



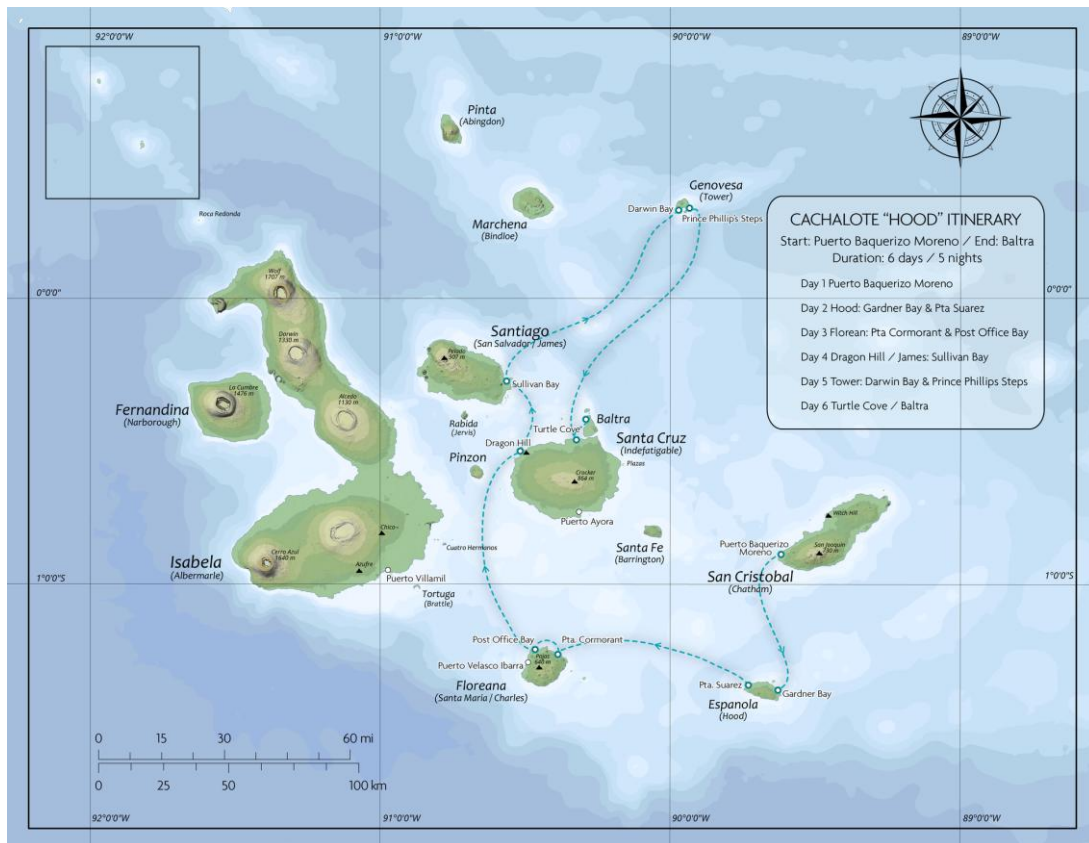
Cachalote Explorer

6 Days – Genovesa and Espanola



A charming and comfortable First-Class yacht Cachalote Explorer was originally a fishing boat built in 1988 in Vancouver, Canada. Converted to a passenger yacht back in 2017 Cachalote was brought to Galapagos the following year and has been a firm favourite of ours since then! With a capacity of up to 16 guests it is operated by a very good local company with a fantastic itinerary and works with excellent naturalist guides. Crew are very friendly and helpful. Eight cabins all with air conditioning, private bathrooms and hot showers. Built for the rough waters of the Canadian West Coast this will provide a smoother than normal ride for boats of this size in Galapagos.





Your Itinerary

One of the best 6 day itineraries available on any yacht! True particularly from April through June – as it includes both Genovesa and Española, the remote outpost islands which are the most spectacular at this time of year when the seabirds are courting at their most intense. It is a great itinerary any time of the year with a superb mix of islands and Galapagos wildlife, and fascinating geological scenery, with pristine white beaches and great snorkeling.

Day 1 San Cristobal

You fly into San Cristobal Island for the start of this cruise program to the East of Galapagos. Once you have paid your Galapagos National Park entrance fee and collected your luggage you will be met by your guide your wonderful 6 day cruise program will begin.

San Cristobal - El Junco Lake

Driving up to the highlands of San Cristobal, you take a narrow road up the sides of an extinct volcano and at the summit you are treated to a spectacular view of the El Junco Lagoon. Rainwater and condensation have collected in the caldera since the last ice age, creating this haven for frigatebirds. Travelling up here gives you a glimpse of the islands many vegetation zones and their eco-systems within the island (you need good shoes and a jacket for this visit!).

