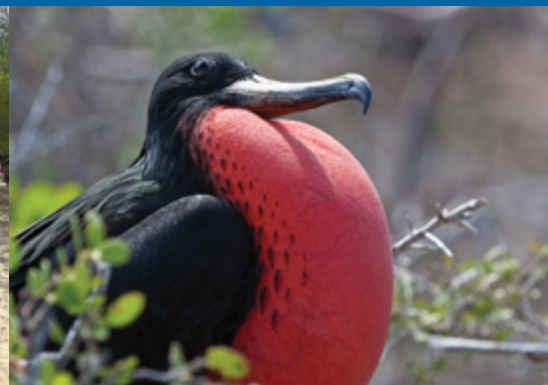




explore **GALAPAGOS**

DARWIN'S ENCHANTED ISLES

March 29 – April 7, 2024







EDUCATIONAL EXPEDITION TO THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS MARCH 29 – APRIL 7, 2024

On an active, experiential learning expedition under the guidance of the islands' highest-rated naturalists, explore Darwin's Enchanted Galapagos Islands.

Activities: Travel between islands by speedboat. Walk, ride bikes; daily hikes, swimming and snorkeling.

Day 1 - Friday, March 29 DEPART THE USA / FLY TO QUITO, ECUADOR

Evening arrivals in Quito. Surrounded by snow-capped volcanoes but only 24 km from the Equator, Quito enjoys a spring-like climate all year round. Although an important city in Inca and pre-Inca times, its original buildings have been erased and what remains today is divided between the historic Spanish colonial architecture and the clean lines of the modern era. This contrast of superb, well-preserved colonial churches and convents versus shining glass and sleek contemporary architecture makes Quito one of the most beautiful cities in Latin America. *Altitude: 9,350 feet. Overnight at Hotel Wyndham Quito Airport*

Day 2 - Saturday, March 30 FLY QUITO / GALAPAGOS ISLANDS – ISABELA ISLAND

Early morning breakfast, transfer and flight to the Galapagos Islands. Your flight departs at 8:00 a.m. The plane makes a brief stop in Guayaquil before continuing to the Galapagos Islands airport on Baltra, arriving at 10:30 a.m. Cross the channel from Baltra to the northern side of Santa Cruz Island. We'll drive across



the island to Puerto Ayora, where we have lunch, then take our speed boat to Isabela Island.

Isabela Island is the largest island in the Galapagos Archipelago. The island has six large volcanic domes; one of these is the Sierra Negra Volcano, the most famous active volcano in the island.

Isabela Island is home to flamingos, penguins, Galapagos giant tortoises, endemic Galapagos sharks, blue sharks, blue-footed boobies, sea lions, sea turtles, marine iguanas, and a wide variety of marine life.

For the next three nights, we're based in Puerto Villamil, the colorful fishing village of about 3,000 inhabitants, situated on a beautiful white coral beach. Stroll the town and enjoy a sunset swim on the beach. *Overnight at Hotel San Vicente (B,L,D)*

Day 3 - Sunday, March 31 ISABELA – LOS TUNELES / BIKE RIDE Today we explore *Los Tuneles* - The Tunnels, a unique geological formation and one of the most fascinating snorkeling



and diving sites in the Galápagos due to its extraordinary lava formations and diverse marine life.

Los Tuneles was formed by the cooling of lava from the nearby Volcán Alcedo, which created a series of lava tunnels and bridges. Over time, the tunnels collapsed, leaving behind a network of shallow and crystal-clear pools surrounded by lava rocks and arches. These intricate formations resemble a maze, hence the name “The Tunnels.”

What makes Los Tuneles truly special is the abundance of marine life that thrives in the area. The pools and lava crevices provide excellent shelter for a wide variety of marine species. We’ll have an extraordinary opportunity to snorkel here, to look for sea turtles, rays, sea lions, marine iguanas, and various colorful fish species. We may even see penguins and sea horses! In addition to the diverse marine life, Los Tuneles is home to blue-footed boobies, pelicans and frigatebirds, which we can see on the nearby rocks and cliffs.

