



## Beluga 8 day –Tower



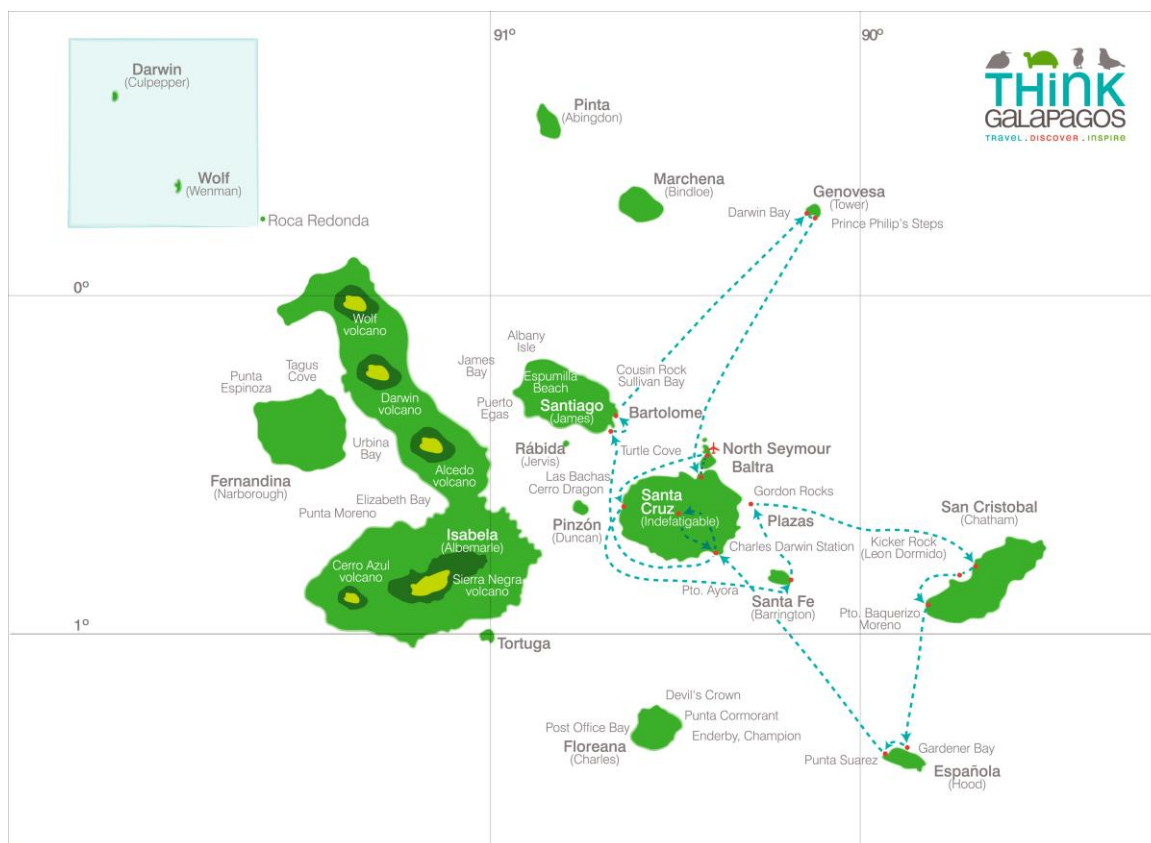
The Beluga is a small motor vessel with space for up to 16 guests. With panoramic windows in the salon and great deck space, Beluga is a fantastic way to cruise the islands in speed and style. Each cabin has their own private bathroom equipped with hot & cold water showers. Beluga is fully air conditioned, 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 itinerary is excellent and one of the few yachts that visits Española and Genovesa in an 8 day cruise.

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.







