

TRIP ID: EC003-UIOGPS7N

Ecuador and Galapagos Multisport Program in 8 Days

Highlights • Quito • Equatorial Museum • Otavalo, Cotacachi and Cuicocha Artisan Towns • Galapagos Islands • Santa Cruz Island • Isabela Island • Charles Darwin Research Center • Snorkeling, Kayaking and Mountain Biking • Guayaquil



Cotacachi Volcano (Crater)



Day 1 • Quito, Ecuador Arrival

Meet and greet at Quito airport by your personal tour guide. Private transportation to your selected hotel for registration. 3-Nights hotel stay in Quito.

Day 2 • Panoramic Quito and Equatorial Tour (B/L)

08:00 pickup from hotel for a full day city tour of Quito. Our guided group tour includes transportation and a professional tour guide. Entry fees to churches are not included USD \$20 (approx. payable locally). Built on a carpet of ancient Incan

ruins, Ecuador's bustling capital is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We visit the historic city center and San Francisco the first church built in Quito. We proceed to La Compañía de Jesus. This Jesuit church is one of the great baroque masterpieces in South America. All the work took 160 years. We continue to La Mitad del Mundo (The Middle of the World) and Quitsato Mitad Del Mundo Monument. A visitor with one foot in either hemisphere, straddling the Equator. Ciudad La Mitad del Mundo is a complex set up on the site where, in 1736, French explorer and scientist Charles-Marie de la Condamine made his final calculations to determine the precise equatorial line. Optional lunch (not incl.). 17:00 transportation back to your hotel.

Day 3 • Otavalo, Cotacachi and Cuicocha Markets • Cotacachi Volcano (B/L)

07:30 pickup from hotel for a full day guided excursion to Otavalo and its neighboring artisan villages. Departure from Quito to Cayambe where you can buy a Bizcochos de Cayambe, a type of cracker or baked bread filled with cheese or caramel sauce. On-route to Otavalo we drive by beautiful Lake San Pablo. Otavalo is famous for its colorful textiles and handicrafts. We continue on to the town of Cotacachi, celebrated for its leather clothing and crafts. On-route to Cotacachi we also stop over at Ñanda Mañachi, an Andean instrument workshop. Continuation to the Cuicocha Lagoon and ecological reserve, located inside the Cotacachi Volcano (crater lagoon). Weather permitting; go hiking along its large rim. Lunch. 17:00 Transportation back to your hotel in Quito.

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Galapagos Islands



Day 4 • Quito • Santa Cruz Island • Isabela Island, Galapagos (B/L/D)

Private transfer to the Quito Airport. Assistance at the airport. Departure to Baltra, Galapagos Islands. Assistance, meet and greet on Santa Cruz Island upon arrival. Travelers have to pass an airport inspection to insure that no foreign plants or animals are imported. 14:00 after lunch, we navigate on a speedboat-ferry to Isabela Island (2hrs). Transportation to your selected hotel for registration. Enjoy a brief rest before heading on to the Flamingo

Lagoon, the largest coastal inlet and breeding ground for flamingos on the Galapagos Islands. Return to your hotel for dinner. 3-Nights hotel accommodation on Isabela Island, Galapagos.

Day 5 • Sierra Negra Volcano • Concha Perla Snorkeling (B/BOXL/D)

08:00 after breakfast, go hiking with your guide to the Sierra Negra Volcano (bring comfortable clothes, walking shoes and a light rain jacket). The Sierra Negra volcano is one of five volcanos on Isabela, and boasts the second largest volcanic caldera in the world. Go trekking on the rim of a six-mile wide crater and across an alien looking landscape of lava fields and fumaroles. Make sure your camera is stored in waterproof bags, wear sunscreen 30+, bring water and a hat! We continue by truck to another trail for a

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Hiking on Isabela Island



Day 5 • Concha Perla Snorkeling (continuation) 12 km hike (4 hours). This route is not strenuous, optional horses are available for rental (horses are not included). From the summit of the Chico Volcano, enjoy spectacular vistas of the landscape below. Box-Lunch included. Return to your hotel. After a short rest, we go snorkeling to Concha Perla in the afternoon. Swim with sea lions, colorful fish, sea turtles and rays. Return to the hotel. Dinner at selected restaurant.

