

GALAPAGOS ADVENTURE CRUISE ON THE M/V EVOLUTION NORTHWESTERN ISLANDS



**WILDLAND
ADVENTURES**

**AUTHENTIC WORLDWIDE
EXPLORATIONS**

Itinerary Overview

Discover a blend of Indian and Spanish culture in Quito, South America's oldest capital city designated as a UN World Heritage Site. Voyage among the Galapagos Islands, a showcase of evolution, aboard a deluxe yacht. As you travel from island to island, our on-board, expert naturalist guide points out the unique behavioral and physical characteristics plants and animals have developed as they evolve and adapt to each unique island habitat.

During an 8-day voyage, you visit all the major sites in the archipelago, including outer islands. No where else on Earth can you observe, photograph and commune so closely with exotic and bizarre wildlife as you venture among cinder cones, lava flows, white and black sand beaches, rocky cliffs and shorelines. Plan to hike, snorkel and sea kayak.

DAY	DATE	OVERNIGHT	HOTELS	MEALS	HIGHLIGHTS
1	Thu	QUITO	Casa Aliso		Arrive and transfer to your hotel.
2	Fri	QUITO	Casa Aliso	B	Half day city tour
3	Sat	SAN CRISTOBAL / LEON DORMIDO	Evolution	BLD	Playa Ochoa, Kicker Rock
4	Sun	PLAZAS SUR / DAPHNE	Evolution	BLD	Punta Carrion
5	Mon	SOMBRERO CHINO / SANTIAGO	Evolution	BLD	James Bay
6	Tue	GENOVESA	Evolution	BLD	Prince Phillip's Steps, Darwin Bay
7	Wed	SANTIAGO / RABIDA	Evolution	BLD	Playa Espumilla
8	Thu	NORTH SEYMOUR / SANTA CRUZ	Evolution	BLD	Bachas Beach
9	Fri	SANTA CRUZ	Evolution	BLD	Charles Darwin Research Station, Highlands
10	Sat	QUITO	Casa Aliso	BLD	Black Turtle Cove, fly to Quito
11	Sun	QUITO		B	Depart

Itinerary in Detail

DAY 1: ARRIVAL IN QUITO

Airport reception and transfer to Casa Aliso, a charming mansion elegantly re-imagined as a boutique hotel in the stylish district of “La floresta.” Overnight at **Casa Aliso**

DAY 2: QUITO

Enjoy a half-day city tour of colonial Quito. Beginning in the charming hillside neighborhood of Guapulo with quaint cobblestone streets and lavish walled residences of ambassadors, continue into the main area of Quito’s New Town, passing the American Embassy and House of Culture. The old colonial center includes the bustling Independence Plaza, the dazzling gold-leafed altars of La Compania Church and the San Francisco Church. Your orientation continues with a visit to Mitad del Mundo, the Equatorial marker and ethnographic village and museum. Learn about the broad diversity of people living in this small nation, from descendants of African slaves on the Pacific coast to the remote Achuar of the rainforest. Overnight **Casa Aliso. [B]**

DAY 3: GALAPAGOS ISLANDS / LEON DORMIDO

Private transfer this morning to the domestic airport for the flight to the Galapagos. You are met and warmly greeted by your naturalist guide and transferred to the Evolution. We set out immediately for Playa Ochoa, a lovely white sand beach in a calm cove, a perfect introduction to snorkeling in the Galapagos. A tidal lagoon beyond the beach offers our first opportunity for observing Galapagos seabirds and the Chatham mockingbird. Continuing on, we navigate near Leon Dormido, or “Kicker Rock,” the remains of a lava cone. The two vertical shafts of rock rise 500 feet from the sea and form a narrow channel for small vessels. The crystal clear water offers a brilliant show of tropical fish and invertebrates. As the sun sets, enjoy a typical Ecuadorian meal, the nightly briefing and formal presentation of the captain and crew. During the rest of this week, you will leisurely voyage through the stunning Galapagos Islands, among a varied landscape of diverse flora and fauna. Overnight onboard the **Evolution. [BLD]**

