

Full Itinerary

CRUISE THE GALAPAGOS AND EXPLORE THE AMAZON LUXURY RAINFOREST ECO-LODGE & ISLAND CRUISE.



TALK TO OUR WELL TRAVELLED TEAM OF EXPERTS

0844 3350 197

Monday to Friday 09:00 - 18:00 GMT



JOURNEY SNAPSHOT

ACTIVITY LEVEL:

Level 2

DESTINATION:

Cruise the Galapagos and Explore the Amazon

DURATION:

13 days / 12 nights

FLIGHT INFORMATION:

Return economy flights from London Heathrow [LHR] to arrive into Quito International Airport [UIO] on Day 1 and depart from Quito on Day 13

PICKUP LOCATION:

Quito International Airport [UIO], Ecuador

OVERVIEW

Choose your own departure date for your group.

Immerse yourself in nature in Ecuador's Amazon Rainforest staying at a luxury eco-lodge, before cruising the Galapagos Islands on a privately chartered yacht

Can there be any greater natural spectacle on earth than the combination of these two destinations? After a little time spent acclimatising to the altitude of Ecuador and exploring the capital city of Quito, this tour takes you to the world's richest and most-varied biological reservoir - the Amazon Rainforest. The Yasuni National Park is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and within it, the Napo Wildlife Centre is an environmentally sustainable eco-resort run by the local indigenous community. There is no more luxurious place from which to experience the local culture and to immerse yourself in the nature of this vast biome.

Continuing on your holiday of a lifetime, a short flight delivers to you the Galapagos Islands. From here, we board a small and intimate cruise onboard a luxury, modern charter yacht. Explore the fascinating Galapagos Islands, on an adventure through the archipelago which inspired Charles Darwin to write 'On The Origin Of Species'. Lying some 1,000 kilometres off the mainland of South America, these islands host a whole range of habitats which have developed their own unique species of plants and animals.

This is truly a holiday which will leave you feeling invigorated and make you think and feel differently about the world.

ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAY 1 - Welcome to Quito

DAY 2 - Discover Quito and Visit the Equator

DAY 3 - To the Amazon Rainforest & Yasuní National Park

DAY 4 - Exploring Yasuní National Park

DAY 5 - The Amazing Amazon Rainforest

DAY 6 - Return to Quito

DAY 7 - Otavalo Market & Peguche Weavers

DAY 8 - To the Galápagos Islands

DAY 9 - Experience Genovesa Island

DAY 10 - The Wonders of Rabida Island & Chinese Hat Islet

DAY 11 - Scenic San Cristobal & the Sea Lions of Lobo Island

DAY 12 - Gianni Arismendy Centre & Return to Quito

DAY 13 - Adios Ecuador

FULL ITINERARY

DAY 1 - WELCOME TO QUITO

Welcome to Ecuador! You will be met at Quito Airport by a Big Journey Company representative and transferred to your hotel.

The rest of the day will be spent at leisure, allowing some time to acclimatise and to soak up the atmosphere of Quito. Your Big Journey Company Tour Director will be on hand today for advice and assistance.

Accommodation: Quito

DAY 2 - DISCOVER QUITO AND VISIT THE EQUATOR

After breakfast, we will enjoy a walking tour of Ecuador's capital city, Quito. Walk down quaint cobbled streets lined with beautiful brightly-coloured colonial houses, in the footsteps of the ancient Incan people. The Inca trod the same paths on their way to the Panecillo, once a centre of worship to the Sun and Moon Gods. When the Spanish arrived, they transformed the Incan avenues into a place heavily influenced by Christianity. Nowadays, the town is watched over by the winged Virgin of Quito up on the Panecillo. Our tour includes the Plaza de la Independencia, where you will see some of the oldest cathedrals in South America, the symmetrical Palacio de Carondelet and the incomparable Iglesia de la Compañía, a Jesuit church overflowing in Baroque art.

Enjoy a welcome lunch together with your Big Journey Company Tour Director today, to meet the group properly and to hear and discuss more about your tour.

Afterwards, we head north-west out of Quito and past the desert-like towns of San Antonio de Pichincha and Calacalí. The vegetation becomes more dense and the leaves of the plants and trees become larger until we reach Mitad del Mundo - the middle of the earth - as calculated and measured by the French Geodesics Mission - Ecuador literally means Equator and the country was named for this famous feature.

Included meals: Breakfast & Welcome Lunch

Accommodation: Quito

DAY 3 - TO THE AMAZON RAINFOREST & YASUNÍ NATIONAL PARK

After breakfast at the hotel, we head to Quito Airport for a short domestic flight inland to Coca Airport.

Today, we leave city-life behind and escape to Yasuni National Park, part of the Amazon rainforest and a designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. The journey to the resort is very enjoyable, arriving by boat to the luxurious Napo Wildlife Centre. This eco-community resort is designed for nature lovers who want to experience the Amazon's unique landscapes and observe breath-taking wildlife. This is a mesmerizing place unlike any other and is the only one of its kind, located within the vibrant heart of one of the most biodiverse ecosystems on our planet.

