



# The Galapagos Islands

Wildlife Islands on the Equator



*Come eye-to-eye with a waved albatross on its nest.*

*Stand beside a blue-footed booby as it performs a courtship dance.*

*Snorkel with playful sea lions, and watch tiny penguins zip by.*

*Savour all of these experiences and more on our magical Galapagos Islands adventure.*

A Galapagos tour offers a nature-lover's dream: encounters with wildlife that is unafraid of humans.

## A Living Natural Laboratory

The Galapagos Islands, in all their dramatic and desolate volcanic beauty, lie 600 miles west of mainland Ecuador's Pacific coast.

This living natural laboratory, inspiration for Darwin's theory of evolution, is home to marine and land creatures - some found nowhere else in the world - which have no instinctive fear of humans.

Travelers sailing around the islands, one of the greatest diving sites on earth, come in close contact with an impressive array of animal and bird life including fur seals, hammerhead sharks, iguanas, boobies, manta rays, penguins, turtles, and tortoises in this, the greatest wildlife sanctuary on earth.

## A Trip With Enhancements

We are proud of this expedition itinerary which has been crafted with much deliberation and with input from naturalists and guests and our partners who operate it.

The result is a unique Galapagos adventure cruise:

- First, we have limited the number of guests to a small **group of 16, for a personalized trip.**
- We work with one of the **best yachts, crew and naturalist in the Galapagos.**
- We chose the timing and the itinerary of our trips to coincide with **the best weather** as well as the

## best times for wildlife activity.

- We also explore **wonderful off-lying islands that many outfitters skip**, so you get a complete experience of the islands' magic.
- In addition to the tours by **zodiacs, snorkel ling and on foot, we also offer paddling excursions** with our fleet of kayaks, allowing us to get far off the beaten path.
- We offer an amazing **"behind the scenes" tour of Old Quito** with an esteemed retired history professor as our private guide.

From a beautifully restored hotel in Quito's 500-year-old "Old Town" (a UN World Heritage Site), you will fly to your yacht in the Galapagos Islands.

Once you have boarded and settled into your private cabin, you'll begin a journey through the islands that involves wildlife viewing, shore trips on foot, snorkelling and kayaking. You will be accompanied by an expert naturalist. We have experienced this trip ourselves and selected it as the perfect fit for Maple Leaf guests.





# The Galapagos Islands

## Dates & Prices

2012:  
May 10- 20, Aug 16-26, Nov 8-18  
10 nights, 11 days

### Land Cost:

Double/twin stateroom: US\$ 5,250 / person  
Triple stateroom: US\$ 4,300 / person

Mid-deck stateroom: US\$5450 / person  
Upper-deck stateroom: US\$5750 / person

\*Includes: accommodation in hotels and on motor yacht, guide services, transfers to and from airports, mini-bus transfers on Santa Cruz Island, all meals as indicated in the itinerary.

Does not include: international flights, domestic flights (approx. USD \$350), park fees (approx. USD \$100), alcoholic beverages in Galapagos and soft and alcoholic beverages in Quito, gratuities, insurances, etc.

Depart: Quito, Ecuador  
Return: Quito, Ecuador

Maple Leaf Adventures  
PO Box 8845, Stn. Central,  
Victoria, B.C., V8W 3Z1 Canada

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## Itinerary

### Day 1: Quito

Meals: none. Guest arriving today are met at the airport by our Quito guide and transferred to Hotel Patio Andaluz.

### Day 2: Quito

Meals: B, L, D A.M: Briefing by our Quito guide, followed by a cultural walking tour of Quito's Centro Histórico, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. PM: Afternoon free. Welcome dinner in Theatrum Restaurant.

### Day 3: Quito to Galapagos

Meals: B, L, D AM: Early flight to Galapagos Islands. Transfer from airport on Baltra Island to Santa Cruz Island, for a tour to the highlands to see giant tortoises in the wild. Lunch in a ranch in the highlands. PM: Tour the Charles Darwin Research Station, in Puerto Ayora. Late afternoon, board Reina Silvia and set sail.

### Day 4: Floreana Island

Meals: B,L, D AM: Punta Cormorant: beach with greenish olivine crystals, flamingo lagoon, walk to white sand beach with turtles' nests and stingrays in the shallows. Post Office Bay: site of whalers' post office barrel and early settlement Champion: fantastic snorkeling site, lots of sea lions. PM: Cruise to Puerto Velasco Ibarra, visit to Pirates' Caves, with stop at giant tortoise sanctuary en route.

