



Athala – 8 day with Genovesa

One of only a small handful of yachts offering true 5 star facilities in Galapagos, this is a beautiful vessel which is very spacious, light and airy. With a capacity for 16 guests, Athala offers all the amenities of being on a larger vessel, but all the intimacy and benefits of being on a smaller vessel. Each of the rooms is spacious with picture windows. Service on board is excellent, with an administrator on board to ensure the smooth running of operations.

The itinerary includes a great variety of islands from almost all regions of the archipelago – as it is a faster and smoother yacht than most, it is able to do this. You will experience a very good selection of Galapagos wildlife, fascinating geological scenery, some great snorkelling opportunities. The highlights include the pristine western coast of Isabella Island, Fernandina Island and Genovesa a beautiful island and outpost for seabirds.



Day 1 Baltra – Arrive at Baltra meet your crew and board your yacht The Athala.

Mosquera This tiny islet, nestled between Baltra and North Seymour islands is a beautiful long narrow beach with a large population of Galapagos Sea Lions. As with other areas in Galapagos this area has been geologically uplifted. A great opportunity for swimming and snorkelling off the beach.

Activities: Wet landing. Short walk along the beach (0.5 Mi). Snorkel.

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Highlights & Animals: Galapagos Sea lion colony, Lava Gulls, Herons. Snorkel: Sharks, Rays, Parrotfish, Angelfish



Day 2

Santiago – Sullivan Bay This site is of great geological interest and is located southeast of Santiago Island. Sullivan Bay offers a rare look at a recently formed lava-field. Located on the eastern coast of James Island, just across from Bartolome, this lava field is thought to have been created in eruptions that took place around 1890.

Activities: Hike (1.3 mi / 2 km) swimming and snorkelling

Difficulty: Moderate.

Type of Landing: Dry landing at the rocky shore and a wet landing at the white sand beach

Highlights & Animals: Pahoehoe lava flows, which has hardened in accordion-style formation. Small glass-like bubbles of lava can be found, called “hornitos”. Penguins in the coastline.

Bartolome

Home to one of the most iconic scenery shots of Galapagos, this small island is located off the eastern shore of Santiago Island. The striking volcanic landscape looks almost lunar and provides a great introduction to the volcanic origins of the islands, with spatter cones and cinder cones some of which are eroded shaping striking formations like Pinnacle Rock. On the way to the top of Bartolome you will observe good examples of pioneering plants, including some beautiful strands of lava cactus. At sea level, this is a great place for swimming and snorkelling, if you are lucky with Galapagos Penguins.



Activities: Dinghy ride & snorkelling. Hike uphill (1.2 mi / 2 km)

Difficulty: Moderate/ difficult. Walk up to the top of volcano 114 meters, 375 wooden steps.

Type of Landing: Dry and wet landing

Highlights & Animals: Pinnacle rock, panoramic view, moonlike landscape, Penguins, pioneer plants, lava cactus. Snorkelling: Penguins, Reef Sharks, Rays great colourful fish.

Day 3

Isabela Measuring over 1800 square miles, and accounting for over half the land surface area in Galapagos, at about 80 miles in length, the seahorse shaped Isabela Island is the largest in the Galapagos. Isabela is formed from six separate volcanoes (Alcedo, Cerro Azul, Darwin, Ecuador, Sierra Negra and Wolf). Being the largest islands, it has many visitor sites, covering a large diversity of ecosystems, from barren lava flows to evergreen lush forests.



Urbina Bay In 1954, almost 4 miles of coastal seabed dramatically uplifted about 15 ft exposing the sea floor and killing thousands of fish and turtles. This then, vegetation has largely colonized the area but many signs of the uplifting can still be observed. This area is now a nesting site for Land Iguanas and occasionally, giant tortoises coming from the moist uplands. This is a good trail to see Darwin finches and it is not rare to see Galapagos Hawks

Activities: Snorkelling, dinghy ride & hike, 2 trails: short (0.6 mi / 1 km), long (1.9 mi / 3km)
Difficulty: Easy (short trail) / Difficult (long trail)
Type of Landing: Wet landing
Highlights & Animals: Land Iguanas (the biggest in Galapagos), Hawks, uplifted coral reef, Giant Tortoises. Snorkelling: Turtles, Rays, tropical fish



Tagus Cove The walk will take you up the slopes of the Darwin Volcano, along the edge of a salt water lagoon to a small hill from which you will see spectacular views of the northern lava fields of Isabela. Most of the fauna will be observed during a dinghy ride along the coast, with dramatic colours and beautiful tuff formations, Blue-footed Boobies, Penguins, Marine Iguanas, Pelicans and shorebirds.