Day 6 • Kayaking Puerto Villamil •

Mountain Bike Ride in Humedales (B/BOXL/D)

After breakfast, walk to the island docks with your guide to board your kayak. After a mandatory safety briefing and putting on your

life jackets, start paddling towards Puerto Villamil Bay and Tintoreras Islet. Observe local marine life from your kayaks! Look for penguins, blue-footed boobies, and sea iguanas. From El Faro outlook had back to your hotel (2- hours) for a tasty lunch. In the afternoon, we travel to Humedales. Enjoy a fun bike ride to the giant tortoise-breeding center. Learn about this enormous reptiles and its habitat. Continue on your bikes through the popular Isabela Lava Tunnel, the Mirador Orchilla, the Estero de Isabela, and the Beach of Love. From the beach, we continue on to the nearby Wall of Tears. Isabela Island housed a large penitentiary from 1943 to 1959. Prisoners built a big wall from volcanic rocks. The name (wall of tears) derives from the arduous labour and harsh conditions prisoners endured. Many convicts lost their lives. Return to your hotel on time for dinner.

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Guayaquil City View

Day 7 • Isabela Island • Trekking Santa Cruz Highlands • Charles Darwin Research Station (B/L/D)

Early wake up! 06:00 hotel check out and departure to the Isabela docks. 07:00 guided speed-boat-ferry transportation to Santa Cruz Island (2-hour navigation). Upon arrival in Puerto Ayora, enjoy breakfast and rest. Hotel registration. Transportation to the Santa Cruz Highlands by van (2 hours). Today we go hiking inside the Cerro Chato Reserve. The scenery here is breathtaking! Look for Giant Galapagos Tortoises in their natural habitat. Incredible lava formations have shaped this landscape. Our naturist tour guide will identify the infamous Galapagos Vampire Finches and many other endemic birds along the trek. After this incredible encounter with the local flora and fauna, we return to Puerto Ayora for lunch.

In the afternoon, we visit to the www.darwinfoundation.org. Continue to Puerto Ayora. Puerto Ayora looks and feels like a prosperous mainland Ecuadorian coastal town, despite the sea lions and pelicans hanging around the waterfront. Free time to enter galleries, bars or just hang out and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere. Return to the hotel. Farewell dinner at selected restaurant. 1-Night stay on Santa Cruz Island.

Day 8 • Santa Cruz Island • Baltra Airport • Guayaquil Departure (B)

Pickup from hotel and transportation to the Baltra Airport. Departure to Guayaquil (or to Quito).

Optional tour (not included): Depending on your departure time from Ecuador, you could join our private guided city tour of Guayaquil. Description: Assistance, meet and greet by your personal guide upon arrival in Guayaquil. Traveling along the main streets and avenues of the town, we visit the Simon Bolivar Park, the Guayaquil embankment, la Rotonda with the statues of Bolivar and Saint Martin. We also explore Las Peñas, Guayaquil's artistic and colonial neighborhood. Enjoy great panoramic vistas of the city and the Guayas River before returning to the airport. Duration: 4 hours. Includes transportation and a guide.

Option STC: Category Tourist Class Hotels

3-Nights Quito, Ecuador • **Holiday Inn Express** www.hiexpress.com

3-Nights Isabela Island Galapagos • **Hotel San Vicente** www.hotelsanvicentegalapagos.com

1-Night Santa Cruz Island Galapagos • **Hotel Fiesta** www.galapagoshotelfiesta.com

Option FCB: Category First Class Hotels

3-Nights Quito, Ecuador • **Dan Carlton Hotel** www.hotelesdann.com

3-Nights Isabela Island Galapagos • **Casa de Marita** www.galapagosisabela.com

1-Night Santa Cruz Island Galapagos • **Hotel Solymar** www.hotelsolymar.com.ec

Domestic Flights to Galapagos (not included)

Quito-Baltra, Santa Cruz Galapagos • Avianca 1688-Daily Flight • 09:10-10:24

Baltra, Galapagos-Guayaquil • Avianca 1633-Daily Flight • 10:05-12:58

Airfare taxes included *from* USD \$499 (Airfare is subject to change)

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