



## JOURNEY TO THE GALAPAGOS

**Adventure, Wildlife, Nature!**

Straddling the Equator in the Pacific Ocean, the Galapagos Islands are home to some of the most fascinating and accessible wildlife anywhere.

**Dates:** From Saturday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> – Tuesday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Duration:** 11 days / 10 nights

**Total Distance:** 3,390 nautical miles



**Cost:** \$ 7,295 per person (double occupancy)  
\$ 2,195 plane registration fee (includes Cuba overflight permit)  
*Single supplement available upon request*

# ITINERARY

## Day 1 - Saturday, February 2: Fort Lauderdale → Kingston, Jamaica → Cartagena, Colombia 530 + 455 NM

Air Journey will greet you at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (KFXE) for a briefing about the forthcoming flight.

Our flight today will bring us over Cuba before landing in Kingston (Jamaica) to refuel. We'll then continue on to Colombia – one of the most ethnically diverse nations in South America – for our visit to Cartagena, undeniably one of Latin America's most beautiful cities lost somewhere in time between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, with the Caribbean sea as a sparkling backdrop. Sir Francis Drake laid siege to the city but the fortress walls and cannons remain, making the area within the old walled city a living museum.



There will be time to relax before we enjoy a well-deserved welcome cocktail and dinner.

Hotel: Sofitel Santa Clara  
*Welcome Cocktail and Dinner included*

## Day 2 - Sunday, February 3: Cartagena

Enjoy a full day tour to experience Cartagena's colonial charm with its tiled roofs, balconies and flower-filled courtyards and relive history in the old walled city, the Ciudad Amarullada, where we'll explore the four sectors, each one with a peculiar story to tell: San Diego, La Matuna, Getsemani and Santo Domingo.

A morning walking tour allows us to explore the Old City. After lunch, we'll continue with a city tour to enjoy the highlights of this beautiful city.

Hotel: Sofitel Santa Clara  
*Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included*

## Day 3 - Monday, February 4: Cartagena → Guayaquil, Ecuador

795 NM

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for our flight to Guayaquil, Ecuador. Strategically located in the downtown commercial and banking heart of the city, the Hilton Colon Guayaquil is only a short transfer from the airport.

Hotel: Hilton Colon Guayaquil  
*Breakfast and Dinner included*



#### **Days 4 - Tuesday, February 5: Guayaquil to Baltra, Galapagos – Manzanillo Tortoise Reserve**

Today we will fly commercial airline (ticket not included) to Baltra in the Galapagos.

Upon arrival in Baltra, we travel across the Itabaca Channel to Santa Cruz Island where a bus takes us to the highlands of Santa Cruz Island. Here we visit the Giant Tortoises Reserve in their natural habitat, a once in a lifetime experience! Make sure you wear outdoors clothing and sturdy footwear this day.

Manzanillo is on the natural path tortoises take every year as they either migrate to higher moist locations during the garúa season (June-September), or when they descend to the warmer lowlands during the wet season. Year round, tortoises can be seen grazing on the surrounding vegetation, or wallowing in muddy banks or in a small red-colored pond (impressively colored by surface red pond-weeds). The area is teeming with life: chirping vegetarian-, small-tree, large-tree and woodpecker finches, mockingbirds and flycatchers, as well as ducks, herons and gallinules make this an exciting morning visit.

After lunch and exploring the tortoise reserve, we continue our road south bound across Santa Cruz Island to Puerto Ayora, the Galápagos' most populous town, where we board the hotel's fiber glass boat (called a "panga") for the short hop across to the "German Neighborhood". This part of Puerto Ayora can only be reached by boat and there are no cars. A short walk along a path takes us to the hotel. Welcome to the Finch Bay Eco Hotel!

This afternoon is free to enjoy the hotel's attractions: the pool and bar area, the white coral beach in front of the hotel, or swing in their hammock

Hotel: Finch Bay Hotel

*Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included*



## Day 5 – Wednesday, February 6: Punta Carrion and South Plaza Island

Today we visit this small island full of fascinating wildlife, both along its shore and along its dramatic, wind-swept cliffs: sea lions, land iguanas, swallow-tailed gulls, Opuntia cacti and vegetation that changes colors according to the season.



