



ANDANDO[®]
TOURS
Mainland Ecuador &
Galápagos Islands

GALAPAGOS

A COMPREHENSIVE AND CONCISE VISITOR'S
GUIDE TO THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS



GALAPAGOS

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ABOUT THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS



THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

The Galapagos are a one in a lifetime experience, that's for sure!

But, what is to be expected from such an amazing destination? What should I know? When should I start planning it?

So many questions come to mind, but once again we are here to help! We understand that getting the trip right makes the difference.

The right time to start planning is when you decide to visit the islands. Of course, you need to know that the best hotels and yachts are full even one year or more before departure day. (Especially during the Christmas and New Year holiday season).

WAYS TO TRAVEL

This volcanic archipelago is located in the Pacific Ocean, just 1,000 km off the coast of Ecuador.

Its 13 islands form the Archipelago de Colón, one of Ecuador's provinces.

There are no direct flights to the Galapagos Islands from other countries so you will need to take an international flight to Ecuador and then take a local flight from Ecuador's main cities: Quito or Guayaquil to Baltra (GPS) or San Cristóbal (SCY).

Three local airlines operate daily flights to the Galapagos Islands: **LATAM, Avianca, and TAME.**

When packing for the Galapagos, remember that on your domestic flight from mainland Ecuador, you are allowed one checked bag weighing up to **50 lbs. 23 kg.** and one small carry-on.

It is almost always necessary to spend at least one night in Quito or Guayaquil before flying to the islands since the Galapagos flights depart in the morning. Boats need to issue tickets since the flights are part of the cruise itinerary.

The Galapagos Islands are probably the most famous wildlife-watching destination in the world.

And no wonder - it's almost impossible to exaggerate the sheer spectacle of the place that provided inspiration for Charles Darwin's groundbreaking theory of natural selection.

- Mark Carwardine

VISITOR SITES

The balance between populated areas and protected areas is delicate in the Galapagos Islands, which is why the archipelago is governed by a special law protect and preserve this fragile environment.

Only 5% of the islands are inhabited. The other **95% is protected by the Galapagos National Park.**

The Galapagos National Park Directorate (GNPD) is in charge of the coordination of group visits to the designated visitor sites. **Tourists are only allowed to visit specific sites when accompanied by a certified naturalist guide. The amount of time that tourists can spend on certain sites is specified by the GNPD to maintain control of the number of daily visitors.**

The amount of time of each visit will depend on the difficulty level and the activity offered.

The visits can take from one hour to half a day.

NATURALIST GUIDES

The Galapagos Islands are unique, and it is all about the wildlife and the flora of this unique environment.

Exploring the islands with a qualified guide is mandatory and your only option to visit the sites.

A good guide will make your trip great, while a bad guide can be the cause of much disappointment.

Keep in mind that if you are on a budget boat, you will have a lower level guide.

It is essential to pick a good boat and a good itinerary. Normally a good tour operator will only employ good and reputable guides.



CRUISES VS ISLAND HOPPING

- Navigations on bigger are recommended for people more prone to seasickness.
- Catamarans and yachts are prepared for long navigations, carrying onboard the adequate equipment in case of an emergency.
- Cruise itineraries vary **from 4 to 15 days**.
- Cruises range from budget to luxury yachts and offer different experiences. Visitor sites are the same and do not depend on the category of service.
- Cruises offer at least **two site visits each day** in addition to other activities that include **snorkeling, swimming kayaking, and panga rides**. Time is maximized since some navigations take place at night.
- Cruise itineraries are established by the national park and are not flexible.
- More remote visitor sites on islands like Fernandina, Genovesa, and Española are **only reachable on a cruise**.
- Island hopping speedboats are light and small, ensuring a bumpy navigation easily leading to seasickness as a consequence of the instability.
- Island hopping speedboats are prepared for **daily excursions only**.
- Island hopping includes daily excursions and departures every day **subject to availability**.
- Some Island Hopping tours are less expensive than some cruises.
- **Navigation** by speedboats can take **up to three hours** each way taking up most of the day and limiting the time for site visits.
- You will have more time to enjoy the populated areas and experience what life is like on the islands.
- Some people prefer to sleep in hotels and not on a yacht.

**CHECK OUT DIFFERENT CRUISE
OPTIONS**

**CHECK OUT DIFFERENT ISLAND
HOPPING PACKAGES**

WHAT TO PACK

Traveling to the Galapagos Islands is a unique adventure, and for that, you will need to be prepared.

Make sure to bring the following list of items recommended by our Galapagos experts:

- Lightweight, breathable waterproof (not water-resistant) rain jacket with hood if possible
- Lightweight, sturdy shoes with ankle support
- Water-resistant sports sandals (Teva, for example)
- Small, water-resistant daypack (to carry camera gear and other equipment that can be damaged due to contact with water)
- Sunglasses (with high UV filter and secure strap)
- Sun hat with a wide brim for protection
- Sunscreen with a high SPF factor
- Lightweight long sleeve shirts for protection from the sun
- Camera equipment
- Earplugs (useful for blocking out engine and other noises)
- DEET-free insect repellent
- Lip balm (at least SPF30)
- If you are prone to motion sickness, we strongly recommend you come prepared
- Snorkel, mask & wetsuit are recommended to ensure a better fit (only if you already have them, as this gear is provided on cruises and can be rented for daily tours).
- Walking sticks can be useful for long walks

DO'S AND DON'TS

The Galapagos Islands were on the radar since the first pirates arrived in the 1700's to the islands and brought with them different animals such as goats, rats, pigs, dogs, and donkeys. Pirates were known to attack colonies of iguanas, destroying the delicate endemic vegetation, and for taking tortoises and their eggs to use them as food supplies on board their ships.

Remember this list of Do's and Don'ts to make the best of your visit to the Galapagos Islands:

1) Do **follow the designated trails** so you can avoid damaging the delicate vegetation. Some plants are found only in the islands.

2) Do **stay with your guide** at all times. If you decide to go on your own, other guides will take a picture of you and the Galapagos National Park authorities will fine your guide. Remember the guides are rangers that protect the Galapagos territory, so please follow their instructions at all times.

3) **Don't touch the animals!**

Galapagos National Park regulations suggest that you keep a distance of **6 feet from animals**. If the animals approach you try to back away to maintain the recommended distance or wait for them to pass.

4) **Don't even consider feeding the animals**. They can find food on their own.

5) Do **save your trash** until you can find a trash bin to deposit it.



DO'S AND DON'TS

6) **Don't bring plants, animals or fruit to the islands.** They will be confiscated at the airport.

7) **Don't smoke in the open areas** as the arid environment of the Galapagos makes it easy to start a fire.

8) **Don't buy souvenirs made from banned items** such as lava rocks, sea lion teeth, tortoise shells or coral shells. Don't take rocks or shells away from the places they are found.

