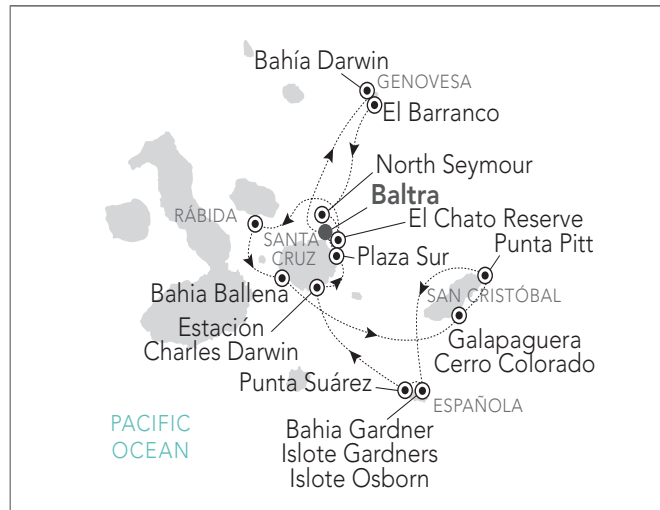




NORTH CENTRAL GALÁPAGOS

SILVER GALAPAGOS

BALTRA TO BALTRA | 7 DAYS



7 DAYS NORTH CENTRAL GALÁPAGOS

Baltra to Baltra

Jan 3, 2015 Voyage 8501	June 20, 2015 Voyage 8525
Jan 17, 2015 Voyage 8503	July 4, 2015 Voyage 8527
Jan 31, 2015 Voyage 8505	July 18, 2015 Voyage 8529
Feb 14, 2015 Voyage 8507	Aug 1, 2015 Voyage 8531
Feb 28, 2015 Voyage 8509	Aug 15, 2015 Voyage 8533
Mar 14, 2015 Voyage 8511	Aug 29, 2015 Voyage 8535
Mar 28, 2015 Voyage 8513	Oct 10, 2015 Voyage 8538
Apr 11, 2015 Voyage 8515	Oct 24, 2015 Voyage 8540
Apr 25, 2015 Voyage 8517	Nov 7, 2015 Voyage 8542
May 9, 2015 Voyage 8519	Nov 21, 2015 Voyage 8524
May 23, 2015 Voyage 8521	Dec 5, 2015 Voyage 8526
June 6, 2015 Voyage 8523	Dec 19, 2015 Voyage 8528

You will visit one of the most unusual islands in the Galápagos on the North Central Route: Genovesa with its collapsed caldera. The island is a birder's paradise. Española is the most southerly island and one of the richest in terms of wildlife; it is the only nesting place in the world for the Waved Albatross.

Expedition Highlights:

- Visit "Bird Island" home to over 30 bird species
- Climb Prince Philip's Steps through a thriving seabird colony
- Observe sea lion families and the famed giant tortoises
- Search for the Galápagos Short-eared Owl.
- Admire the antics of Red-footed and Blue-footed Boobies
- Find corals and bones on raised North Seymour Island
- Explore natural underground lava tunnels and hike across lavaflows
- Hike up the sides of an extinct volcano
- See spectacular water-spouting "blowers"
- Swim and snorkel in tranquil, clear waters
- Photograph colourful marine iguanas
- Marvel at the fearless behaviour of wildlife
- Cruise by Zodiac along scenic coastlines
- Learn about conservation efforts at the Fausto Llerena Breeding Center

Day 1 — Baltra

Embark *Silver Galapagos* between 12:30pm - 1:15pm, and depart on your exciting Silversea Expedition – *North Central Galápagos*. After settling in and setting sail, you will be introduced to your Expedition Team and enjoy the first of many memorable meals onboard.

Day 2 — Bahía Darwin, Genovesa Island

El Barranco, Prince Philip Steps, Genovesa Island

Genovesa (“Tower “in English) is dubbed “Bird Island”, a name it lives up to in a spectacular way. Huge colonies of seabirds create a birdwatcher’s paradise. Take a walk on the sandy beach of Darwin Bay, home to one of the world’s largest Red-footed Booby nesting colonies. Yellow-crowned Night Herons feed near tidal lagoons, while hundreds of Swallow-tailed Gulls nest in the cliffs. Climb the “steps”, a steep path named after the Duke of Edinburgh who visited the island in 1965, and you will be well rewarded: a remarkable spectacle of Nazca Boobies nesting on the ground, Great Frigatebirds with their fiery red sacs, and, if you are lucky, you might see the elusive Short-eared Owl on a daytime hunt for Storm Petrels, a favourite prey. After a morning walk, we will have a chance to enjoy our first snorkelling excursion and experience the diverse, underwater wonderland that surrounds the island. We will also have the opportunity to kayak around Darwin Bay—which is actually a flooded caldera—and admire the island’s craggy landscape.

