



ALMAZ
JOURNEYS

Itinerary 'A' Aboard the Theory or Origin Ecoventura

This itinerary is for reference only. The order of activities is subject to change based upon the assigned yacht.



SUNDAY	Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, SAN CRISTOBAL (Chatham) El Junco Lake, SAN CRISTOBAL
MONDAY	Punta Pitt, (SN, PR) SAN CRISTOBAL Cerro Brujo (SN, PR, KY) SAN CRISTOBAL
TUESDAY	Punta Suarez, ESPANOLA (Hood) Gardner Bay (SN, PR, KY) ESPANOLA
WEDNESDAY	Punta Cormorant (PR, SN), FLOREANA Post Office Bay (SN), Baroness Point (PR) FLOREANA
THURSDAY	Highlands of SANTA CRUZ CCFL (Darwin Station), SANTA CRUZ
FRIDAY	Sombrero Chino (SN), Las Bachas (SN) or Black Turtle Cove (PR) Bartolome (PR, SN)
SATURDAY	South Plaza Island (SN) North Seymour (PR)
SUNDAY	Interpretation Center, SAN CRISTOBAL

Day 1: Sunday

Arrive at San Cristobal airport (SCY) and meet your Ecoventura representative/guide outside of the airport for your transfer to your vessel. After being escorted to your cabin you'll participate in a brief safety drill before heading back out onto San Cristobal Island to head to El Junco Lake. Here you'll cruise around on a zodiac boat and be able to swim around and snorkel with the local sea lion population that may come up to greet you. Back aboard the ship, you'll have a multi-course dinner (as you will every evening) with your fellow passengers.

Day 2: Monday

You'll start your exploration today with a Zodiac ride to look for wildlife at Cerro Brujo, which translates to Wizard Hill. Your guide will point out the wide variety of birds soaring around you, from brown pelicans and brown noddly terns to blue-footed boobies dive-bombing the water around you as they fish. Look for different color patterns that indicate age - for example, a brown pelican will have a white neck when it's mature. Sally Lightfoot crabs, black when they're young but extremely colorful once fully grown, scurry all over the rocks. Your guides will also point out unusual geological formations, including the Cathedral, jokingly called Darwin's Pants. After the Zodiac tour, you'll be able to take in the gorgeous coral sand beach at your own pace. Take a peaceful walk along the beach, swim with sea lions or you have the option to paddle board or kayak. Paddleboards are beginner friendly, with the

option to kneel if you aren't comfortable standing. This is a good opportunity to become familiar with your snorkeling gear from the beach before snorkeling in deep-water. Your guides will teach you about the various species of fish you've encountered so far. If you'd like help identifying any of the fish in your photos, they'll be happy to lend their expertise. Return to the yacht for lunch served on the sun deck (weather permitting) before going ashore at Punta Pitt for a hike - parts of the trail are rocky, and there is some climbing involved. This is considered one of the best sites for birdwatching, primarily because it is the only place where you'll see all three species of boobies: the blue-footed, the red-footed, and the Nazca. Look for baby blue-footed boobies, fully grown after just a couple of months but fluffy and white until their feathers come in. Your guides will also point out frigates, swallow-tailed gulls, storm petrels, brown pelicans. At Pitt Rock, we can snorkel with sea lions and colorful fish such as King Angel and Surgeon fish. A Zodiac will transfer you back to the boat for a briefing and dinner. As the yacht sets sail, choose from a selection of guidebooks or fiction in the library, or climb to the top deck for a distant view of "Sleeping Lion". Join your guide on deck for an exploration of the Southern skies full of stars if weather permits.

Day 3: Tuesday

This morning you'll land at Punta Suarez on Espanola (Hood) Island. Your guides will point out the large number of endemic species living here, such as the waved albatross. These gorgeous birds spend the first several years of their lives in the open ocean and return to land to mate. If your visit is between April and December, you will witness the well-known courtship dance. As you walk, take care not to step on the marine iguanas sunbathing on the dark rocks. These iguanas are usually black but acquire bright red and green coloration during mating season from the algae they eat. Follow the trail to the dramatic ocean blow hole, watch for colorful sally light-foot crabs crawling along the shoreline. We also find Darwin's Finches, Hood mockingbird, Galapagos Doves, red-billed tropicbirds, Galapagos Hawks, Nazca boobies and swallow-tailed gulls, the only nocturnal gull in the world. Return to the yacht for lunch served on deck (weather permitting) and a cooking demonstration on how to make Ecuadorian ceviche.

