch, you will visit the Black Beach which invites to swim and get to know the beautiful underwater world with your snorkel equipment. Return to Puerto Ayora.

Or visit **Santa Fe**. A thirty –minute loop through the giant Opuntia cactus forest will show you land iguanas that are unique to this island. These rare reptiles are easiest to find early morning and late afternoon. A two hour trail with good views, and a chance to see some endemic vegetation including Scalesia. Before the trekking, you will have a box lunch. This island offers an excellent opportunity for snorkeling from the panga to the point of the small islet that forms the bay.



Or visit **Bartolome**. This small island famous of the photogenic pinnacle rock that looks sheared away from the cliff. The trail passes different lava formation and pioneer vegetation on the way to the summit. It is a one-hour of moderate uphill hiking with beautiful views of the surrounding islands. A short walk through sand dunes brings you to another beach. Before the trekking, you will have a box

lunch. Next to the pinnacle is a pleasant beach with a clam bay for swimming. Box lunch is included. Penguins can sometimes be observed while swimming or snorkeling.

Overnight. (B/BL/-)

DAY 11: PUERTO AYORA - (Charles Darwin Research Station – Tortuga Bay)

Charles Darwin Research Station gives you information about the evolution of the islands and hosts a breeding center of giant turtles. You can see different generations of turtles. Here you can also learn about the work done by the foundation and the importance of preserving the archipelago's ecosystems. A series of walkways takes you through the captive breeding program where you will see juvenile and



adult tortoises, different types iguanas can also be observed. In the afternoon it was a visit to Tortuga Bay beach, perhaps the most beautiful beach in the Galapagos. To reach there, you hike a moderate rocky trail surrounded by cactus, palo santo trees, and matasarno trees. After this excursion you reach the impressive and wonderful white sand beach where you can swim and snorkel observing colonies of marine iguanas, pelicans, Darwin's finches, sharks, sea turtles. Overnight. (B/-/-)

DAY 12: FREE DAY

Today, you will have a free day to explore for your own the Enchanted Islands. The Galapagos Islands are volcanic islands spread on either side of the Equator line in the Pacific Ocean, 926 km (575 mi) west of mainland Ecuador. The islands are well-known for their enormous number of endemic species that were studied by Charles Darwin during the journey of the Beagle. His notes and collections contributed to the initiation of Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection. The archipelago consists of 18 major islands, 3 smaller islands, and 107 rocks and islets. This marvellous destination offers a lot of alternatives, such as: bicycle ridings, hikings, snorkellings opportunities, kayakings, or just beautiful beaches to swim and have time to relax. Overnight. (B/-/-)



DAY 13: SANTA CRUZ – BALTRA (Airport)

After breakfast you will be transferred to Baltra airport by visiting the Gemelos. (B)

TRAVEL DATES 2019

FIX DEPARTURES 2019			
ECUADOR MAIN LAND		GALAPAGOS ISLAND HOPPING	
Start	Finish	Start	Finish
3-ene	11-ene	11-ene	15-ene
7-feb	15-feb	15-feb	19-feb
7-mar	15-mar	15-mar	19-mar
21-mar	29-mar	29-mar	2-abr
10-abr	18-abr	18-abr	22-abr
8-may	16-may	16-may	20-may
4-jun	12-jun	12-jun	16-jun
19-jun	27-jun	27-jun	1-jul
4-jul	12-jul	12-jul	16-jul



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18-jul	26-jul	26-jul	30-jul
8-ago	16-ago	16-ago	20-ago
22-ago	30-ago	30-ago	3-sep
5-sep	13-sep	13-sep	17-sep
19-sep	27-sep	27-sep	1-oct
3-oct	11-oct	11-oct	15-oct
17-oct	25-oct	25-oct	29-oct
7-nov	15-nov	15-nov	19-nov
21-nov	29-nov	29-nov	3-dic
5-dic	13-dic	13-dic	17-dic

