

The Yacht La Pinta

On arrival staff from **the La Pinta** will meet all arriving guests & transfer you to the boat. The advantage of cruising on this boat is, again, that a member of our ground agents (who own the boat) actually flies with all arriving La Pinta clients from Quito & Guayaquil, ensuring clients are looked after throughout & even check them in for the flights. The boat is a luxury category vessel with 48 passengers. It was a new arrival to the islands in March 2008 & each cabin is a spacious suite with a large picture window. It is the most prestigious boat to sail upon & has the very best guides & staff on board.

- The **La Pinta** is a new boat to the Galapagos Islands, with its arrival in March 2008. It is now the top boat sailing the waters, with wonderful guides & excellent accommodation. A 7 night cruise on board the Yacht La Pinta is the ultimate luxurious expedition adventure in the Galapagos Islands. The 63-meter (207-foot) yacht accommodates 48 guests. Guest will also enjoy the Galapagos Marine Reserve – the second largest in the world – with various snorkelling outings, chances for swimming and whale and dolphin watching during inter-island cruising. La Pinta's ample staterooms provide Galapagos explorers with unparalleled comfort. Its 24 cabins are located mid-ship, in the Upper Deck, with twin beds (32" x 79" inches), which can be converted to one Queen bed (64" x 79" inches), with private bathroom and air conditioning. Six cabins are connected, for the convenience of families travelling together, and there are also 4 triple cabins of approximately 22 square meters (236 square feet). Bedding is fine cotton, down duvets and a choice of pillows. www.yachtlapinta.com



FRIDAY

Puerto Baquerizo Moreno (San Cristobal [Chatham] Island)

Morning arrival at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the small and cosy capital of Galapagos. This small attractive port is the provincial capital of the Galápagos Islands (population ca 4,000), along a crescent-shaped bay. Visit the San Cristóbal Interpretation Centre, located in a natural setting, that allows visitors to obtain information for a better understanding of the natural history of the Galápagos, with a great emphasis on human history and conservation. Transfer to board Y/LA PINTA. Welcome introductory briefing, and lunch. Boat Drill and other activities will be explained by the staff.

Isla Lobos and Playa Ochoa (San Cristobal[Chatham] Island)

A zodiac ride along the rocky shoreline of Isla Lobos: a rugged satellite islet of San Cristobal, home of Galapagos sea lions, brown pelicans, and marine iguanas. A small colony of frigate birds, trees and stunning vistas of nearby kicker Rock. A wet landing on a coralline beach (Playa Ochoa) will offer the first opportunity to swim or snorkel. Highlights ashore include the Chatham (San Cristobal) Mockingbird, Chatham Lava Lizard; both species are endemic to this island, and seen nowhere else in Galapagos. We may also spot Yellow Warblers, Galapagos flycatchers etc. These are the same shores that Charles Darwin walked upon, back in September 1835, as San Cristobal was the first island where he set foot in the Galapagos. Back on board, join us at the bar saloon for a cocktail offered by the Captain, enjoy the expedition plan for the next day followed by dinner.

SATURDAY

North Seymour Island

Morning disembarkation (dry landing) for a walk along the coast and the interior of the island, observing bird colonies of blue footed boobies, frigate birds, swallow tailed gulls and also sea lions and marine iguanas. An opportunity for snorkelling or coastal exploration.

Guy Fawkes and Cerro Dragón (Santa Cruz Island)

Guy Fawkes is a group of four small islets, remains of eroded tuff cones, two of which still show their crescent face protected to the leeward side. Fantastic locations to enjoy the marine reserve, including Galápagos sharks, turtles and sea horses along with myriads of reef fish. Afterwards, explore the northern shore of Santa Cruz Island, at Cerro Dragon, where an important project to save the endemic land iguanas was successful in protecting these reptiles against introduced predators. Today the iguana population is booming again, and individuals may be seen basking in the sun or feeding on the opuntia cacti. To reach this "Dragon Hill" we pass a small lagoon, feeding ground for colourful waders like stilts and greater flamingos.

SUNDAY

Post Office Bay, Champion Islet (Floreana [Charles] Island)

Wet landing at the historic barrel that served as a post office, to learn about the human side of the islands, its early inhabitants and the adventures of pirates and whalers. Possibility to snorkel from the zodiacs around Champion Islet or a ride on the glass-bottom boat. A zodiac ride along Champion islet may show the rarest land bird in Galápagos: the Charles Mockingbird.