### Day 5: Southern Isabela Island

Meals: B,L,D AM: Bahia Elizabeth: Breeding site for Galapagos penguins, the largest concentration in the islands. Panga ride and snorkeling. PM: Punta Moreno: Dramatic lava flows, red mangroves, lava herons

### Day 6: Central Isabela and Fernandina

#### Islands

Meals: B,L,D AM: Bahia Urbina: in 1954 this area was uplifted 4 meters by volcanic activity, so it is a geological wonder. Also the site of the largest land iguanas in the Galapagos. PM: Cruise to Punta Espinoza on Fernandina Island: huge heaps of marine iguanas, nesting flightless cormorants, Galapagos hawk.

### Day 7: Northern Isabela Island

Meals: B,L,D AM: Tagus Cove: panga ride along the cliffs for good sightings of blue footed boobies, flightless cormorants and Galapagos penguins. Dramatic snorkeling in rock gardens at the foot of the cliffs – swim with penguins! Hike past salt lake crater and up to top of tuff cone for spectacular 360 degree view. PM Punta Vicente Roca: at the foot of Ecuador Volcano, a panga cruise looking for huge Ocean Sunfish (Mola Mola) as well as of masked and blue footed boobies on the cliffs; great snorkeling site, lots of green turtles.

### Day 8: Santiago Island

Meals: B,L,D AM: Playa Espumilla: Idyllic beach, green turtles, sea lions and good snorkeling. Caleta Bucanero: stunning scenery and interesting bucaneer history. PM Puerto Egas: Fur seals, marine iguanas, yellow crowned night herons and many other shore birds.

### Day 9: Santa Cruz & North Seymour Islands

Meals: B,L,D. AM PM: Las Bachas: beautiful sand beach for swimming and snorkeling small lake with flamingos. North Seymour: large land iguanas, nesting frigate birds, blue footed boobies and swallow tailed gulls.

### Day 10: Galapagos to Quito

Meals: B,L,D AM: Transfer to Baltra for flight to Quito. Farewell dinner in Alma Cocina (subject to change).

### Day 11: Quito to home or onward journey

Meals: B. Transfers to airport for homeward flights.  
*Note: Transfers are not provided for guests leaving after the trip end date.*

*This itinerary is a good example of the trip, which we have offered for years, but is subject to change.*





# The Galapagos Islands



*"The islands are magnificent. They were more than I could have hoped for."*

*"Your compassion and sensitivity to guests is first class. Your planning and attention to the specifics of what makes a memorable adventure is fantastic. Thank you!"*

*K.S., Toronto*

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## Activities & Accommodation

### Activities:

Easy hiking, kayaking, snorkeling, wildlife and bird watching, cruising.

### Accommodation:

7 nights aboard the motor yacht. 3 nights in hotels.

## About the Ship

Your trip will be aboard a luxury yacht - one of the top serving the Galapagos Islands.

The ship is a 90-foot, fibreglass power boat with luxurious, spacious, double-occupancy, private cabins. Each cabin has a "head" (bathroom) with sink, walk-in shower, and toilet, as well as 2 side-by-side beds and an upper bunk. There is also ample storage.

The ship has a dining lounge and a salon for reading and relaxing in, as well as an upper deck lounge.

There are kayaks and snorkelling gear, and two inflatable shore boats (called "pangas") for visiting the islands. The crew are excellent and very experienced, having worked together for a decade on the ship.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Where are the Galapagos Islands and how do I get there?

They are part of Ecuador and lie 1000 kilometres off its coast. Our trip starts and ends in Quito, the capital of Ecuador, which you can fly to through Houston or Miami. From Quito our group takes a domestic flight to Baltra, in the Galapagos, where we meet our yacht.

### Why should I go to the Galapagos?

We believe everyone should go there, at least once! The creatures that live on the Galapagos Islands and in the waters around them have no fear of humans, so the wildlife encounters are unparalleled. Coming

face to face with a waved albatross as it sits on its nest, watching close-up the hilarious courtship rituals of blue footed boobies, seeing tiny penguins zip past you while you are snorkeling and having juvenile sea lions playfully twirl around you- these are unforgettable experiences. And they only scratch the surface of the amazing things that happen on this magical trip.

