

Travel with the Houston Zoo

Galapagos: The Land of Darwin

aboard the
M.Y. Alya



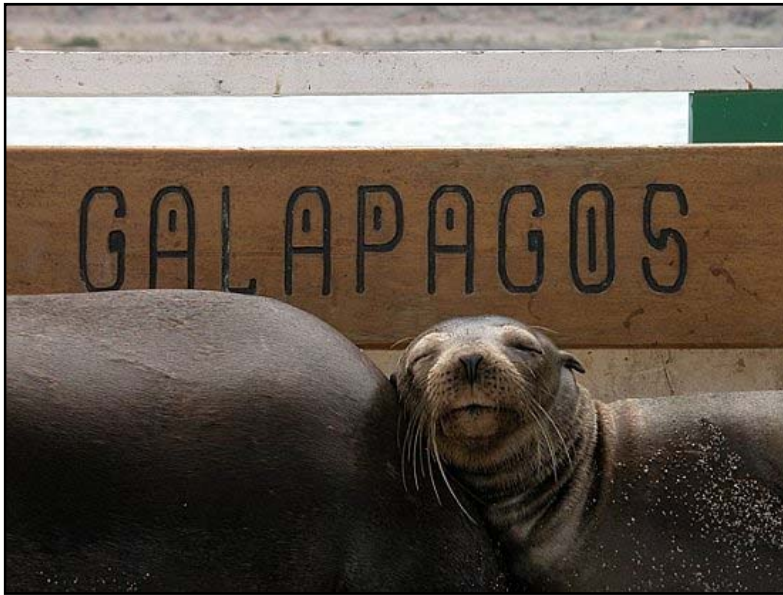
Sunday 21st July – Tuesday 30th July 2019

Celebrate Charles Darwin by walking in his footsteps on a trip to the Galapagos Islands with the Houston Zoo and Terra Incognita Ecotours. The Galapagos Islands are home to some of the most interesting and accessible wildlife anywhere in the world. Swim and snorkel with sea lions, come within inches of the blue-footed boobies and marine iguanas, perhaps allow a mockingbird to alight on your head. You will learn about the Houston Zoo Conservation programs and the vital work being done to study and preserve Galapagos wildlife. Visit nests of the magnificent frigatebirds, search for giant tortoises in the wild, experience the diversity of the legendary finches. Gain an appreciation for how remarkable life on Earth can be!

This is an ecotour that will **make a difference to you, and to the places we visit.**

We will employ local people.
We will use locally owned and operated lodges and outfitters.
We will use local goods and services.

Reserve your space today - Call 1-877-GO EXPLORE or visit www.ecotours.com



Day 1: Sunday 21st July 2019. Home to Quito, Ecuador

Plan to arrive anytime today in Quito, where you will be met and transferred to the charming boutique Hotel Patio Andaluz in the colonial city of Quito, located in the highlands of the Ecuadorian Andes. Get to know your fellow explorers as we enjoy our Welcome Dinner this evening.

Overnight in Hotel Patio Andaluz, Quito

(D)



Day 2: Monday 22nd July 2019. Quito to Isla San Cristobal, Galapagos

This morning drive back to the International Airport for the flight to the Galapagos Islands. After passing through immigration and baggage claim, you will be met by the M.Y. Alya staff and transferred to the yacht. You will be shown to your cabin where you will have some time to settle in before lunch and a welcome briefing. In the afternoon, your first visit takes you to the **Breeding Center Jacinto Gordillo "La Galapaguera"**. It is a new visitor site in the southeast part of San Cristobal Island and on the trees and shrubs surrounding the site, you may see land birds like warblers, finches and mockingbirds. Giant tortoises can be observed on the trails. They live there wild but in a protected area to ensure their survival by sealing them off from introduced predators like pigs and goats.

Overnight on board M.Y. Alya

(B,L,D)



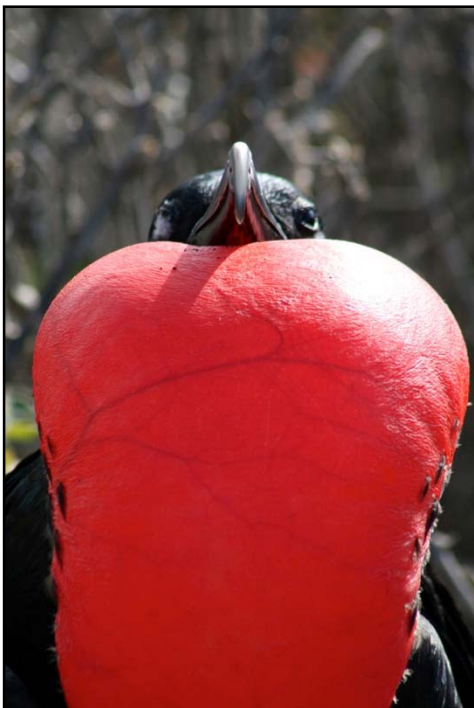
Day 3: Tuesday 23rd July 2019. Los Lobos Island and Pitt Point

In the morning you will enjoy an excursion to Lobos Island which means "Sea Lion Island." This appropriately named island is ripe with noisy, playful, jolly sea lions who will welcome you to their home with open, well, fins. This island also offers great snorkeling opportunities as well as the chance to see blue-footed and Nazca boobies.

In the afternoon, we will have sailed to the north-eastern end of San Cristobal Island where you can visit Pitt Point, a location that hosts frigatebirds, storm petrels, and all three types of booby birds: the Nazca, blue-footed and red-footed boobies. A steep trail goes up a cliff and through a ravine leading visitors to an area with an abundance of birds.

