

A World Away Travels

adventure travel's complete experience...

PO Box 596 ~ South Fork, CO 81154 ~ USA
Phone 1-888-438-3612 ~ Fax 1-707-516-7651 ~ email info@aworldawaytravels.com
www.aworldawaytravels.com

Galapagos Cruise and Highlands Excursion **Weekly Departures**

Join us as we cruise to the Galápagos to view the islands' unique and fearless wildlife. Our naturalist guided trips aboard small-chartered sailboats and motor yachts provide intimate, insightful and luxurious week-long voyages. Retracing the step of Darwin's famous voyage we will explore the Galápagos' fascinating islands and view an extraordinary variety of species of birds, plants and animals found nowhere else in the world. Combining coastal walks, snorkeling, sea kayaking and exploring by pango (dinghy) we will have close-up encounters with the Galapagos' incredible wildlife; from bays of swimming sea lions, to mountain sides inhabited by giant tortoises and beaches covered with sun bathing Iguanas. Our vessel, the Andando is a magnificent steel hulled schooner, with teak decks and a luxurious interior. The boat features air-conditioned cabins with private bathrooms, exquisitely prepared gourmet meals and an incredibly attentive staff. The most important member of the staff our expert naturalist guides who will allow you to truly discover the natural wonders of the Galápagos, a paradise for naturalists, photographers and adventurers.

Day 1 Friday *United States-Quito, Ecuador*

Departing from the United States you will arrive in Quito (9,300 feet), the colonial capitol of Ecuador, in the evening. Your guide will be at the airport and will help you transfer to the five star Hotel Colon. Centrally located the Colon is a meeting place for Ecuadorians. Accommodations: Hilton Hotel Colon

Day 2 Saturday *Quito*

After breakfast at the hotel today you will enjoy a walking tour of Quito's colonial center. Old Quito has been declared a national monument and today all of the buildings are painted in white with blue balconies and trim. Your tour features the old city visiting Independence Square, the San Francisco Monastery that was built of the remains of the Hauyna –Capacis Royal House in 1535, and El Panecillo, the most famous landmark in Colonial Quito from which it is possible to observe not only Quito, but also the snow-capped volcanoes that surround the city. After lunch the afternoon is free to further explore on your own. Quito has a number of art galleries and an impressive archeological museum. Tonight we will have a welcome dinner in colonial Cusco at one of the great local restaurants. Accommodations: Hilton Colon Hotel
Breakfast, Dinner

Day 3 Sunday *Quito-Cochasqui*

From Quito you will travel to the emerald green mountains of the Ecuadorian Andes. Our journey begins driving through open countryside passing traditionally dressed people working on their farms. Our first destination will be the ruins at Cochasqui. The ruins were built by the Cara Indians and had been largely forgotten until recently. In 1977, The area was declared a national archeological site and are now being excavated and investigated. At the site there are 15 grass-covered pyramids, or tolas, that were built in the 9th century. Surrounding the ruins are the lush green hillsides of Ecuador's highlands and the giant volcanoes of Cotapaxi and Illiniza, Ecuador's two highest peaks. After enjoying a neighboring walk we travel to the Casa Mojanda for the evening. Accommodations: Hacienda Casa Mojanda *B,L,D*

Day 4 Monday *Cochasqui-Otavallo*

After breakfast we will further explore the area around our hacienda including the Mojanda Cajas which have lagoons where spotting condors can be quite frequent. From here we will travel to the highland town of Otavallo. Otavallo is located in the Imbabura Province, which is also known as the Lake Province. Its people are involved in the making of handi-crafts ranging from weaving, stone and wood carving and leather goods. Before visiting the larger market we will stop in two smaller towns en route, Peguche and Agato to watch as locals weave their incredible textiles. In the afternoon we will drive to Hacienda Cusin, a beautifully converted 17th century hacienda in the town of San Pablo del Lago. Tonight dinner will be next to a roaring fireplace in this incredible hacienda. Accommodations: Hacienda Cusin *B,L,D*

Day 5 Tuesday *Otavallo-Quito*

The morning is free to further explore around the hacienda. There are several short (1-2 hour) walks, mountain bikes or horseback rides that can be done from the hacienda. After a delicious home cooked lunch we will drive back to Quito for the evening. Arriving in the late afternoon the evening is free to further explore on your own. Accommodations: Hotel Colon *B,L*

