THE GALAPAGOS

Designed by Professor Brian Hazlett | 9 Days | January 2016
THE GALAPAGOS
INCLUDED ON TOUR

Round-trip flights on major carriers; Full-time Tour Director; Air-conditioned motorcoaches and internal transportation; Superior tourist-class hotels with private bathrooms; Breakfast daily; Select meals with a mix of local cuisine.

Entrances:
- Butterfly Farm, Mindo
- Tarabita Waterfall Hike
- Santo Domingo Monastery
- Quito Astronomical Observatory
- Mitad del Mundo
- Ethnographic Museum
- Intinan Museum
- Charles Darwin Research Station
- Tintoreras
- Tortuga Bay
- Media Luna
- El Puntudo
- Twin Craters

Overnight stays:
- Quito (3)
- Galapagos (Various Islands) (4)
- Quito (1)

NOT INCLUDED ON TOUR
Optional excursions: Insurance coverage; Beverages and lunches (unless otherwise noted); Transportation to free-time activities; Customary gratuities (for your Tour Director, bus driver and local guide); Porterage; Adult supplement (if applicable); Weekend supplement; Shore excursion on cruises; Any applicable baggage-handling fee imposed by the airlines (see efst.com/baggage for details); Expenses caused by airline rescheduling, cancellations or delays caused by the airlines, bad weather or events beyond EF's control; Passports, visa and reciprocity fees
YOUR ITINERARY

January 3-11, 2016

Day 1: Arrive in Quito

Welcome to Quito, the Ecuadorean capital. Depending on your arrival time, you may have free time to settle in with your group.

Dinner is included this evening (only for arrival before 8pm).

Overnight in Quito

Day 2: Quito | Mindo Cloud Forest

Excursion to the Mindo Cloud Forest
Mindo is a town, a river and an area. Located on the western slopes of the Andes, you will have the opportunity view many different species of birds.

Visit a Butterfly Farm
Enjoy a visit to a butterfly farm where you will see many different species of butterflies and see the four stages of the butterfly life.

Tarabita Waterfall Hike
You will take a tarabita (wooden cable car) across the valley and explore the waterfalls during your afternoon hike.

Lunch is included this afternoon.

Overnight in Quito

Day 3: Quito

Guided Sightseeing of Quito
Carved into a narrow plateau high above the Andean valleys, Ecuador’s capital is overshadowed by soaring peaks and the looming Pichincha Volcano. On today’s sightseeing tour, explore the well-preserved colonial quarter of Quito, where wrought-iron balconies and majestic stone pillars grace its 300-year-old plazas, churches and palaces. The area was declared a World Heritage Site by the United Nations in 1978. Stroll amid the shady palm trees and colorful gardens of Independence Plaza, admire the stunning Government Palace and visit the charming Santo Domingo Church.

Excursion to the Equatorial Line
Sixteen miles from Quito, the Equator crosses the Ecuadorean countryside at Mitad del Mundo ("middle of the world"). Here you’ll have the opportunity to stand with one foot in each hemisphere. A monument at the Equatorial Line honors the long history of diversity in Ecuador, its obelisk perfectly aligned with the cardinal points of the compass. Here you can also visit the Intinan Museum.

Visit the Quito Astronomical Observatory
Today you will visit one of the oldest observatories in South America.

Overnight in Quito

Day 4: Quito | Galapagos

Board a Flight to Baltra
This morning, fly to the Galapagos, arriving amid the ecological paradise. In 1959, the archipelago was declared a national park in order to protect its unique flora and animals, including giant tortoises (from which the islands took their name), iguanas, penguins, cormorants and Darwin’s 13 species of finches. Please keep in mind that the island’s ecosystems are fragile. Park regulations are designed to protect this early treasure for future generations.

Travel to Santa Cruz Island
Make the transfer to Santa Cruz Island, the gateway to the Galapagos.

Visit the Charles Darwin Research Foundation
Operated by the Charles Darwin Foundation, the research station is home to a team of more than a hundred scientists, educators, volunteers, research students and support staff from all over the world.

Free Time in Santa Cruz
You will have free time this afternoon to snorkel.

Lunch and dinner are included today.

Overnight on Santa Cruz Island, Galapagos

Day 5: Santa Cruz Island | Isabela Island

Transfer to Isabela Island
Begin your exploration of Isabela Island, the largest in the Galapagos archipelago. You’ll start out on the western side of the island at Punta Moreno, where lava flows and mangrove swamps meet the sea. You might catch a glimpse of the sea turtles and flamingoes who call Punta Moreno home. You will visit Tintoreras. Home to a great variety of wildlife, its turquoise, crystalline waters are inhabited by white-tipped reef sharks, Galapagos penguins, marine turtles and sea lions. One of it beaches, surrounded by mangroves, is one of the few sites where marine iguanas can reproduce successful. You will also have the opportunity to snorkel.

Lunch and dinner are included today.

Overnight on Isabela Island, Galapagos

Day 6: Isabela Island | Floreana Island

Visit Floreana Island
Floreana Island was named after Juan Jose Flores, the first president of Ecuador. With a relatively flat surface and abundant supply of fresh water, Floreana was a popular stop for whalers. In the 18th century they established Post Office Bay, where whalers kept a wooden barrel for letters to be picked up and delivered by ships from all over the world. Cards and letters are still placed in the barrel without postage, and visitors are encouraged to sift through them to see if they can deliver by hand back home.

Lunch and dinner are included today.

Overnight on Santa Cruz Island, Galapagos
Day 7: Santa Cruz Island

Return to Santa Cruz Island
Spend an additional day exploring Santa Cruz. Visit Tortuga Bay and see the perfectly preserved beach that is home to marine iguanas, Galapagos crabs and birds. You will have time to visit Media Luna, one of the largest craters in the highlands, as well as El Puntudo and Cerro Crocker, the highest peak on the island.

Lunch and dinner are included today.

Overnight on Santa Cruz Island, Galapagos

Day 8: Santa Cruz Island | Baltra | Quito

Travel to Baltra
En route back to the airport in Baltra, stop in the highlands of Santa Cruz. Observe the unique and diverse vegetation zones of the area.

Visit the Twin Craters
These craters, formed by the collapse of empty magma chambers, sit nestled within the beautiful Scalesia forest. You might be lucky enough to spot one or more special birds who call this forest their home such as the Vermilion Flycatchers, Short-eared Owls, the Galapagos Dove or several finch species.

Return to Quito
Board a flight for your return to Quito.

Overnight in Quito

Day 9: Transfer to the Airport for Your Return Flight

Your Tour Director assists with your transfer to the airport, where you’ll check in for your return flight home.

Itinerary is subject to change

For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the Booking Conditions at www.efcst.com/bc.

Compared to the standard EF tour, with this one we’ve added a day-trip to Mindo (a mainland region that boasts over 300 bird species) and a fourth day on Galapagos. The cost is based on 10-14 participants.

$4547 for 29 or younger
$4787 (double occupancy) for 30+
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