MID – RANGE HOTELS

HOTEL	Brief Description	Web page	CATEGORY
Mercur e	Located in the Mariscal area near restaurants, Shopping Malls and Banks.	http://www.mercurequito.com.ec/	****
Indio Inn	Located in Otavalo, the hotel is within walking distance of famous artisan market. The hotel has comfortable rooms, as well as a stylish cafe/restaurant with international and national dishes, games, billiards and conference room, and WiFi. The hotel has 3-storey hotel also has interior gardens, perfect for relaxing.	http://www.hotelesindioinn.com/	***
Volcano	Located in the best zone of Baños Town, with the nicest view of the Virgin Waterfall and its surroundings. They offer: Balcony, Cable TV / Phone, Security case in each room, Living rooms, Free Internet and WiFi, Security 24 hours, Restaurant, Massages, Swimming pool - Jacuzzi.	http://www.volcano.com.ec/	***
Casa Real	Located in Riobamba and offers excellent commodities and was designed with a futuristic vision based on the legance and	http://www.hotelspacasareal.com/	***

	destinctions of the Royal Houses of Spain.		
Crespo	Located at Cuenca in the most emblematic and beautiful place of the city "El Barranco" on the riverside of the Tomebamba river and only four blocks away from the Central Park.	http://www.hotelcrespo.com/	***
Unipark	Located at Guayaquil in front of Parque Seminario known as Iguanas' Park and cornered to the Cathedral. This hotel is a referent of hospitality and gastronomy on the touristic and financial center, a few steps away from major attraction as Malecon 2000, City Hall, Barrio Las Peñas, and a 15 minutes car ride to International Airport. Unipark Hotel offers 140 comfortable rooms, recently renewed and equipped with necessary services for leisure and business travelers. Two restaurants, Unicafe and Sushi Bar where you will enjoy specialties of Ecuadorian, Japanese and International cuisine.	http://uniparkhotel.com/	***
Fiesta	Hotel Fiesta have a culture of service, "Hand-Made". Impeccable cleanliness, unassuming and friendly. Hearty full breakfast. Personal attention. Excellent location near the centre of Puerto Ayora. A tranquil place to relax after busy, active days.	http://www.galapagoshotelfiesta.com/en-us/	***



ECUADOR MAINLAND: Net Rates per person in Double room in Dollars:

Number of passengers	2 PAX	Single Supplement
Price per person in double room	\$ 1249	\$239

Included in Rate:

- Overnight on double occupancy at mentioned hotels.
- Daily Breakfast
- Transportation in private car or minivan according to number of participants
- All transfers, sightseeing and excursions according to the program
- Spanish/English speaking guide
- Entrance: Panecillo, La Compañía, Inti-ñan, Pailon del Diablo waterfall, Devil’s Nose Train ticket, Ingapirca.

Not included in Rate:

- Meals and Drinks, not included in the program
- Tips to guide and drive
- Extra expenses not included in the program
- Tips to porters at airport

GALAPAGOS ISLAND HOPPING: Net Rates per person in Double room in Dollars:

Number of passengers	2 PAX	Single Supplement
Price per person in double room	\$889	\$251

Included in Rate:

- Transfer in / out
- Meals as mentioned. B: breakfast; L: lunch; BL: box lunch; D: dinner
- Lodging in: Hotels Tourist superior Class – Hotel Fiesta or similar.
- Excursions and transfers according to the program description.
- Naturalist guide (English / Spanish)
- Transportation for transfers at the Galapagos Islands.

Not Included in Rate:



- Galapagos National Park entrance fee: USD 100 per person (to be paid in cash at Baltra's airport)
- Transit Card: USD 20 per person
- Isabela Island entrance fee: USD 20 per person
- Extra beverages and meals
- Tips
- Flight ticket to Galapagos
- Travel or health Insurance

PAYMENT:

20% Deposit of the total amount up to 5 days after booking
100% Payment 30 days before the beginning of the journey

CANCELLATION POLICY:

Up to 90 days prior to the booking: USD 100.- per person as administrative charges.
89-60 Days prior to arrival: 50% cancellation fee of the total amount
59- 0 Days before arrival: 100% cancellation fee of the total amount