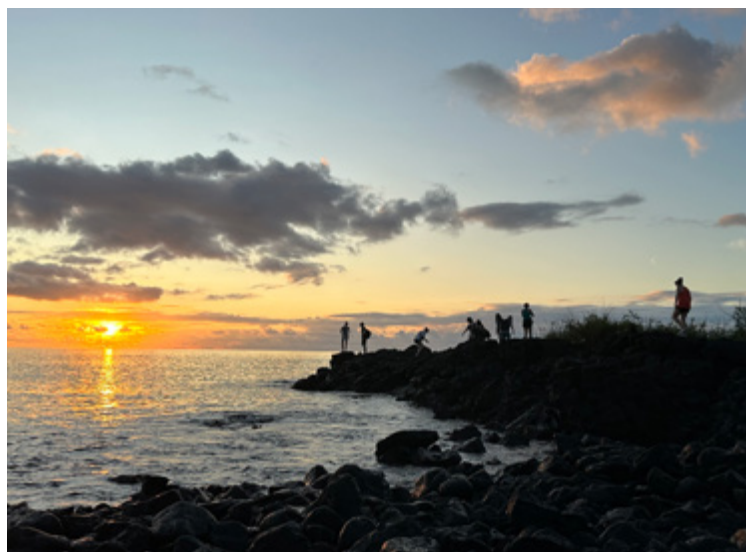


A visit to this protected area provides a unique opportunity to explore an otherworldly landscape, witness extraordinary marine life, and appreciate the unique geological processes that have shaped the Galápagos Islands over millions of years.

After freshening up back at the hotel, we’ll take a bike ride around Puerto Villamil and along the beach, stopping to look at iguanas and tortoises, then taking a refreshing swim. *Overnight at Hotel San Vicente (B,L,D)*

Day 4 - Monday, April 1 ISABELA – SIERRA NEGRA VOLCANO / FLAMINGOS Today’s exploration takes us to Sierra Negra volcano one of the five active volcanoes on Isabela, whose most recent eruption took place in August 2018. Our first stop will be at the majestic volcano rim, offering us a breathtaking view of the surrounding landscape. If weather conditions permit, we’ll hike around the caldera, one of the largest calderas in the world, to the fumaroles—places where the Earth’s heat





escapes to the surface – to experience first-hand the powerful forces that shape our planet. We'll have a picnic lunch in the shade of a giant tree. On our way back to Villamil, we'll stop at the Villamil flamingo lagoons to observe American flamingos and other shore birds such as plovers, sandpipers and willets.

At the end of the afternoon, there's time for a swim in the sea.
Overnight at Hotel San Vicente (B,L,D)

Day 5 - Tuesday, April 2 SANTA CRUZ - CHARLES DARWIN STATION AND HIGHLANDS This morning we depart Isabela by speedboat and move to Santa Cruz Island for three nights in Puerto Ayora, the main community in the Galapagos and the headquarters of the Galapagos National Park.

This afternoon, we visit the famous Charles Darwin Research Station. Here we'll learn about conservation programs carried out by the National Park, with the scientific support of the Charles Darwin Station. We visit the Tortoise captive breeding program and learn about famous "Lonesome George" who died in 2012, the last Pinta tortoise. Then we explore the highlands of Santa Cruz by bus, to

discover giant tortoises in their natural habitat. Santa Cruz has a population of about 8,000 giant tortoises. Check in to the hotel to enjoy the pool or take some time to look around the town of Puerto Ayora. *Overnight at Hotel La Laguna (B,L,D)*

Day 6 - Wednesday, April 3 SANTA CRUZ – SANTA FE / COFFEE & SUGARCANE FARM This morning cruise over to the nearby Island of Santa Fe and the protected and rich turquoise waters of Barrington Bay. Explore part of the island, in search of two endemic species, then swim and snorkel.

