



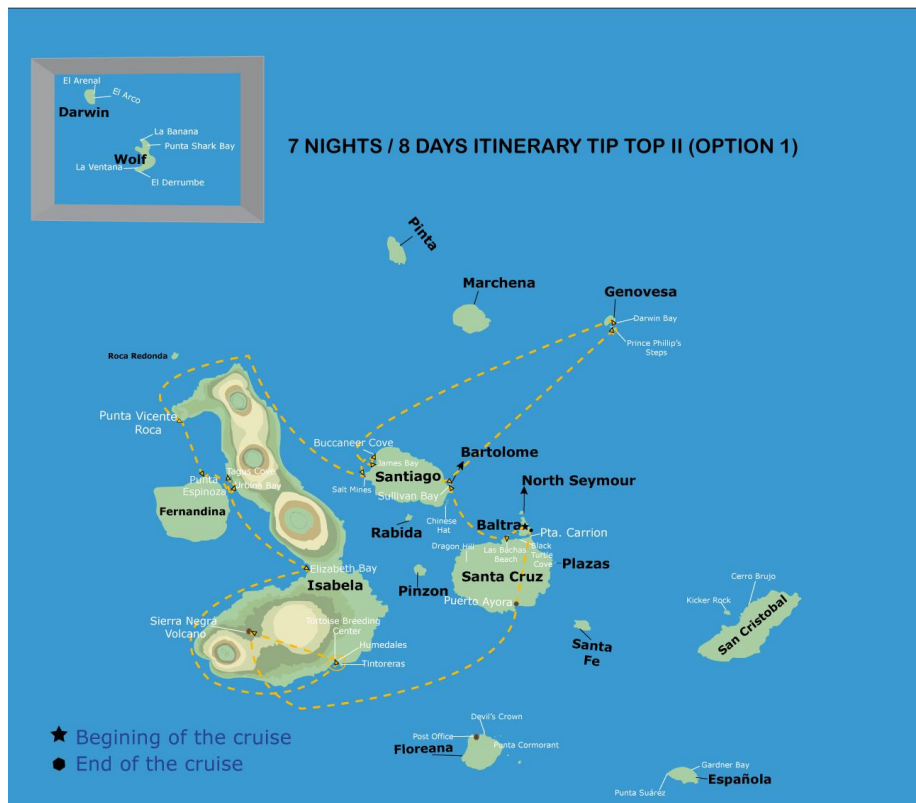
## Tip Top II – North Western – 8 days



*The Tip Top II is one of the newest catamarans in Galapagos, with great service and a very friendly crew, accommodating 16 passengers in 10 double cabins each with private shower and toilet. There is a bar, dining room, library, sundeck and diving platform. Just some of the luxuries you'll enjoy on the yacht's three decks are air conditioning, a TV, a VCR, a full sound system, an inviting dining room, a fully equipped bar, a library filled with a variety of reading materials, a spacious sundeck, and snorkelling equipment. This is a great itinerary visiting the Northern island of Genovesa one of the outpost islands for seabirds as well as the pristine western part of the archipelago.*







**Day 1**      **Baltra**      Arrival at the airport in Galapagos.

**Santa Cruz - Bachas Beach** A beautiful white sandy beach punctuated by lava formations. The wonderfully soft sand here makes it a favourite site for nesting Sea Turtles. Here you will also see White Mangroves, one of the four mangrove species found in the Galapagos. There is a small coastal lagoon behind the sand dunes where Flamingos, Stilts, Pintail ducks and other water birds are regularly seen.

