



Beluga 5 day –Española



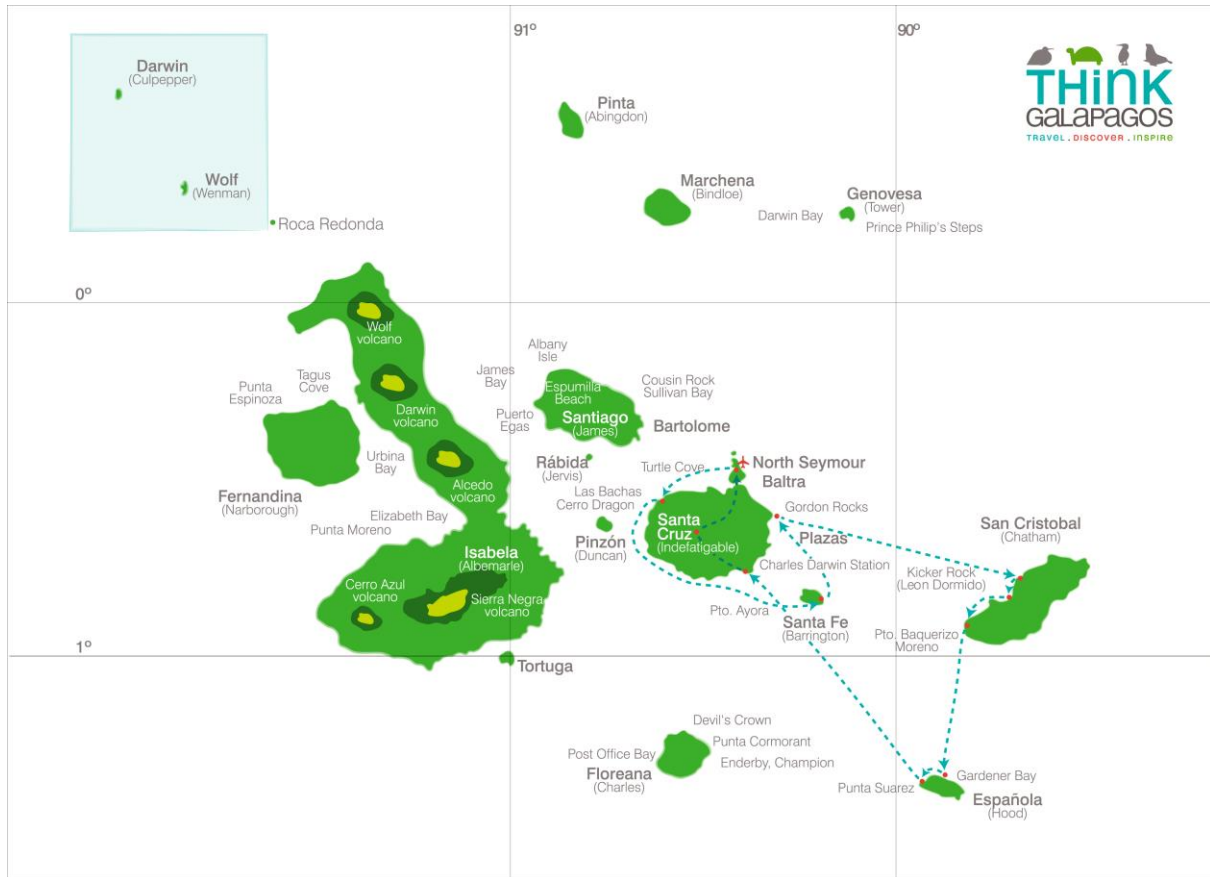
The Beluga is a small motor vessel with space for up to 16 guests. With panoramic windows in the salon and great deck space, Beluga is a fantastic way to cruise the islands in speed and style. Each cabin has their own private bathroom equipped with hot & cold water showers. Beluga is fully air conditioned, and is surprisingly spacious inside with two bilge keels which are used to reduce movement of the yacht whilst sailing and offers all the comforts and facilities of a first class motor yacht. The yacht is operated by a respected local company and works with very good naturalists and crew.