9) **Don't write or carve anything on rocks or tree trunks.**

10) **Don't use the camera flash** when taking pictures. This lights hurt animals' eyes and unsettles them.

11) **Do have fun and enjoy being surrounded by endemic creatures** that inhabit this fantastic archipelago!

[More information about the National Park Rules.](#)



YEAR-ROUND ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

Most of the animals are visible all year-round. **Birdwatchers** will be treated to sightings of both great and magnificent frigatebirds throughout the year, together with flightless cormorants, Galapagos dove, greater flamingos, Nazca, red-footed, masked and blue-footed boobies.

Year-round **land species** include lava lizards, giant tortoises, land and marine iguanas, while sea lions and fur seals can be seen basking along the shoreline and tropical fish, sharks, rays and sea turtles can be spotted just below the water's surface.

[Galapagos wildlife calendar](#)



MUSTS IN THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS





SWIMMING AND ENJOYING WITH GALAPAGOS PENGUINS



SNORKELING WITH SEA LIONS



WALKING WITH GIANT TORTOISES



CETACEANS OBSERVATION



HIKE TO THE SECOND LARGEST VOLCANIC CRATER



HANG OUT WITH MARINE IGUANAS



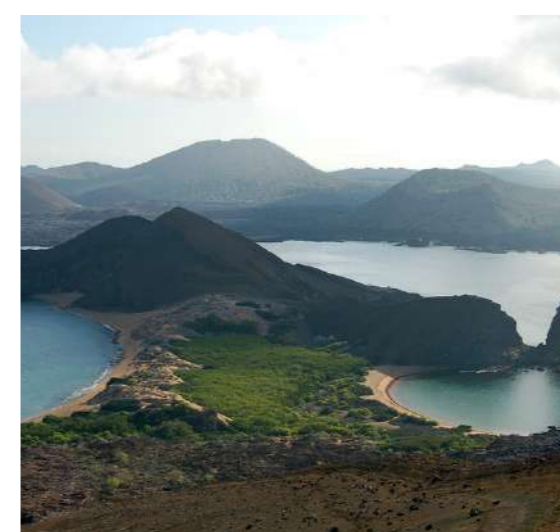
REMEMBER THE PIONEERS IN FLOREANA ISLAND



ADMIRE THE FLIGHTLESS CORMORANT



SURPRISE YOURSELF WITH A PIECE OF MARS ON EARTH AT RABIDA ISLAND



TAKE A PICTURE OF THE PINNACKE ROCK



SWIM WITH GREEN SEA TURTLES



BIRD WATCHING EVERYWHERE

PLAN YOUR VACATIONS WITH THE GALAPAGOS TRAVEL EXPERTS

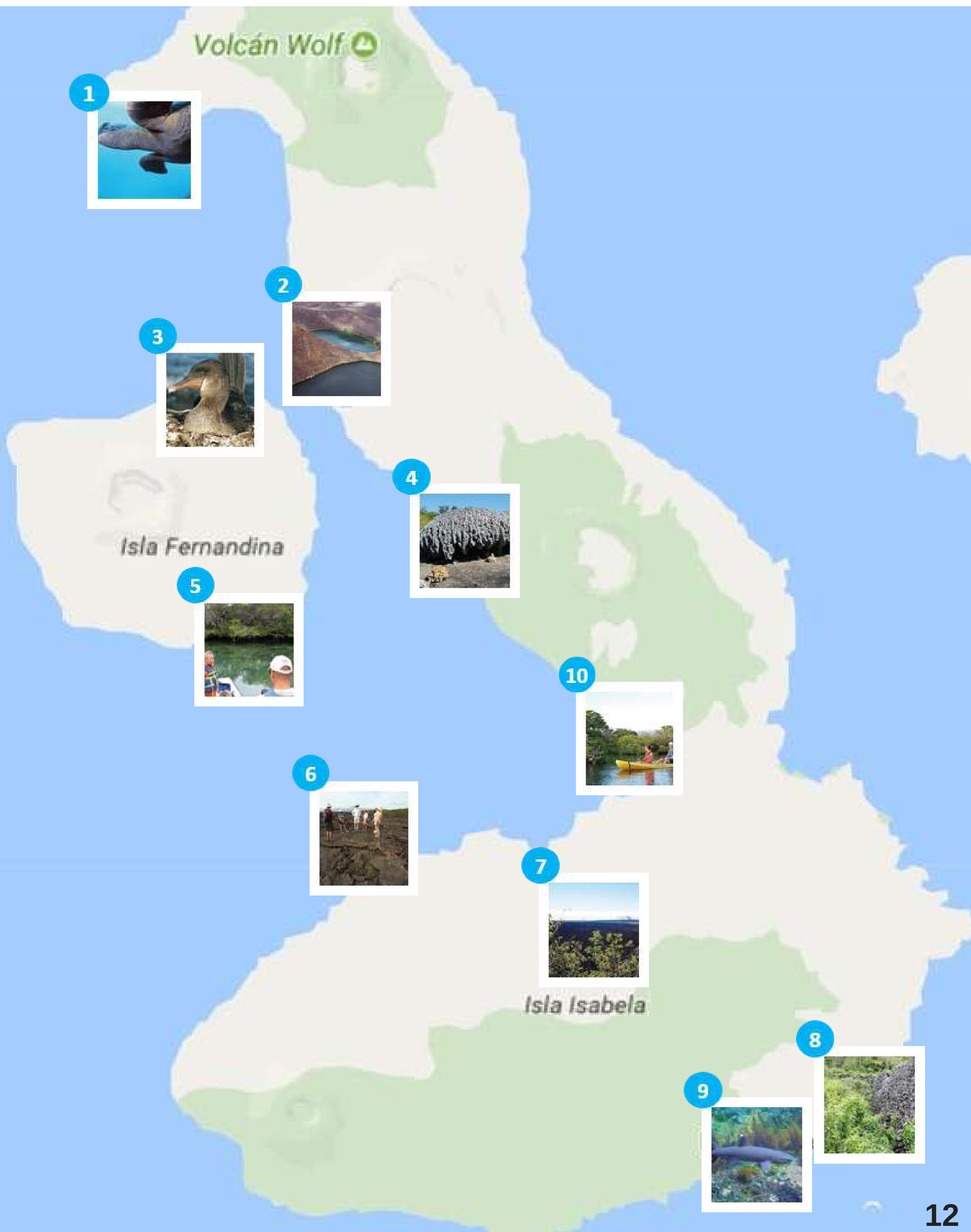


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Galápagos Islands

VISITOR SITES

VISITOR PLACES - ISABELA AND FERNANDINA

- 1 Punta Vicente Roca
- 2 Tagus Cove
- 3 Punta Espinoza
- 4 Urbina Bay
- 5 Mangle Point
- 6 Punta Moreno
- 7 Sierra Negra Volcano
- 8 Wall of Tears
- 9 Tintoreras Islet
- 10 Elizabeth Bay



1- PUNTA VICENTE ROCA

This is a special site, formed by two separate coves. The area is rich in different types of sea life, and, if you are lucky you may spot a rare “mola-mola”, or sunfish. This is a perfect site for snorkeling and diving.

