

8-day Classic Galapagos Explorer Tour

Complete Dossier



 www.galakiwi.com

 Galakiwi

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 Galakiwi Adventures

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Galapagos Islands

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Introduction

Immerse yourself in the wildlife, culture, and unique ecosystem the Galapagos has to offer as we hike, bike, kayak, and snorkel our way across the archipelago. We'll spend the week snorkeling with curious sea lions, grazing sea turtles, majestic rays, and an abundance of tropical fish while visiting 3 inhabited and 1 uninhabited island.

Day 1 welcomes you to San Cristobal, where you'll kick off your journey with a scenic hike and snorkeling excursion at Loberia, encountering the diverse marine life of the island. Day 2 invites you to explore the famed Kicker Rock through an exciting snorkel tour, while Day 3 sees you flying to Isabela for a day filled with exploration. Embark on a bay kayak adventure and stroll through the wetlands to the Giant Tortoise Breeding Center. Day 4 presents a thrilling hike up Sierra Negro Volcano, offering panoramic views of Isabela's rugged terrain. On Day 5, dive into the underwater wonders of Los Tuneles during a captivating snorkel tour. Day 6 brings you to Santa Cruz, where you'll journey through the Highlands and unwind at the picturesque Tortuga Bay. Day 7 offers a day tour to North Seymour Island, where you'll encounter fascinating wildlife species. Finally, on Day 8, bid farewell to this enchanting archipelago as you depart for the airport, concluding your unforgettable Galapagos adventure.

Each island has historical and educational sites we'll visit along the way to learn about human history and the many programs in place to maintain this delicate environment through research, education, and sustainable tourism. We'll be staying in quaint hotels and dining in local restaurants that get you off the beaten path and into the amazing culture.

Tour Summary

Tour Length:	8 days/7 nights on Land
Start & End	San Cristóbal, Galápagos - Baltra Island
Departures:	1x a month, starting on
Tour Style:	Classic Active Adventure
Comfort Level:	Standard Plus
Sweat Factor:	Moderate
Group Size:	Min 4, Max 12
Minimum Age:	8 years old
Tour Price details:	See the website for up-to-date pricing information

Highlights

- **Snorkel iconic sites:** Dive into the Galápagos' best underwater worlds at Kicker Rock, Los Túneles, and North Seymour, where you might encounter sea turtles, reef sharks, rays, and playful sea lions.
- **Hike Minas de Azufre:** Trek across the surreal volcanic terrain of Minas de Azufre, with its sulfur vents and striking lava formations, and explore scenic coastal trails like La Lobería.
- **Experience Four Unique Islands:** Stay on San Cristóbal, Isabela, and Santa Cruz, each with its own distinct wildlife and character, plus enjoy a day trip to the remote North Seymour Island.
- **Encounter the giants:** Observe Galapagos giant tortoises in the wild and visit a breeding center working to protect these iconic creatures.
- **Kayak calm coastal waters:** Paddle through the serene bay of Isabela, gliding past mangroves and spotting marine life in a peaceful setting.
- **Connect with local life:** Enjoy fresh Ecuadorian cuisine and warm hospitality as you engage with the people who call the Galapagos home

Itinerary Snapshot

Day	Activities	Where	Meals
Day 1	Fly to San Cristobal, Hike & Snorkel at Loberia Beach	San Cristobal	L D
Day 2	Snorkel Tour to Kicker Rock	San Cristobal	B L
Day 3	Fly to Isabela, Bay Kayak, Wetlands walk to Tortoise Breeding Center	Isabela	B L D
Day 4	Hike to Sierra Negra Sulfur Mines	Isabela	B L
Day 5	Snorkel at Los Tunnels, Free Afternoon	Isabela	B L
Day 6	Boat to Santa Cruz, Visit Highlands, Swim at Los Grietas	Santa Cruz	B L D
Day 7	Day Tour to North Seymour Island	Santa Cruz	B L
Day 8	Transfer to Baltra Airport, Fly to Guayaquil	/	B

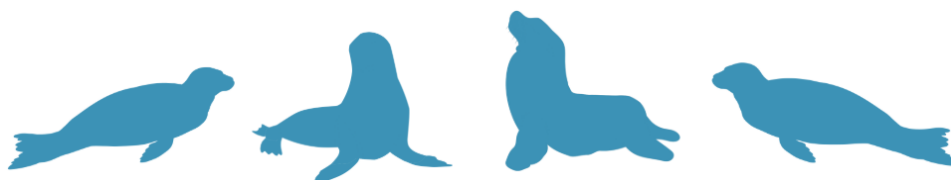
What is Included and Not Included?

