



Coates Wildlife Tours

Specialist in Nature Tours since 1986

Trip Dossier

16 Day Galapagos and Amazon Rainforest Expedition



Small Group Tour - Max 14 passengers

Quito to Quito

03 - 18 October 2024

Itinerary Highlights:

- Canopy tower on the Napo; there is no finer canopy experience in Eastern Ecuador
- Multiple canoe rides, ideal for spotting monkeys and otters as well as herons, kingfishers and large birds like toucans, parrots and even macaws
- 7-night cruise through Darwin's "Enchanted Islands"
- Lobos Islets beach, home to a colony of Galapagos sea lions, blue-footed boobies and great frigate birds
- South Plazas Island; home to several hybrid iguanas, a crossing of a marine iguana with a land iguana
- Chinese Hat; home to lava lizards, marine iguanas, and Sally Lightfoot crabs
- Dragon Hill is frequently visited by flamingos, pintail ducks and other species of birds, and has been re-populated with land iguanas from Seymour, Isabela and Santa Cruz island
- Charles Darwin Station & the Highlands of Santa Cruz Island (home to a population of giant tortoises)
- The Tortoise Breeding Centre of Isabela Island; Arnaldo Tupiza Breeding Centre
- Punta Moreno offers clear views of the three most active volcanoes in the Galapagos, while penguins and flightless cormorants can be spotted along the rocky shores
- Fernandina Island; no foreign species have ever invaded this Island, making it one of the world's most pristine island ecosystems; flightless cormorants also nest here & the Galapagos hawk is often spotted

This tour to the South American country of Ecuador, including the Galapagos Islands and the Amazon Rainforest, will undoubtedly be a trip of a lifetime as you take part in one of the most exciting natural history expeditions in the world. It is hard to imagine the vast array of unique birds, plants, mammals, reptiles, and geological and photographic opportunities you will experience while exploring the varied and glorious scenic habitats and unique culture of this remarkable wilderness area.

Your tour begins in the city of Quito. After visiting some of this city's many highlights, you will fly to the Amazon Rainforest, one of the most biologically diverse areas on earth. Experience rich greenery, prolific bird and animal life and unique culture from a well-appointed lodge deep in the jungle. From top to bottom, there is no finer canopy experience in Eastern Ecuador. Flocks of colourful tanagers pass right through the canopy, Blue-and-yellow Macaws fly past in nearby trees, Spider Monkeys search for fruit, two species of large toucans call in the early mornings and afternoons, and the life of the forest opens before you.

After spending time in the jungle, you will fly to the Galapagos Islands to undertake a private charter seven-night cruise on board the luxury Archipell. The islands of the Galapagos vary from stark, volcanic islands with immense lava fields to islands rich with vegetation and rimmed with sandy beaches. In 1835 Charles Darwin arrived in the Galapagos and decided that "the natural history of these islands is eminently curious and well deserves attention".

While visiting many of the islands, you will learn about and view much of the wildlife, including masked and blue-footed boobies, magnificent frigate birds, giant tortoises and prehistoric-looking marine iguanas. With this relaxed itinerary and comfortable accommodations, this will be an unforgettable tour.



Itinerary

DAY 1 Arrive in Quito

Arrive in Quito, where your guide will meet you after clearing the customs area and transfer you to your boutique hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel Patio Andaluz

DAY 2 Quito Full-Day Tour

This fascinating and renovated city tour starts with a visit to the Itchimbia neighbourhood for spectacular views of the old and new city. Then you will visit the old colonial Quito starting in Santo Domingo Plaza, walking through one of the oldest streets in the town, "La Ronda Street," where you will see how the colonial houses were built and how the Quiteños lived in the sixteen hundreds. Your walk takes you through the city museum to San Francisco Plaza, making a quick stop to try the typical sweets of Quito. San Francisco is the oldest church in Quito, full of history and legends. Next, visit La Merced church to see the arabesque and baroque styles used to decorate this church. Finally, you will visit the main square to see the Presidential Palace, the main cathedral and other important buildings. The last stop before your guide takes you to the Equator is the La Compañía de Jesus church, one of the most beautiful churches in South America or perhaps the world. Dinner tonight will be a Welcome to Ecuador experience at a local restaurant.