Type: No landing

Activities: Panga ride, snorkeling

Wildlife: Puffer fish, penguins, sea turtles, and rays. Nazca boobies, blue-footed boobies and sea lions.

2- TAGUS COVE

This visitor site served as an anchorage spot for the buccaneers since the 1800s. Tagus Cove is located in Isabela Island, across from Fernandina Island next to the Bolivar channel. The trails offer an amazing view of Darwin Lake, another point of interest in Punta Tortuga located in the North of Tagus cove.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Panga ride, hike, snorkeling

Wildlife: Mockingbirds, blue-footed boobies, flightless cormorants, Sally lightfoot crabs, green sea turtles, lava lizards, penguins, marine iguanas.

3- PUNTA ESPINOZA

One of the most popular sites to see in the Galapagos, this visitor site includes one of the most pristine ecosystems in the world. In addition to natural wildlife and a view of the Pacific Ocean, you'll have the opportunity to walk on lava fields with the one the most active volcanoes in the world, La Cumbre, as a backdrop to the landscape.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Blue-footed boobies, Galapagos hawk, Flightless cormorant, sea lions and marine iguanas

4- URBINA BAY

Located between Elizabeth Bay and Tagus cove, at the base of Alcedo volcano, this visitor site is another great place to snorkel. Due to volcanic activity in the 1950s, Urbina Bay was naturally lifted above sea level, expanding the coast almost a mile out and leaving different marine formations on shores. There are two trails here; from the longer trail, you can see the uplifted coral heads. Flightless cormorants, penguins, blue-footed boobies, and pelicans are also sometimes seen along the shore.

Type: Easy landing

Activities: Panga ride, short or long hike, snorkeling

Wildlife: Galapagos hawks, giant tortoises and land iguanas. Tropical fish, sea turtles and rays can be spotted while snorkeling.

5- MANGLE POINT

This visitor site offers a beautiful view of the Coast of Fernandina Island. Located off the south east coast of Fernandina, Mangle Point offers crystal clear waters where you can snorkel and swim with sea lions, spot penguins and see the Galapagos flightless cormorants.

Type: No landing

Activities: Panga ride, snorkeling

Wildlife: Sea lions, penguins, flightless cormorants

6- PUNTA MORENO

This is a slightly more challenging hike, but is definitely worth it. You will hike on pahoehoe lava, through a vast landscape containing natural pools with ducks, gallinules, waders and stilts.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Panga ride, hike, snorkeling

Wildlife: Turtles, reef sharks, turtles, marine iguanas, pintail ducks, flamingoes, gallinules, flightless cormorants.

7- SIERRA NEGRA VOLCANO

Get ready for some adventure as you hike through the Sierra Negra Volcano! With a 6 mile diameter and at 300 meters deep, it's the world's second largest volcanic crater. The Sierra Negra Volcano is located 13 miles away from Puerto Villamil and offers an amazing view.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Galapagos finches

8- WALL OF TEARS

This historical visitor site is located about 5km of Puerto Villamil. This was formerly a penal colony where prisoners were forced to build a 65 ft. wall, stone by stone. Many of them died building this wall. In fact, many local residents can affirm to hearing cries from the site.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

9- TINTORERAS ISLET

This chain of small islets at the south of Puerto Villamil is a fascinating spot to observe the iconic white-tipped reef shark (also known as Tintoreras) swimming during the low tide.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Trekking, snorkeling

Wildlife: Marine iguanas, turtles, penguins, White-tipped reef sharks and sea lions.

10- ELIZABETH BAY

Elizabeth Bay is located on the east coast of Isabela Island. During your visit, you can start by taking a dinghy to the Marielas, a rocky islet that's known for its population of penguins. After that, you can go to a cove where you will see white, red, and black mangroves.

Type: No landing

Activities: Panga ride

Wildlife: Mangroves, penguins, rays, turtles, herons.