This evening, you may wish to take advantage of one of the guided night walks to experience the beauty and the unique night-time wildlife of the Amazon.

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Napo Wildlife Centre, Yasuní National Park

DAY 4 - EXPLORING YASUNÍ NATIONAL PARK

The Napo Wildlife Centre is full of fascinating wildlife to discover in the company of the local people who have made this their home for countless generations. The Centre is nestled on a small ridge and at the edge of a great jungle lake surrounded by the beautiful Amazon rainforest. We spend the day experiencing this wonder for ourselves.

Get a close-up and personal view of the jungle and its diverse flora and fauna exploring the forest trails, and experiencing the canopy itself from an observation tower. From high up in the canopy, you have a broad scope to observe the magnificent scale of the trees, flocks of colourful birds flying, troops of monkeys tussling, and an unobstructed view of miraculous Amazonia.

Explore the black waters of the Añangu Lake and creeks on board a paddle-canoe tour, paddled by your own local guide. In the Amazon jungle, you can discover hundreds of different aquatic animals such as fish, caimans, turtles, giant otters, and other exotic creatures. Don't forget to bring your camera and a sense of adventure!

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Napo Wildlife Centre, Yasuni National Park

DAY 5 - THE AMAZING AMAZON RAINFOREST

Spanning nearly 2.5 million acres of lush rainforest, the National Park is home to more than 600 bird species alone. Parrot clay licks are one of the most stunning nature spectacles to see in the Amazonia. These are natural banks containing great amount of minerals on which birds and different animals feed and early in the morning hundreds of vibrantly colored birds visit the licks.

There will also be plenty of time for getting to know more about the Kichwa Añangu people, who have made their home in the most biodiverse place on Earth. Learn more about community traditions and culture of the Napo Wildlife Center hosts with a visit the local village. Women of the community will welcome you with typical dances, rituals, handcrafts food and drinks.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Napo Wildlife Centre, Yasuni National Park

DAY 6 - RETURN TO QUITO

The splendours of the Amazon are unforgettable - we will take those memories with us as we check out from the Napo Wildlife Centre and travel to Coca Airport for flights back to Quito.

On arrival at Quito Airport, we will be transferred to our hotel to prepare for the next exciting leg of this natural adventure - the Galapagos Islands.

Included meals: Breakfast and boxed lunch

Accommodation: Quito

DAY 7 - OTAVALO MARKET & PEGUCHE WEAVERS

Today we visit the Otovalo handcraft market, situated in the suburbs of Quito. The indigenous Otavaleños are famous for their traditional handicrafts, particularly weaving, and also for the production of leather goods, tagua nut jewellery and much more.

From here we continue to the peaceful village Peguche, just outside Otovalo. Here the residents are famed for their agricultural way of life and for their weaving skills. Traditional methods for weaving are still commonly practised in Peguche. Hand spinning and traditional looms are common here. Before we return to Quito for the evening we will also visit the line of the equator where it crosses through the town of Cayambe, at the foot of the Cayambe volcano. The volcanic ash that has been scattered here has turned the area into one known for its nutrient-rich soils and for its beauty.

Included meals: Breakfast and Lunch

Accommodation: Quito

DAY 8 - TO THE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

The day begins flying from Quito across the Pacific to the Galápagos Islands.

On arrival, you will be met at the airport by a Big Journey Company representative and transferred to our private yacht to begin the next exciting chapter of this trip sailing around the Galápagos Islands.

The first destination will be a visit to Charles Darwin Station. This is home to a very successful breeding programme for tortoises, ranging from 3-inch-long hatchlings to 4 foot-long mature tortoises. By the end of 2017, this successful programme had also returned more than 7,000 juvenile tortoises to their island of origin.

Type of Landing: Dry landing

Difficulty: Easy

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Galápagos Cruise

DAY 9 - EXPERIENCE GENOVESA ISLAND

Today your cruise visits Genovesa Island, one of the more northern islands in the archipelago. After landing, there will be an opportunity for a walk to El Barranco (0.9 miles/2 km). Also known as Prince Phillip's Steps, El Barranco's steep, rocky paths leads up to a high cliff-face and a marvellous view can be appreciated from here. This cove is home to palo santo vegetation as well as red-footed boobies, short-eared lava owls, Galápagos swallows, and Galápagos doves.

Type of Landing: Dry, difficult landing

Difficulty: Moderate

There is also the opportunity to visit Darwin Bay. Here the white sand coral beach heads a half-mile trail (0.75km) that winds through mangroves filled with land birds. Nazca boobies, red-footed boobies, and swallow-tailed gulls can be spotted here. Further down the path are tidal pools where sea lions swim playfully. At the end is a spectacular view off a cliff. The snorkelling opportunities here are also particularly good.