Accommodation: Hotel Patio Andaluz

BLD

DAY 3 Quito - Coca

Your guide will take you from Papallacta to the airport in time to take a 30-minute flight to Coca over the eastern Andes mountain range. Upon arrival, you will take a 5-minute drive in a local chiva (hired bus) or local taxi from the airport to Port Francisco de Orellana to embark onto a comfortable covered motor boat. We begin a canoe ride along the Napo River for about 2 ½ hours. You will have a boxed lunch en route.

Birds such as herons, kingfishers and others can be spotted along the way. After arriving at the Napo Wildlife Center (NWC) entry dock, we disembark and then take a majestic and peaceful 1 ½ hours dugout canoe ride to where the lodge is located.

There is a good possibility of sighting various species of monkeys and large birds like toucans, parrots or even macaws. Late afternoon arrival to the NWC lodge at Añangu Lake, enjoy a welcome drink and facilities.

After dinner: optional caiman observation around the lake and natural sounds of the night.

Accommodation: Napo Wildlife Centre Lodge

BLD

DAY 4 Amazon Adventure

Early wake up to reach Ecuador's best and most easily accessed parrot clay licks, about 1 hour away from the lodge. We arrive just before the parrot activity starts at the clay lick from 7:30 - 8:30 am. A total of 11 species of parrots, parakeets and macaws can be seen. A visit depends on weather conditions but is usually successful. Later, hike along a forest trail to visit the Quichua community of Añangu and share time with a family on their activities. Return to the creek and walk through a Terra Firme Forest for about 30 minutes until we arrive at the second parrot clay lick, where, if the weather permits, we can find different species of parrots, parakeets and even macaws. We will have a boxed lunch at the parrot clay lick observatory. Late afternoon arrival back at the lodge.

Accommodation: Napo Wildlife Centre Lodge

BLD

DAY 5 Amazon Adventure

After breakfast, we leave the lodge and drive to a 36m canopy tower on the Napo, a great way to experience life above the forest floor. This is the second tower at the Napo Wildlife Center (the first is attached to the dining hall and allows excellent lake views). The canopy tower is about 20 minutes from the lodge, deep within the terra firme forest. As you ascend the 12-story tower, you pass through different levels of the forest and emerge on top of a huge Ceiba tree. Here you cross onto a wooden platform built into the tree and experience the view formerly reserved only for the birds. The metal tower was constructed to the highest standards, galvanised, and carefully inspected by engineers. Safety is the priority. The platform at the top of the tree was constructed by tree platform specialists brought from Eco-Ecuador's Peruvian partner organisation Perú Verde. From top to bottom, there is no finer canopy experience in Eastern Ecuador. Flocks of colourful tanagers pass right through the canopy of the tree, Blue-and-yellow Macaws fly past in nearby trees, Spider Monkeys search for fruit, two species of large toucans call in the early mornings and afternoons, and the life of the forest canopy opens before you.

Birds virtually impossible to see from the forest floor far below are suddenly beside you, oblivious to your presence.

Accommodation: Napo Wildlife Centre Lodge

BLD

DAY 6 Amazon Adventure

This morning we will have an early departure to return to Coca and then fly back to Quito. The trip back to Coca will again be an excellent opportunity to see Giant otters, Monk Saki monkeys or many other rare birds as we cruise along the river.

After arriving in Coca, we will take our flight to Quito airport. Upon arrival, we will transfer to the valley of Guayllabamba, only 30 minutes away, where you can enjoy a BBQ, use the facilities, relax and learn about our local plantations.

We will transfer back to Quito and check in to our hotel.