Day 3 — North Seymour

Sullivan Bay, Santiago

North Seymour is a small up-lifted island close to Baltra filled with a spectacular profusion of wildlife — above and below the sea. Two species of frigatebirds nest here; one of which, the Magnificent Frigatebird, is an opportunistic breeder. At any month of the year we may see males displaying their bright-red gular pouch to attract females. Galápagos Sea Lions snooze in the sand. Blue-footed Boobies perform their courtship dance called “sky-pointing”. Marine iguanas and Galapagos land iguanas patrol the beach, while Brown Pelicans and Brown Noddy Terns look for food in the shallow coastal waters. We will walk through this spectacular landscape, and afterwards have an opportunity to go snorkelling—perhaps even spotting the impressive whitetip shark.

Coming ashore on the east coast of Santiago Island, we will witness the marks Nature has left on the islands through its geological forces.

Our landing will be on a white sandy beach or directly onto lava –depending on the conditions. In either case we will see the lava flows that are not much older than a hundred years –dating back to 1897. Here the very high temperature of the molten material, as well as its gas content, had caused the surface to be quite smooth. The appearance this lava has is almost like frail rope and the technical term for it is *pahoehoe* (a Hawaiian name that supposedly suggests the swirls left behind by a paddle (=hoe) in the water). Since the lava has not moved equally in all places, the “design” of the surface texture induces one to see different objects and images in the lava. As the sun heats up the lava during the day, at the time of our visit the temperatures will have you back at the sandy beach and getting ready for snorkelling in due time. While we will look for shelter from the heat at the beach, be aware that animals like beaches, too. Apart from rays, turtles are quite fond of the beaches and come there to lay their eggs.

Day 4 — Rabida and Bahía Ballena - Eden, Santa Cruz

Rabida and Bahía Ballena

Rabida is a small picturesque island with red rock cliffs and maroon sand. Here we can see Darwin’s finches, lava lizards and Galápagos Mockingbirds. Take a walk along the cliffs where the red rocks, green Palo Santo trees and the blue turquoise sea create landscapes of stunning contrast, while an underwater world teeming with colourful tropical species and vibrant submarine landscapes is equally amazing. After a short but rewarding hike, we will have the opportunity to swim or simply stroll along the beach

and admire the sea lions snoozing along the shore. You can also go for a stunning snorkel-excursion with sea lions, reef sharks, marine iguanas, colourful anemones and parrotfish, or kayak along the picturesque Rabida cliffs.

Bahia Ballena or Eden islet

Depending on the landing conditions, the Expedition Leader and Captain will decide whether we can go for a walk at Bahia Ballena where whalers left behind some of their pottery, or sail to Eden Islet for snorkelling, kayaking and Zodiac rides. Eden is a small, eroded tuff cone and an excellent example of the unique geology of the Galápagos. It is home to Great Blue Herons, sea lions, and Blue-footed Boobies, while the small tidal areas can be a resting place for reef sharks, eagle rays and green turtles, and make an excellent spot for kayaking as well.

Day 5 — La Galapaguera & Punta Pitt, San Cristobal

The most emblematic animal in the archipelago is the Galápagos Giant Tortoise. Over-hunting and competition with introduced animals has left its numbers close to extinction. Nonetheless, since the late 1950s, the tenacious work of the Galápagos National Park Service park rangers and the scientists of the Charles Darwin Research Station has been bringing those numbers back. We'll see these ancient reptiles and their babies, and learn more about current conservation efforts at the Galapaguera Cerro Colorado. Breeding and rearing endemic animals in captivity is part of a much broader conservation programme aimed at restoring and protecting the Galapagos Islands' natural biodiversity.

San Cristóbal is one of the oldest islands in Galápagos and the well-eroded landscape of Punta Pitt creates a dramatic landscape. We may see all three species of boobies here: Red-footed, Blue-footed and Nazca, as well as both the Great and Magnificent Frigatebird. After a wet landing on an olivine beach where sea lions doze, we'll climb up a ravine to view one of the most scenic panoramas in the archipelago. San Cristóbal or Chatham Lava Lizards guide our way, while Red-footed Boobies and Nazca Boobies fly overhead.

