

THE GALAPAGOS

Exploring in Depth Aboard the *Evolution*

10-DAY EXPEDITION VOYAGE

INTRODUCTION TO THE GALAPAGOS

Chances are, if you're interested in nature and wildlife you've always wanted to visit the Galapagos Islands ... a dream of so many adventurous travelers. Straddling the equator in the Pacific Ocean, these islands are home to some of the most interesting and accessible wildlife anywhere. You'll find yourself just inches away from giant tortoises and the courtship rituals of comical blue-footed boobies, and you'll gain an appreciation for how remarkable life on Earth can be.

The animals of the Galapagos Islands have adapted to such unusual conditions that they have become a living study of evolutionary science. And since the islands are so isolated and have few natural predators, the wildlife has very little fear of humans, allowing you to get unbelievably close.

On our 10-day voyage you'll have ample time to explore the islands' diverse terrain — desert landscapes, lush highland forests, volcanic soils and nutrient-rich waters. We'll visit Fernandina Island, where earlier this year a small volcano erupted, and see how the animals are adapting to this change — evolution before your eyes. There will be plenty of time to snorkel alongside sea lions, or relax in the clear waters of the Pacific.

We sail aboard the 32-guest *M/V Evolution*, the perfect size and the perfect way to explore. This ship, just refurbished, is crafted in the manner of a historic European steamer, capturing the spirit and style of an earlier era. During your voyage you will be accompanied by outstanding naturalist guides who are not only authorities on the wildlife of the Galapagos Islands, but also are a pleasure to be with. They will see that you get the most of your experience.



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November 7 – 16, 2008

ITINERARY

DAY 1 • FRIDAY

Miami / Guayaquil

Our expedition begins in the Miami International Airport, where we check in for our early evening flight to Guayaquil, Ecuador. On arrival, our representatives meet us and take us to our fine hotel for the night. (Meals Aloft)

DAY 2 • SATURDAY

Guayaquil / San Cristóbal / Cerro Brujo

After breakfast at our hotel, we transfer to the airport and fly to the Galapagos Islands. Our crew meets us at San Cristóbal Island and escorts us on the short bus trip to the harbor, where our 32-guest expedition ship, the *M/V Evolution*, awaits us. This afternoon we visit the powder-white sands of Cerro Brujo for swimming and snorkeling, with a good chance of sea lions joining us. We'll likely see blue-footed boobies, yellow warblers and finches. (B,L,D)

DAY 3 • SUNDAY

Española (Hood) Island: Punta Suarez and Gardner Bay

In the morning we visit Punta Suarez, also located on Hood Island, where we wade ashore through a large sea lion colony. The curious Hood mockingbird, found only here, may alight on your head if you permit it. We'll also see Galapagos doves, Galapagos hawks and the red-colored race of marine iguana that is found only here. The huge waved albatross nests here between April and December. Albatross courtship displays are elaborate and highly amusing. Albatrosses are graceful in the air but back-heavy and ungainly on land. Because they are unable to launch themselves into flight from the ground, they must waddle to a cliff and jump off the edge! Finally, we walk to Española's famous blowhole, where incoming waves spout 90 feet into the air. In the afternoon we visit Gardner Bay on

Hood Island, where we can swim and snorkel among sea lions. Dominant male sea lions mark out territories along the shore and patrol them noisily, defending against other males who might want to invade the "harem." (B,L,D)

DAY 4 • MONDAY

Santa Cruz Island

Today we visit Santa Cruz Island. We begin at the Charles Darwin Research Station, world famous for its research and tortoise breeding programs, where we learn about the vital work being done to study and preserve Galapagos wildlife. We walk to the village of Puerto Ayora, the largest human settlement in the Galapagos, with free time to explore.



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Then we drive to the highlands and see a very different side of the Galapagos: the forested highlands. We look for giant tortoises in the wild, and walk through the forest surrounding a pair of pit craters, and time permitting explore a lava tube. (B,L,D)

DAY 5 • TUESDAY

Santiago (James) Island / Bartolomé Island

Santiago has several sites to visit at the western end of James Bay. Puerto Egas, with its black sand beaches, was the site of a small salt mining industry in the 1960s. A walk inland to the salt crater is an excellent opportunity to spot land birds such as finches, doves and hawks. A walk down the rugged shoreline will turn up marine species, including iguanas basking on the rocks and sea lions lazing in the tide pools. At the end of the trail there is a series of grottoes where fur seals and night herons rest on shady ledges. Just north of James Bay is Buccaneer Cove, a particularly scenic area of steep cliffs and dark beaches. In the afternoon we visit Bartolomé Island, which provides important clues as to how life began on the Galapagos. A few hardy plants have begun to colonize the lava rock. From atop Bartolomé's volcanic cone there is a splendid panorama of lava flows, beaches, sea, neighboring islands and the jagged Pinnacle Rock. We will also have an opportunity to swim, snorkel and kayak here, possibly with penguins and sea lions for company. (B,L,D)