Included in Tour Price

- Flights to and from Galapagos
- 7 Nights Standard Accommodation
- Airport assistance for the flight to the Galapagos
- All Land, Air, and Sea Transport in Galapagos
- Naturalist Guide Authorized by the GNP
- Sea Kayaks and Snorkeling Equipment
- Tips for hotel staff, boat crew, and drivers
- Meals daily as specified in the Itinerary
- Drinking Water

Not Included in Tour Price

- National Park Entrance Fee: \$200 pp
- Ingala Fee: \$20 pp
- Single Supplement
- Optional Diving (Please inquire in advance)
- Drinks other than water (Soda, beer, etc.)
- Meals not specified in the Itinerary
- Tips for Tour Leader/Naturalist Guide
- Internal flight extra weight, \$2 per pound



Where You'll Go in the Galápagos



Why Choose Sustainable, Land-Based Travel in the Galápagos?

When you visit the Galápagos, how you travel matters. Choosing a land-based tour is not only a more immersive way to explore the islands, it's also the most sustainable.

Land-based tours support local communities, reduce environmental impact, and offer a deeper connection to the islands. Staying on land means you'll engage with local culture, contribute directly to the economy, and enjoy a more flexible, immersive experience—without sacrificing comfort or adventure. It's the best way to explore responsibly and make your trip truly meaningful.



Detailed Itinerary

Day 1

Fly to San Cristobal, Hike & Snorkel at Loberia Beach

San Cristobal



This morning we'll take a short flight to one of the oldest islands in the Galapagos archipelago, San Cristobal. We'll land in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, a coastal town and the administrative capital of the islands.

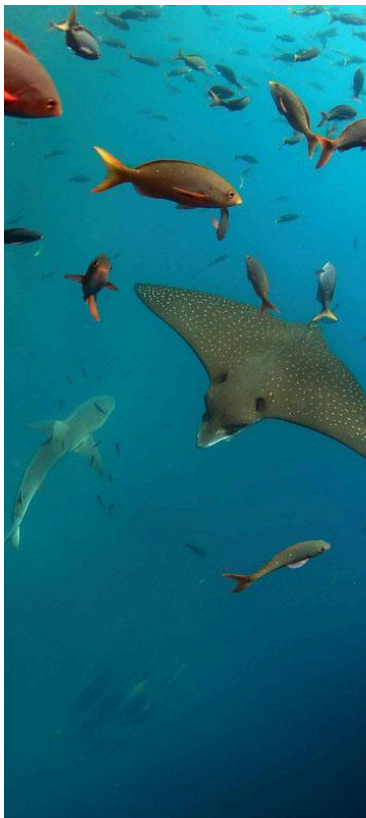
After sampling some of the local cuisine, we'll head over to a beach called La Loberia. There we'll be able to watch sea lions sunbathing, playing and vying for our attention. For those eager to explore further, a swim or snorkel in the azure waters awaits, marking your first refreshing dip into the island's vibrant marine ecosystem. Additionally, a scenic hiking path beckons just beyond the beach, promising further discovery and adventure amidst San Cristobal's natural wonders.

Meals Included: Lunch and Dinner

Day 2

Snorkel Tour to Kicker Rock

San Cristobal



Today, we venture offshore for one of the most iconic marine experiences in the Galapagos. After a scenic boat ride from San Cristobal, you'll arrive at this impressive volcanic formation—two steep cliffs rising vertically from the ocean, separated by a narrow channel that's become a haven for marine life.

Once in the water, you'll snorkel along the vertical rock walls and through the narrow gap between them, and you'll explore deep, clear waters home to sea turtles, rays, starfish, and an impressive array of tropical fish. With a bit of luck, you may also encounter Galapagos sharks or even a hammerhead cruising below—harmless but unforgettable to witness.

Our final stop is a secluded, boat-access-only beach where you can relax and swim in the warm, turquoise water after enjoying lunch on board. It's the perfect place to reflect on the day's marine adventures with the striking silhouette of Kicker Rock on the horizon.

Back on land in the afternoon, we'll continue exploring San Cristobal with a visit to the Galapagos Interpretation Center, where you'll gain deeper insight into the archipelago's natural and human history. From there, we'll walk to Tijeretas Hill, named for the frigatebirds (or "tijeretas" in Spanish) that often soar overhead. The viewpoint offers sweeping views of the coastline and a final opportunity to connect with the unique landscape of the islands.