Accommodation: Dann Carlton Hotel

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DAY 7 Otavalo Full-Day Tour

This land is rich with friendly and colourfully attired indigenous people, historic working haciendas, and towering volcanoes with verdant slopes. Our destination is the Otavalo Indian craft market. As we pass the highlands, we're treated to a sweeping view of Imbabura and Cotacachi Volcanoes rising above San Pablo Lake. The Otavalo market dates back thousands of years and is famous throughout the Andes for its handicrafts, textiles and tapestries.

Today lunch will be served at one of the local haciendas built between the 17th and 18th centuries with a typical Andean ambience. After lunch, we'll visit the village of Peguche, where native weavers demonstrate their craft as they have for centuries. We will return to our hotel in the late afternoon. Dinner tonight has not been included to enable us to visit a local restaurant of our own choice. (at own expense).

Accommodation: Dann Carlton Hotel

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DAY 8 Fly to Galapagos & Board the M/C Archipell

Today marks the start of our Galapagos Adventure.

AM: Transfer to Quito airport in time for the 07:50 am departure to Baltra Island at 09:50 am. We will then transfer to the catamaran M/C Archipell.

Begin your 7-night cruise through Darwin's "Enchanted Islands". All cabins are spacious, featuring outside views, bath/shower and air-conditioning. All meals, lectures and shore excursions are included. A Category "3" naturalist leads the excursions and cultural programs with years of experience guiding the Galapagos Islands.

PM: Isla Lobos, San Cristobal Island.

The Lobos Islets beach harbours a colony of Galapagos sea lions. As in other colonies in the archipelago, you can approach nurturing females within a few metres. In the breeding season, territorial males also visit this colony, defending and mating the harem on their part of the beach. This low islet is home to more than just Galapagos sea lions. Two other emblematic species breed here: male blue-footed boobies and great frigate birds who try to impress the females (and tourists) with clumsy dances, heaving their striking blue feet or blowing up their balloon-sized scarlet pouches.

BLD

DAY 9 Cruising the Galapagos Islands

AM: South Plazas Island

South Plaza is located east of Santa Cruz Island, forming part of a pair of islands called "Islas Plazas". Despite its small size, some of the Galapagos' most interesting and outstanding species are found here. The Plaza's land iguanas are smaller than their relatives on other islands. There are several hybrid iguanas throughout the island due to crossing a marine iguana with a land iguana. They are unique and can be recognised at a glance by their black/grey colour, with a land iguana's crest but the face and tail of the marine iguana. The large population of iguanas is due to the presence of tuna, their favourite food. Swallow-tailed gulls nesting in the rugged cliffs are seen along with other seabirds such as Audubon shearwaters, red-billed tropic-birds, frigate birds and brown pelicans.

PM: Santa Fe Island

From here, passengers follow a rocky, 300-meter circuit, which passes through one of the tallest stands of opuntia cactus in the archipelago, some reaching heights of over ten meters. There is a longer, more rigorous trail through the island's Palo Santo forest. Still, it is less frequented by visitors since it requires a medium-level hike along rocky stretches and slippery slopes, which are easily eroded. The forest is home to various land birds, including the impressive Galapagos hawk.

BLD

DAY 10 Cruising the Galapagos Islands

AM: Chinese Hat

Sombrero Chino-a small island just off the southeastern tip of Santiago -is a relatively recent volcanic cone with a few intact lava tunnels. Although the island is small, it has a beautifully understated panorama: the ambience created by the volcanic cone background, crashing waves, and nearby islets make Sombrero Chino an especially pleasant stop.

The 400-meter trail begins on a small, white-sand beach nestled discreetly in the sheltered cove between Sombrero Chino and Santiago. Sea lions and American oystercatchers often frequent this beach. The trail continues along the coastline of the cove, passing beside the island's characteristic lava terrain and colourful pioneer vegetation and offering glimpses of lava lizards, marine iguanas, and Sally Lightfoot crabs battling the changing tides. The trail ends at the island's rocky shore, which is spattered with scenic tide pools lined with green algae and marine iguana passersby during the cool season.