### Will the islands be crowded?

Only 6% of the National Park is open to visitors - a great way to ensure that the wildlife on the islands is properly protected. So you will often see other boats in most of our anchorages. But the National Park goes to great efforts to avoid too many people on one site at any one time, for the sake of the visitors but most of all for the sake of the islands' fauna and flora. Also, our Naturalist Guide is highly skilled at deciding when our groups should go ashore, avoiding busy times so that you have the best experience possible.

### What do we do in Quito?

We spend a total of three nights in the beautiful Old Quarter of Quito, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. On the second day of the trip we have a fabulous tour of this area with a remarkable guide who has special access to parts of churches normally closed to the public. We stay in a lovely, historic hotel, eat great food and soak in the atmosphere of this fabulous city!

### What are the physical activities on the trip and what level of fitness do I need?

You do not have to be very fit, but a level of agility is important. In the Galapagos Islands we have two on-shore visits a day. Each of these involves getting in and out of Zodiacs - always with the strong arms of our crew members to assist you. On land, each excursion involves about two hours of walking. The pace is slow, as we constantly stop to observe and discuss wildlife, but we are sometimes moving over very uneven ground, such as lava flows and boulders. We also go snorkeling at least once a day for about 45 minutes, and usually get in and out of the water from



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the Zodiac, with the help of a ladder and our crew.

Please also note that Quito (where we are at the start and end of the trip) is 9000 feet above sea level, so it's important to pace yourself in terms of physical activity there. If you have a heart or lung condition please check with your physician to make sure you can handle the elevation. The Galapagos, obviously, are at sea level.

### **I'm a vegetarian, is that a problem?**

Not at all, but please let us know in advance, and advise us on what you can't eat.

### **Do I need insurance?**

Medical insurance, including emergency evacuation, is required on all our trips. We also strongly advise you to purchase trip cancellation insurance.

### **Do I need a visa?**

North Americans do not need a visa, however you will need a passport that is valid up to 6 months after your trip in Ecuador ends.

### **Do I need vaccinations?**

You should make sure that your routine vaccinations (tetanus, polio, diphtheria) are up to date. From the time of writing it is advisable to be inoculated against hepatitis A and typhoid. If you are planning a trip to the Amazon, you should have a shot for yellow fever and take malarial medication. Please note that these are guidelines, and it is advisable to check with your physician or local travel clinics.

### **Are bugs a problem?**

There is no malaria in Quito or the Galapagos, and few bugs to worry about. In the Galapagos it's worth having some anti-bug spray along for when you are on the beaches (sand flies) or hiking in areas with long grass.

### **How can I access cash when I'm on the trip?**

There are ATMs in Quito airport and close to our hotel. During the Galapagos cruise we will spend an afternoon

in the town of Puerto Ayora, where there are ATMs.

### **What clothes and equipment will I need?**

When you sign up for the trip, we will provide you with a comprehensive clothes and equipment list.

### **I'm more into physical activity than my partner, is that a problem?**

One of the beauties of our mothership trips is that they offer a great deal of flexibility in terms of activities. In the Galapagos, if one of you wants to take a break, you can skip an excursion, relax on the boat and enjoy wildlife viewing from the deck. During our Quito tour you will always be in walking distance or a very short taxi ride from our hotel.

### **What is the weather like in May and Oct/Nov?**

May to November is considered the "cool" season with average temperatures ranging from a low of 68 to a high of 82 F (19 – 27 C). At this time of year, there are more animals on different islands, and the cold currents bring more animal life to the ocean. It's a cooler time in the water for snorkelling, but we found it quite pleasant.

### **I'm travelling alone, is that a problem?**

Absolutely not. We have many guests who travel with us on their own. They appreciate the camaraderie of our groups, and usually go home with new-found friends.



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**Top-deck Lounge**



**Salon & Dining Lounge**



**Regular Stateroom**



**Mid-deck Suite**



**Top-deck Suite view 1**



**Top-deck Suite view 2**

## More About the Ship

Reina Silvia sails primarily with 12 passengers; however, she may still carry 16 passengers as 4 of the 6 staterooms can be configured for three persons. Reina Silvia accommodates her guests in 6 staterooms, each equipped with individually controlled air conditioner, telephone (internal calls and international satellite phone service), and a TV with DVD player. All staterooms can be configured to have either two lower beds or one king-sized bed. Bathroom facilities are en suite with a full size shower, lavatory, and hair dryer.

