

FAMILY ADVENTURES

The Galapagos

THE ENCHANTED ISLES



Ultimate EscapesSM
LUXURY DESTINATION CLUBS



Off the coast of Ecuador lies the beguiling destination of the Galapagos, a collection of magical islands characterized by desolate volcanic landscapes and enchanting and unique wildlife. Join us as we move from the restored haciendas near Quito to the endless wonders of the UNESCO-protected marine reserve. Join us as we settle into a luxurious private villa on the glorious Galapagos Islands. Explore the archipelago by private yacht, from the mangrove lagoon of Black Turtle Beach to the lava rocks of the Santa Fe Islands; from the bird colonies on North Seymour to the calm sands of Mansa Beach.



The Trip

WHERE WE SLEEP...

SWISSOTEL

Begin your adventure in style and comfort at the Swissotel. Conveniently located in the commercial center of Quito, and around the corner from the "centro historico", the Swissotel offers 227 generously oversized luxury rooms filled with amenities.

HACIENDA CUSÍN

The Hacienda Cusin is a restored 17th-century Andean estate which offers individually decorated guest rooms and garden cottages. Nestle into the hand woven bed-covers after enjoying one of twenty activities, tours or expeditions the Cusin offers. Activities around the property include horseback riding, biking, and visiting nearby villages and lakes.

THE ROYAL PALM RESORT

Built to complement the natural paradise of the Galapagos Islands, the exclusive and spacious Royal Palm Hotel mingles lush tropical forest with rich, individually decorated suites and villas. Don't forget to invigorate your senses with one of many fresh and exotic fruit and vegetable drinks offered with the cuisine.

M/V EXPLORER II

With an overall length of 89.35 m and reaching 17 knots, the M/V Galapagos Explorer II is the most elegant of the vessels cruising the Galapagos' waters. There are six decks which hold a total of 52 spacious air-conditioned cabins.

DAY 1 - QUITO

Evening arrival in Quito. Private transfer to Swissotel, Ecuador's premier luxury hotel. Views from the hotel, located in the bustling financial district and near the best shopping, show the spectacular Cotopaxi and Pichincha volcanoes. Quito is just 22 kilometres from the Equator, but it has a mild, spring-like climate that makes it perfect for an extended stay as you explore the beautiful colonial section of the city and the surrounding Highlands. The Swissotel has a world-class spa, an excellent restaurant and bar, as well as a fitness centre. *Hotel: Swissotel Meals: Dinner*

DAY 2 - OTAVALO HIGHLANDS

The nearby Highlands around the village of Otávalo reveal beautiful landscapes, in the full majesty of the Andes. Tonight, after your private transfer to the Highlands, you will stay at Hacienda Cusin. This lovely, first-class hacienda has guestrooms with views of the garden or mountains. Guestrooms have fireplaces, beamed ceilings, antique reproduction furniture and Andean crafts. Along with the historic ambiance, the hacienda has modern amenities. Travel to Hacienda Mantales, a beautiful property located on the edge of the Cloud Forest, the gateway to the Amazon. Actually, the surrounding landscape is a combination of Cloud Forest and Eyebrow Mountain Forest, but the flora and fauna are distinct from what you will have seen previously on the trip. *Hotel: Hacienda Cusin Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 3 - OTAVALO HIGHLANDS

The province of Imbabura is one of the most popular destinations in Ecuador: a magical land of lakes, snow-covered mountains and terraced farmlands. The Otavalo Indian market dates back to pre-Inca times and is famous for its textiles woven on backstop and shuttle looms. So, after an awe-inspiring view from one of many mountains, visit the Indian Market to search for the special souvenir that will hold all your dearest memories. *Hotel: Hacienda Cusin Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 4 - GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

Transfer to the airport for your flight to the Galapagos Islands. Once there, you will be met and transferred to your boat, the M/V Explorer II, which is an elegant motor-vessel with classic modern lines, blending comfort, adventure and environmental preservation in the Galapagos Islands. *Ship: M/V Explorer II Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 5 - GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

Explore Punta Suárez on Española Island, home to the largest colony of frigate birds in the Galapagos as well as significant populations of blue-footed boobies, swallow-tailed gulls and brown noddies. In the afternoon, float near Gardner Bay and watch for rays, sharks and sea turtles in the clear waters of the extensive mangrove lagoon. There is also the possibility of seeing one or more of the three species of Darwin finch which are endemic to the island. *Ship: M/V Explorer II Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 6 - GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

Arriving on Santa Cruz Island, view The Charles Darwin Research Station and peer

LOCAL DIVERSIONS...

