

expedition and where numerous Ecuadorian crafts and items are displayed.

p.m.

Old Quito Tour: This afternoon we will enjoy a guided walking tour of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Old Quito to see major colonial sites.

Women's Panel: We want you to meet and connect with local women so we're inviting some to join us in what we're affectionately calling our "Sisters in Country Panel." We hope to include Paloma Guerra a Superior Court Judge & a youth speaker of the Yasuni project.

For dinner tonight you will be matched up to eat in a small group with 3-4 other travelers from our group.

Day 3, Jan 7th Day-Trip: Women Weaving in Octavalo (Bkfst, Dinner)

Today we're road-tripping 2 hours away on an excursion to the city of Otavalo, an historic region famous for its woven products dating back centuries. This is such a special day—so worth the drive! We will learn more about the indigenous peoples of Ecuador that thrived before the arrival of the Spaniards.

a.m.

Shopping! Part of our visit today to this quaint and small town is connecting with a woman's cooperative. (We love supporting women and their products whenever we can!) As one of the most popular things to do in Ecuador, their market is known around the world as the home of the largest market in South America, we will also have free time to enjoy lunch & shop!

p.m.

Easy Waterfall Hike: After lunch we will stretch our legs for a beautiful hike around the Peguche waterfalls—a sacred place in the culture of the indigenous peoples of Octavalo. (It's considered easy, well-defined walking along a river that ends with a waterfall. About 3 km)

Ceremony: We end our day with a water purification ceremony "limpia" with a local Kichwa Curandero/Shaman. We will learn firsthand about how local spiritual values can add to the conservation efforts of ecotourism.

Dinner together is included.

The Galapagos Islands are a natural wonder, famous for their unique wildlife like giant tortoises, marine iguanas, and blue-footed boobies. A haven for nature lovers, the islands offer pristine beaches, volcanic landscapes, and incredible snorkeling. As the birthplace of Darwin's theory of evolution, the Galapagos provide a rare chance to experience species found nowhere else on Earth, making it a must-visit for anyone seeking adventure and a deep connection with nature.

Day 4, January 8th To the Galapagos! (Breakfast, Dinner)

This morning, we are off to the Galapagos. We will fly into Baltra where we will transfer to **Floreana**.

We will be basing ourselves on Floreana Island during our time in the Galapagos as it affords us so many options to do all the amazing day trips we want without having to pack and move. Floreana is the smallest of the islands and first to be inhabited, and it offers a more intimate and off-the-beaten-path experience. Known for its rich history and small local community, Floreana provides a peaceful retreat where you can enjoy pristine landscapes, encounter wildlife without the crowds, and immerse yourself in the island's unique legends and slower pace of life. It's perfect for travelers seeking an authentic and tranquil Galapagos experience.

Upon arriving, we will meet the locals and have an orientation to unfold our program over our stay on the islands.

In the afternoon we will have a 2-hour walk into the interior and survey **the unique highlands of the island**. Our local guide will share their knowledge of the island's flora and fauna, the natural history – geology and unique ecology.

Day 5, Jan 9th Snorkeling, Sea Turtles and Spa time (Bkfst, Lunch)

a.m. **Snorkeling:** This morning, we will adventure to one of the very best Galapagos snorkel sites in the Galapagos, the Devil's Crown, and Sea Turtle nesting sites! We will have lunch included during the day.

p.m. **Personal Time:** In the afternoon you have time for personal exploration, or you may elect to relax and enjoy time for spa service in the afternoon. (We will provide the links so you can book in advance!)

Day 6, Jan 10th Volcanoes and Mangroves (Bkfst, Lunch, Dinner)

a.m. **Boating to the island of Isabella by boat.** This is the largest island and the most volcanically active. Here we learn about the unique

character of the archipelago. It is famous for its wildlife: giant tortoises, marine iguanas, sea lions, manta rays, boobies, penguins and of the islands!

p.m. **Mangrove Hike:** Our afternoon brings us to a mangrove hike. We get close to the giant tortoises in their natural environment. By exploring several interesting resting places, among them “El Estero,” the only place where you can see the 4 types of Galapagos mangroves.