Activities: Long uphill hike, Snorkelling, dinghy ride, Kayak.
Difficulty: Moderate
Type of Landing: Dry landing
Highlights & Animals: Darwin Finches, lowland native vegetation, beautiful landscapes, Penguins, Flightless Cormorants, Blue-footed boobies, Darwin Volcano & Lake

Day 4 – Fernandina

Punta Espinosa Punta Espinosa, is a truly spectacular visitor site and a real highlight for any visitor to the Galapagos. A narrow strip of land extending out from the base of the Fernandina Volcano, it is home to the largest colonies of Marine Iguanas in the Galapagos. You will also have the chance to see Flightless Cormorants here, sea lions, and Galapagos Hawks often perch on the mangrove trees looking for prey. Along the coast, tidal pools provide a perfect environment for invertebrates and shorebirds, such as Oystercatchers, Plovers, Turnstones and Whimbrels.



Activities: Hike of approx (1.2 mi / 2 km). Snorkel.

Difficulty: Moderate

Type of Landing: Dry but sometimes slippery at low tide

Highlights & Animals: Sea Lion colony, Flightless Cormorant, vast numbers of Marine Iguanas, Sea Turtles, Sally-lightfoot Crabs, shorebirds, Herons. Snorkel: Penguins, Marine Iguanas feeding underwater, Cormorants, Sea turtles.

Isabela

Vicente Roca Point Beautiful volcanic scenery , amazing lava intrusions and huge sea cliff make this place one of the most scenic in the Galapagos. Nazca and Blue-footed Boobies sit along the cliffs whilst Flightless Cormorants stay along the shoreline and if you are lucky you will see Penguins in the water. The upwelling of cold water currents have created an abundance of marine life here, making for great snorkelling.

Activities: Dinghy ride, snorkel.

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: No landing

Highlights & Animals: Spectacular landscapes, Sea Turtles, Blue-footed boobies, Nazca boobies, Penguins, Flightless Cormorants. Snorkel: Sea turtles, Penguins, Gorgonians and other invertebrates.



Day 5

James – (Santiago) - James Bay (Puerto Egas) This was the island where Charles Darwin spent the majority of his land visits in Galapagos. At James Bay, the Fur Seal Grottos provide great chances to get close views of both Fur Seals and Galapagos Sea Lions in a series of rocky pools. This visit also provides some of the best opportunities for tide-pooling in the Galapagos, and chances to see shore birds such as Plovers, Sandpipers, Herons and Oystercatchers. The snorkel from the beach is excellent.

Activities: Snorkelling, hike (1.2 mi / 2km)

Difficulty: Easy / moderate

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Highlights: Galapagos Fur seals, Galapagos Sea Lions, tidal pools and “grottos”, Galapagos Hawk, Oystercatchers, Marine Iguanas, finches. Snorkelling: Reef Sharks, Turtles, Rays, nice underwater formations.

James (Santiago) – Playa Espumilla This tawny beach is a favourite nesting ground of Green Sea Turtles. There is a trail going inland with some very large Palo Santo trees where a number of land birds can be seen, including the Vermillion Flycatcher, the Galapagos Dove, Darwin Finches and Galapagos Mockingbirds. The beautiful sandy beach is a great place to swim and has some great mangrove areas.

Activities: Hiking (1 mi- 1,6km), Snorkelling and swimming at the beach

Difficulty: Easy / Moderate

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Highlights: Lowland Forest, Galapagos Hawk, Darwin Finches. Snorkelling



Day 6

Santa Cruz - Charles Darwin Research Station The Charles Darwin Research Station offers a great chance to learn about the work being done to conserve and protect the islands wildlife. For some visitors (depending on the time of year) this is the only time to see Giant Tortoises and certainly the closest range opportunity. It is also a great chance to see the Tortoise Rearing Centre.

Activities: Walking

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Dry landing

Highlights & Animals: Giant Tortoises, Land and Marine Iguanas, Mockingbirds, Darwin Finches.