DAY 4: PLAZA SUR / DAPHNE

Following breakfast, this morning’s visit is to South Plaza, a small geological uplift with tall cliffs offering spectacular views. After a dry landing, the trails lead us through Prickly Pear cactus or Opuntia and Sesuvium to a broad range of wildlife. Here we find the Galapagos land iguana feeding on the cactus leaves. Toward the end of the hill, we may encounter a colony of sea lions. The dominant bulls will likely be in various stages of recovery from battles lost over prime beach territory. We also find swallow tailed gulls, shearwaters and red-billed tropicbirds who build their nests along the cliffs. The afternoon brings us to Daphne Major, one of the most important islands for ongoing scientific research in the Galapagos. Scientists here have captured and tagged each of the island’s finches in hopes of better understanding their travels and activities. You may observe many of the Galapagos archipelago’s impressive species, blue-footed boobies, red-billed tropicbirds, magnificent frigatebirds, Nazca boobies, short-eared owls and Galapagos martins. Overnight onboard the **Evolution. [BLD]**

DAY 5: SOMBRERO CHINO / SANTIAGO

This morning’s visit is to Sombrero Chino, a tiny island just off the southeast tip of Santiago. Its name (Chinese Hat) describes the island's shape. Though centrally located it is one of the least visited sites in the area. Our landing is on a beautiful crescent-shaped white sand beach, home to sea lions and sally lightfoot crabs. The trail explores the island’s volcanic origin, one of the most evident in the islands. The lava rock is very fragile and tends to easily break. The sharp outcroppings caused from these breaks make it necessary to bring good shoes. Patches of pahoehoe lava, cracked lava and lava tubes can be found throughout the island. Our path leads partially up the striking red rust sides of the Sombrero to the caldera, high enough on the island to offer spectacular views of the waves crashing below. Snorkeling in the waters near Sombrero Chino is particularly exhilarating; white-tipped sharks frequent the area, as do playful sea lions and “flying torpedo” Galapagos penguins. Following lunch and repositioning to nearby Santiago, we have a wet landing onto a black sand beach at James Bay. An easy stroll takes us to the coastline where we observe tidal pools, marine birds, iguanas and sea lions, as well as migratory birds,

often present in this area. Keep an eye out for the impressive Galapagos hawk, soaring on the island's thermals. The trail ends at fur sea lion grottos, where we will undoubtedly observe the nocturnal hunters sleeping off the night's activities. Upon returning to the beach, don your flippers and snorkel gear for a refreshing swim. Return to the yacht for dinner. Overnight onboard the **Evolution. [BLD]**

DAY 6: GENOVESA

We spend the entire day on Genovesa, considered to be one of the most spectacular Islands in Galapagos for bird species. This morning, we have a dry landing at Prince Philip's Steps. Red-footed boobies nest here in Palo Santo trees and Nazca (formerly masked) boobies nest near the trail. In an open lava field, observe large numbers of storm petrels, and if you are lucky, we will see the elusive short-eared owl. Following the walk, kayaks are available for paddling along the shoreline. Look closely for the beautiful red-billed tropic bird usually found in the crevices. After lunch, take a *siesta* or borrow a book from the library and lounge on deck. This afternoon, we have a wet-landing on Darwin Bay, a coral sand beach where swallow-tailed and lava gulls gather near the tide pools. Enter a forest of *Optuntia* cactus and mangroves where colonies of great frigate birds nest. In a dramatic display, the earthbound males inflate their red-throated pouches to attract females as they fly overhead. The trail leads through a rich inter tidal zone where your naturalist guide helps you identify a wide diversity of wildlife. After the walk, we can swim and snorkel with sea lions from the beach in these warmer northern waters. Returning to the yacht, we set sail early to motor to the western islands. Enjoy your naturalists' briefing followed by dinner. Overnight onboard the **Evolution. [BLD]**