Return to Santa Cruz, where we meet a farmer, Mr. Adriano Cabrera, who welcomes us to his family's farm where coffee, bananas and sugarcane are produced. Learn about the life of a local farming family and agriculture in the island climate. You may wish to take home coffee or brown sugar that they produce.

Dinner is on your own this evening. *Overnight at Hotel La Laguna (B,L)*

Day 7 - Thursday, April 4 SANTA CRUZ - TORTUGA BAY BEACH

This morning we will walk for about an hour to reach one of the most beautiful beaches in the world, Tortuga Bay Beach, named after the turtles that nested here in the past. As we walk, we'll pass through an endemic cactus forest as we observe small land birds, until we reach the white sand beach. Pelicans, frigate birds, boobies, ghost crabs and marine iguanas have no fear of sharing the clear waters and beach with us as we swim, snorkel or kayak.

We'll have a picnic lunch on the beach. *Overnight at Hotel La Laguna (B,L,D)*

Day 8 - Friday, April 5 SANTA CRUZ / BALTRA / QUITO

This morning we depart magical Galapagos and fly back to the mainland at 10:35 a.m.; arriving in Quito at 3:05 p.m. Continue to our hotel for check in and overnight. *Overnight Hotel Sebastian or similar (B)*

Day 9 - Saturday, April 6 QUITO – CHOCOLATE / DEPARTURE

After a late breakfast, we check out of the hotel and embark on a captivating exploration of the enchanting streets of Quito Colonial, a historical gem nestled in Ecuador's heart. Led by your expert local guide, explore a vibrant tapestry of churches, structures, and historical sites, each holding a unique tale of the city's past.

Walking through the historic center, stop in the Plaza San Francisco, an emblematic urban scene since colonial times, step inside to behold the grandeur of the Church and convent of San Francisco, a majestic architectural complex, the oldest and most significant religious site in Ecuador.

At La Plaza De La Independencia, you'll find the city's most important buildings: the Government Palace, the Arzobispal Palace, the municipality offices, and the monumental Independence monument, that embodies the spirit of Ecuador's historic struggle for freedom. We'll take in the views over the entire city of Quito, at Mirador del Panecillo, the giant metal statue of the "Winged Virgin", the guardian of the city. At the "Middle of the World" monument on the equatorial line, straddle earth's two hemispheres.

Finally, we'll enjoy a chocolate tasting experience and dinner before we head to the airport for departure to the USA. *(B,D)*

Day 10 - Sunday, April 7 ARRIVE HOME

All itineraries are subject to approval by the Galapagos National Park and may vary according to changes in park regulations. The exact order of daily activities may vary according to local boat transportation schedules.

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS WITH FENWICK HIGH SCHOOL

March 29 – April 7, 2024

\$5,682 per person

\$650 deposit on or before October 15, 2023

\$5,032* Final payment due on or before December 15, 2023

*Payment by credit card incurs an additional 3.5% service fee

REGISTER ONLINE

conservancytravel.org/fenwick-galapagos

INCLUSIONS:

- ✓ Round-trip airfare from Chicago to Ecuador
- ✓ Domestic flights from mainland to islands
- ✓ Eight nights hotel accommodations in Standard category rooms.
- ✓ Meals as detailed as included in the itinerary (B:8; L:6; D:5)
- ✓ Expert Galapagos National Park Ranger guide
- ✓ Galapagos National Park Fee & Galapagos Transit Control Card
- ✓ Private land transportation throughout the program
- ✓ Speedboats between islands on shared basis
- ✓ Snorkeling Gear (Mask, snorkel, fins and mesh bag)
- ✓ Excursions as detailed in the itinerary
- ✓ Potable water provided to refill your personal water bottle; soft drinks, water, juice, tea & coffee at included meals
- ✓ Gratuities for hotel staff, to guides and driver

EXCLUSIONS:

- Transfers to/from Chicago airport
- Services not detailed in the itinerary
- Excursions not detailed in the itinerary
- Personal expenses such as passport fees, laundry, internet and phone calls, beverages not detailed as included with meals or on transportation, camera fees, etc.
- Travel Insurance



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Register online at
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