**Activities:** Walking along the beach, swimming, snorkelling.

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Type of Landing:** Wet landing

**Highlights & Animals:** World War II remnants, Sally Lightfoot crabs, Hermit Crabs, Black Necked Stilts, Whimbrels, Flamingos, Sea Turtles





## 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

**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

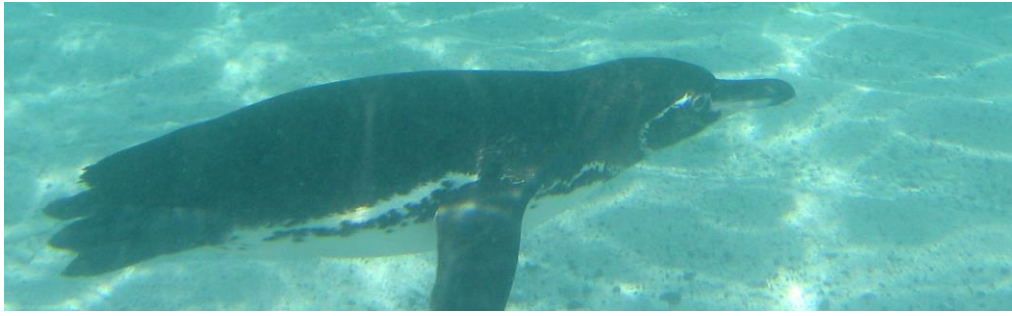
Home to one of the most iconic scenery shots of Galapagos, this small island is located off the eastern shore of Santiago Island. The striking volcanic landscape looks almost lunar and provides a great introduction to the volcanic origins of the islands, with spatter cones and cinder cones some of which 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 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.

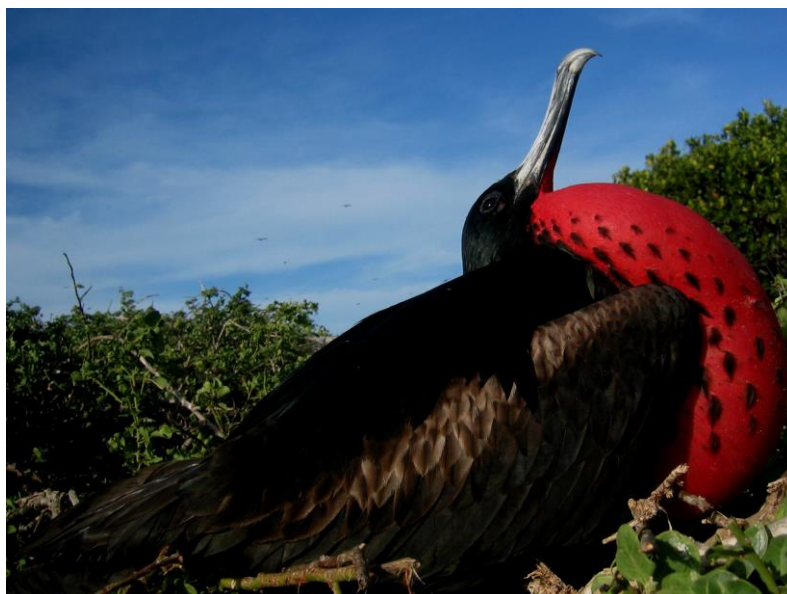
**El Barranco or Prince Philip's Steps** The tour begins with a great dinghy (small dingy) ride along the base of the cliffs where you see Red-billed Tropicbirds trying to make a precise landing in their nest. Squadrons of Frigatebirds are seen flying back and forth, whilst Red-footed Boobies perch on 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 4 James – (Santiago) - James Bay (Puerto Egas)

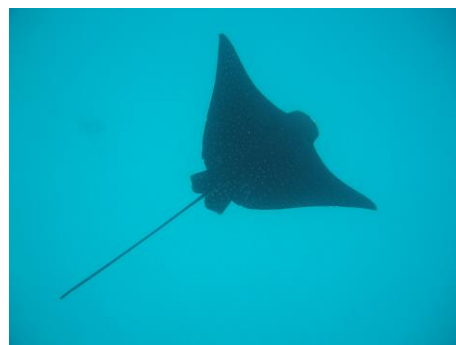
This was the island where Charles Darwin spent the majority of his land visits in Galapagos. At James Bay, the Fur Seal Grottos provide great chances to get close views of both Fur Seals and Galapagos Sea Lions in a series of rocky pools. This visit also provides some of the best opportunities for tide-pooling 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) – Buccaneer Cove