VISITOR PLACES - SANTIAGO ISLAND

1 Espumilla Beach

5 Chinese Hat

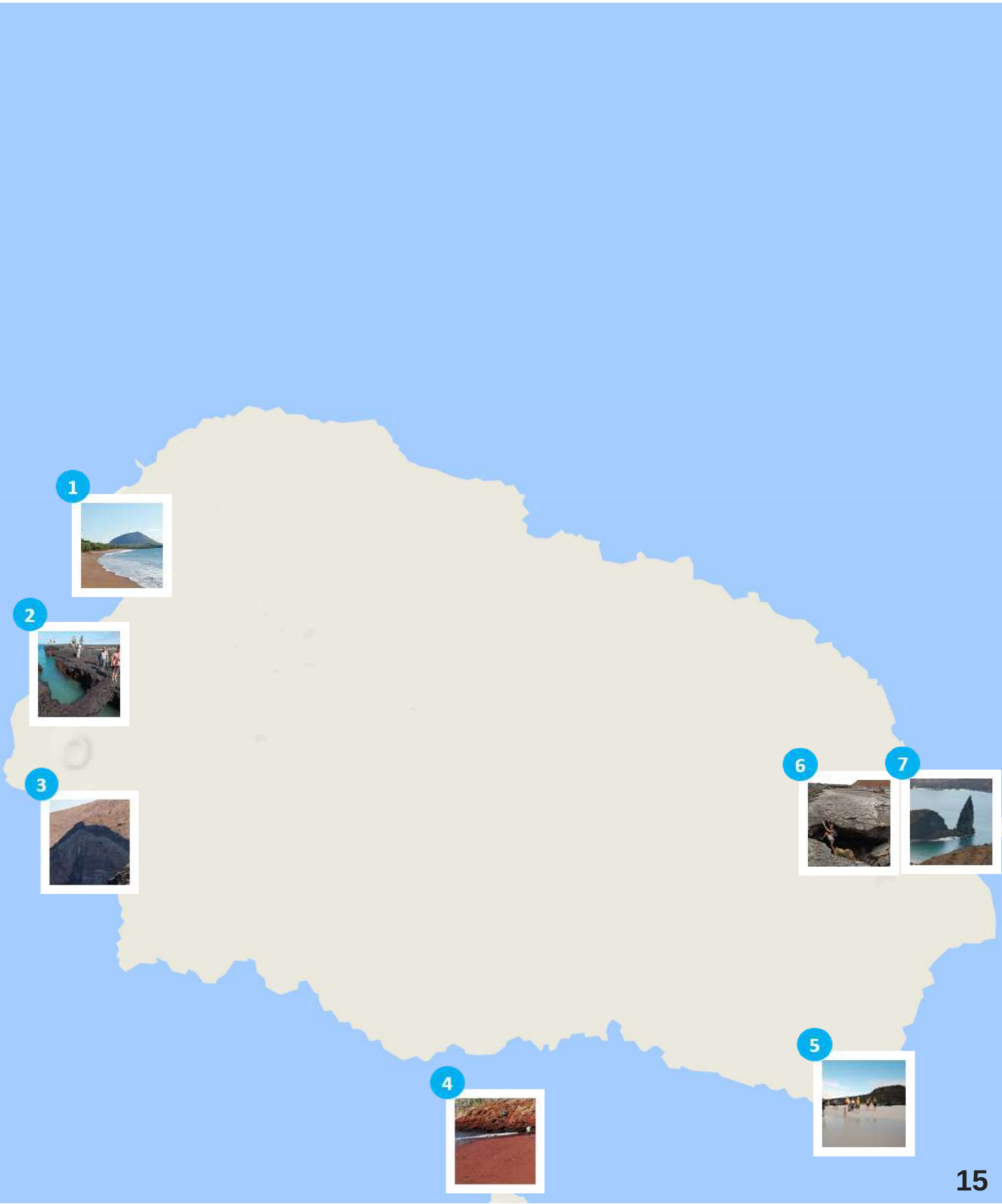
2 Puerto Egas

6 Sullivan Bay

3 Bucaneers Cove

7 Bartolome Island

4 Rabida Island



1- ESPUMILLA BEACH

This visitor site is abundant in marine life, which attracts great quantities of sea birds looking for food. It is a great place to snorkel and observe the amazing Galapagos marine life, as well as take a refreshing swim.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Galapagos finches

2- PUERTO EGAS

Puerto Egas was once the site of a salt mine. It offers an easy walk along a scenic shoreline where you can see some birds, sea lions and fur seals. You can also swim or just rest in the beach if you like.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

3- BUCCANEERS COVE

This visitor site was a refuge for actual Buccaneers. The pirates and buccaneers would anchor in the cove and look for tortoises as food stock while they repaired their ships. In addition, the view of the steep cliffs and birds is breathtaking.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Trekking, snorkeling

Wildlife: Marine iguanas, turtles, penguins, White-tipped reef sharks and sea lions.

4- RABIDA ISLAND

Rabida Island is a great snorkeling site. It is one of the most colorful islands in the Galapagos. You will love its famous sandy beach and spectacular landscapes, where you can observe a wide variety of birds. It is the paradise for bird watchers.

Type: No landing

Activities: Panga ride

Wildlife: Mangroves, penguins, rays, turtles, herons.

5- CHINESE HAT

This is a small island with the shape of a Chinese hat. Thanks to its distinctive shape, it has fascinated visitors for years. It is also a great place to snorkel and offers even more amazing views.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Galapagos finches

6- SULLIVAN BAY

Lava cactus and the low-lying molugo are the only vegetation that managed to survive in this harsh environment. Here you can spot oystercatchers fishing crabs and other sea food.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

7- BARTOLOME ISLAND

This former volcano has dry vegetation and so wild life is mostly limited to lava lizards that can be spotted on land. But there is abundant marine life by the shore. This island offers spectacular sceneries, especially the pinnacle rock, an excellent point for a family photo-op, and one of the best places to snorkel.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Trekking, snorkeling

Wildlife: Marine iguanas, turtles, penguins, White-tipped reef sharks and sea lions.

VISITOR PLACES - SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND

1 Kicker Rock

5 Lobos Islet

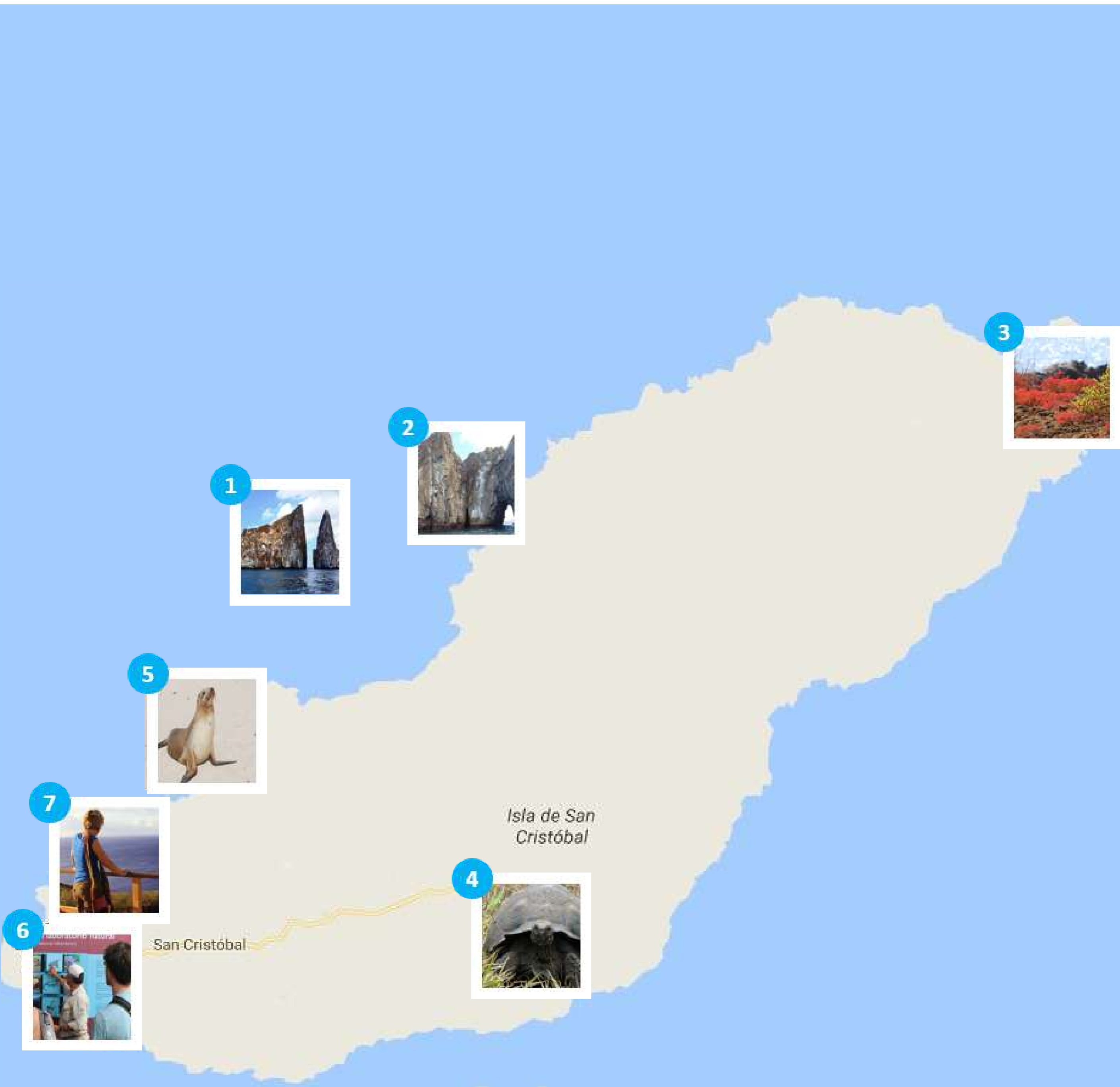
2 Cerro Brujo

6 Interpretation Center

3 Pitt Point

7 Tijeretas Hill

4 Jacinto Gordillo Breeding Center



1- KICKER ROCK

Located a couple of hours west of San Cristobal, these striking rock formations stand vertically and are divided by a small channel. In this visitor site, there is no landing but you can snorkel, dive or kayak.

