



Montserrat

4 Days Itinerary D Central - Northern



Built in 2004 and fully refurbished in 2021, Monserrat is a great mid-range option. Officially first class, the yacht has a total capacity of up to 20 guests. Whilst it is larger capacity yacht than we usually work with, the Monserrat's guide-to-passenger ratio of 10 to 1 is one of the best in Galapagos, making Monserrat a great option. 10 cabins in total spread over two decks with lots of comfortable deck space, a friendly crew and good local operation. The yacht also offers stand-up paddleboarding as well as kayaking.





Day 2

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.



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 a 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 (0.3 mi. / 0.4km) 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.



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 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.

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.



Genovesa - Darwin Bay

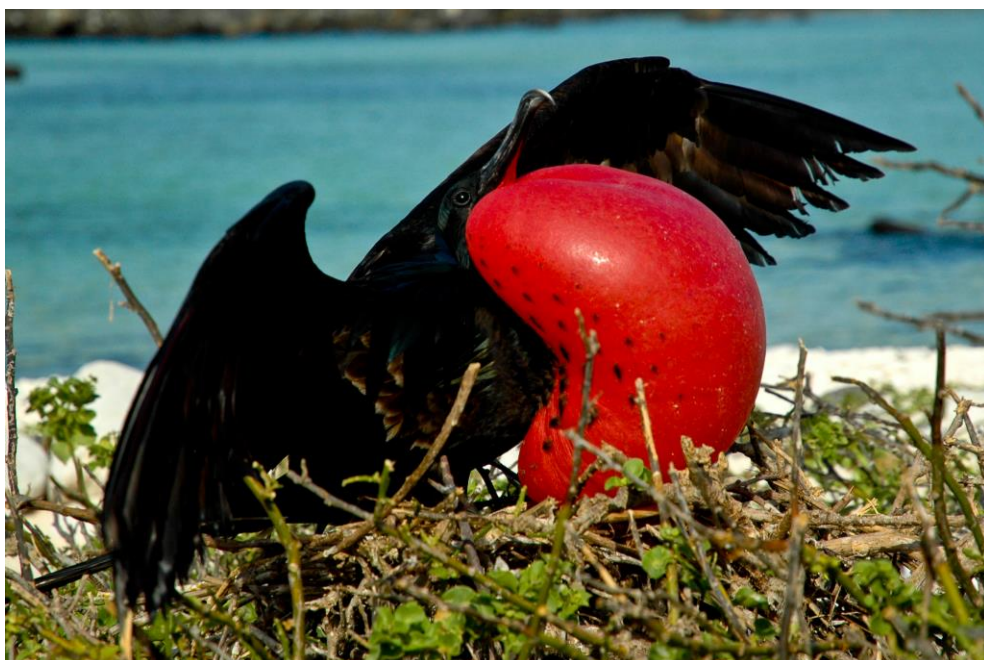
This bay is actually the caldera of an extinct, partially eroded volcano, with the surrounding cliffs forming the inner portion of the rim. You will land on a coral beach, and will immediately be struck by the amount of birdlife. The trail is loaded with Great Frigatebirds (mating season from February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



Day 4 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



This morning visit will be an early one and shorter than other visits you have in the week. From here your guide and one crew member will help you with your luggage, take you to Baltra Airport and the guide will help you check in for your flight back to mainland Ecuador, or you can extend your Galapagos trip 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.*

