

Grand Majestic 5-day Cruise "A"

(Santa Cruz, Genovesa, Rabida, Santiago, San Cristobal)



Day 1: Thursday

SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

In the morning: Baltra Airport Arrival

Morning flight from Quito or Guayaquil to Baltra, Galapagos Islands. After passing through immigration and baggage claim, you will be met by a Grand Majestic staff member and brought into a private bus to start your adventure in Galapagos.

Please note: Your first excursion in the Galapagos will be after being picked up at the airport upon arrival to the islands, before boarding the cruise. It is essential for you to arrive in the Galapagos wearing comfortable clothes, good closed-toe shoes suitable for an excursion, a long-brimmed hat, sun lotion, sunglasses, and to ensure you have your camera handy.

In the afternoon: Fausto Llerena Breeding Center

You will visit "Fausto Llerena" Tortoise Breeding Center in Puerto Ayora, where giant tortoises are bred in captivity. This is home to tortoises ranging from 3-inches (new hatchlings) to 4-feet long adults. Subspecies of the giant tortoises interact with one another, and many of the older tortoises are accustomed to humans stretching out their heads for a photo opportunity. The babies are kept until they are about four years-old and strong enough to survive on their own.

Fausto Llerena Breeding Center, Santa Cruz Island	
<i>Possible Activities:</i>	Walking
<i>Difficulty:</i>	Easy
<i>Type of Landing:</i>	Dry Landing
<i>Highlights & Animals:</i>	Giant tortoises, finches, Galapagos rails

Day 2: Friday

GENOVESA ISLAND

In the morning: El Barranco

El Barranco, also known as Prince Phillip's Steps, is a steep, rocky path that leads up a high cliff rock face. A marvelous view can be appreciated from here. This site is also home to Palo Santo vegetation as well as red-footed boobies, short-eared owls, Galapagos storm petrels, and Galapagos doves.

El Barranco, Genovesa Island	
<i>Possible Activities:</i>	Hiking (0,9 miles / 2 Km)
<i>Difficulty:</i>	Moderate
<i>Type of Landing:</i>	Dry Landing
<i>Highlights & Animals:</i>	Red-footed boobies, short-eared owls, storm-petrels, Galapagos doves

In the afternoon: Darwin Bay

Visit the white-sand coral beach of Darwin Bay which includes a half mile trail (0,75km) that winds through mangroves filled with land birds. Nazca boobies, red-footed boobies, and swallow-tailed gulls, which can easily be spotted here. Further down the path we'll find tidal pools where sea lions swim playfully. At the end is a spectacular view of a cliff.

Darwin Bay, Genovesa Island	
Possible Activities:	Hiking (0,9 miles / 1,5 Km), snorkeling, kayaking, and dinghy ride
Difficulty:	Easy
Type of Landing:	Wet Landing
Highlights & Animals:	Nazca boobies, red-footed boobies, swallow-tail gulls, mangroves, coral pebble beach, snorkeling: rays, colorful reef fish, and hammerhead sharks occasionally

Day 3: Saturday

RABIDA AND SANTIAGO ISLANDS

In the morning: Rabida

You will visit Rabida Island (or Jervis) which is one of the most colorful and volcanically varied islands in the archipelago as well as a great snorkeling site. We will start on Rabida's famous maroon/red sand beach, and after an easy hike, you will arrive to a stunning lookout to enjoy the amazing landscapes. The island is a birdwatcher's delight. Some species are abundant such as a few varieties of finches, Galapagos vermilion flycatchers, Galapagos hawks and brown pelicans.

Rabida Island	
Possible Activities:	Snorkeling, panga ride & short hike (0,6 miles / 1km)
Difficulty:	Easy/Moderate
Type of Landing:	Wet Landing
Highlights & Animals:	Snorkeling: white-cheeked pintail ducks, colourful fish, sea lions, brackish water lagoon, pelicans

In the afternoon: Chinese Hat Islet

This small islet is located near the southeast coast of Santiago Island. Its name comes from the distinct shape of the islet's summit. Chinese Islet is a great location to view many geological formations such as lava tunnels and lava flows. Some of the lava flows were formed underwater and subsequently raised above sea level. The presence of coral heads on the lava flow indicates this phenomenon.

Chinese Hat Islet, Santiago Island	
Possible Activities:	Hike (1,9 miles / 3 km)
Difficulty:	Easy
Type of Landing:	Wet Landing
Highlights & Animals:	Lava formations, great site for snorkeling with an abundance of marine species such as sea lions, sharks, rays and penguins.

Day 4: Sunday

SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND

In the morning: Witch Hill

Located on the northern coast, this eroded hill and its surroundings present one of the most picturesque beaches in the Galapagos with its white powdery sand and the abundance of animals. Wildlife includes sea turtles, rays, and various types of booby birds. The clear water provides an excellent opportunity for enjoying swimming and snorkeling.

Witch Hill, San Cristobal Island	
Possible Activities:	Hike, dinghy ride, snorkeling & kayaking
Difficulty:	Easy
Type of Landing:	Wet Landing
Highlights & Animals:	Beautiful rock formations, sea lions, shore birds, finches and mockingbirds; Snorkeling: nice tropical fish, anemones, sponges, coral

In the afternoon: Lobos Island

You will take an excursion to Lobos Island which means “Sea Lion Island.” This appropriately named island is ripe with noisy, playful, jolly sea lions who will welcome you to their home with open, well, fins. This island also offers great snorkeling opportunities as well as the chance to see blue-footed and Nazca boobies.

Lobos Island, San Cristobal Island	
Possible Activities:	Short hike (less than 0,6 miles / 1 km), dinhy ride
Difficulty:	Easy/Moderate
Type of Landing:	Dry Landing
Highlights & Animals:	Sea lions, frigate birds, blue-footed boobies

Day 5: Monday

SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND

In the morning: Gianni Arismendy Interpretation Center

This site is part of an environment project. The tour of this center will explore the natural history of the islands including human interaction and conservation efforts. The Museum of Natural History explains the volcanic origin of the archipelago, ocean currents, climate, and the arrival of endemic species. The Human History exhibit chronologically describes significant events such as discovery and colonization of the islands.

Gianni Arismendy Interpretation Center, San Cristobal Island	
Possible Activities:	Museum visit
Difficulty:	Easy
Type of Landing:	Dry Landing
Highlights & Animals:	Great exhibits about the archipelago’s natural history

Afterwards: San Cristobal airport departure

After this final visit, you will be transferred to the San Cristobal airport in time for your flight back to the mainland.

Please note:

Itineraries are unlikely to change significantly but are subject to change. Weather, wildlife breeding, safety concerns, instructions from the Galapagos National Park, specific abilities and interests of guests as well as operational matters may cause your guide or captain to change the time or nature of visits. Your guide and captain will always endeavor to select the best itinerary within these limits.