Meals Included: Breakfast, and Lunch

Day 3

Fly to Isabela, Bay Kayak, Wetlands walk to Tortoise Breeding Center

Isabela



This morning we fly to Isabela, the largest island in the archipelago. Flights between islands are on small aircraft that fly low and offer you an amazing look at Galapagos from above. You'll be able to see hardened lava channels, pockets of new vegetation springing from the black abyss, and the dramatic coastline with its hidden beaches.

After checking into our hotel, we will go for a leisurely kayak around the sheltered bay area of Puerto Villamil. As you navigate the bay, you'll have the opportunity to observe a diverse array of wildlife, including playful sea lions, graceful sea turtles, and hopefully some Galapagos penguins. The calm waters make for a smooth and enjoyable ride, suitable for all skill levels.

After lunch, we will make our way to the Giant Tortoise Breeding Center, following wetland trails that are home to pink flamingos and pintail ducks. This mangrove-lined path will lead us to Isabela's Giant Tortoise Breeding Center, where we'll see giant tortoises in all stages of development. The center houses nearly a thousand giant tortoises, each preparing for life on their own!

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 4

Hike to Sierra Negra Sulfur Mines

Isabela



This morning, journey into one of the most otherworldly landscapes in the Galápagos with a hike to the Minas de Azufre. Located in a remote corner of Isabela Island, this area is alive with geothermal activity. Steam escapes from active sulfur vents, and the ground is streaked with vibrant yellow and orange mineral deposits, a vivid reminder of the volcanic forces that shaped these islands.

You'll trek across rugged lava fields, surrounded by an eerie stillness that makes you feel as though you've stepped onto another planet. While this hike is more about geology than wildlife, you may spot hardy pioneer plants or birds that have adapted to this harsh environment. It's a fascinating glimpse into the Galápagos' dramatic, untamed side.

Meals Included: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 5

Snorkel at Los Tunnels, Free Afternoon

Isabela



If you think sleeping sharks, seahorses, sea turtles, and strange lava tunnel formations sound intriguing, then you're going to need your mask, snorkel, and flippers, because you get all that and more at Los Tunnels.

Also called Cabo Rosa, this area, about one hour from town, was created when lava flows reached the ocean, forming tunnels, arches, and sheltered bays perfect for snorkeling. They also happen to be perfect feeding grounds for sea turtles and resting places for other species like Galapagos sharks! Even the cute Galapagos penguins have been known to visit this area at times.

It is one of the most diverse snorkel spots in the entire archipelago and is also home to some birds, such as nesting blue-footed boobies.

We will return to the town in time for a late lunch in a local restaurant, and the afternoon is free for you to relax or continue to explore.

Meals Included: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 6

Boat to Santa Cruz, Visit Highlands, Swim at Los Grietas

Santa Cruz



We'll wave goodbye to Isabela this morning as we depart for Santa Cruz Island. We will embark on a roughly 2-hour boat ride to Santa Cruz Island. Keep an eye out for some marine life that might stop by as the boat makes the crossing.

On arrival to Santa Cruz, we'll hop on a bus bound for the lush Highlands, where we can enjoy watching giant tortoises roaming freely in their natural habitat. These iconic Galapagos creatures can be observed up close, cooling off in a watering hole or munching away. We will continue our exploration by venturing into fascinating lava tunnels. These underground passages, formed by ancient volcanic activity, offer a unique glimpse into the island's geological past. Walking through these tunnels is an awe-inspiring experience, showcasing the powerful forces that have shaped the Galapagos Islands. After our exploration, we will enjoy a delightful lunch in the highlands before returning to town.

This afternoon, cool off with a refreshing swim at Las Grietas, a stunning volcanic fissure filled with crystal-clear, emerald waters. Surrounded by towering lava rock walls, this hidden natural pool feels like a secret oasis.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner

Day 7

Day Tour to North Seymour Island

Santa Cruz



Your adventure begins with a 40-minute scenic boat ride to the island, where you'll be greeted by an array of vibrant wildlife. As you explore the island's trails, you'll witness the remarkable blue-footed boobies and impressive frigatebirds with their striking red-throat pouches. The rocky coastline is home to playful sea lions frolicking in the surf and marine iguanas basking on the warm rocks. Inland, you'll traverse a landscape of low, bushy vegetation, providing a perfect backdrop for spotting native species. After a morning of wildlife viewing and exploration, enjoy a delicious picnic lunch amidst the natural beauty of the island. The tour also offers opportunities for snorkeling in the crystal-clear waters surrounding North Seymour, where you can encounter a variety of marine life, including colorful fish and sea turtles.