### Your Itinerary

One of the best itineraries possible, 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 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. / 1.6 km)

**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

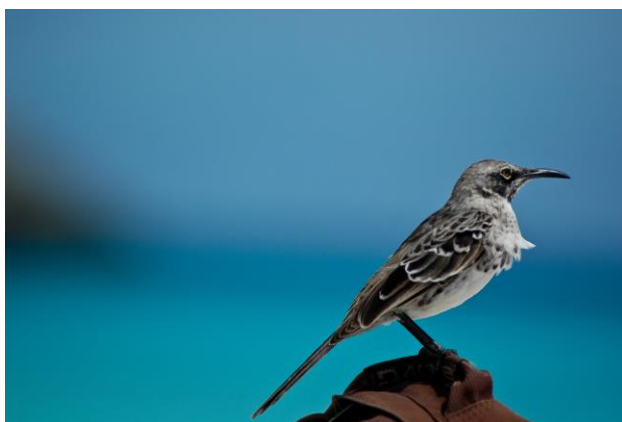
**Santa Fe** This is the oldest of the Galapagos islands. Its paradisiacal bay offers great possibilities to swim and snorkel in crystal clear waters. A hike inland offers a great chance to see a species of Land Iguanas (*Conolophus pallidus*) which is endemic to Santa Fe Island. In the same area you'll 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. Espanola'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 5

### 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 (1.2 mi. / 2 km)

**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

**Type of Landing:**

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

## Day 6 Chinese Hat or Sombrero Chino

Located just off the southeast tip of James Island, this island owes its name to its shape. A truly beautiful island, surrounded by crystal clear waters, this is great location for Sea Lions. Perhaps more than any other site, this islet gives you a sense of Galapagos volcanic origins as the beautiful white beach gives way to an almost primeval landscape of volcanic rubble.

**Activities:** Hiking 0.4 mi. Snorkelling & Kayaking.

**Difficulty:** Easy/Moderate

**Type of Landing:** Wet landing

**Highlights & Animals:** Walk along the shore visiting a small colony of Galapagos Sea Lions. Penguins. Snorkel: Penguins, Reef sharks, Parrotfish, Puffers.



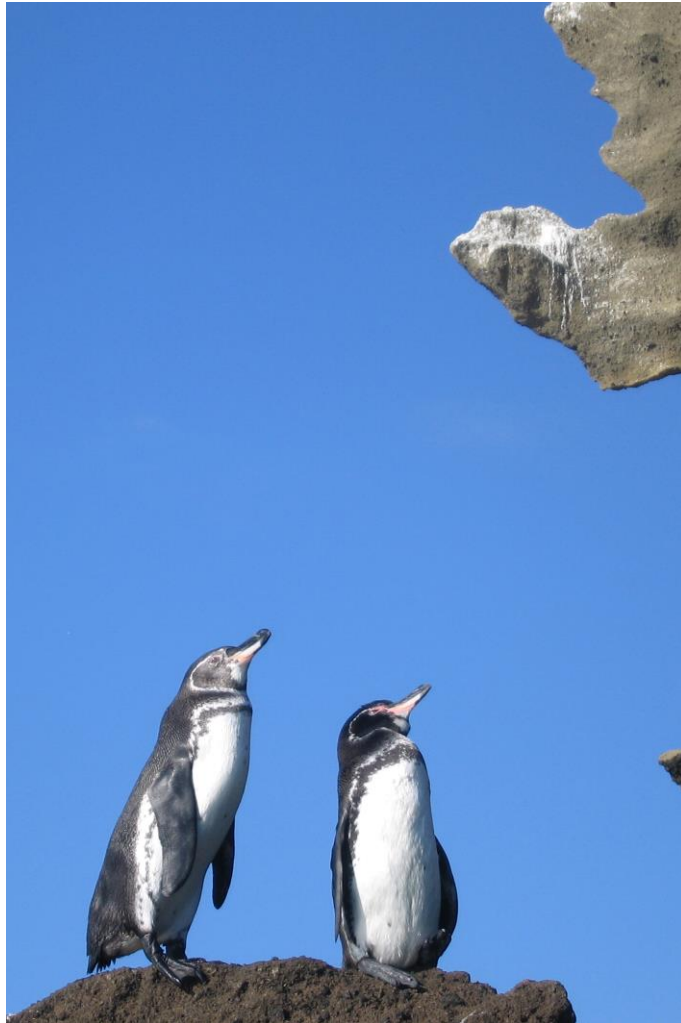
**Santiago – Sullivan Bay** This site is of great geological interest and is located southeast of Santiago Island. Sullivan Bay offers a rare look at a recently formed lava field. Located on the eastern coast of James Island, just across from Bartolome, this lava field is thought to have been created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

**Activities:** Hiking (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 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 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 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 - 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.*



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