Overnight on board M.Y. Alya

(B,L,D)



Day 4: Wednesday 24th July 2019. Espanola Island

In the morning, you will visit Suarez Point. On the trail you will have the chance to see blue-footed boobies, albatrosses, and Nazca boobies. This island is the breeding site of nearly all of the world's 12,000 pairs of Waved albatrosses. You will also visit a beautiful site on the ocean front where there is a

cliff that the large albatrosses use as a launching pad! You will have the chance to see the famous blowhole that spurts water into the air. The landscape is great for photography.



In the afternoon, the excursion takes you to the spectacular Gardner Bay. After landing, you can walk across a lovely white-sand beach amongst a busy sea lion colony or dive into the water to swim with sea lion pups. You may also see curious mockingbirds on the beach.

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(B,L,D)



Day 5: Thursday 25th July 2019. Santa Cruz Island and North Seymour Island

In the morning, you will head to Carrión Point, located in northeastern Santa Cruz. We will navigate around this point which will provide you opportunities to see various sea birds nesting on the rock cliffs. Carrion Point creates a sheltered lagoon with beautiful, turquoise water. During this visit you can snorkel and see a variety of sharks, rays and perhaps the harmless white-tip reef sharks.

At North Seymour island you will be able to see Galapagos sea lions, blue-footed boobies, and magnificent frigatebirds which are abundant on this island. North Seymour was formed by a series of submarine lava flows containing layers of sediment that were uplifted by tectonic activity. The island is characterized by its arid vegetation zone.

Overnight on board M.Y. Alya

(B,L,D)

Day 6: Friday 26th July 2019. Genovesa Island

In the morning, you will visit the white-sand coral beach of Darwin Bay which heads a half-mile trail (0.75km) that winds through mangroves filled with land birds. Nazca boobies, red-footed boobies, and swallow-tailed gulls can also be spotted here. Further down the path we find tidal pools where sea lions swim playfully, at the end of the trail is a spectacular view.



In the afternoon, you will visit El Barranco, which is also known as Prince Phillip's Steps. It is a steep, rocky path that leads up a high cliff-face. A marvelous view can be appreciated from here. This site is also home to *palo santo* vegetation as well as red-footed boobies, short-eared lava owls, Galapagos swallows, and Galapagos doves.

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(B,L,D)



Day 7: Saturday 27th July 2019. Santiago and Bartholomew Island

Start the day with a visit to Sullivan Bay located on the southeast part of Santiago. This place is interesting for its geology because the area is covered by lava flows. This place has elevations in the form of small volcanoes formed by the lava flows.

In the afternoon, you will head to Bartholomew Island, home of the famous Pinnacle Rock. Bartholomew consists of an extinct volcano with a variety of red, orange, black and even green volcanic formations. We will take a trail of stairs to the summit of the volcano (about 30 or 40 minutes) where you will enjoy one of the best views of the islands! You will also visit a small, beautiful beach surrounded by the only vegetation found on this barren island. The beach is perfect for snorkeling where you may even see Galapagos penguins.

Overnight on board M.Y. Alya

(B,L,D)

Day 8: Sunday 28th July 2019. Santa Cruz Island – Dragon Hill and Black Turtle Cove

In the morning, you will visit Dragon Hill on Santa Cruz. The visitors' site at Dragon Hill is located on the northwestern part of Santa Cruz Island and consists of a trail that runs through three different environments although it is only slightly less than a mile long (1,600 meters). The beach is very rocky. At

high tide it's a nice place for snorkeling. At this visiting site you can find vegetation typical of the intertidal and dry zones.



In the afternoon you will visit Black Turtle Cove on the northern part of Santa Cruz Island. This inlet is surrounded by mangroves and is only accessible by dinghy. The shallow cove is a haven for young marine life. Black-tip and white-tip reef sharks, sea turtles, and a variety of rays are often spotted here.

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(B,L,D)

Day 9: Monday 29th July 2019. Santa Cruz Island and Baltra Airport to Quito, Ecuador

We have saved the best for last! Our morning excursion takes us from Puerto Ayora to the green highlands of Santa Cruz for a visit to El Chato reserve – home to the wild Giant tortoises. The area is divided in two: Caseta and Chato. The trail begins at Santa Rosa (13.7 miles / 22 km) from Puerto Ayora, with the Caseta route being the most challenging. The reserve allows visitors to observe giant tortoises in the wild during the dry season and is also a good place to spot short-eared owls, Darwin's finches, yellow warblers, Galapagos rails and paint-billed crakes.

After this final visit, you will be transferred to the Baltra airport in time for the flight back to the mainland. We are met on arrival at the Quito airport and transferred back to the charming Hotel Patio Andaluz where our adventure began!

Farewell Dinner and overnight in Hotel Patio Andaluz, Quito

(B,L,D)



Day 10: Tuesday 19th July 2019. Quito, Ecuador to home

After breakfast you can schedule your flight home at any convenient time today. We include a transfer to the International Airport according to your flight time.

Cost per person is \$7,999

Single supplement is \$2,499

Cost includes:

- Yacht accommodations in double/twin cabins with private bathroom.
- All meals as listed (3 daily meals and 2 snacks).
- Guide services (Spanish / English).
- Transfers in the islands.
- Basic snorkeling gear.
- Domestic Air Ticket (Quito – San Cristobal / Baltra - Quito).
- Galapagos entrance fee.

Not included:

- International Airfare.
- Vaccinations and/or medications.
- Alcoholic drinks.
- Visas and/or departure taxes.
- Phone calls.
- Laundry or other items of a personal nature.
- Tips, gratuities or personal expenses.



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About our boat – M.Y. Alya

The brand new Alya Motor Yacht was specifically designed and built to cruise the Galapagos.

M.Y. Alya offers 9 cabins and ample social areas including a superb sundeck with a large jacuzzi.



Double cabin



Twin cabin



Lounge/bar



Sundeck