There is a coral beach where many iguanas come to mate and nest, something incredible is the Mirador whose name is “Cerro Orchilla”, where after climbing some stairs, we will soak up spectacular views of the island. Finally, we arrive at the famous and historical “Wall of Tears”, which is full of very important stories, and you can see how it was formed from heavy rocks.

Return to the hotel to rest before heading to dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 7, Jan 11th Hiking & Horsing around in the Sierra Negra (Bkfst, Lunch)

All day **Volcano Hike:** After breakfast, get ready for the **Sierra Negra Volcano hike!** We will travel 45 minutes by truck or bus to begin the 16 km hike (approx. 4 hours). The hike is long in terms of distance, but not very difficult as the inclines and declines are quite gradual.

The Sierra Negra volcano hike takes you to one of the largest volcanic craters in the world, offering breathtaking panoramic views of the Galapagos Islands. This moderately challenging hike rewards adventurers with stunning landscapes, unique geological formations, and the chance to spot wildlife along the trail, making it a must-do for nature enthusiasts and anyone wanting to experience the dramatic volcanic beauty of the Galapagos.

Recommended: comfortable clothes, walking shoes and a light rain jacket. Also, make sure your camera is stored in waterproof bags, wear some sunscreen, bring water, and a hat! A box lunch will be provided at the hotel.

(There is an option to ride horses for an additional cost, if interested please let us know beforehand)

Eve One option: watch sunset with a cocktail at the Pink Iguana Bar before dinner!

Day 8, Jan 12th Kayaking and Concha Perla (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

a.m. **Kayaking:** After our hiking yesterday, let's go back out on the water today! We will have an opportunity to kayak – again guided- and experience the uniqueness of aquatic Galapagos. We will **kayak for 2- 3 hours through the Bay of Puerto Villamil**, where you can observe penguins, blue-footed boobies, pelicans, sea iguanas, sea turtles, sea lions, eagle rays and sometimes juvenile shark sharks.

p.m. **Snorkeling:** Never too much snorkeling when you're in such rich waters so let's go explore **Concha Perla** where we can swim with sea lions, colorful varieties of fish and, with luck, sea turtles and rays.

Return to the hotel to rest before heading to dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 9, Jan 13th Santa Cruz & Giant Tortoises (Breakfast, Lunch)

a.m. **Boat to Santa Cruz!** This is a great island to relax and soak up the atmosphere. The port of Puerto Ayora is the major link between islands, and we arrive here to begin our adventure. There is swimming and kayaking in the waters along the white sandy beaches. We will explore lava tubes, tunnels and fissures.

Here you will have the unforgettable opportunity to observe the famous Galapagos **Giant Tortoises** in their natural environment. The Islands themselves were named after these species. You will also be able to observe the famous Galapagos Finches, Bird Wizards, as well as endemic vegetation such as Escelacias forests and Matazarnos.

Late p.m. Afterwards we will return to Puerto Ayora and end our day with a brief visit to **Charles Darwin Research Institute** to learn about ongoing conservation efforts in The Galapagos.

Eve Free time for Dinner. Optional evening visit to **the Santa Cruz Brewery**, the first microbrewery in Santa Cruz and have produced the first craft beer in Galapagos.

Day 10, Jan 14th Back to Quito! (Bkfst, Dinner)

It's time to return to Quito! Much of today we will be making our way from the Islands back to the capital city, but we also want you to have free time for last minute shopping at the artisan craft market.

4:00pm Time to rest

5:30pm Wrap up Circle
7:30pm Farewell Dinner!

Day 11, Jan 15th Hasta Luego! (Breakfast)

Return to US (Or stay and enjoy a few extra days in Quito!) You'll fly out of International Airport Mariscal Sucre International Airport, the international airport serving Quito, Ecuador.

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