PM: Dragon Hill – Santa Cruz Island

Dragon Hill, named after the giant land iguanas that once thrived here, is home to a brackish lagoon where the greater flamingo sometimes appears. The visitor site at Dragon Hill has been open to visitors since 1993. This site is located in northwestern Santa Cruz Island and consists of a trail leading to a hyper-saline lagoon behind the beach, frequently visited by flamingos, pintail ducks and other birds.

This site has been re-populated with land iguanas from Seymour, Isabela and Santa Cruz islands. There is a short walk to the hill, which offers a beautiful view of the bay. BLD

DAY 11 Cruising the Galapagos Islands

AM: Charles Darwin Station and Puerto Ayora – Santa Cruz Island.

Although the great majority of Galapagos visitors come here to observe and appreciate natural wonders, it is also interesting to learn about how the protection and conservation of the islands are carried out. The main attractions include the National Park information centre, the Van Staelen Exhibition Hall, and the Breeding and Rearing Centre for young and adult Galapagos tortoises in captivity.

PM: The Highlands of Santa Cruz Island.

Santa Cruz has all the vegetation zones. You can see the contrast between the arid coastal zone and the remarkably refreshing highlands. The humid zones provided some of the drinking water consumed in town. The highlands house unusual trees and ferns, colourful land birds, and a healthy population of giant tortoises. Sudden rains are common, so bring a light jacket and a plastic bag for your camera. BLD

DAY 12 Cruising the Galapagos Island

AM: Tintoreras - Isabela Island.

“Tintoreras” are small islands in front of the Puerto Villamil coast. Here you can find herons on the lookout on mangrove branches, Galapagos Penguins and sea lions that often pop out onto the shore. White-tipped reef sharks (in Spanish: Tintoreras) are common in the archipelago and are found in shallow waters.

PM: Arnaldo Tupiza Breeding Center – Isabela Island

The Tortoise Breeding Center of Isabela is located 1.5 km from Puerto Villamil. You can walk or drive. In the Center, populations from South Isabela (Sierra Negra Volcano, Cerro Azul): Cazuella, Cinco Cerros, Roca Union, San Pedro, Tables and Cerro Paloma have been reproduced in captivity. In total, there are 330 juvenile and adult tortoises.

From the population of Cerro Paloma, there are four males and two female Galapagos, which, so far, are the only survivors. Raising this breed of tortoise is of particular interest since genetic analysis performed in 1994 based on blood samples has determined that tortoises from this Galapaguera are

different from the others. This is compounded by one of these two females being infertile, as shown by the analysis of absent follicles. However, in 1998, the second female nested and now has 9 Galapaguitos of Cerro Paloma. BLD

DAY 13 Cruising the Galapagos Island

AM: Punta Moreno – Isabela Island

Punta Moreno on the western coast of Isabela Island offers a nice view of the three most active volcanoes in the Galapagos: Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul on Isabela Island and La Cumbre on Fernandina Island.

The vast lava flows are the first thing that catches your eye when you arrive at Moreno Point. The only vegetations seen at first sight are the mangroves at the shore and some cacti. However, during a hike, you reach some beautiful oasis-like lagoons surrounded by lush green amidst the black lava flows. Abundant wildlife, including flamingos, can be seen in these lagoons. You will hopefully see blue-footed boobies, penguins, and flightless cormorants during a dinghy ride along the rocky shores.