After lunch, you'll have the option to snorkel at Tortuga Rock and explore the caves covered with invertebrates. Disembark at Gardner Bay, site of a beautiful white-sand beach where colonies of sea lions dot the shoreline. The dominant males of a sea lion colony keep watch over their harems to keep them safe. Here you'll have the option to snorkel from the beach, kayak or paddleboard, or simply walk along the beach, sunbathe or explore the Darwin Finches, Espanola mockingbird and Galapagos hawks. After the activities, return to the yacht for a briefing and dinner. Your guide will offer an enrichment lecture tonight after dinner. Informative and entertaining, the topic for this evening is on marine currents and climate or Geology of the Islands.

Day 4: Wednesday

Step ashore at Punta Cormorant's olive-sand beach with the sounds of sea lions, lava herons, yellow-crowned night herons and blue-footed boobies as you walk around Floreana (Charles) Island. The green mineral you'll see on the beach is caused by a high concentration of iron and manganese from the same basaltic lava found in Hawaii. As you walk to a brackish lagoon, home to Bahama ducks, common stilts, Galapagos flycatchers and bright pink flamingos, the guides will point out the rich variety of plant life, including morning glories, cut-leaf daisies, mangroves (black, red, and white), palo verde and Scalesia. The trail leads to a beach where sea turtles lay their eggs in the powdery sand dunes and sting rays swim in the shallow water. Don't miss the opportunity to snorkel at Devil's Crown

or Champion Islet, a shallow sunken crater colonized by a brilliant array of colorful fish and coral, white-tipped sharks, sea turtles, spotted eagle rays and sea stars. Return to the yacht for lunch and a brief history of the human history of Galapagos and explain the fascinating story of why this island is sometimes called the Island of Mysteries. In the afternoon, you'll be able to participate in a thrilling Galapagos tradition. Floreana is home to Post Office Bay, the site where English whaling vessels erected a post barrel in the late 18th century. When you drop a postcard in the barrel, no postage is required. You'll search through the postcards left by previous visitors, and if you see one addressed to a location near your home, you may choose to take it with you and deliver it in person. Similarly, your note will be delivered by future visitors. Postcards will be provided on board by your guides. Take a Zodiac excursion at Baroness Point to look for sea turtles and rays. If you have an underwater camera, you'll be busy snapping photos of sea stars and a brilliant array of colorful fish. Return to the yacht for a briefing followed by dinner and a fun filled entertaining pirate themed party – participation is optional.

Day 5: Thursday

When you look outside this morning, your view will be completely different from the last few days. A harbor full of boats is bustling with activity at Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz Island, a town with a population of 24,000. You'll travel by bus to a higher altitude with beautiful geological formations including the lava tunnels at El Mirador and Los Gemelos (the twins), a pair of massive craters. Your guides will explain how they were formed. The highlight of the morning is a visit to a privately owned ranch where tortoises roam free. These slow-moving giants can grow to be over 500 pounds! Lunch will be served back on board the yacht, and in the afternoon, you'll learn about the most famous visitor to the Galapagos - Charles Darwin - as well as current conservation efforts, when you visit the Centro de Crianza Fausto Llerena and Charles Darwin Research Station. Visit the exhibit honoring Lonesome George, whose death marked the extinction of his species of tortoise from Pinta Island. There's another story with a happier ending: Diego, a tortoise from the San Diego Zoo, brought his species back from the brink of extinction by fathering hundreds of offspring. You'll have free time to explore the town as you walk back to the main dock, the distance of about a mile. If you're looking for a souvenir, this is the perfect time. Stop at the artisan chocolate shop to select a truffle, with dozens of flavor options, or visit an art gallery for a painting or ceramic piece. Along the way there will be cafes with coffee, ice cream and internet. You'll have the option to stay on land for dinner with transfers provided by Zodiac. Otherwise, return to the yacht for the usual delicious multi-course dinner. Today's daily briefing will be held in the afternoon to allow for extra time in the evening.