You will return to Santa Cruz late afternoon.

Meals Included: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 8

Transfer to Baltra Airport, Fly to the mainland



Today, you'll bid farewell to the islands as we transfer you to the airport for your flight back to the mainland.

Meals Included: Breakfast

Accommodation

Please find an example of the hotels we usually use; these may change depending on availability.

Santa Cruz - Solymar hotell



Hotel Solymar is a Mediterranean-style hotel located in Pelican Bay, in the heart of Puerto Ayora, just minutes from the Charles Darwin Research Station. It features a bar and an outdoor pool.

Isabela - Albemarle hotel



Albemarle is a bright and welcoming boutique hotel in Puerto Villamil, Isla Isabela. Its entrance opens directly onto soft sands and palm trees.

San Cristobal - Seaside Hotel



SeaSide Hotel is located in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, just steps from Playa Mann. It offers beachfront accommodations with an outdoor pool, garden, and terrace.

Activity & Itinerary Disclaimer

All dossiers and itineraries are designed to be as informative as possible and are provided in good faith. Unless otherwise stated, all prices in this Dossier are in USD. Due to the temperament of Mother Nature and the Ecuadorian Government, itineraries may change and activities may be shifted, omitted, or replaced without notice. Our goal is to give you the best possible tour with a safety-first mentality. We also must comply with all rules set forth by the national and local governments, no matter how convenient or inconvenient they may be. The good news is that we rarely have to change the itinerary drastically, and we are very adept at dealing with the challenges of operating in a third-world country. You're in good hands!

Itinerary Notes

Departing for Galapagos

Your flight to the Galapagos is part of the tour; however, you are responsible for making your way to the airport and completing check-in. You will not receive a paper ticket – you'll just need to show your ID at the counter. Once we know which airport you're flying from, you'll be sent additional information on how the check-in process works.

Galapagos Flight

It's 2 hours from Guayaquil to Galapagos. During your flight to the islands, the aircraft will be sprayed while passengers are on board to kill any species possibly residing in your hand luggage. Don't worry – the spray is biodegradable, not harmful to humans, and recommended by the World Health Organization.

Arriving in the Galapagos

Once you arrive in Galapagos, you'll queue up to pay your National Park Entrance Fee (\$200 cash only). There are no ATMs in the airport in Galapagos. Your guide will be waiting to pick you up just outside the airport when you arrive. After you pay your National Park fee and collect your checked luggage, head outside to meet your guide.

Santa Cruz Highlands

If it's been raining, the farm can be muddy. The lava tunnel is damp, dark, and rocky. There are lights in the tunnel, but if you have a headlamp, bring it. Closed-toe shoes are recommended, and keep a rain jacket handy just in case.

Tortuga Bay

The trail to Tortuga Bay is an easy 45-minute walk along a well-maintained path. After passing the National Park checkpoint at the entrance, there are no facilities—no bathrooms or shops—so be sure to bring plenty of water, sunscreen, and anything else you may need. All kayaking equipment will be provided at the beach, so there's no need to carry gear with you.

The kayaking takes place in Playa Mansa, a calm, sheltered bay protected by mangroves. The gentle conditions make it suitable for all experience levels—no prior kayaking experience is necessary. If you plan to explore the surrounding trails or cactus forest before or after the activity, wear shoes suitable for walking on rocky and uneven terrain.

Boat Crossings *(Public Boat to Isabela)*

Residents and tourists alike use this method of transport regularly between the main inhabited islands. On the open ocean, between islands, is your best chance to see whales, dolphins, and sea birds. Each crossing takes about 2 hours. Less time if the sea is calm, more time if the sea is rough. Boats are usually 30-35 feet long and hold 20-30 passengers. You'll be leaving bright and early most days when the sea is usually calm, but if you're prone to seasickness or not sure, bring some seasickness pills just in case.

Volcano Hike

You'll be walking for approximately 3–4 hours in total, with frequent rest stops and a break at the rim. From the National Park checkpoint, it's about a 45-minute steady uphill walk to the rim of the volcano. The majority of the trail is wide and level once you reach the top, with only a few short, steeper sections.

This hike is non-technical and manageable for most active travelers. There is one proper bathroom at the start of the trail. If you're prone to ankle strain, we recommend wearing hiking boots and using athletic braces. For those with knee issues, bringing a hiking pole or two can be helpful. As always, wear sun protection, bring plenty of water, and be prepared for changing weather conditions in the highlands.