PM: Elizabeth Bay – Isabela Island

Elizabeth Bay is located on the east coast of Isabela Island. The bay contains many islets, which can be visited by dinghy or panga rides. Penguins and Blue-footed Boobies can be spotted on the rocky islets. With abundant marine life and clear water, the area is perfect for snorkelling and viewing schools of colourful fish, sea lions, and perhaps sharks or whales. BLD

DAY 14 Cruising the Galapagos Islands

AM: Tagus Cove – Isabela Island

Tagus Cove is located on Isabela Island across from Fernandina Island, next to the Bolivar Channel that divides the two islands. This spot has been frequented by ships since the 1800s that used the area as anchorage. Trails lead from the cove past Lake Darwin to a ridge displaying beautiful views. Another area of interest is Punta Tortuga. Located north of Tagus Cove, also across from Fernandina Island, this beach is surrounded by mangroves.

PM: Espinoza Point – Fernandina Island

No foreign species have ever invaded Fernandina Island; it is one of the world's most pristine island ecosystems. The volcano "La Cumbre" dominates the land, with lava fields reaching the ocean. The island's highlight features the flightless cormorant nesting site. This area provides an excellent opportunity to see the Galapagos hawk. BLD

DAY 15 Cruising the Galapagos Island - Quito

AM: Bachas Beach – Santa Cruz Island.

Las Bachas is a swimming beach located on the north shore of Santa Cruz. One of the few remnants of the U.S. World War II presence in the Galapagos, a floating pier, can be seen here. You may see flamingos, Sally Lightfoot crabs, hermit crabs, black-necked stilts, and whimbrels. Sea turtles also nest off the beach.

PM: Transfer to the Baltra airport for your flight to Quito. Upon arrival, transfer to the Eurbuilding airport hotel. Tonight we gather in the hotel's restaurant for our farewell dinner. BD

DAY 16 Quito - Home

Today you have free time to relax before your flight home. The hotel's complimentary shuttle between the hotel and the airport will transfer you from the hotel in time for your flight back home. Remember to be at the airline's front desk at least 2 1/2 hours before departure. B

The above itinerary may be varied according to conditions and advice.

Tour Costs

Cost: US \$9,550.00 Per Person Twin Share
US \$1,355.00 Single Supplement

Note: Single Supplement is only available for Amazon Lodge and Quito Hotels.
Single Supplement is NOT available for Cruise due to limited rooms)

Departs: Quito, Ecuador 03 October 2024
Finishes: Quito, Ecuador 18 October 2024

Tour Payments

First Deposit: At time of booking US\$2,000.00 per person
Second Deposit: Due on or before 12 March 2024 US\$1,000 per person
Final Payment: Due on or before 12 June 2024
Max No. Of Participants: 14 passengers and a Coates Escort

Notes:

Tour Cancellations:-

All cancellations must be in writing, and the following penalties will apply:-

First deposit:

A penalty of 25% of the deposit amount will apply if cancelled prior to 365 days prior to tours commencement.

A 50% penalty will apply if cancelled between 364 and 180 days prior to commencement of the tour.

A 100% penalty will apply if cancellation is received less than 180 days prior to tour commencement.

Second Deposit:

Is non refundable after the 12 March 2024.

Final Payment:

Is non refundable after the 12th June 2024.

Prices have been based on all known costs. Any significant changes beyond our control may be passed onto passengers.

Travel Insurance.

To protect your investment and to ensure the best possible treatment in case of an emergency, travel insurance cover is essential for this trip.

Included

- Internal Flights as per itinerary.
- Meals as per the itinerary
- tea and coffee during voyage
- All shore excursions per the itinerary
- Use of snorkel gear and Kayaks
- Comprehensive pre-departure information
- Port surcharges, permits and landing fees
- English speaking Naturalist Guide
- Australian Tour Escort from Coates
- Gratuities during the cruise and at the Jungle lodge plus local guides.
- Transfers as mentioned in the itinerary
- Galapagos National Park Fee

Not Included

- International flights
- Pre & Post Tour accommodation
- Transfers not mentioned in the itinerary
- Airport arrival or departure taxes
- Passport, visa, and vaccination charges
- Travel insurance or emergency evacuation charges
- Hotels and meals not included in itinerary
- Optional excursions not included in the itinerary
- All items of a personal nature including but not limited to: alcoholic beverages and soft drinks, laundry services, personal clothing, medical expenses, gratuities not listed in inclusions, Wi-Fi, email or phone charges