DAY 6 • WEDNESDAY

Genovesa (Tower) Island / Darwin Bay

Genovesa Island contains one of the largest and most diverse bird populations in the Galapagos. From our pangas we see red-billed tropicbirds. In the morning, we climb Prince Philip's Steps to an area with colonies of Nazca boobies and great frigatebirds, which have a very large wingspan and a slender, dramatic silhouette in flight. Breeding males inflate their strawberry-colored chest pouches to an enormous size. There are also red-footed boobies and the subtly-colored Galapagos dove, once endangered but now

increasing in number. In the afternoon we visit Darwin Bay, home to the nocturnal swallow-tailed gull and the rare lava gull. A walk along the cliffs gives us fine views of the Pacific Ocean. We have a chance to swim and snorkel here. (B,L,D)

DAY 7 • THURSDAY

Fernandina Island – Punta Espinosa / Isabela Island - Tagus Cove

The morning finds us at Fernandina, the youngest and most volcanically active island in the Galapagos. We land at Punta Espinosa. There are flows of ropy "pahoehoe" lava that have been newly colonized by lava cactus. Flightless cormorants build their nests on the point, sea lions sprawl on the beach and play in the tide pools, Sally Lightfoot crabs scuttle along the rocks, and marine iguanas dot the sand. In the afternoon, we sail round to Isabela Island and explore Tagus Cove, whose surrounding cliffs are marked with the names of pirate and whaling ships from long ago. On our panga ride we look for penguins, flightless cormorants, pelicans and iguanas. We then have a chance to stretch our legs as we walk uphill to the rim of the crater of Darwin Volcano and look down into Darwin Lake. The landscape is impressive, with plants characteristic of the dry zone. We may see several species of Darwin's finches here. (B,L,D)

DAY 8 • FRIDAY

North Seymour Island / Black Turtle Cove

In the morning we visit North Seymour Island, where there are good nesting sites for a



large population of magnificent frigatebirds. Blue-footed boobies perform their courtship dance in the more open areas, and swallow-tailed gulls perch on the cliff edges. Despite the surf that can pound the outer shore, sea lions haul out onto the beach and can be found along with marine iguanas. Caleta Tortuga Negra (“Black Turtle Cove”) is a beautiful and peaceful area of mangroves, where on our panga ride we look for schools of golden rays, endangered green sea turtles, white-tipped reef sharks, lava herons and blue-footed boobies. For part of the time, we’ll turn off the motors of our pangas and just drift silently through the cove.

DAY 9 • SATURDAY

Kicker Rock / San Cristóbal / Guayaquil

The morning we sail out to Kicker Rock, which rises 500 feet straight up, and has the shape of a sleeping lion. We enjoy a “panga” (small boat) ride, seeing the thousands of seabirds which nest here, including blue-footed boobies, Nazca boobies and swallow-tailed gulls. Back at San Cristóbal, we visit the Interpretation Center to learn about conservation efforts in the Galapagos. We then fly to Guayaquil, where we enjoy a farewell dinner at our hotel. (B,L Aloft,D)

DAY 10 • SUNDAY

Guayaquil / Miami

We take a morning flight to Miami, and connect with flights home. (B,L Aloft)



KITTY COLEY & FRIENDS
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Pricing for the 10-day Galapagos Expedition based on double occupancy includes:

- Land and air arrangements from hometown for Kitty Coley as tour host based on 15 full paying guests..
- Hotels, meals and activities as described in the detailed itinerary.
- Outstanding professional naturalist guides.
- Excellent accommodations aboard a 32-guest yacht – the *Evolution*.
- Meet and greet in Miami to assist with check in.

Items not included in the price:

- Round trip transportation from home town to Miami.
- Round trip air transportation from Miami to Ecuador, priced separately. \$50 ticketing fee will apply
- In country airfare Guayaquil/Galapagos/Guayaquil, priced separately.
- U.S. and Ecuador airport departure taxes and fuel surcharges.
- Passports, beverages from the bar, laundry and other personal items.
- Gratuities to the naturalist guides, captain and crew

\$4498 PER PERSON D1,2,3,4 & C4,5

\$4698 PER PERSON C1,2,3,6,7,8,9

\$4898 PER PERSON A2&A3

\$5198 PER PERSON A1

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