Santa Cruz – Highlands The highlands of Santa Cruz are home to fascinating geological features, like lava tubes and the twin sinkhole craters of Los Gemelos, which are home to some 300 different fern species as well as a forest of Scalesias, a relative of sunflowers. This is an excellent area to look for some elusive endemics like the Woodpecker Finch (one of only a few bird species in the world to use tools), Small Tree Finch, Vegetarian Finch and Galapagos Rail. The highlands of Santa Cruz are one of the best places to see Giant Tortoises in the wild.

Activities: Hike (0.9 mi / 1 ½ km)

Difficulty: Easy / moderate

Highlights & Animals: Pitt craters, Scalesia Forest, Darwin finches, Warblers, Flycatchers.

Day 7 Genovesa (Tower) A highlight of any visit to the Galapagos, a truly beautiful island thanks to the richness of its birdlife. Located in the northeast portion of Galapagos, the island is an outpost for many seabirds (as is Espanola in the South). Interestingly there are no land reptiles here and only very small Marine Iguanas, due to direction of ocean currents which apparently would not have carried terrestrial animals here. You will visit the following sites.

El Barranco or Prince Philip's Steps The tour begins with a great dinghy (small dingy) ride along the base of the cliffs where you see Red-billed Tropicbirds trying to make a precise landing in their nest. Squadrons of Frigatebirds are seen flying back and forth, whilst Red-footed Boobies perch on branches of Palo Santo trees which seemingly grow out of the cliffs. Once you arrive on land and climb to the cliff-top, you enter an area where nesting Nazca Boobies and Great Frigatebirds are found. It is also a great place to see Galapagos Doves and Vampire Finches (Sharp-beaked Ground finches)...ask your guide for the full story on the name! You will also see a large colony of Storm Petrels which attracts Short-Eared Owls, often observed stalking at these small sea birds, even during the day.

Activities: Hike (0.9 mi / 1 ½ km)

Difficulty: Moderate

Type of Landing: Dry, difficult landing

Highlights: Red-footed Boobies, Great Frigatebirds, Short-eared Owls, Storm-petrels, Galapagos Doves, Darwin Finches.



Genovesa - Darwin Bay This bay is actually the caldera of an extinct, partially eroded volcano, with the surrounding cliffs forming the inner portion of the rim. You will land on a coral beach, and will immediately be struck by the amount of birdlife. The trail is loaded with Great Frigatebirds (mating season from February to May), Red-footed Boobies nesting in the mangroves, Swallow-tailed Gulls, Lava Gulls, Yellow-Crowned Night Herons. Your trail takes you past a beautiful tide pool area Herons try to catch small fish.

Activities: Hike (0.9 mi / 1 ½ km), snorkelling, kayaking & dinghy ride

Difficulty: Easy/moderate

Type of Landing: Wet landing.

Highlights: Nazca Boobies, Red-footed Boobies, Great Frigatebirds, Swallow-tailed Gulls, mangroves, coral pebbles beach. Snorkelling: rays, colourful reef fish and Hammerhead Sharks

Day 8

North Seymour A great variety of Galapagos wildlife is provided in the loop trail on this small island. The highlight of your visit here will be the largest colony of Magnificent and Great Frigatebirds in the Galapagos as well as a colony of Blue-footed Boobies. In addition there are Sea lions, Marine Iguanas, Lava Lizards, Swallow-Tailed Gulls, and a few secretive, but very large Land Iguanas.

Activities: Hiking(1.5 mi/2.2 km), Snorkelling & dinghy ride

Difficulty: Moderate/difficult

Type of Landing: Dry landing

Highlights & Animals: Land & Marine Iguanas, Frigatebirds, Blue-footed Boobies, Sea Lions, sea birds. Snorkelling: Rays, Reef Shark, fish, Garden Eels



After this final visit, you will be transferred to Baltra's airport for your flight back to the mainland, or you could continue your Galapagos adventure with a stay in one of the inhabited islands.

Please note: *Itineraries are unlikely to change significantly but are subject to change. Weather, wildlife breeding, instructions from the Galapagos National Park, specific abilities and interests of passengers as well as operational matters may cause your guide or captain to change the times or nature of your visits. Your guide will always endeavour to have the best itinerary for you within these constraints.*



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