We cross the island of Santa Cruz to meet the yacht at the Itabaca Channel. At Itabaca, we embark on the Sea Lion Yacht and immediately get acquainted with the safety procedures, as well as facilities of the vessel. The captain will soon set course to the first stop, Punta Carrión, at the north-eastern tip of Santa Cruz Island. Our guides will seek out the best site along the cliffs for an enjoyable snorkel. Back on board, we continue sailing round the eastern coast of Santa Cruz until we reach a group of islets and rocks: South and North Plaza are twin, crescent-shaped islands. While the northern twin remains accessible only for scientists, South Plaza is one of Galápagos most impressive visiting sites.

Only 426 feet wide, it was formed from uplifted seabed, giving it a tilted tabletop aspect. Our landing is in the channel between North and

South Plaza, where the island slopes down toward the water. The approach makes for a lavishly colorful sight! The turquoise waters of the channel contrast brilliantly with the white sand and black lava of the shoreline. The rocks have grown thick with green seaweed in places, speckled with bright orange “Sally light foot” crabs. Further up the shore, a carpet of scarlet Sesuvium succulents serves as groundcover for a grove of luminescent green prickly-pear cactus. Yellow-gray land iguanas sit beneath these, waiting patiently for pears to drop.

The trail gradually follows the tilt of the island to the cliffs that overlook the ocean to the south, where swallow-tailed gulls nest. Red-billed tropic birds, masked and blue-footed boobies ride the gusty currents. The overlook is a great place for spotting large marine life, including manta rays. Surf pounds an inlet at the western corner of the island, where a colony of bachelor sea lions make their home, accounting for the surprising surface of the rocks, polished by the oils of their fur.



Hotel: Finch Bay Hotel  
*Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included*

## Day 6 – Thursday, February 7: Santa Fe Island

Santa Fe offers one of the more beautiful and sheltered coves in the archipelago. Its turquoise lagoon is protected by a peninsula of tiny islets forming an ideal anchorage. The island lies to the southeast of Santa Cruz within sight of Puerto Ayora. Like North Seymour, Santa Fe has been uplifted, and you can see where underwater lava once cooled off (pillow lava).

A wet landing on a sandy white beach brings us into contact with one of the many sea lion harems. Bulls vie for the right to be Beach Master, while smaller males masquerade as females and make stealthy mating moves. Galápagos hawks are often easily approached, perched atop salt bushes.



The giant prickly pear cactus found here live up to their name, with tree-sized trunks! Our goal is to spot one of the large species of land iguana, native to Santa Fe. Beige to chocolate brown in color with dragon-like spines, these huge iguanas truly resemble dinosaurs.

An indigenous species of rice rat also inhabits the thickets, and lucky hikers can spot harmless Galápagos snakes. After the hike, there is nothing more inviting than a swim in the calm waters of the bay, a great snorkeling opportunity with diverse marine life.

This is a walking excursion and involves uneven rocky terrain.

Hotel: Finch Bay Hotel  
*Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included*

### **Day 7 – Friday, February 8: Tortuga Bay Beach and Charles Darwin Station Research**

#### **Morning**

Tortuga Bay is located to the southwest of Puerto Ayora, on Santa Cruz Island. Its name means turtle, since it is the favorite place for sea turtles to lay their eggs. Tortuga Bay with a beautiful white sand beach is considered the most beautiful of the Galápagos Archipelago. There is excellent bird watching along the path, with plenty of Darwin's Finches and other sea birds.

There are two beaches at Tortuga Bay, the one on the west is perfect for swimming, snorkeling or relaxing as the water is calmer, and on the other one, separated by mangroves, is great for surfing. Sea lions, marine iguanas, pelicans, and more marine birds are commonly found along the beach. Return to the hotel for lunch.



#### **Afternoon**

The headquarters of the Galápagos 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. Unfortunately, the number of tortoises is so reduced in the wild that this is the only place where many visitors to Galápagos have the chance to see tortoises.

Hotel: Finch Bay Hotel  
*Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included*

**Day 8 - Saturday, February 9: Baltra to Guayaquil**

After breakfast we leave the Finch Bay Hotel for a overland transfer to the airport in Baltra to take the flight back to the continent.

Upon arrival in Guayaquil, transfer to the Hilton Colon Hotel. The afternoon is free for you to relax and explore the city on your own.

Hotel: Hilton Colon Guayaquil  
*Breakfast and Dinner included*

**Day 9 – Sunday, February 10: Guayaquil → Panama City, Panama**

**665 NM**

Fly to Panama. Enjoy a scenic approach to Panama City including a beautiful view of the Panama Canal.