Day 6 — Bahía Gardner; or Islote Gardner, Española

Punta Suárez, Española

Don't miss a chance to swim with sea lions from the gorgeous beach at Gardner Bay. Relax on the white sands of this idyllic beach as the water laps gently in front of you. You may even spy some iguanas on the shore. Further out you can snorkel with large schools of colourful tropical fish and an occasional manta ray, while a whitetip shark naps on the bottom. You may wish to experience this from a kayak: paddling through crystal-clear waters while marvelling at the natural wonders all around you.

In the afternoon we will visit Punta Suárez at the western point of Española, the oldest island in the Galápagos. Sheer cliffs provide superb thermals for seabirds. Swallow-tailed Gulls, Nazca Boobies and Blue-footed Boobies can easily be seen. The largest seabird to nest in the Islands, the Waved Galápagos Albatross, may be seen seasonally from April through December, and has made Española its home. Mockingbirds, doves, and occasional Galápagos Hawks can also be found, as well as sea lions and colourful marine iguanas.

Day 7 — The Fausto Llerena Breeding Center and Puerto Ayora Town Visit, Santa Cruz

Plazas Sur

We will cruise overnight to Santa Cruz, an island in the central part of the archipelago with the largest human population. The headquarters of the Galápagos National Park Service and the Charles Darwin Research Station are located in the small town of Puerto Ayora. The Station is the operative branch of

the Charles Darwin Foundation, an organisation established in 1959 to provide conservation counsel to the Ecuadorian government. Its flagship program is the restoration of Galápagos Giant Tortoises.

At the Fausto Llerena Breeding Center, we will get to see tortoises of both morphotypes: dome-shaped and saddle-backed, as well as baby Giant Tortoises up to 5 years old that are waiting to be returned to their home island. There is also an exhibit on Galápagos land iguanas; their numbers were once diminished due to introduced animals such as dogs and cats, but they have had a comeback thanks to the efforts of the National Park Service and Research Station. Towards the end of the morning, there will be time to do some sightseeing and shopping in town.

If instead you want to see the Giant Tortoises in the wild, a bus will take you to a farm where they are roaming free in the highlands of Santa Cruz.

You could also visit “Trapiche”, a local farm with a coffee and sugar plantations to experience the social side of the islands. You will be taken by bus to the farm and there you can taste all the different forms of sugar and there will be an explanation of how alcohol is produced –you can even try some if you want. You will be offered fresh roasted coffee produced on this farm.

If you take these options, there will be no time to do sightseeing or shopping in town.

South Plaza is a neat little island located close to the eastern coast of Santa Cruz. Its main attraction is a colony of Galápagos land iguanas, but the setting is also a highlight — Giant Prickly Pear Cactus, the reddish Sesuvium plant, a mat-like ground cover, and a large nesting colony of Swallow-tailed Gulls make this small island an excellent stop. Marine iguanas and Galápagos Sea Lions are also around.

Day 8 — Baltra

Following breakfast, disembark *Silver Galapagos* for your return flight from Baltra Airport.

Expedition highlights and wildlife listed here are possible experiences only and cannot be guaranteed. Your Expedition Leader and Captain will work together to ensure opportunities for adventure and exploration are the best possible, taking into account the prevailing weather, wildlife activity and conditions. Expedition Team members scheduled for this voyage are subject to change or cancellation. Embarkation times are included in your final cruise documents.



WESTERN GALÁPAGOS

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SILVER GALAPAGOS

BALTRA TO BALTRA | 7 DAYS



7 DAYS WESTERN GALÁPAGOS

Baltra to Baltra

Jan 10, 2015 | Voyage 8502
Jan 24, 2015 | Voyage 8504
Feb 7, 2015 | Voyage 8506
Feb 21, 2015 | Voyage 8508
Mar 7, 2015 | Voyage 8510
Mar 21, 2015 | Voyage 8512
Apr 4, 2015 | Voyage 8514
Apr 18, 2015 | Voyage 8516
May 2, 2015 | Voyage 8518
May 16, 2015 | Voyage 8520
May 30, 2015 | Voyage 8522
June 13, 2015 | Voyage 8524