Type: No landing

Activities: Diving, snorkeling, kayak

Wildlife: Sharks, reef fish, Boobies

2- CERRO BRUJO

This beautiful white-sand beach was one of the first places that Charles Darwin visited. This area is abundant in wildlife: you will spot boobies, sea turtles and rays. The turquoise clear water makes it an excellent place for swimming or snorkeling.

Type: Wet landing

Activities: Panga ride, hike, snorkeling, kayak

Wildlife: Marine iguanas, pelicans, sea lions, marine iguanas.

3- PITT POINT

The arrival to this visitor site is usually a wet landing. A trail will lead up a cliff to an area inhabited by birds. Here you can find endemic species, such as red-footed boobies and the Chatham mockingbird. This is another good place to snorkel or kayak.

Type: Wet landing

Activities: Panga ride, hike, snorkeling, kayak

Wildlife: Sea lions, boobies

4- JACINTO GORDILLO BREEDING CENTER

Located at the northeast of San Cristobal Island, this breeding center allows you to see the different stages of the life of tortoises. The breeding center contains hatchling tortoises up to 4 months old, after which they are taken to their natural habitat.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Trekking

Wildlife: Tortoises

5-LOBOS ISLET

Its name in English means The Sea Lion Island. This is because this visitor site is filled with playful sea lions. This is a great place to see sea lions on the beach, spot some Nazca boobies and blue-footed boobies, and snorkel.

Type: Wet landing

Activities: Swimming, snorkeling

Wildlife: Sea lions, pelicans, frigate-birds, boobies, marine iguanas.

6- INTERPRETATION CENTER

This Interpretation Center is located in Puerto Baquerizo Moreno. This site is a point of information about the Galapagos Islands and was opened in 1998. Here, you can find information about the origin of the islands, its culture and its geography.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Short walk

7- TIJERETAS HILL

This visitor site receives its name after the colonies of Frigate birds nesting in the trees. Cerro tijeretas has hiking trails that are connected and lead to a viewpoint above a cove— this cove is also an excellent place to snorkel or swim.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Walk, swimming, snorkeling

Wildlife: Frigate birds

VISITOR PLACES - SANTA CRUZ

- 1 Tortuga Bay
- 2 Puerto Ayora
- 3 Research Station
- 4 El Chato
- 5 Twin Craters
- 6 Santa Cruz Highlands
- 7 South Plaza Island
- 8 Dragon Hill
- 9 Bachas Beach
- 10 Black Turtle Cove
- 11 Daphne Islet
- 12 Seymour North
- 13 Mosquera Islet



1- TORTUGA BAY

Tortuga Bay get its name from the black sea turtles that lay their eggs on the beach. It is a beautiful beach where you can swim or snorkel. It's also a great vantage point for bird watching.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Swimming, snorkeling, surfing

Wildlife: Green turtles, white-tip sharks, Ground finches, pelicans.

2- PUERTO AYORA

This city is the economic capital of the Galapagos Islands, where you will find plenty of restaurants, stores, and bars. If you go to the bay, you can also observe sea birds and other wildlife.

Activities: Walk, shopping observation of wildlife

Wildlife: Sea turtles, sea birds, sea lions

3- RESEARCH STATION

The Charles Darwin Research Station is a non-profit organization that helps to preserve the Galapagos Islands. Here, you will see the Galapagos Tortoises breeding and learn about the natural history of the islands.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hiking

Wildlife: Giant tortoises, land iguanas, mockingbirds, great blue herons.

4- EL CHATO

El Chato is located in the humid zone of Santa Cruz. It has transition vegetation and as a result, is home to magnificent giant tortoises.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Darwin's finches, short-eared owls, yellow warblers, pain-billed crakes, Galapagos rails.

5- TWIN CRATERS

The Twin craters, or Los Gemelos, as they are known in Spanish, are two volcanic depressions located in the high part of the Santa Cruz Island. These formations were created by the collapse of surface material in underground fissures and chambers.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Short walk

Wildlife: Short eared owl, vermilion flycatchers, woodpecker finches.

6- SANTA CRUZ HIGHLANDS

Lava cactus and the low-lying molugo are the only vegetation that managed to survive in this harsh environment. Here you can spot oystercatchers fishing crabs and other sea food.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Tortoises, Galápagos flycatchers, small tree-finches, woodpecker finches

7- SOUTH PLAZA ISLAND

This small island was formed by rising lava, and is currently covered with opuntia cacti and sesuvium. This particular plant gets a red color during the dry season and turns green to yellow during the rainy season.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Marine iguanas, land iguanas, lava lizards and madeiran storm petrels.

8- DRAGON HILL

This is one of the newest visitor sites established by the Galapagos National Park. It offers a great opportunity to spot Galapagos flamingos at the hypersalinic lagoon located behind the beach.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Lava lizard, lava herons, Flamingos, common stilts, pintail ducks, land and marine iguanas, mockingbirds.

9- BACHAS BEACH

Take a refreshing swim in Las Bachas beach, where you can see a historic floating pier, leftover from World War II.

Type: Wet landing

Activities: Swimming

Wildlife: Sea turtles, Sally Lightfoot crabs, hermit crabs, black necked stilts, whimbrels.

10- BLACK TURTLE COVE

This inlet is only accessible by dinghy. This shallow inlet is surrounded by mangroves, making it a safe haven for young marine life.

Type: No landing

Activities: Panga ride

Wildlife: Hammerhead shark babies, rays, sea turtles, sea birds

11- DAPHNE ISLET

Daphne is a tuff crater, located north of Santa Cruz Island. Access to the island is restricted, so you will start with bird watching from a boat and then continue onto Playa Borrero on Santa Cruz to snorkel. There are diving groups that also go to Daphne Minor, without disembarking on land.

Activities: Panga ride, bird watching

Wildlife: Nazca boobies, blue-footed boobies, Galapagos martins, short eared owls, frigate birds and red-billed tropic bird.

