

Calipso 4-day Cruise "Naturalist"

(South Plaza, Floreana, Santa Fe, Santa Cruz, San Cristobal)



Day 1: Monday

SOUTH PLAZA ISLAND

In the morning: Baltra Airport Arrival

Morning flight from Quito or Guayaquil to Baltra, Galapagos Islands.

You will arrive at Baltra Island in the morning. After passing through immigration and baggage claim, you will be met by a Calipso staff member and transferred to the yacht. You will be shown to your cabin where you will have some time to settle in before lunch and a welcome briefing.

In the afternoon: South Plaza Island

This small island with steep cliffs was formed by rising lava and is now covered by Opuntia cacti. It is also home to one of the largest sea lion colonies as well as colorful yellow and red land iguanas. The most characteristic plant is the Sesuvium. During the rainy season its color is a greenish to yellowish tone and in the dry season (end of June through January) a bright red.

South Plaza Island	
<i>Possible Activities:</i>	Hike (1.5 miles / 2 ½ km)
<i>Difficulty:</i>	Moderate
<i>Type of Landing:</i>	Dry Landing
<i>Highlights & Animals:</i>	Land iguanas, sea lion colony, Audubon's shearwaters, swallow-tailed gulls, Nazca boobies, amazing landscape with cliffs

Day 2: Tuesday

FLOREANA ISLAND

In the morning: Post Office Bay

You will land on a beach and head to a spot where 18th century whalers placed a wooden barrel used as an unofficial mail box. The custom continues to this day with Galapagos visitors. So, don't forget your postcards, and don't be surprised if the post card arrives to its destination before you even get home!

Post Office Bay, Floreana Island	
<i>Possible Activities:</i>	Short hike (less than 0.6 miles / 1km) & snorkeling
<i>Difficulty:</i>	Easy
<i>Type of Landing:</i>	Wet Landing
<i>Highlights & Animals:</i>	Post office barrel, nice sandy beach

Afterwards: Baroness Viewing Point

Baroness Viewing Point is a fantastic place to absorb the environment of the Galapagos. Once inhabited by an indulgent baroness and her three lovers, the history of this island is intriguing. The legends about this baroness are associated with a fascinating murder mystery. There are easy trails in this area for exploring the flora and fauna of Floreana.

Baroness Viewing Point, Floreana Island	
Possible Activities:	Short hike (0.6 miles/1 km), snorkeling, kayak, panga ride
Difficulty:	Easy
Type of Landing:	Dry Landing
Highlights & Animals:	Great view, sea turtles, mysterious story about the first inhabitants of the islands

In the afternoon: Cormorant Point

Cormorant Point hosts a large flamingo lagoon where other birds such as common stilts and white-cheeked pintails can also be seen. The beaches on this island are distinct: The Green Beach is named so due to its green color, which comes from a high percentage of olivine crystals in the sand, and the Flour Sand Beach is composed of white coral.

Cormorant Point, Floreana Island	
Possible Activities:	Dinghy ride & hike (1.25 mi /2 km)
Difficulty:	Easy
Type of Landing:	Wet Landing
Highlights & Animals:	Flamingoes, green-colored beach

Day 3: Wednesday

SANTA FE AND SANTA CRUZ ISLANDS

In the morning: Santa Fé Island

Santa Fe Island (Barrington) is home to the small picturesque bay and anchorage on the island's northeast coast. The bay has two visitor trails: one leading to a scenic viewpoint atop a cliff, and the other spanning from a small beach to a tall prickly pear cactus forest.

Santa Fé Island, Santa Fe Island	
Possible Activities:	Hiking (5 miles / 8 km)
Difficulty:	Moderate
Type of Landing:	Dry Landing
Highlights & Animals:	Land iguanas, giant Opuntia cacti

In the afternoon: Fausto Llerena Breeding Center

You will visit "Fausto Llerena" Tortoise Breeding Center in Puerto Ayora, where giant tortoises are bred in captivity. This is home to tortoises ranging from 3-inches (new hatchlings) to 4-feet long adults. Subspecies of the giant tortoises interact with one another, and many of the older tortoises are accustomed to humans stretching out their heads for a photo opportunity. The babies are kept until they are about four years-old and strong enough to survive on their own.

Fausto Llerena Breeding Center, Santa Cruz Island	
Possible Activities:	Walking
Difficulty:	Easy
Type of Landing:	Dry Landing
Highlights & Animals:	Giant tortoises, finches, Galapagos rails

Day 4: Thursday

SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND

In the morning: Gianni Arismendy Interpretation Center

This site is part of an environment project. The tour of this center will explore the natural history of the islands including human interaction and conservation efforts. The Museum of Natural History explains the volcanic origin of the archipelago, ocean currents, climate, and the arrival of endemic species. The Human History exhibit chronologically describes significant events such as discovery and colonization of the islands.

Gianni Arismendy Interpretation Center, San Cristobal Island	
<i>Possible Activities:</i>	Museum visit
<i>Difficulty:</i>	Easy
<i>Type of Landing:</i>	Dry Landing
<i>Highlights & Animals:</i>	Great exhibits about the archipelago's natural history

Afterwards: San Cristobal airport departure

After this final visit, you will be transferred to the San Cristobal airport in time for your flight back to the mainland.