June 27, 2015 | Voyage 8526
July 11, 2015 | Voyage 8528
July 25, 2015 | Voyage 8530
Aug 8, 2015 | Voyage 8532
Aug 22, 2015 | Voyage 8534
Oct 3, 2015 | Voyage 8537
Oct 17, 2015 | Voyage 8539
Oct 31, 2015 | Voyage 8541
Nov 14, 2015 | Voyage 8543
Nov 28, 2015 | Voyage 8545
Dec 12, 2015 | Voyage 8547
Dec 26, 2015 | Voyage 8549

The Western Islands are home to the only active volcanoes in the archipelago and are known both for their spectacular volcanic landscapes as well as penguin spotting; over 95% of Galapagos Penguins live in these islands. It's also the only area to see the endemic Flightless Cormorant. Other key sites include the Fausto Llerena Breeding Center, Post Office Bay with its human history and Champion Islet with some of the best snorkelling in the archipelago.

Expedition Highlights:

- Walk across spectacular lava fields
- Explore tidal pools, lush mangroves and Scalesia forests
- See pelicans and penguins along the rocky shores
- Swim with green sea turtles, sea lions and manta rays
- Hike through fragrant forests of Palo Santo "Incense" trees
- Encounter the largest colony of marine iguanas
- Watch for a unique species of Flightless Cormorant
- Visit one of the most volcanically active places on Earth
- Discover a saltwater lagoon within a volcanic tuff cone
- Read cave inscriptions from the 1800s
- Learn of the islands' whaling history and early Norwegian settlers
- See wild flamingos (in season) and nesting sea turtles
- Observe giant tortoises and sea lion colonies
- Photograph iconic Pinnacle Rock

Day 1 — Baltra

Embark *Silver Galapagos* between 12:30pm - 1:15pm, and depart on your exciting Silversea Expedition – *Western Galápagos*. After settling in and setting sail, you will be introduced to your Expedition Team and enjoy the first of many memorable meals on board.

Day 2 — Bartolomé

Playa Espumilla, Santiago

Some of the most spectacular landscapes in the islands come into view. Just off the coast of Santiago, Bartolomé boasts some of the most magnificent landscapes in the islands including the famous Pinnacle Rock, a towering obelisk at the edge of the ocean. Go snorkelling or take a walk along the beach to look for the playful Galápagos Penguin, perched on a rock or zooming underwater.

Beautiful Espumilla Beach is an important nesting site for the East Pacific Green Sea Turtle. We'll walk through the arid vegetation zone of the interior where we'll see the largest Palo Santo trees in the Galápagos, the perfect habitat for several species of Darwin's finches.

At times of year when conditions aren't ideal at Espumilla, you'll enjoy a visit to Buccaneer's Cove. This protected cove once served as a safe harbour for pirates as they repaired their ships and replenished their stores. Today, it offers a wealth of water-based activities, including snorkelling with a kaleidoscopic array of tropical fish, whitetip sharks, fur seals and even eagle rays. You can embark on a kayak or Zodiac tour and spy some of the beautiful geologic features of the area—red cliffs, natural caves and unique rock formations—while perhaps spotting native sea birds (like the Brown Noddy Tern) that nest in the cliffs.

Day 3 — Punta Vicente Roca, Isabela

Punta Espinoza, Fernandina

Five (originally six) majestic shield volcanoes up to half-a-million years old pierce the arid landscape of Isabela, the largest and youngest island in the Galápagos. Snorkelling is probably the best (and coldest) in the islands at Punta Vicente Roca, located at the base of Ecuador Volcano (North-West Isabela). Half of this volcano collapsed about 100,000 years ago—meaning that visitors now get a spectacular cutaway view of the caldera. Aboard a Zodiac, we'll look for an array of seabirds including Flightless Cormorants and penguins.

The largest colony of marine iguanas in the Galápagos can be seen sunning on the black lava shores of Punta Espinoza at the north-eastern corner of Fernandina. One of the most pristine islands in the world, Fernandina hosts an impressive array of wildlife including sea lions, colourful Sally Light-Foot Crabs and the rare endemic Flightless Cormorant.

Day 4 — Caleta Tagus, Isabela

Bahía Elizabeth, Isabela

A short cruise across the Bolivar Strait brings us to Tagus Cove on Isabela Island. Yellow Warblers and Galápagos Mockingbirds may escort our hike between Palo Santos and Yellow Cordias, passing the briny Darwin's Crater Lake along the way. Join the snorkelling tour to look for penguins, cormorants and the shy Brown Noddy Tern along the sheltered cliffs. You may also explore the area on a kayak.