This is the place where Darwin landed and built his base camp on his visit to James. It is a geological marvel since it offers wonderful scenery and chances to see both new and old ash formations. There is no landing site, so visit here can be only done either by dinghy or kayak. During the dinghy ride you might see Blue-footed Boobies, Brown Noddy, Galapagos Fur Seals and Swallow-tailed Gulls.

**Activities:** No landing. Boat tour along the coast. Kayak and Snorkelling

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Type of Landing:** No landing

**Highlights & Animals:** Sea birds, scenery, snorkel, spectacular rock formations.



## Day 5

### 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.

### 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.





## 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.







## Day 6

**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

## Elizabeth Bay

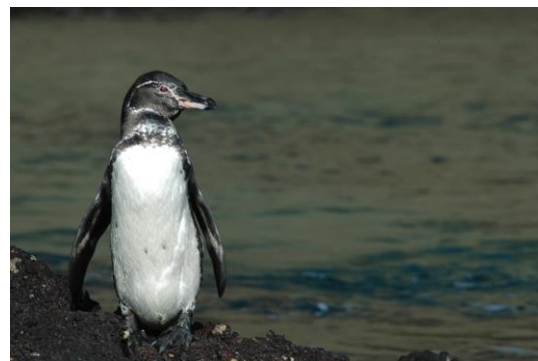
Located on the west coast of the Isabela, no landings are permitted here, but it makes for a beautiful dinghy ride. This is one of the best areas to see Galapagos Penguins as they prefer the cooler waters found on western Isabela. Flightless Cormorants and Marine Iguanas are common and often seen basking in the sun on rocks along the shore. As you then enter a narrow cove lined with large Red Mangrove trees, you will see Marine Turtles, Rays and shore birds.

**Activities:** Two-hour dinghy ride

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Type of Landing:** No landing

**Highlights & Animals:** Mangrove forest, Sea Turtles, Penguins, Rays, Herons, Sea Lions.



## Day 7

### Sierra Negra Volcano

This volcano on Isabella Island has one of the largest caldera's in the world measuring over 6 miles across. After a 30 min drive from the town, you will hike for 1 hour to get to the rim of the caldera and for a total of 4 hours (round trip) to Volcan Chico, a set of spatter and cinder cones created in 1979. Along the way you will usually see Vermillion Flycatchers, Galapagos Martins, and Galapagos Hawk. All along the way you will be rewarded with incredible panoramic views of Sierra Negra.

**Activities:** Hiking, horseback riding.

**Difficulty:** Moderate/Difficult

**Type of Landing:** Dry landing

**Highlights & Animals:** Large caldera, stunning views, Darwin finches, Galapagos hawks.

### Isabela – (Villamil) – Tortoise Breeding Centre

The Galapagos has 11 different species of Giant Tortoise of which five species are endemic to Isabela. A new breeding facility, built just outside of town by the Galapagos National Park Service is helping to increase the populations of these iconic endangered reptiles. Thanks to this breeding centre and the one located at the Charles Darwin Station in Santa Cruz, the populations of Tortoises, which were on a severe decline until the 80's, is now recovering and has reached over 30.000 throughout the islands.

**Activities:** Hike (1 mi / 1,6 km)

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Type of Landing:** Dry Landing

**Highlights & Animals:** Wetlands, salt and brackish lagoons on the way to the Breeding centre. Flamingos, Stilts, adult and baby Giant tortoises.

## Day 8

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 – 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.

**Activities:** Walk

**Difficulty:** Easy /moderate

**Type of Landing:**

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

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 ....

*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.*



*"All the flights and flight-inclusive holidays in this document are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: [www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate](http://www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate)"*

