



ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION of SMITH COLLEGE

Wildlife of the Galapagos Islands *A Family Adventure Aboard the Santa Cruz*

June 14 to 23, 2009

Preliminary Itinerary (subject to amendment)

Day 1 – Sunday, June 14, 2009

U.S. / Guayaquil, Ecuador

- Depart the U.S. on the recommended group flight or independently.
- Upon arrival, check in to the hotel.

Hotel Hilton Colon

Day 2 – Monday, June 15, 2009

Guayaquil/Baltra, Galapagos Islands

- This morning fly to Baltra Island in the Galápagos. Twelve large islands and dozens of smaller ones, all volcanic, combine to form an ecological niche with towering volcanoes, crater lakes, and stunning lava formations.
- Upon arrival, board the *Santa Cruz*, your home for the next seven nights. During a dinghy ride among mangrove-ringed inlets, observe the landscape and coastline, an area of dramatic volcanic activity. Watch for boobies, frigates, pelicans, marine iguanas, sea turtles, and rays.
- After a dry landing, follow a trail to Dragon Hill, a nesting site for land iguanas reintroduced to the area by the Charles Darwin Research Station, and a rewarding location for sightings of Darwin's finches, Galápagos mockingbirds, endemic flycatchers, and yellow warblers.

(B, L, D)

Santa Cruz

Day 3 – Tuesday, June 16, 2009

Bartolomé and Santiago Islands

- Start the day with a hike to Bartolomé Island's 600-foot summit for spectacular views of its fascinating volcanic topography. Ride in small local boats called pangas around colossal Pinnacle Rock, with time to enjoy the beach and snorkel with Galápagos penguins. See marine iguanas graze on emerald-green algae beds, and watch seabirds forage along the pitch-black shoreline of Puerto Egas on Santiago Island.
- After snorkeling and swimming, take a guided walk to observe a colony of sea lions filled with playful pups.
- On board the ship this evening, gaze at the equatorial night sky or join in lively talks on geology, evolution, and oceanography.

(B, L, D)

Santa Cruz

Day 4 – Wednesday, June 17, 2009**Rabida and North Seymour Islands**

- Disembark at Rabida Island's unusual rust-colored beach to see marine iguanas and a large colony of sea lions.
- Walk to a nearby salt pond, where flamingos feed on brine shrimp and a large colony of pelicans make their nests.
- Snorkel or swim off the beach and see a vast array of underwater species.
- In the afternoon sail to North Seymour Island. One of the few islands in the Galápagos uplifted from the ocean bed, North Seymour's sandy shores teem with Galápagos sea lions and marine iguanas.
- Visit colonies of blue-footed boobies, magnificent frigate birds, and swallow-tailed gulls during an afternoon walk, taking in views of both the coast and the interior of the island.

(B, L, D)

Santa Cruz

Day 5 – Thursday, June 18, 2009**Santa Cruz Island**

- This morning, sail to Santa Cruz Island to visit the Charles Darwin Research Station and learn about a program devoted to rearing giant tortoises in captivity.
- See a forest of giant prickly pear cacti and visit the town of Puerto Ayora.
- Ride up to the lush Santa Cruz highlands to enjoy a special breakfast and see the giant daisy trees of the Scalesia Forest. Observe vermilion flycatchers, Darwin's finches, and giant tortoises in their natural habitat.

(B, L, D)

Santa Cruz

Day 6 – Friday, June 19, 2009**San Cristobal Island**

- Disembark at Puerto Baquerizo Moreño on San Cristobal Island for a visit to the tortoise-breeding center at Cerro Colorado, and spot the island's mockingbirds, lava lizards, and vermilion flycatchers.
- If time allows, stop at El Junco Lagoon, the only permanent freshwater lagoon on the islands.
- En route to Playa Ochoa, where Charles Darwin first set foot on the Galápagos in 1835, visit a small islet with a thriving sea lion colony and numerous common stilts, Darwin's finches, and mockingbirds.
- Sail past Kicker Rock, a spectacular volcanic formation off the coast of San Cristobal, and take a dinghy ride to Cerro Brujo.

(B, L, D)

Santa Cruz

Day 7 – Saturday, June 20, 2009**Española/Floreana Islands**

- After breakfast, disembark at Gardner Bay on Española (Hood) Island for a short walk along a pristine white coral beach. Enjoy snorkeling and swimming here or explore nearby islets in a glass-bottom boat.
- During an afternoon excursion to Punta Suarez, walk on lava terrain and visit unique seabird colonies.
- Those who choose not to walk the entire trail can take a dinghy ride along the island's coastline, followed by a very short walk under easy conditions.
- During an afternoon excursion to Floreana Island, advanced snorkelers can

explore the “Devil’s Crown” while others can hike to Punta Cormorant, for a swim or snorkel.

(B, L, D)

Santa Cruz

Day 8 – Sunday, June 21, 2009

Fernandina and Isabela Islands

- On Fernandina, the youngest island in the Galapagos, enjoy a dinghy ride to observe Galapagos penguins and flightless cormorants, and then disembark at Punta Espinoza for a one-mile walk. With no introduced mammals, Fernandina has a unique environment with the islands’ highest density of marine iguanas, which coexist with sea lions, Sally Lightfoot crabs, and hawks.
- In the afternoon, snorkel along the cliffs of the partly submerged Ecuador Volcano on the northern tip of Isabela Island. Explore the coast by dinghy as naturalists discuss the dramatic geology of the area.
- Tonight, celebrate the voyage at a farewell dinner.

(B, L, D)

Santa Cruz

Day 9 – Monday, June 22, 2009

Baltra Island/Guayaquil

- Return to Baltra for a flight to Guayaquil.

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Hotel Hilton Colon

Day 10 – Tuesday, June 23, 2009

Guayaquil/U.S.

- Fly to the U.S. on the recommended flight itinerary, or independently.

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