The tallest red mangrove trees in the Galápagos are found in Elizabeth Bay, an idyllic mangrove lagoon and a fascinating place to observe marine life. We'll take a Zodiac through the mangroves where sea

turtles swim close to the surface, and pelicans and herons stalk for fish or crab. Sea lions and penguins are also prevalent in this marine sanctuary. (No landings permitted.)

Day 5 — Post Office Bay, Floreana

Punta Cormorant; or Corona del Diablo; or Champion, Floreana

Floreana has been luring visitors since the 18th century when whalers hunted the island for tortoises and pirates sought shelter in its caves. Sailors established a rustic mailing system here: a barrel nailed to a pole where they would drop letters hoping they would be delivered by other mariners sailing home. You can continue the tradition if you choose. Then take a walk along the lovely beach, or go snorkelling in an underwater world as colourful as Floreana's history.

You'll have an opportunity to get to know the flora and fauna of this island. On the northern coast (between Punta Cormorant and Post Office Bay), a sea lion rockery has developed. Amid lava rocks that are dotted with Prickly Pear Cacti and Sesuvium, a small colony of the creatures thrives. Pups are particularly curious when visitors arrive—they love to go in the water and investigate Zodiacs as they pass through their waters.

As you travel along the coast, you may find many other creatures that shelter amid the red and white mangroves: eagle rays, marine turtles, Brown Pelicans and resting Cattle Egrets. Kayaking through the turquoise waters here is a true pleasure, inviting a sense of peaceful solitude and an invigorating feeling of connection to nature. Even if you prefer not to go into lava tunnels, there is so much to explore in Floreana.

Where in the world can you see an olivine beach, deciduous vegetation and pink flamingos all in one place? Only at Punta Cormorant, one of the most interesting sites in the islands. We'll learn about the formation of beaches as we land on the olive-green sand and walk to Flour Beach, a favourite nesting site for Green Sea Turtles. Floreana also offers some of the best snorkelling sites in the Galápagos.

Day 6 — Galapaguera Cerro Colorado, San Cristóbal

Wizard Hill, San Cristóbal

The most emblematic animal in the archipelago is the Galápagos Giant Tortoise. Over-hunting and competition with introduced animals has left its numbers close to extinction. Nonetheless, since the late 1950s, the tenacious work of the Galápagos National Park Service park rangers and the scientists of the Charles Darwin Research Station has been bringing those numbers back. We'll see these ancient reptiles and their babies, and learn more about current conservation efforts at the Galapaguera Cerro Colorado. Breeding and rearing endemic animals in captivity is part of a much broader conservation programme aimed at restoring and protecting the Galapagos Islands' natural biodiversity.

This afternoon you can swim, snorkel or kayak with sea lions and marine iguanas right from Cerro Brujo, a breathtaking white coral beach. It's a haven for birdwatching, too.

Day 7 — Los Gemelos, Santa Cruz

Puerto Ayora and the Fausto Llerena Breeding Center, Santa Cruz

The second largest island in the archipelago is home to both the largest human settlement and the second largest wild tortoise population. We'll visit Los Gemelos, two pit craters (similar to sink holes) in the midst of a forest of tall Scalesia trees that look like giant daisies and are endemic to the Galápagos. Here there's a good chance to spot land birds, especially one of the rare and endemic Galápagos Martins.

If instead of going by bus to see tortoises in the wild you want some exercise, you have an array of options in the highlands of Santa Cruz: you can reach the farm where Giant Tortoises roam around free by mountain bike accompanied by one of our naturalists on the farm trails or side roads.

If you are not into biking you can visit “Trapiche”, a local farm with a coffee and sugar plantations to experience the social side of the islands. Here you can taste all the different forms of sugar and there will be an explanation of how alcohol is produced –you can even try some if you want. You will be offered fresh roasted coffee produced on this farm.

For those who would like to walk to enjoy an ecological reserve with the best view of the entire island and search for the second species of Giant Tortoise found in Santa Cruz you can visit Cerro Meza. The sink hole there can be accessed by both bus and walking.

After everyone has visited their main point of interest we will all meet for lunch at one of the local farms.

Tortoises in the Galápagos occur in two different morphotypes: dome-shaped and saddle-backed. The smaller saddle-back tortoise was hunted virtually to extinction and just a handful of survivors remain. The Fausto Llerena Breeding Center gives us the opportunity to see both the domed tortoise and the iconic saddleback tortoise after which the islands were named.

Day 8 — Baltra

Following breakfast, disembark *Silver Galapagos* for your return flight from Baltra Airport.

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