12- SEYMOUR NORTH

This is the perfect island to observe different birds, such as the magnificent frigate birds. This island is formed of submarine lava that was brought to the surface by tectonic activity.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Panga ride, bird watching

Wildlife: Galapagos sea lions, magnificent frigate birds, land iguanas, blue-footed boobies, hammerhead sharks, stingrays, white-tipped sharks.

13- MOSQUERA ISLET

This small island is the result of another volcanic lifting of land, and is located between Baltra and North Seymour. Here, you can see sea lions and shore birds.

Type: Wet landing

Activities: Walks, snorkeling

Wildlife: Colonies of sea lions, marine iguanas, lava herons, lava gulls, great blue herons.

VISITOR PLACES - FLOREANA ISLAND

1 Punta Cormorant

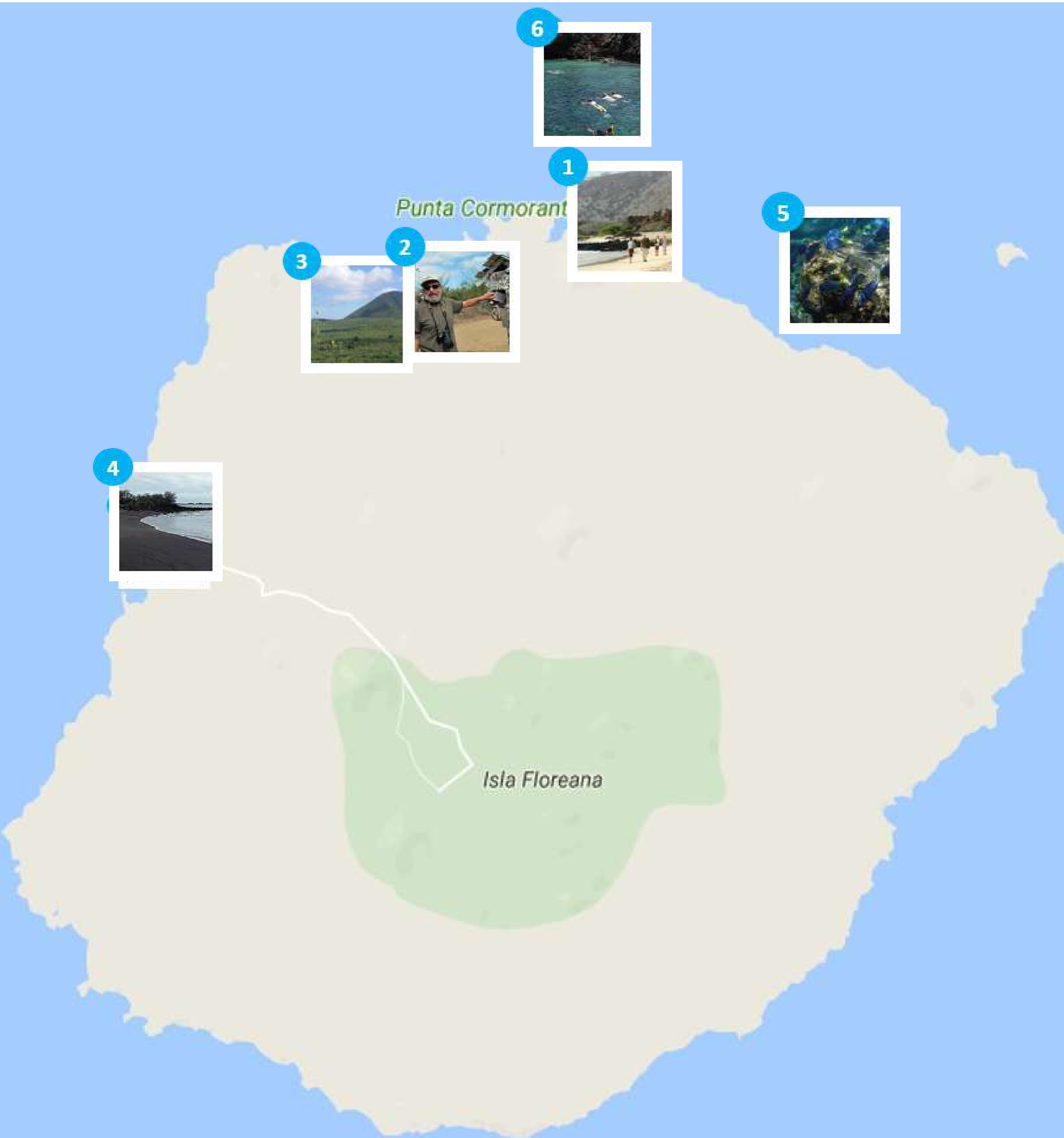
4 Black Beach

2 Post Office Bay

5 Islet Champion

3 Baroness Lookout

6 Devil's Crown



1- PUNTA CORMORANT

This visitor site offers a different type of beach: The Green Beach, which gets its name from its rich green color that comes from the olivine crystals in the sand. This site has a flamingo lagoon where you can also spot other birds.

Type: Wet landing

Activities: Hike, panga ride

Wildlife: Flamingos, white-cheeked pintails

2- POST OFFICE BAY

This used to be a stop for whalers to stock food and water. Unfortunately, they used to pick tortoises for food until they drove them to extinction. As whalers got homesick from spending several years at sea, they started to leave letters here. When other whalers passed by, they would pick them up and send them to the specified addresses. Currently, visitors can leave a postcard and wait for other passengers to send them to the specified addresses.

Type: Wet landing

Activities: Hike, panga ride

Wildlife: Sea lions, rays, shark, turtles

3- BARONESS LOOKOUT

This visitor site has an interesting and mysterious background. It was named after the Baroness Eloise Wagner de Bosquet, one of the first inhabitants of the Galapagos. She lived here with her three lovers, and was also one of the participants in the "Galapagos Affair".

Type: Wet landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Birds, sea turtles

4- BLACK BEACH

Black Beach is a visitor site with historical significance. This is the departure point for some of the most interesting spots in the islands, such as Asilo de la paz, and the caves where pirates used as hideouts.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Walk

Wildlife: Birds, iguanas

5- ISLET CHAMPION

This small island is located close to Floreana, and is perfect for activities like diving and snorkeling. There is a great wall of black coral bushes and yellow cup coral that attracts a large number of marine life.

Type: No landing

Activities: Snorkeling, diving

Wildlife: Pacific seahorse, green turtles, surgeonfish, hawkfish.

6- DEVIL'S CROWN

This visitor site is famous for its variety of marine life. The currents rushing through the "crown" make it one of the best snorkeling sites in the Galapagos. Devil's crown is a volcanic crater that has been eroded by the waves.

