

## WILD GALÁPAGOS ESCAPE ABOARD *NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ISLANDER II*

13 DAYS | YEAR-ROUND SATURDAY DEPARTURES | BALTRA-SANTA CRUZ

Explore more of Darwin's islands on this back-to-back voyage aboard the newest member of the fleet, *National Geographic Islander II*. With just 26 staterooms and suites, this elegant ship feels like a private yacht. Witness the iconic wildlife that sparked the theory of evolution; snorkel pristine, well-protected waters teeming with sea lions and sea turtles; and hike black-sand beaches and lush highlands. Our Galápagos expeditions are honed over more than 50 years experience of bringing guests to the Enchanted Isles, and each voyage is crafted to offer you a diverse perspective of the archipelago with multiple adventures daily on land and under water. Stay aboard for back-to-back voyages to see all the islands on this 13-day program—and save 10%. No single visitor site can be visited twice over a two-week period, so you will see something new every day.



### DAY 1: Guayaquil or Quito, Ecuador

Welcome to Ecuador! Upon arrival in Guayaquil, transfer to the 44-room Hotel del Parque, a tranquil haven surrounded by lush gardens set in a lovingly restored 19th-century building along the river.\*

### DAY 2: Guayaquil or Quito / Baltra, Galápagos / Embark / Caleta Tortuga Negra, Santa Cruz

**Morning:** This morning, fly to Galápagos. You are welcomed by our naturalist staff at the Baltra Airport and will embark the *National Geographic Islander II* by Zodiac. Part of the magic of any Galápagos voyage is the varied nature of the terrain, wildlife, and experiences that each island offers, with each departure providing a well-considered balance. Welcome aboard!

**Afternoon:** You will have time for lunch, briefings, and to settle into your cabins before joining a Zodiac cruise of Caleta Tortuga Negra, a spectacular mangrove-lined cove on Santa Cruz Island teeming with marine life. Look for green turtles, sharks, and schools of golden and eagle rays. (B, L, D)

### DAY 3: Puerto Ayora & Highlands, Santa Cruz

**Morning:** Call at Puerto Ayora, headquarters of both the Galápagos National Park and Charles Darwin Research Station. Tour the giant tortoise breeding corrals, a pioneering effort, and visit the research station before continuing to town.

**Afternoon:** Head to the lush, green highlands to see giant tortoises roaming in the wild, and have lunch at a local ranch dedicated to conservation. (B, L, D)

### DAY 4: North Seymour / Rábida

**Morning:** On this wildlife-rich island, follow coastal trails past groups of Galápagos sea lions and marine iguanas, before heading inland through a silvery forest of palo santo to colonies of magnificent and great frigatebirds, blue-footed boobies, and other seabirds. See land iguanas clambering over rocks in search of cactus and other flowers. Look for swallow-tailed gulls, noddy terns, red-billed tropic birds, and Galápagos fur seals on the rocky walls of this small island, created by geologic uplift rather than lava flows.

**Afternoon:** Land on a red-sand beach on this volcanically varied island, where we explore inland. We may see flamingos feeding in a brackish lagoon and clownish brown pelicans entertaining us from their nests. Here is your chance to snorkel or explore by kayak or paddleboard. (B, L, D)

\*You may also fly into the Ecuadorian capital of Quito instead of Guayaquil (all Galápagos flights originate in Quito). Ask your expedition specialist about this alternative flight path.

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#### DAY 5: Punta Vicente Roca, Isabela / Punta Espinosa, Fernandina

**Morning:** Awaken in the remote western archipelago, haunt of whalers and pirates of yore. Board the Zodiacs for a cruise along the wildly eroded volcanic shores of Isabela, a towering island formed of six great shield volcanoes that make up two-thirds of the land area in Galápagos. Snorkel and Zodiac along the coast, where we might see green turtles, fur seals, and even penguins. Keep an eye out for whales and dolphins—the waters here in the west are rich.

**Afternoon:** Hike over impressive lava past tide pools where young sea lions play and the strange flightless cormorant nests. One of the most active oceanic volcanoes in the world, Fernandina is the youngest and most pristine island in Galápagos. Later back aboard, join fellow travelers on deck to celebrate crossing the Equator. (B, L, D)

#### DAY 6: Playa Espumilla & Buccaneer's Cove, Santiago / Puerto Egas, Santiago

**Morning:** Explore a dense coastal forest at Playa Espumilla, filled with mangroves and home to Galápagos hawks and other land birds. Or stroll along the wide beach early this morning. After breakfast, swim, snorkel, kayak, and paddleboard along the spectacular coast of Buccaneer's Cove, a secluded atelie where pirates once careened their ships. Darwin camped here during his time on the islands.