Day 6-12 Galápagos Cruise

Day 6 Wednesday *Quito-Plaza*

In the morning you will transfer from the hotel to the airport for your flight to the Galapagos. The Galápagos are situated 600 miles off the shore of Ecuador. Your flight lands on the island of Baltra where you transfer to your motor or sailing yacht. After lunch on board we will begin our week-long trip through the Galápagos. Aboard small vessels you will be able to travel to places that the larger boats can not access; allowing you superb animal viewing experiences. Today we cruise to the island of Plaza. Plaza is a small island with steep cliffs and fascinating wildlife. Plaza is home to sea lion colonies as well as land and marine iguanas, swallow tailed gulls and red-billed tropic birds. *B,L,D*

Day 7 Thursday *South Plaza-Santa Cruz-Santa Fe*

Today we visit the Islands and Santa Cruz and Santa Fe. Santa Cruz is one of the largest islands in the Galápagos. As well it is home to the Darwin Research Station in Puerto Ayora. In the lush highlands of Santa Cruz we will see giant tortoises and visit extinct volcano cones. The highlands are home to a wide variety of birds. We should see brightly colored vermilion flycatchers, yellow flycatchers, egrets, and several of Darwin's Galápagos finches. Returning to our boat we will visit Black Turtle Cove where we have a chance to see sharks, rays and, in season, green sea turtles. Our final stop for the day will be the island of Santa Fe with its frolicking sea lion populations and dramatic Opuntia Cactus. *B,L,D*

Day 8 Friday *Santa Fe- Espanola*

The island of Espanola is a true highlight, nearly all of the species found on this island are visible from Puenta Suarez, including: Albatross colonies, mocking birds, unusual red and green trimmed marine iguanas, and both blue footed and masked boobies. In the evening we will set anchor along one of Gardner Bay's beautiful beaches. *B,L,D*

Day 9 Saturday *Espanola-Florena*

From the Punta Commerant we walk to a flamingo lagoon, where the species nest showing off their bright pink colors. The lagoon also hosts species of Galápagos Ducks and many other varieties of shore birds. In the afternoon we will snorkel at nearby Devils' Crown, an almost completely submerged volcano known for its brightly colored coral and tropical fish. Our day ends dropping a letter off at Post Office Bay, where in the 18th century whalers opened an unofficial post office in a barrel, for other visitors to take home and deliver their mail. *B,L,D*

Day 10 Sunday *Florena-Isabella*

The largest island in the Galápagos, Isabella also has the highest peak, Volcano Wolf which rises more than 5,000 feet above sea level. This island has some of the most remote visitor sites including Punta Morena with its flamingos in an oasis among barren lava fields and flightless cormorants on the rocky

shores. In the afternoon we will travel by panga through lush mangroves and small islets to view turtles and penguins. *B,L,D*

Day 11 Monday *Isabella-Fernandina*

Before leaving the waters of Isabella we will visit Urbina Bay with its Land Iguanas and Giant tortoises. Fernandina may be the Galápagos' most virgin island. Here the impressive black volcanic rock formations are covered with marine iguanas sunning themselves. Sea lions dash in and out of the inlets and cormorants walk tipsily along the beaches, between pelicans and penguins. *B,L,D*

Day 12 Tuesday *Fernandina-Santiago*

Off the coast of Santiago we will visit two smaller islands, Rabida and Bartalome. Radida with its volcanic red sand beaches and bachelor sea lions is our first stop before visiting Bartalome off the eastern shore of Santiago. Jutting out of Sullivan Bay, Pinnacle Rock with its spectacular view of the Galápagos is the archipelagos most frequented island. In the afternoon we will have a chance to snorkel with penguins and climb the island's volcano. *B,L,D*

Day 13 Wednesday *Return to Quito*

Our week long exploration of the Galápagos ends at Baltra where we will catch a flight to Quito. The afternoon is free to relax before our final dinner in downtown Quito. Accommodations: Hotel Colon *B,L,D*

Day 14 *Depart Ecuador*

In the morning you will catch a flight home. *B*

Trip Cost: \$3200 (6-8 participants) \$3400 (3-5 participants) \$3600 (2 participants) **Single Supplement:** \$500 (Available in Quito and Oltavalo only-not on boats)

Internal Flights: \$400

CRUISE ONLY:\$2500

All of our Galapagos tours are limited to 16. It's a small group that will allow us to meet and interact with local people- not possible in larger groups and have the best wildlife viewing experiences. Guided by superb trip leaders with extensive backgrounds living and working with Ecuadorian people and traveling through out the country this trip is an incredible opportunity you could not receive with another company.

The cost of the trip will include everything while you are in Peru (unless note in the itinerary). This includes all guides, tours, lectures, accommodations in first-class hotels (4 nights Hilton Colon Hotel, 1 night Hacienda Casa Mojanda, 1 night Hacienda Cusin, 7 nights aboard a chartered sailing vessel or motor cruiser) food (41 meals), entrance fees, and ground transportation. The price does not include international air fares, airport tax, Galapagos Park Fee, and personal expenses.