Day 6: Friday

When you wake up this morning, you'll be in solitude once again, with no other boats in sight. You'll have two options for a morning activity. Today's hike is a challenge, with about 400 wooden steps winding around Bartolome Island, ending in a gorgeous panoramic view of Pinnacle Rock. Your guide will stop along the way to describe the geology of the landscape - mini lava cones and bombs formed by flowing magma from past volcanic eruptions. If you'd rather skip the hike, enjoy a Zodiac ride around the island to look for penguins. You'll see these adorable animals - the second smallest type of penguin - swimming and diving playfully or grooming themselves on rocks. Crystal clear water beckons you to wade in from the beach. Snorkel with schools of tropical fish, white-tipped reef sharks and Galapagos Penguins. Return to the vessel for lunch served on the sundeck (weather permitting). The itinerary for this afternoon varies depending on your yacht, but all visitors will enjoy lovely views and some of the Galapagos' renowned wildlife. Guests on the Origin go ashore at Sombrero Chino

(Chinese Hat), a small island off the southern tip of Santiago that owes its name to its shape. Sea lions await on the beach, and as you explore, you'll see marine iguanas and oystercatchers. Along the trail, you'll see remnants of the island's geological history, with volcanic rubble and cracked lava formations. Guests on Theory visit Playa las Bachas, (Spanish for barges) on the northern side of Santa Cruz. You'll also have a wonderful opportunity for snorkeling after exploring interior lagoons with vivid flamingos. Guests on the Letty have a Zodiac excursion at Caleta Tortuga Negra (Black Turtle Cove) through a series of coves and inlets surrounded by mangroves. You'll navigate slowly along the shoreline, listening for the telltale deep inhale of a sea turtle and watching for the wings of a school of golden rays. Your guide will offer an enrichment lecture tonight after dinner. Informative and entertaining, the topic for this evening is on Charles Darwin and evolution or social/ environmental projects that are supported by Ecoventura.

Day 7: Saturday

This morning you'll start out at South Plaza, a small islet with tall cliffs and a trail with a variety of plants and animals. This island's species of "Opuntia" or prickly pear cactus has been decimated by invasive species, so you'll see young plants surrounded by nets to protect them. Look for nests for a variety of birds, such as swallow-tailed gulls, shearwaters, small ground finches, and red-billed tropicbirds. This geological uplift is home to a colony of bachelor sea lions, with dominant bulls in various stages of recovery from battles over prime beach territory. You'll also have an opportunity to see land iguanas up close, and your guides will describe what differentiates them from marine iguanas. During lunch, you'll sail to North Seymour Island, where a spectacular sight awaits - frigate birds with red sacs on their chests inflated, seeking mates. At the height of mating season, you'll be surrounded by dozens, but no matter what time of year you visit, there will be individuals seeking mates. The Galapagos Islands are home to two different species of frigates, Great and Magnificent, and your guides will teach you to identify the difference. You'll have a final opportunity to snorkel in deeper water. Look for sharks, sea lions, and starfish, along with a variety of tropical fish. Before dinner, the captain and crew join you for a champagne toast to celebrate a wonderful week during the captain's farewell party. During the briefing, and you'll receive detailed instructions for disembarking the next morning. After dinner, there is a special presentation from your guides, and you come to realize your week in paradise has almost come to an end!

Day 8: Sunday

This morning you'll disembark the yacht after breakfast. As a perfect way to sum up the trip, you'll visit the Interpretation Center on San Cristobal (1) to discover more about the human history of the Galapagos Islands. There's also a paved trail where you can enjoy a brief walk before a bus ride to town. You'll have some free time for last-minute photos before your transfer to the airport. It's a quick flight back to the mainland, but you'll be bringing lifelong memories with you!