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Difficulty: Easy / moderate

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Galápagos Cruise

DAY 10 - THE WONDERS OF RABIDA ISLAND & CHINESE HAT ISLET

Rabida Island - which translates as Angry Island - is one of the most colourful and volcanically varied islands in the archipelago and a great snorkelling site.

Its famous maroon sandy beach and stunning lookouts provide wonderful landscapes. The island is a birdwatcher's delight. Some of the rarest species are in abundance here, such as nine varieties of finches, large-billed flycatchers, Galápagos hawks and brown pelicans. On shore it is possible to take a short hike (0.6 miles / 1 km) to explore further.

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Difficulty: Easy / moderate

Chinese Hat Islet is located near the southeast coast of Santiago Island. Its name comes from the distinct shape of the islet's summit. This small islet is a great location to view many geological formations such as lava tubes and lava flows. A longer hike is available here (1.9 miles / 3 km).

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Difficulty: Easy / Moderate

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Galápagos Cruise

DAY 11 - SCENIC SAN CRISTOBAL & THE SEA LIONS OF LOBO ISLAND

Located on the northern coast of San Cristobal Island, Witch Hill and its surroundings present one of the most picturesque beaches in the Galápagos. Take a hike here to find beautiful rock formations, white powdery sand and an 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 snorkelling.

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Difficulty: Easy walk along the beach

The name Lobos Island means "Sea Lion Island." This appropriately named island is ripe with noisy, frolicking, jolly sea lions who will welcome you on today's visit to their home with open flippers. This island also offers great snorkelling opportunities as well as the chance to see blue-footed and Nazca boobies. Short hike (less than 0.6 miles/1 km).

Type of Landing: Dry landing

Difficulty: Easy / moderate

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Galápagos Cruise

DAY 12 - GIANNI ARISMENDY CENTRE & RETURN TO QUITO

Today we will visit the Gianni Arismendy Interpretation Centre, on the south of San Cristbal Island. The centre aims to provide a complete history of the Galápagos Islands and give visitors a more holistic understanding of these islands' unique habitats and wildlife. Here visitors learn more about the natural history, human history, and conservation of the Galápagos Islands. It is a short walk from the landing area to the centre.

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Dry

After this final visit, we head for port for disembarkation and the end of our island cruise. You will be transferred to San Cristobal Airport in time for your flight from the Galápagos Islands back to Quito, on Ecuador's mainland.

Upon arrival in Quito, you will transfer to the hotel and enjoy a farewell dinner together at the hotel this evening.

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Quito

DAY 13 - ADIOS ECUADOR

After breakfast at the hotel, you will be transferred to the airport to meet your departure flights home.

Included meals: Breakfast

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ATOL Protection
- Return economy flights from London Heathrow [LHR] to Quito International Airport [UIO]
- Meet & Greet at Quito Airport on arrival
- Return economy flights: Quito International Airport [UIO] - Coca Airport [OCC]
- One-way Economy flights: Quito International Airport [UIO] - Baltra Airport, Galapagos Islands [GPS]; San Cristobal Airport, Galapagos Islands [SCY] - Quito International Airport [UIO]
- Transfers as detailed in the itinerary
- Accommodation as detailed in the itinerary
- All meals detailed as detailed in the itinerary
- Excursions as detailed in the itinerary
- Transport in an air-conditioned deluxe vehicle
- Experienced, qualified English speaking guide
- Transit Control Card
- Use of snorkelling equipment

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Galapagos National Park entry fee - Approx US\$100 per person. Payable in cash on arrival in the Galapagos Islands by all visitors.
- Transfers on arrival or departure, to/from the airport(s), outside of the tour dates
- Drinks
- Gratuities
- Visas, travel and medical insurance
- Any personal items and anything not mentioned under included in price above
- Any meals not mentioned in itinerary
- Any optional activities offered
- Any COVID tests or related entry & exit requirements

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Whilst itineraries while cruising are unlikely to change significantly, they are subject to change. Weather, wildlife breeding, safety concerns, instructions from the Galapagos National Park, specific abilities and interests of passengers 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.
- Please let The Big Journey Company know prior to travelling if you have any medical needs or take any medication that we need to be made aware of to ensure that you have a safe and pleasant tour.
- Check in is after 2-3pm and check out is before 10am unless otherwise specified in the itinerary.
- Cancellation 90 – 0 days prior to departure cancellation fee is 100%. It is your responsibility to ensure the correct travel insurance in place to protect you against the need to cancel your holiday. Deposits are non-refundable. Final payments are due 14 days prior to departure. Further terms and conditions apply and will be provided upon request or at the time of booking.
- The Big Journey Company reserves the right to withdraw any offer prior to accepting a reservation request. This does not affect your statutory rights. This offer is subject to availability and space is limited.
- Please consult your doctor for advice on vaccinations and inoculations before travel.

BOOK YOUR JOURNEY

Choose from the list of dates below

Call to Book

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