**Top deck** The top deck features a large shaded and enclosed lounge and bar. Sliding windows allow warm air through yet keep the cold air out. The circular seating takes advantage of the almost 360 degree views. Drinks are served at the bar during sunsets and Equator crossings. The cushioned lounge area is a great place to catch up on reading, daydreaming, and napping. Just forward of this area, with access from the port passageway, is the entrance to stateroom 1. With its large windows this room offers a superb view. It has a mini bar and a small writing desk and is larger than the other staterooms. It can be configured as two twin or one king-sized bed.

**Main Deck** At the aft of the main deck is the boarding and swim platform. Forward is an extended bow pulpit for whale and dolphin watching. From the well-equipped galley excellent cuisine is served in the dining salon. The dining and salon area has an LCD projector used for informative presentations by the naturalist guide. Drinks are served at the bar and the library offers a selection of books and nature movies.

Stateroom 2 is located forward of the bar. It features two lower twin beds that can be joined together to make a king bed; the en suite bathroom facility has a full size shower.

**Lower Deck** From the salon/dining area, staircases lead down to the staterooms 3, 4, 5, and 6. Each has twin beds (night table in between) that can be moved together to make a king-bed. Hidden in the bulkhead of each lower deck stateroom is a Pullman-style berth that can be made up when the stateroom is reserved for three persons. The en suite bathroom facility extends across the entire width of each stateroom and features a full size shower. Large, fixed portholes provide daylight and views; each with a metal cover that can easily be closed to block out light or for safety. In order to keep the impact to the natural environment to a minimum, Reina Silvia is equipped with an IMO approved wastewater treatment plant and an oil-water separator. Only biodegradable soap, shampoo, and rinse are used on board. A desalination plant provides all the freshwater needed.



**Top Deck**



**Main Deck**



**Lower Deck**

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*“Thanks for the best vacation ever.”*

– Carrie Novick, Oregon.

## Contact Us

To book a trip or for help with any questions you may have, we welcome your call or email.

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## Booking and Cancellation Policy

To avoid disappointment, your reservation should be made early. The number of participants in each program is limited, and the demand is high. Our trips sell out early.

### North America Trips

**Deposit:** A deposit of one third of the price of the trip will reserve your space for any trip.

**Balance:** The balance is due 120 days prior to departure.

**Cancellations:** If you are unable to participate and cancellation occurs at least 120 days prior to the departure date of your trip, the full amount of your deposit is refundable, minus a \$200 admin fee. If cancellation occurs less than 120 days prior to the departure date of your trip, we will do our best to try to fill your space on the trip, however no money will be refunded unless all the spaces on your trip are filled.

### Galapagos Islands Trips

**Deposit:** A nonrefundable deposit of US \$1000 reserves a place on the trip. On payment of the deposit you will receive: receipt/invoice, medical information form, agreement and release from liability form, itinerary and additional information covering packing lists, visa requirements, health issues, etc.

**Balance:** The balance is due 3 months prior to departure date. On payment of the balance you will receive: receipt, final trip bulletin including participant list and rendezvous instructions.

**Single Supplement:** Accommodations are based on double occupancy. If you are traveling alone and wish to share accommodation, we will try to assign you a roommate. If there

is no one with whom you can share, or if you prefer single accommodation, you will be requested to pay a Single Supplement, as listed for each trip.

**Cancellation Policy:** At the time we receive written notice of your wish to cancel your trip, the following fees will apply: \* 90 days+ from departure date: 100% of deposit; \* 89 to 60 days from departure date: 50% of Land Cost; \* 59 days or less from departure date: 100% of Land Cost

### Group Bookings

For large group bookings, such as a family charter of the entire ship, the booking and cancellation policy may be different - please do contact us for information.

## Cancellation Insurance

We highly recommend cancellation insurance, which protects you if you have to make a late cancellation in certain cases (such as a medical emergency). Travel insurance can be purchased through your travel agency or through our travel agent (contact us for info). This must be done at the time your booking is confirmed.

## Pre-Trip Information Package

A comprehensive pre-trip information package will welcome you “aboard” at the time of booking. It includes information on clothing and other items to bring, how to get to your trip, insurance, visa requirements, etc.

## Getting to & from the Ship

Our office staff can help you with these questions and arrangements - call or email any time.

Design: [www.LotusDesign.ca](http://www.LotusDesign.ca)