Activities: Uphill hike (1 mi / 1.6 km)

Difficulty: Easy/moderate

Type of Landing: No landing

Highlights & Animals: Interesting hike to see the only permanent lake of the entire Galapagos. Views of the lake, endemic highland vegetation, Darwin Finches.



San Cristobal – Galapaguera Cerro Colorado

Located in the south east of San Cristobal, this area is home to giant tortoise corral, where tortoises are kept in near-natural conditions. The site has been developed to help restore the Giant Tortoise population of the island (which was badly impacted by whalers in past centuries) and provides a great chance to see these magnificent giants up close in a natural habitat with paths covering an area of 900 meters.

You will also have great chances of seeing the San Cristobal Mockingbird, Woodpecker Finch and Large and Small Tree Finches here. It is also one of the few places that you can see the delicate *Calandrinia galapagosa*, a critically endangered plant endemic to San Cristobal.

Activities: Short hike (less than 0.6 mi / 1 km).

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: No landing

Highlights: Dry vegetation of lowlands. Giant Tortoises, San Cristobal Mockingbird, Darwin Finches



Day 2 Española (Hood)

This island is one of the highlights of any visit to Galapagos. Española is the southernmost island in the Galapagos, and is also one of the oldest. Numerous Sea Lions are seen here, plus hundreds of Marine Iguanas basking on the rocks. Española's Marine Iguanas are unlike other Galapagos Marine Iguanas thanks to their bright colouring. Española is home to thousands of nesting seabirds all year, including Blue-footed Boobies, Nazca Boobies and Frigatebirds. Between late March and December, the Waved Albatross, perhaps the most spectacular of Galapagos birds, returns to Española by the thousands to perform their amazing mating dance and produce the next generation. Almost the entire population breeds on this island during this time, and they spend the rest of the year at sea.



Gardner Bay

This beautiful bay is nestled between Gardner islet and the beautiful coral sand beach in Española. You will visit a spectacular white sand beach, home to one of the largest Sea Lion colonies in the islands, where you can also see endemic Española Mockingbirds and with some luck, Galapagos Hawks.



Activities: Snorkelling and kayaking. Short hike along the beach (0.6 mi / 1km)

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Highlights & Animals: White sandy beach, Sea Lion colony, Mockingbirds Galapagos Hawks. Snorkelling: colourful fish, Sea Lion nursery.



Punta Suárez

Regarding the amount of wildlife, this is one of the best trails in the whole islands. Despite the difficult terrain, the walk is an absolute marvel, as from the beginning to the end you will see large quantities of Sea Lions, Marine Iguanas, Blue-footed and Nazca Boobies, gulls, Galapagos Hawks and during most of the year, Waved Albatross. There are spectacular views of flying birds from the cliffs.

Activities: Hike (1.2 mi / 2 km)

Difficulty: Difficult, rocky terrain.

Type of Landing: Dry Landing

Highlights & Animals: Española Mockingbird, Nazca Boobies, Waved Albatross, Red-billed Tropicbirds, lava lizards, Galapagos Hawk, Blue-footed Boobies, blow hole, amazing landscape.

Day 3 Floreana - Punta Cormorant

At Punta Cormorant you will walk on an olivine beach (a mineral known for its olive-green quality, that is found in meteorites, the moon and mars as well as on earth), visit a large lagoon where Greater Flamingos sometimes nest, and walk over to Flour Beach, a beautiful white sandy beach to look for Green Sea Turtle nests.

Activities: Hike (0.7 mi / 1.2km)

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Highlights and Animals: An easy walk along a coastal lagoon where flamingos are often found, along with stilts and ducks. White sand beach.



Floreana – Devil's Crown

One of the highlights of this area is snorkelling at Devil's Crown, a partially submerged crater teeming with Parrotfish, Wrasse, Surgeonfish, and Damselfish among many other varieties of tropical fish.

Activities: Snorkel

Difficulty: Moderate. Strong current

Type of Landing: No landing

Highlights and Animals: One of the best snorkelling sites in the islands, but a strong current can be a challenge for very inexperienced divers. Sea lions, reef sharks, sea turtles, hammerhead sharks, rays, many fish.



Floreana - Post Office Bay

The famous Post Office Bay is where people leave their mail to be picked up and delivered by others in the “post office” barrel—a time-honoured tradition begun by whalers more than two hundred years ago.