DAY 7: SANTIAGO / RABIDA

This morning, disembark for a hike through a Palo Santo forest, retracing trails once walked by pirates and whalers in search of a fresh water supply. A short walk takes us to a mangrove swamp where we may observe a variety of water birds, Galapagos hawks, and vermilion flycatchers as well as sea turtles. Slightly beyond lies a brackish lagoon, home to flocks of pink flamingos. Located south of Santiago, Rabida is one of the most volcanically varied islands in the chain. Geologically consisting of eroded hills and lava emitted from spatter cones that have resulted in island's striking colors. A visit begins with a wet landing on the deep maroon colored northern beach. Marine iguanas and sea lions are often seen resting in the shade of the caves nearby. Behind the beach is the salt brush home where the brown pelicans make their nests. Rabida may be the only opportunity visitors have to see pelicans nesting up close. On the cliffs above the pelicans, blue-footed and masked boobies can be seen. Following the path visitors arrive at a small saltwater lagoon where pink flamingos, Bahama pintail ducks and common stilts are frequently seen feeding. Rabida offers the best lagoons in the islands for viewing flamingos. These large pink or reddish birds live in shallow saltwater lagoons. They feed 7-12 hours a day, primarily on the pink shrimp larva that give them their color. Continuing up the rocky red cliffs a short 15-20 minute walk leads to a cliff overhang with a fantastic view of the cove with the ocean, lagoon and scarlet cliffs. Returning back to the beach Rabida offers excellent snorkeling opportunities with sharks and manta rays commonly seen. Overnight onboard the **Evolution. [BLD]**

DAY 8: NORTH SEYMOUR / SANTA CRUZ

Following breakfast, board the Zodiacs for a dry landing at North Seymour, a small geological uplift. We follow a trail that leads us to swallow-tailed gulls, blue-footed boobies and the endemic land iguanas. Your guide will also lead you to the largest colony of magnificent frigate birds found in Galapagos. As we stroll along the beach, we find marine iguanas and sea lions body surfing the northern swells. After the walk, grab your snorkel and fins to explore the deep water here. Following lunch onboard, jump in the Zodiacs this afternoon for a visit to Las Bachas, which is the Spanish translation for "barges". The long stretch of a soft white coralline sand beach is a favored spot for nesting sea turtles. A path leads us to interior lagoons where we find the Greater Flamingo, black-necked stilts and whimbrels, as well as other coastal bird species. The snorkeling is wonderful here from the beach. Overnight onboard the **Evolution. [BLD]**

DAY 9: SANTA CRUZ

This morning we visit the Charles Darwin Research Station. We observe all three tortoise corals and the breeding center with new hatchlings and miniature tortoises not yet ready to be repatriated to the wild. Scientists from all over the globe work at the station and conduct biological research from anatomy to

zoology. We also visit the Van Straelen Hall with exhibits and a short video presentation. Visitors can meet perhaps the Galapagos' most famous resident, Lonesome George, the last surviving member of the Pinta Island subspecies. Following lunch, we travel by bus to the highlands of Santa Cruz. The scenery gradually changes as we wind our way through all seven vegetation zones found in Galapagos. Here we visit the tortoise reserve where we encounter giant tortoises in their natural habitat. We visit *Los Gemelos*, Spanish for "The Twins," a pair of large pit craters, and habitat for the brilliant red male vermilion flycatcher. A special treat is a stop at "the tunnels," the largest lava tubes found in Galapagos, and eye-popping evidence of the Islands' volcanic origins. Overnight onboard the **Evolution**. **[BLD]**

DAY 10: QUITO

Today our voyage comes to an end. But before we bid farewell to the Evolution and her crew we pay a visit to Black Turtle Cove on Santa Cruz. We carefully navigate in our Zodiacs through a series of coves surrounded by lush mangroves. Your naturalist may point out mating marine turtles (Sept-Feb), white-tipped reef sharks, spotted eagle rays and beautiful yellow cow-nosed rays. The Zodiac motors are turned off and all must remain quiet while maneuvering through this magical area. The cove, a maze of tranquil salt water inlets, is a nursery site for sea turtles, rays and sharks as well as an important nesting site for sea birds. Disembark after our excursion, and return with your guides to the Galapagos airport for your afternoon flight to the mainland. Transfer in from the Quito airport and stay overnight at **Casa Aliso**. **[B]**

DAY 11: DEPART FOR HOME

Transfer to the airport for your return flight home or extend your trip to visit more of Ecuador's natural wonders. **[B]**

END OF SERVICES

Actual routes and activities may vary. Local trip coordinators reserve the right to change accommodations to similar quality alternatives.

Accommodations



CASA ALISO, QUITO

Casa Aliso is a charming boutique hotel in the style and comfort of a small, luxurious home. This luxury Ecuador vacation accommodation is located in the fashionable residential neighborhood of "La Floresta", a quiet, forested area in the northern sector of the city a close to restaurants, shops and plazas of downtown Quito. Each room is individually designed featuring classic décor with modern style. They are well appointed with a sitting chair, desk, and comfortable beds, with telephones and cable TV. The bathrooms have a bathtub and shower, bathrobes, hairdryers and are equipped with 220v and 110v sockets. Your Ecuador adventure will be enhanced by the fine cuisine and the exceptionally professional and personal service of the staff at Casa Aliso.