Punta Cormorant (Floreana [Charles] Island)

Disembark at Punta Cormorant (wet landing) for an easy walk to see the flamingos that inhabit a brackish-water lagoon, and other birds like ducks, stilts, sandpipers, etc. Return to the beach and possibility to swim; there is great snorkelling at this site or kayak from the beach. Next day's expedition plan and dinner

MONDAY

Punta Moreno (Isabela [Albemarle] Island)

Dry landing over a young lava field. A dramatic scenery of pahoe-hoe lava that stretches to the foot of some of the most active volcanoes in Galápagos (Cerro Azul and Santo Tomás a.k.a. Sierra Negra). The landscape will be briefly interrupted by small scattered brackish lagoons. Lush vegetation and brightly coloured birds are a striking contrast with the surrounding jet black lava. A panga ride along the shore will reveal mangrove tenants like rays, young sharks, nesting pelicans and flightless birds like penguins and the endemic cormorant. Lunch on board.

Punta Espinoza (Fernandina [Narborough] Island)

The afternoon brings us to the jewel of the national Park, and youngest island, Fernandina. Disembark (dry landing) for a one-mile walk. Punta Espinoza has an amazing combination of barrenness with much wildlife. Having no introduced mammals, Fernandina has a very unique environment with the highest density of marine iguanas, sharing their space with sea lions, sally-light foot crabs, hawks, penguins and the flightless cormorant. Expedition plan and dinner.

TUESDAY

Highlands of Santa Cruz [Indefatigable] Island

After breakfast, disembark (dry landing) to visit the highlands of Santa Cruz Island, an Scalesia forest and the twin pit craters geology formation, Los Gemelos. From December to mid-April a visit to see the giant tortoises in the wild may be included, if weather conditions are good. Lunch at the poolside of the Finch Bay Eco Hotel.

Puerto Ayora and the Charles Darwin Research Station

Afternoon visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station and the giant tortoise pens, including tortoise celebrities like "Lonesome George" within an impressive giant prickly-pear cactus forest home to many land birds. These are the headquarters of scientific investigation, conservation and the National Park administration. Late afternoon stroll along the main street of Puerto Ayora before embarking on Yacht LA PINTA. Next day's expedition plan and dinner.

WEDNESDAY

Bartolomé Island

A small satellite island of the neighbouring Santiago Island, Bartolomé is a landmark of Galápagos. Broken volcanic material reveals some of the most striking volcanic landscapes: the Pinnacle rock. After a dry landing, the short, yet somewhat steep trail will unfold virtually every volcanic feature expected to be found in Galápagos. Lava flows, tuff, cinder and spatter cones. To reach the summit a wooden staircase was built to minimize erosion on the island's slopes. The vista is the prize: The Pinnacle Rock next to golden beaches and turquoise waters. This is the introduction to the next activity:

swimming and snorkelling along the north beach of Bartolomé. Glass Bottom boat is an option for non-snorkelers. Lunch on board.

Rábida Island

Only a short sailing distance from Bartolomé is the colourful island of Rábida. Aquatic activities will include swarms of reef fish, sea lions and often large rays. The day can end with a rewarding stroll along the trail up to the viewing rocks over the red beach. A deciduous forest of palo santo trees, home to Darwin finches and Galápagos doves. Expedition plan and dinner. Weather permitting, stargazing from the outer deck at night.

THURSDAY

Gardner Bay (Española [Hood] Island)

After breakfast, disembark (wet landing) at a white coral beach where you can take a short walk and watch the sea lions, Hood mockingbirds, finches or enjoy the beach. There is great snorkelling in this area (snorkelling equipment is available for guests at no extra cost), or ride the glass-bottom boat.

Punta Suárez (Española [Hood] Island)

Afternoon dry landing for an exciting walk on lava terrain to visit its unique sea bird colonies, including the Waved Albatrosses (May - December), colonies of Nazca- and blue footed boobies, swallow tailed gulls and the famous blowhole. Departure briefing and dinner.

FRIDAY

Puerto Baquerizo Moreno (San Cristobal [Chatham] Island)

Disembark at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno. Transfer to the airport to take the flight back to the continent.