Type: No landing

Activities: Snorkeling

Wildlife: Sharks, rays, tropical fish

MORE VISITOR PLACES

1 Punta Suarez

2 Osborn Islet

3 Gardner Islet

4 Gardner Bay

5 El Barranco

6 Darwin Bay



1- PUNTA SUAREZ

Visiting Punta Suarez is definitely a treat, as it's one of the only two visitor sites in the pristine island of Española. This visitor site offers a great opportunity to spot a wide variety of birds, the endemic waved Albatross, and the green iguanas.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Nazca boobies, blue-footed boobies red-billed tropicbirds, waved albatross, hood mockingbird, lava lizards, Galapagos hawk.

2- OSBORN ISLET

This small islet is located at the Southeast part of Española Island. Here is another great place to enjoy swimming and snorkeling.

Type: No landing

Activities: Swimming, snorkeling

Wildlife: Colorful fish

3- GARDNER ISLET

This islet is near Gardner Bay, and it is a great place to snorkel and swim. This visitor site provides a complementary visit for even more snorkeling activities after you visit any of the other sites.

Type: No landing

Activities: Swimming, snorkeling

Wildlife: Colorful fish

4- GARDNER BAY

This visitor site is a fun place: you can see sea lions at the bay, as well as take pictures and enjoy a refreshing swim with these adorable creatures!

Type: Wet landing

Activities: Panga ride, snorkeling, hike

Wildlife: Sea lions, mockingbirds.

5- EL BARRANCO

Also known as Prince Phillip's Steps, this visitor site offers a difficult hike with a steep, rocky path that leads up to a high cliff. The hike is well worth it, with a wonderful view once you reach the peak.

Type: Dry landing

Activities: Hike

Wildlife: Red-footed boobies, Galapagos doves, storm-petrels, short-eared owls

6- DARWIN BAY

This visitor site consists of a half mile trail, a white sand beach, tidal pools with playful sea lions, and mangroves with lots of land birds.

Type: Wet landing

Activities: Panga ride, snorkel, hike, kayak

Wildlife: Red-footed boobies, Nazca boobies, swallow-tailed gulls, rays, hammerhead sharks, and colorful reef fish

MOVING AROUND



Of course, you want to see as much as possible during your stay, so you need to know how to get around the islands and the transportation options.

Don't worry! We are here to help.

HOW TO TRAVEL BETWEEN ISLANDS?

By sea:

Speedboat companies offer inter-island transportation. The public speedboats schedule is as follows:

From	To	Departure Time	Arrival Time
Santa Cruz	San Cristobal	7:00 / 07:00 AM	9:15 / 09:15 AM
Santa Cruz	San Cristobal	2:00 / 14:00 PM	4:30 / 16:30 PM
Santa Cruz	Isabela	7:00 / 07:00 AM	9:30 / 09:30 AM
Santa Cruz	Isabela	2:00 / 14:00 PM	4:15-30 / 16:15-30 PM
Isabela	Santa Cruz	6:00 / 06:00 AM	8:00 / 08:00 AM
Isabela	Santa Cruz	3:00 / 15:00 PM	5:15 / 17:15 PM
San Cristobal	Santa Cruz	7:00 / 07:00 AM	9:30 / 09:30 AM
San Cristobal	Santa Cruz	3:00 / 15:00 PM	5:30 / 17:30 PM

By air:

EMETEBE is a flight company that offers inter-island transportation by air. They offer different services, such as cargo transportation, charter flights and medical flights in addition to island transfers.

They currently fly to four destinations in the Galapagos Islands: San Cristobal, Baltra, Santa Cruz and Isabela.

For more information about their rates and special services you can visit their website: www.emetebe.com.ec

ARRIVING AT BALTRA

The original Baltra airport was a U.S. Military base during World War II. Currently, the Seymour airport is the 5th busiest airport in Ecuador and is also known as the Galapagos Ecological Airport, as this terminal operates on wind and solar power.

Unfortunately in Baltra, besides the airport, there is nothing else to do. That is why you will need to transfer to another island or boat once you collect your luggage.

Outside the airport, you will find several buses waiting for passengers to board. These buses are provided free of charge and will take you to the Itabaca Canal located between Baltra and Santa Cruz.

The ride takes about 5-10 minutes.

Once you get off the bus with your luggage, you will wait for the ferry that will take you across to Santa Cruz. The cost to cross the Itabaca channel on the ferry is \$1 USD; the crossing will only take a couple of minutes.

Once you've crossed the canal, you can take a taxi. These white pick-up trucks will be waiting at the dock offering to take you to Puerto Ayora. The approximate cost for the ride is \$25 USD.

If you are on a tight budget, you can wait for the bus to Puerto Ayora. The estimated time of this ride is about 45 minutes, and the cost is no more than \$2 USD. The bus does not have air conditioning, and it is usually crowded, but this is the least expensive way to get to Puerto Ayora.

If you are traveling to Isabela, you can take an inter-island flight directly from Baltra.





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RECOMMENDED HOTELS IN GALAPAGOS



LUXURY HOTELS

MORE LUXURY PACKAGES



FINCH BAY

This eco-friendly hotel is located in the heart of the Galapagos Islands in Puerto Ayora on the island of Santa Cruz.

Lying just steps from the beach in a secluded area across from the heart of Puerto Ayora, this hotel invites you to the natural surroundings, a pool and the sea - perfect combination for your stay in the Galapagos.



IGUANA CROSSIN

It is a front beach hotel located in Puerto Villamil on Isabela Island.

This unique hotel offers you a relaxed experience surrounded by the endemic vegetation of the island and unique view. Designed to meet our passengers' expectations and offer a relaxed ambiance, this hotel was built with original materials found on the islands.



PIKAIA LODGE

This intimate lodge offers a luxury experience connected to the marvels of Galapagos flora and fauna.

Regarding the accommodations, this lodge was built to surpass your expectations. From ample rooms with huge balconies and private pool to its private tortoise reserve, this eco-lodge will definitely complete your experience.

TOURIST SUPERIOR HOTELS

DAILY TOURS



CASA PLAYA MANN

This cozy hotel is located on San Cristobal, just a few steps away from Playa Mann. All of the suites have a view of the beach, and some of them have a view of the interior gardens. The entire structure is focused on the preservation of natural resources.



VILLA LAGUNA HOTEL

This hotel is perfect for those looking for tranquility and good service in Puerto Ayora. This hotel offers single, double and triple rooms. You can relax by the pool, and enjoy the local food in the Manglar restaurant.

TOURIST CLASS HOTELS



PIMAMPIRO

A comfortable stay in the Galapagos for a reasonable price. Cabañas Pimampiro is close to the center of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, and it has a pool and a restaurant. Rooms and suites have air conditioning, hot water and coffee makers.



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RECOMMENDED CRUISES IN GALAPAGOS



LUXURY GALAPAGOS CRUISES



M/Y PASSION

This luxurious yacht is designed to surprise you every day with breakfast on the sun deck, dinners in a spacious dining room and delicious treats for when you return from your daily excursions. With enough space to enjoy a private moment for yourself in its ample social areas or just to enjoy a family moment.