Tour Information

Coates Escort: Tom Grove (Managing Director of Coates Wildlife Tours)

Wildlife Specialist: Local Naturalist Guides

Accommodation:

Archipel - Catamaran

This modern and sleek motor catamaran cruises the archipelago with style and comfort. Although the Archipel could accommodate up to 18 passengers, there are only 16 passengers on board. You live in one of the eight spacious double cabins with outside views, a private bathroom, hot water, a locker, and a closet. Four cabins have double beds, and five have lower twin beds.

The entire interior of the boat is made of elegant teak wood. In addition, there are a comfortable dining room, a bar and lounge, a library, a ventilation system, a TV and DVD room, stereo, mobile and e-mail service, a safety deposit box, first aid equipment, an ice maker, a water purifier, an observation deck, as well as a spacious sun deck with chairs to sleep or relax.



Hotel Patio Andaluz

It is in the late sixteenth century colonial-style house in the heart of historic “Quito Antiguo”. It houses an exclusive restaurant specialising in national and Spanish cuisine, a Tapas Bar, a Guayasmin lecture room, an artisan shop and a spa. Churches, museums and national monuments surround this elegant boutique hotel. However, the hotel itself is an official National Treasure, with centuries of history within its walls. This hotel is also committed to sustainable tourism. Website: <https://www.hotelpatioandaluz.com>

Napo Wildlife Center Amazon Lodge

It is an alternative luxury ecohotel in Amazonian Ecuador and forms part of the sustainable ecotourism and conservation project. You will stay in spacious cabanas; rooms include private bathrooms with hot water, a private balcony, 24/7 electricity (powered by a solar panel system and silent generators), 120v outlets, mosquito nets and ceiling fans. The lodge is located by Anangu Lake and has a library, shopping boutique, and internet and laundry services (both at an additional cost).

Dann Carlton Hotel

It is located in the heart of Quito's financial and business district. It is close to shopping centres, the Olympic stadium and the remarkable urban Parque La Carolina ('the lungs of the city'). This hotel has a swimming pool, gym, restaurant and bar.

Website: <https://www.hotelesdann.com/dann-carlton-quito/>

The EB hotel

It is located 8 minutes from Quito's airport and roughly 30 minutes from the city's historic centre. This hotel has a bar and restaurant while the rooms are equipped with flat-screen TVs, cotton bathrobes, internet and premium toiletries.

Website: <https://www.ebhotels.com/quito/61-About>

Meals:

Meals as per the tour itinerary are included. Special dietary requirements can usually be catered for where prior notice is given. Don't hesitate to contact the office if you have a special dietary requirement, as a surcharge may apply.

Physical Requirements:

Easy to moderate. We must get into and out of the smaller boats that take us ashore for excursions during the cruise and on trips along the rivers during our Amazon Adventure. During the cruise, there will be a mixture of dry Landings (jetties) and wet landings (beaches).

Weather:

The weather varies vastly between the areas we are visiting. In the Amazon Rainforest, you can expect humidity with temperatures in the high 20s or low 30s. Rain can also be expected. On the Galapagos, we expect calm seas and fine weather with temperatures around the mid-20s. There is always a slim chance of the odd shower. Quito is expected to be in the high teens or low 20s, with a slight chance of a shower.

Clothing:

A suggested list of items to bring on the tour will be included with our pre-departure information, which will be sent to you about one month before departure. However, comfortable casual clothing and comfortable walking shoes are recommended. Soft-soled shoes are required on board the boat.

For detailed **Terms and Conditions**, please visit the FAQ page on our website.

To make a booking or further information please contact

Tom or Sylvia Grove at Coates Wildlife Tours

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