Hotel: Waldorf Astoria  
*Breakfast and Dinner included*

**Day 10 - Monday, February 11: Panama City**

Our full day sightseeing tour includes a one-hour excursion on the Panama Canal with the opportunity to spot Green Iguana and Three-toed Sloth resting on tree branches, Crocodile, Osprey in the hunt for Peacock Bass, Snail Kite and Keel-billed Toucan among other wildlife.

We will then proceed to the Miraflores Lock where you will be able to watch ships entering the lock and discover the new museum where you can test your skills to enter the Lock on a simulator.

A buffet lunch will be served at the Miraflores Restaurant providing a great view of the canal.

In the afternoon, we will continue with a walking tour to view the historical landmarks of World Heritage-listed Casco Viejo.

Hotel: Waldorf Astoria  
*Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included*



**Day 11 - Tuesday, February 12: Panama City → Grand Cayman → Fort Lauderdale, FL**

**625 + 420 NM**

We will transfer to the airport and fly to Fort Lauderdale to clear US Customs. There will be an optional technical stop in Grand Cayman to refuel.

*Breakfast included*

Landing Points, Identifier and Runway Lengths:		
<b>Fort Lauderdale</b>	KFXE	6,002'
<b>Kingston</b>	MKJP	8,900'
<b>Cartagena</b>	SKCG	8,500'
<b>Guayaquil</b>	SEGU	9,154'
<b>Panama City</b>	MPMG	5,906'
<b>Grand Cayman</b>	MWCR	7,021'

# TERMS & CONDITIONS

## Our land program includes:

- Presence of an Air Journey tour leader who will facilitate clearances, Immigration, refueling, flight planning, and provide help with any difficulty that might arise
- All accommodations in hotels listed or similar categories based on double occupancy
- All meals as specified in itinerary
- Morning and afternoon tours in the Galapagos as described in the program (subject to change based on hotel program)
- \$100 Galapagos National Park entrance fee and \$20 Transit Control Card for Galapagos
- Roundtrip transfers between airport and hotel
- All sightseeing, hotel taxes, gratuities and guide services as in indicated in itinerary

## Our land program does not include:

- Travel Insurance (available, call us for details)
- Airport departure taxes and landing fees
- Airline ticket for round-trip flight between Guayaquil – Baltra - Guayaquil
- Beverages
- Personal expenses such as laundry, room service, communication charges and other incidentals

Please note that hotel accommodations and sightseeing are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. Air Journey reserves the right to amend the order of sightseeing as necessary. Every effort will be made to operate tours as planned, but alterations may occur after the final itinerary has been issued.

Our quoted prices include planning, handling and operational charges; they are based on current rates of exchange, tariffs and taxes as of March 2018. Air Journey reserves the right to increase tour prices to cover increased costs, tariffs and taxes, and to reflect fluctuations in foreign exchange markets.

## Passports are mandatory for the Journey.

Air Journey has quoted this itinerary with a minimum participation of 5 planes.

## The Registration fee includes:

- Extensive Navigation log (airports, route, frequencies, information of airspace, nav-aids, reporting points, international flight plan) tailored for each aircraft;
- Flight plans and eAPIS manifest (departure and arrival) filed on your behalf;
- Cuba overflight permit;
- Pilot briefing prior to each day's flight;
- Weather website with constant updates showing TAF, METAR, Wind Aloft, prognostic forecast and review;
- Fuel availability confirmed along the route of flight;
- Flight bag and collared, cotton shirt for the pilot with his name and aircraft tail number embroidered on the upper front. Shirts are available for passengers and crew at an additional cost.

## Cancellation, refunds:

- a) **Cancellation by the client:** Is always required in writing and is subject to the following schedule of dates, whereby some or all moneys paid will be retained:
  - i) Given outside of 131 days of departure: AJ retains the initial deposit of \$1,000 per person
  - ii) Between 131 and 120 days of departure: AJ retains 50% of the tour cost & the registration fee
  - iii) Between 119 and 80 days of departure: AJ retains 75% of the tour cost & the registration fee
  - iv) 79 days or less or No show of departure: AJ retains 100% of the tour cost & the registration fee
- b) **Cancellation by AJ:** Should AJ cancel the tour after deposits have been received due to fewer than the minimum participants required, the full deposit will be refunded. Should AJ cancel the tour at any time due to factors beyond their control (including war, flood, force of nature, riot, civil action), they will refund the client whatever portion of moneys are reimbursed by ground operators and accommodation suppliers.

**Survival equipment** is available for rental on a daily basis and will be waiting for you at our departure point. Contact us for details. Life vests are mandatory. A survival raft is recommended.