[More Information](#)



OCEAN SPRAY

A new 113 ft. (34 m) mega-catamaran that can accommodate 16 passengers while offering an elegant design, comfort, and speed.

This catamaran features spacious cabins with private balconies, ample sun deck and a Jacuzzi designed for moments of relaxation on board.

[More Information](#)



CORMORANT

A motor catamaran that incorporates the best of design with spacious suites, balconies in every cabin, ample sundeck and a Jacuzzi. The Cormorant has a capacity for 16 passengers and is 108 ft. (33 m) in length.

[More Information](#)

FIRST-CLASS GALAPAGOS CRUISES



TIP TOP II

This re-designed catamaran offers cabins with balconies and a special sundeck. It can accommodate up to 16 passengers in its 10 cabins.

This vessel offers 1st class service, with a friendly crew always willing to assist you at any time during your Galapagos cruise.

[More Information](#)



S/S MARY ANNE

S/S Mary Anne is the sailing cruise in Galapagos that redefines comfort. Aboard the 216 ft. (65.84 m) barquentine, the journey becomes an uncomplicated form of indulgence.

[More Information](#)



TREASURE OF GALAPAGOS

This first-class catamaran accommodates 16 passengers in 9 cabins, each of them with a private balcony.

[More Information](#)

MID-RANGE CRUISES



GALAVEN

It is an 88-ft. vessel that accommodates 20 passengers in 11 comfortable cabins, designed to offer spacious social areas and where passengers can enjoy the ocean view.

[More Information](#)



SAN JOSE

Discover the unique wildlife of the Galapagos Islands on board Motor Yacht San Jose. This affordable cruise can take you to the most amazing places of the archipelago. Enjoy the panoramic view and spot the wildlife from its deck. This motor yacht is designed for 16 passengers traveling in its eight cabins.

[More Information](#)

BUDGET CRUISES



ANGELITO

This affordable motor yacht was built in the Galapagos and accommodates 16 passengers in its eight cabins. Cruise the Galapagos Islands without stretching your budget. Angelito offers cozy social areas and large windows for you to enjoy the view!



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DIVING IN GALAPAGOS



The Galapagos Islands are recognized as one of the world Seven Underwater Wonders of the World by CEDAM international. Nearly 20% of Galapagos marine life can't be found anywhere else in the world.



AGRESSOR

Offers the ultimate live-aboard scuba diving experience and can accommodate 16 passengers in eight comfortable cabins.

It offers a great itinerary, with a maximum of four dives daily, and two-night dives per week.



GALAPAGOS SKY

This luxury live-aboard yacht has cruised the Galapagos Islands for a decade. If you are looking for a diving experience with luxurious accommodations and enjoy excellent food during your Galapagos adventure, Galapagos Sky is the perfect choice.



LAND-BASED DIVE TOURS

As all of the diving cruises offer no less than 7-day itineraries, this means you can reach the more distant diving sites comfortably. However, if you are going to the islands for only a short period, we recommend land-based dive tours.

If you need more information about these tours, [please contact one of our Galapagos experts.](#)



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GALAPAGOS FOR EVERYONE



FOR BIRDWATCHERS

In the Galapagos, you will have a unique opportunity to observe both endemic species and migrant species. There are whimbrels, Franklin's Gull, tattlers and more than 50 resident species, of which 25 are endemic to the islands.

Spectacular seabirds will surround you including the famous Galapagos penguin, blue-footed boobies, albatross and frigate birds among others. On land, you will be able to observe Darwin's finches, petrels, Galapagos flightless cormorants, lava herons, lava gulls, Galapagos mockingbirds, vermilion flycatchers, Galapagos hawks and short-eared owls.

As if this were not enough, you will have close encounters with land iguanas, marine iguanas, Galapagos tortoises, sea lions and fur seals.

Galapagos has terrific weather and is a year-round destination. It is important to know that most species of birds that inhabit the archipelago nest year-round, so you will be able to see courtship, mating, eggs incubating and hatching and chick rearing at almost any time of the year.

In the Galapagos, the yachts have different itineraries, and all of them are designed for passengers to enjoy their time in the islands and spot as much wildlife as possible.

Galapagos expert's tip: The best islands to spot birds are North Seymour and Genovesa.

FOR SCUBA DIVERS

Not every day you get to dive in a marine reserve and encounter unique species. Activities such as snorkeling or diving are a must when visiting the Galapagos Islands. You will swim with sea lions, sea turtles and spot hammerhead sharks, and spot schools of tropical fish and reef sharks. There are plenty of dive sites in the archipelago, for beginners to advanced divers. It is crucial that you understand how currents affect your dive and you must be certified.

Recommended sites: Gordon Rocks, Seymour Channel, Daphne Major and Daphne Minor, Lobos Island, Cousin's Rock, Kicker Rock and Bartholomew Point. Dive sites near the islands of Wolf and Darwin are only accessible during a live-aboard cruise.



FOR ADVENTURERS

The Galapagos Islands surely have a lot to offer to its visitors and you can choose to kayak, snorkel and swim with tortoises and sea lions, dive and explore the depths of the marine sanctuary, go to Las Tintoreras on a bike, or take a hike to the highlands or the Sierra Negra Volcano on Isabela Island.

That is why there are specialized hotel based tours designed for people who are looking for more activity during their Galapagos vacation. Of course, during a cruise, you will have most of these activities included in your itinerary.

FOR HONEYMOONERS

Galapagos is the ultimate destination for honeymooners! Cruising this enchanted archipelago, you will feel the romance in this quiet destination. Enjoy a romantic dinner on deck under the stars in the middle of the ocean, taste the delicacies of the islands and wake up in your suite to then go off on your next adventure with your soulmate.

If you prefer not to cruise on a yacht, you can choose a hotel based tour as Galapagos has many lodges and hotels that offer privacy and a romantic ambiance. Live the perfect honeymoon in paradise.

Galapagos expert's tip: If you are looking for a particular detail or a special drink during your honeymoon, let your agency know beforehand, so they can arrange everything on time, as drinks and other products come from Ecuador's mainland.

FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

The enchanted archipelago is photogenic. It doesn't matter where you look, everything around you seems surreal and beautiful. The landscapes, the wildlife, the people, and the charm of the small towns are something else. Photographers go crazy in the islands, there is so much to see and so much to photograph, and there is even an annual photography contest where the best photos are picked for a Galapagos calendar.

You can take pictures during your excursions but must keep in mind that you cannot separate from your group, this means you may not have enough time to take pictures during the excursions. But don't worry, that is why there are special departures for photography groups.

Galapagos expert's tip: Remember to take enough batteries and memory cards for your camera, as you will not be able to buy more during your cruise. A telephoto zoom lens is highly recommended.

DESIGN YOUR GALAPAGOS
VACATION