This 5-day itinerary is excellent visiting a great selection of islands including the beautiful Española – and is particularly good when the Waved Albatross are on Española between April and December.

Enjoy your time on board in the spacious sundeck or relax in the shade of the top deck while cruising between the islands. The Beluga has been awarded the "Smart Voyager Certification" for adhering to conservation standards. Beluga also complies with all international maritime regulations and is SOLAS certified.







Day 1 Baltra Arrival at the airport in Galapagos.

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, Common 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 near-extinction due to feral dogs and cats.

Activities: Hiking (1 mi / 1.6km)

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.



Day 2

Santa Fe This is the oldest of the Galapagos islands. Its paradisiacal bay offers great possibilities to swim and snorkel in crystal clear waters. A hike inland offers a great chance to see a species of Land Iguanas (*Conolophus pallidus*) which is endemic to Santa Fe Island. In the same area you'll also see a forest of giant prickly pear cactus. After your visit you can swim and snorkel both inside and outside the bay.

Activities: Hiking, Snorkelling

Difficulty: Moderate

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Highlights: Santa Fe Land Iguanas, Sea Lion colony, Galapagos Hawks, Mockingbirds, giant prickly pear cactus (the tallest in Galapagos). Snorkel: Sea Lions, Reef Sharks, Parrotfish, Surgeonfish.



South Plaza

This is the best island for observing Land Iguanas, along with Cactus Finches, Tropicbirds and Sea Lions. One of your first stops will be through a small “forest” of Prickly Pear Cactus. The walk along the sea cliffs is a wonderful experience, with Galapagos Shearwaters and Red-billed Tropicbirds gliding by. Towards the end of the walk is a bachelor Sea Lion colony, with a battle-scarred collection of old bulls in various states of recuperation or total retirement!

Activities: Hike (0.8 mi / 1.2 km)

Difficulty: Moderate

Type of Landing: Dry landing

Highlights & Animals: Land Iguanas, Sea Lion colony, Galapagos Shearwaters, Swallow-tailed Gulls, Nazca Boobies, amazing landscape with cliffs



Day 3 San Cristobal – Cerro Brujo

This striking eroded tuff cone was one of the first sites visited by Charles Darwin. It has a beautiful coral sand beach where you can take a leisurely walk (depending on time of year) visited by Brown Pelicans, Blue-footed Boobies, and Swallow-tailed Gulls as well as Marine Iguanas and Sea Lions. The beauty of this dramatic area can also be explored from the dinghy, exploring caves and looking for sea birds.

Activities: Hike along the beach (1 mi / 1.6 km), dinghy ride, snorkelling & kayaking

Difficulty: Easy walk along the beach

Type of Landing: Wet landing

Highlights & Animals: Beautiful rock formations, Sea Lions, shore birds, Land birds: Finches and Mockingbirds, snorkelling: Sea Lions, nice tropical fish, anemones.



San Cristobal - Leon Dormido

Sometimes called Kicker Rock, Leon Dormido is a huge rock formation near the coast of San Cristobal, an eroded cinder cone with two vertical rocks rising over 150 meters from the ocean, and a favourite spot for Tropicbirds along with Great and Magnificent Frigatebirds. You will visit this site by boat and it is a great spot for snorkelling.

Activities: Snorkelling & dinghy Ride

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: No landing

Highlights: Deep water snorkelling: Sharks, tropical fish, Turtles, Manta rays, Hammerhead shark, spectacular rock formations, sea birds: Blue-footed Boobies, Nazca Boobies & Frigatebirds.



San Cristobal – Puerto Baquerizo and the Interpretation Centre

The easternmost island in the archipelago, this island has a small town, Puerto Baquerizo Moreno and is home to a fantastic interpretation centre, which provides an excellent overview to the islands human history and the conservation work being done to protect it.

Activities: Easy hike (0.2 mi / 0.3 km)

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Dry landing

Highlights & Animals: Interesting information centre focused on the human history of the islands. Around the centre, Finches, Mockingbirds and endemic plants.



Day 4 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 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 5

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 - 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: Walk

Difficulty: Easy

Type of Landing: Dry landing

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



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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