Snorkel & Activity Gear

We take pride in having the best gear in the Galapagos Islands! Wetsuits or rash guards, fins, masks, and snorkels are provided for you, as well as kayaks during scheduled activities. If you prefer to bring your snorkel gear, please do so. If you have a new mask, it should be cleaned properly and used beforehand to make sure it isn't going to fog up when you are on the hunt for that perfect underwater fish photo. If you wear glasses, **YOU CANNOT WEAR YOUR GLASSES WITH A MASK**. You can wear contacts or visit a dive shop before coming to the Galapagos to get a corrective lens mask if necessary.

Los Túneles Snorkel

This half-day tour includes a 45-minute boat ride each way, which can be bumpy—consider motion sickness medication if needed. Snorkeling is in calm, shallow waters and suitable for all experience levels. You'll be in the water for about 1–1.5 hours with chances to see sea turtles, rays, reef fish, and possibly sharks or seahorses.

All snorkel gear (mask, fins, wetsuit) is provided. Entry and exit from the boat is via ladder, and there's a short walk on lava rocks—water shoes or booties are useful. Bring sun protection and a dry bag if you have one.

Please note: If ocean conditions are too rough, the captain may decide not to enter the Túneles area. In this case, snorkeling will take place at an alternative site with similar marine life and safe conditions.

Giant Tortoise Breeding Center

Closed-toe walking shoes, a rain jacket, insect repellent, and your camera are all you'll need for this experience. The trails might be rocky and muddy, but flat.

Inter-Island Flight (Flight to Isabela from San Cristobal)

Flights between islands are on a 6 or 9-passenger plane. These small aircraft fly low and offer you an amazing view of the islands from above. You'll be able to see hardened lava channels, pockets of new vegetation springing from the black abyss, and the dramatic coastline with its hidden beaches. Most flights are 45 minutes or less. These planes are small, and the luggage space is limited. Baggage is limited to 25 pounds per person. Flights can be noisy: keep some earplugs or your iPod handy. Delays are also fairly common.

La Loberia

The walk to the Loberia is a sandy, easily traversed path. It takes 15+ minutes to walk in. Snorkeling is best done on low tide.

Kicker Rock Snorkel

If you've never snorkeled before, no worries. There will be a full briefing and a practice run in calm water. Wetsuits make you buoyant, and we have a couple of different flotation devices to choose from. You do need to be able to climb a short ladder back into the boat after the snorkels, but again, don't worry, the skipper will be there to help you. You'll be on the boat for approximately 6 hours. Since you'll be staying close to the coast, seasickness isn't usually an issue these days.

Diving in the Galapagos

Please inquire in advance. We can also arrange a diving extension for you to spend extra time in the Galapagos; this must be booked and paid for in advance. If you have never gone diving with a 5 mm- 7 mm wetsuit, in the open water, or it's been 2 years or more since your last dive, we highly recommend a refresher course to be better prepared, as well as to ensure your safety and comfort during your dive experience. Diving in the Galapagos is not geared towards novice divers.

Note: To book diving, we require you to complete a dive request form and send us a copy of your certification.

Tijeretas Hike

The Tijeretas track is a loop trail of 2km/1.5 miles in length. The loop takes you up and down four flights of stairs to various lookouts, one with a statue of Charles Darwin. It's a paved/sealed track, and there is an extension to a beautiful beach called Punta Carola. Facilities are located at the beginning, in the Interpretation Center.

Interpretation Center

The center opens at 6 AM daily, so you can always stop here on your final day for an early morning visit.

Departing Galapagos

When you leave Galapagos, you must present the stub from your INGALA paper (you filled this out on the way to Galapagos). If you lose that stub, you will have to pay USD 20 again for a new one.

Links to additional Information

Tour Preparation Guide

For important information about your tour, [click here](#)

Your Galapagos Experience

For further information on accommodation, food, and more, [click here](#)

Recommended Packing List

Need help knowing what to pack? [Click here](#)

Pre & Post Tour Information

Consider extending your stay in the Galapagos, Ecuador, or Peru. We would love to help you! Find here the [link](#) to the pre & post Tour Dossier on our Website.

Stay in Touch & Share Your Experiences

When your tour does come to an end, and you travel onwards or head home, we hope you've made some new friends and enjoyed your time with us! Our Social Media contact points are on the front page of this dossier, and we'd love to have you share your photos with us. Don't be a stranger!

Testimonials and word of mouth are what keep our business growing and putting smiles on travelers' faces, so help us spread the word! Don't forget to sign up for our email newsletter, too, as you could win a free trip!