**Afternoon:** After lunch, explore tide pools and look for fur seals sheltered in quiet grottos of black basalt at Puerto Egas, where you see evidence of an old salt mine and other human history. Swim and snorkel from the beach, which is frequented by sea lions and marine iguanas. (B, L, D)



#### DAY 7: Baltra / Daphne Major

**Morning:** After breakfast this morning, join a private guided tour with other guests who are staying aboard for the next voyage.

**Afternoon:** Rejoin the ship and meet on the observation deck as we circumnavigate Daphne Major to enjoy a welcome cocktail with guests who just arrived. (B, L, D)

#### DAY 8: Bartolomé / Cerro Dragon, Santa Cruz

**Morning:** Climb the steps to the 360-foot summit of Bartolomé, a volcanic wonderland of spatter and scoria cones and tuff formations. Enjoy a stunning view of wind- and water-sculpted Pinnacle Rock and the surrounding vista of land and sea. Admire stark lava flows across the way on Santiago, the most recent eruption dating from 1897. Comb the golden-sand beach or immerse yourself among schools of multicolored reef fish. This is a spot where lucky snorkelers might encounter Galápagos penguins, one of the world's rarest penguins—incongruous in this equatorial setting.

**Afternoon:** Land on the beach for a hike through giant cactus and incense tree forests to reach Dragon Hill, habitat of the colorful Santa Cruz land iguanas, brought back from the brink of extinction. (B, L, D)

#### DAY 9: Post Office Bay, Champion Islet & Punta Comorant, Floreana

**Morning:** Join the 19th-century tradition of leaving and taking letters from the barrel for hand delivery at Post Office Bay. Paddleboard and kayak along the coast at Baroness Lookout, named after the early settler and eccentric Eloise Bosquet de Wagner. Snorkel among sea lions and abundant fish, or cruise along the shore by Zodiac. Keep an eye out for the endangered Floreana mockingbird, now found only on these offshore islets.

**Afternoon:** See swallow-tailed gulls, Española mockingbirds, Nazca boobies and, seasonally, the world's only population of waved albatross at Punta Suarez, where we walk among vividly colored marine iguanas and breeding colonies of sea lions. Optional trails lead inland across iron-laden pillow basalt to the blowhole and seabird cliffs. (B, L, D)

#### DAY 10: Gardner Bay & Punta Suarez, Española

**Morning:** Explore the expanse of bright white sand at quiet Gardner Bay, where sea lions rest and play. Swim from the beach, snorkel along the offshore islets, kayak, or paddleboard.

**Afternoon:** See swallow-tailed gulls, Española mockingbirds, Nazca boobies and, seasonally, the world's only population of waved albatross at Punta Suarez, where we walk among vividly colored marine iguanas and breeding colonies of sea lions. (B, L, D)



#### DAY 11: Punta Pitt & Cerro Brujo, San Cristóbal / León Dormido (Kicker Rock)

**Morning:** Land on a small, sparkling beach at Punta Pitt for a hike up to a plateau where masked-, blue-, and red-footed boobies all nest, and look for endemic Cristóbal mockingbirds, lava lizards, and other wildlife.

**Afternoon:** Relax at the celebrated expanse of powdery white sand at Cerro Brujo, one of the most beautiful beaches in Galápagos. Join fellow guests on deck for a farewell cocktail. (B, L, D)

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#### DAY 12: Canal Itabaca, Santa Cruz, Galápagos / Disembark / Guayaquil or Quito, Ecuador

**Morning:** Disembark early this morning for an excursion into the highlands to see Galápagos tortoises in the wild at a local ranch dedicated to conservation. Continue to Baltra for the flight back to Guayaquil, where we transfer to the Hotel del Parque—or continue to Quito for an optional three-night extension. Flights arrive in Guayaquil by 5:00 p.m. and Quito by 7:00 p.m. Ask your expedition specialist for details. Transfer back to the airport the next day or take advantage of overnight flights. (B)

#### DAY 13: Guayaquil or Quito

Transfer to the airport after breakfast or relax at the hotel. Checkout is at 11:00 a.m. (B)

#### Itinerary

In the Galápagos, no single site can be visited by the same ship more than once over a two-week period. The idea was developed in 2011, and Lindblad was the first voluntary adopter of this innovative new proposal by the Galápagos National Park, which aims to spread people out to allow for a more intimate experience. We have created an optimal balance during each week in terms of terrain and wildlife. If you wish to see all the sites, you could join for two weeks, but be assured there is no better week to experience Galápagos—just nuances for one week to the other. Itineraries are determined by the national park and subject to change.

Visit [expeditions.com/expeditions/wild-galapagos-escape](https://expeditions.com/expeditions/wild-galapagos-escape) for more information about the voyage.

Visit [expeditions.com/islanderii](https://expeditions.com/islanderii) for more information about the ship.

**For more information, call us at 1.800.397.3348 or contact your Travel Advisor.**