Activities: Short hike (less than 0.2 mi / 0.3km), lava tunnel & snorkelling

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Highlights: Barrel Post Office, lava tunnel inland (difficult access), nice sandy beach



Day 4 Santa Cruz – Cerro Dragon or Dragon Hill

After a dry landing, the walk will take you along the edge of a salt water lagoon behind the beach where you can often see flamingos, Pintail Ducks, stilts and other bird species. A short walk inland, offers a great view of the bay and a nesting site for Land Iguanas, many of which were repatriated back to Cerro Dragon by the Charles Darwin Research Station, after their near-extinction due to feral dogs and cats.



Activities: Hiking (1 mi./ 1.6km) Snorkelling

Difficulty: Moderate

Type of Landing: Dry landing

Highlights & Animals: Coastal lagoon with variety of water birds: Herons, Stilts, Pintail Ducks, Oystercatchers, Flamingos. Giant Cactus, Land Iguanas, Darwin Finches, Mockingbirds. Snorkel: Parrotfish, Puffers, Snappers, Sea Turtles.



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 (0.9 mi / 1.5 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.



Day 5 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 Española 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.

Genovesa - Darwin Bay

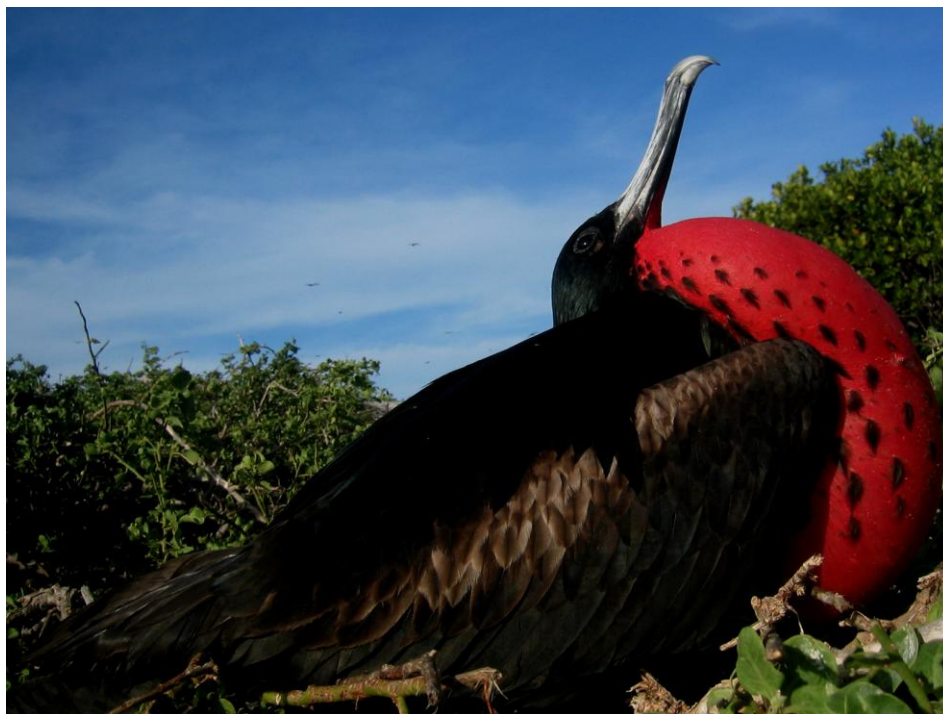
This bay is actually the caldera of an extinct, partially eroded volcano, with the surrounding cliffs forming the inner portion of the rim. You will land on a coral beach, and will immediately be struck by the amount of birdlife. The trail is loaded with Great Frigatebirds (mating season from February 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 where 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



El Barranco or Prince Philip's Steps

The tour begins with a great dinghy 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.



Day 6 You will have an early start this morning, and the visit will be a relatively short one as the yacht must then return to Baltra where the cruise will end in time for guests to take their connecting flight back to mainland Ecuador.

Santa Cruz - Black Turtle Cove (Caleta Tortuga Negra)

A beautiful mangrove lagoon on the north shore of Santa Cruz Island. The yacht anchors just outside the cove and you will enter on a dinghy, paddling through the calm waters of the lagoon, which is a resting site for Green Sea Turtles. A wonderfully quiet journey, through a beautiful and unique habitat. With good luck as well as Marine Turtles you will see different types of sharks and schools of Golden and Eagle Rays swimming just below the surface, whilst Yellow Warblers sing from above.



Activities: Boat tour in a lagoon, wildlife observation.

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: No landing

Highlights & Animals: Lagoon surrounded by mangroves. Sharks, rays, sea turtles, pelicans and Blue-footed Boobies



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.*