M/V EVOLUTION

The M/V Evolution combines 1920's elegance and style with modern day comfort and safety. The 210 ft Galapagos expedition ship is one of the most popular vessels among guests who appreciate the special ambiance of a classic small ship with the space and amenities of a completely renovated and modern Galapagos yacht. The Evolution is professionally operated by eighteen crew members, a special Galapagos tour leader, and naturalist guides trained and licensed by the Galapagos Islands National Park Service and the Charles Darwin Research Center. The Evolution features a lounge with bar and facilities for lectures,

presentations and films, and a library with a wide range of books, movies and games. Two spacious sundecks are lined with beautiful rattan furniture and you will enjoy stargazing at night in the hot tub on the bow. Meals are served buffet style in the dining room and al fresco dining area. Kids dishes, vegetarian menus and special diets are available upon request. Other amenities include an air renewal system, boutique, and an infirmary with a MD on board at all times. Snorkeling equipment, wetsuits, and kayaks are provided. The Evolution also offers a unique perspective on your Galapagos trip by carrying clear acrylic sea kayaks for 'glass-bottom' glimpses beneath the calm seas. For more information on the cabin configurations and boat dimensions, please see our [website](http://www.wildland.com).

2012 DEPARTURE DATES (THURSDAY TO SUNDAY)

January 5-15	May 10-20	September 13-23
January 19-29	May 24-June 3	September 27-October 7
February 2-12	June 7-17	October 11-21
February 16-26	June 21-July 1	October 25-November 4
March 1-11	July 5-15	November 8-18
March 15-25	July 19-29	November 22-December 2
March 29-April 8	August 2-12	December 6-16
April 12-22	August 16-26	December 20-30
April 26-May 6	August 30-September 9	

2012 PRICING

Cabin number	Per Adult	Per child
A 1	\$6680	\$6095
A 2-3	\$6335	\$5395
C1-3, C5-9	\$5780	\$5095
C4 & D1-4	\$5380	\$4795

*Principal additional fees of \$535 per adult and \$275 per child include: Internal air Quito-Galapagos-Quito, and Galapagos National Park Fee. Child is ages 11 and under

INCLUDED SERVICES

- All guided tours and excursions
- English-speaking naturalist guides
- Round trip airfare Quito - Galapagos
- Galapagos National Park fees
- Airport-hotel transfers, land and sea transportation
- 10 nights accommodation as indicated
- Meals as indicated [B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner]
- Wildland Adventures travel consultation and pre-departure services

NOT INCLUDED SERVICES

- International or internal airfare
- Tips and gratuities
- Airport departure taxes
- Drinks, alcoholic beverages, and meals other than listed above
- Personal expenses for extra services, optional activities, or changes in your itinerary for reasons beyond our control
- Travel insurance for trip cancellation, medical services, or evacuation
- Any other items not mentioned above

NOTE: Wildland Adventures, Inc. has arranged your trip utilizing the travel services of local in-country ground operators who are independent contractors. These local outfitters, lodges, hotels and other suppliers of your travel services will make every effort to conduct this trip as described in the itinerary. It is however possible that due to transportation schedule changes, weather, delays and unforeseeable acts of God, humans or nature, this itinerary may vary from what is described. Participants must assume all risks whether identified in advance or unforeseen. All optional activities are at your own risk. Extra costs due to unexpected changes in your itinerary for reasons beyond our control are not included. We highly recommend purchasing traveler's insurance for trip delay, trip cancellation, baggage, accident or

sickness. Representatives are available for assistance at any time during your trip. If preferred hotels are not available, every attempt will be made to reserve alternative accommodations of similar quality. (If upgrade is necessary, higher rates may apply.) All information and services provided are subject to our Reservation Form Terms and Conditions.

For Galapagos travelers, please note that due to weather conditions, vessel operation, and Galapagos Park management, cruise itineraries are subject to change. All yacht operators reserve the right to change vessels prior to departure due to maintenance or replacement. On very rare occasions when this occurs passengers will be transferred to another vessel and cabin of comparable or better class (comfort, services, amenities, equipment, etc.) at no extra charge.