WILDLIFE ENCOUNTER

Ecuador is a mega diverse country with 1,600 bird species (some 15% of the world's known bird species) in the continental area, and 38 more endemic to the Galápagos. There are also 25,000 species of plants recorded, 106 endemic amphibians, and over 6,000 species of butterflies.

CULINARY DELIGHTS

The food in Ecuador is very diverse, varying with altitude along with the agricultural conditions. Pork, chicken, meat or "cuy" (guinea pig) are popular in the mountain regions, and are usually served with an immense variety of cereals, potatoes or rice.

NATURAL WONDER

Located about 75 kilometers south of Quito lies Cotopaxi; One of the highest active volcanoes in the world. Roam the numerous valleys and settlements formed by powerful mudflows and walk atop the igneous rock solidified from the last eruption.



into the evolutionary and ecological research, which plays a strong role in conservation and management of species found in the Galápagos Islands. See the tortoise hatchlings and breeding programs which are saving several races of tortoises from extinction. After visiting the Research Station, board the Explorer to set sail towards Rabida Island and explore the land that's studded with several small volcanic craters. Upon arrival, see various sea lions and after a short hike you will reach the lagoon to see flamingos and pelicans. *Ship: M/V Explorer II Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 7 - GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

In the morning you will be back in the Island of Santa Cruz where you will visit Las Bachas Beach, made of decomposed coral, which makes it white and soft, and a favourite site for nesting sea turtles. The Sally Lightfoot crabs are abundant on the lava rocks along the waters edge. These crabs will eat anything they can get their claws on. Go for a serene hike and witness flamingoes, hermit crabs, black necked stilts, and whimbrels before transferring to the Royal Palm Hotel on Santa Cruz Island. *Ship: M/V Explorer II Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 8 - SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

After a leisurly breakfast in your villa, head over to the pool and soak-in the magical adventure you had just encountered on the Islands. Bask in the sun or in the jacuzzi while watching your children play in the pool. Some of the amenities included in the hotel package are: Health spa, swimming pool, gymnasium, tennis courts, restaurants, bar, satellite television, convention centre, internet, dvd players, telephone, fax, observatory, museum, and jacuzzi. *Hotel: Royal Palm Resort Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAYS 9 - SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

Being the largest Channel Island, Santa Cruz is also the most diverse with interesting geological features including two mountain ranges, many canyons and a rugged shoreline. At least 600 plant species, well over 120 species of land birds including the endemic Island scrub jay, and a vast expanse of wilderness area exist for the curious to explore by land or sea. *Hotel: Royal Palm Resort Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAYS 10 - SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

Stroll to the ranch site at Prisoners Harbor at mid Santa Cruz, or take a rugged hike up Scorpion Canyon on east Santa Cruz, both are good locations for viewing the endemic island scrub jay. In summer through fall, the ocean conditions are usually some of the best for kayaking and snorkeling. Island endemic wildflowers including several species of buckwheat, asters, and other sunflowers bloom. During summer there is also a chance to see blue or humpback whales. *Hotel: Royal Palm Resort Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 11 - SANTA CRUZ ISLAND / QUITO

After breakfast, you will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Quito. In Quito you will be transferred to your hotel. Take time to visit the city to browse to souvenirs for friends and family back home. *Hotel: Swissotel Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 12 - QUITO / DEPART

Transfer to the airport to catch your international flight home. *Hotel: None Meals: Breakfast*

The Details

Start: Quito, Ecuador

Finish: Quito, Ecuador

Level of Activity: *Moderate* - Walking along cloud forest paths and city streets, strolling through small towns. Water activities such as snorkeling and kayaking are available alongside the exploration of nature and wildlife. Suitable for all ages and abilities, with some opportunities for extended walks.

What's Included:

- all accommodations on a shared twin/double room basis
- all meals as indicated in the itinerary
- all domestic flights & cruises
- all transfers, events & local experts as indicated
- all special events and on-trip surprises
- all pre-departure materials, including documents wallets and destination details

Trip Format: Private trips are designed for travellers who know exactly what they want, who appreciate (and are willing to pay for) the craftsmanship that an expert can bring to the challenge, and who value their own time enough not to want to waste it trying to build the trip of a lifetime on their own.

Trip Operator: Horizon & Co., founded in 1963, is Canada's leading boutique travel company. In addition to offering escorted and independent trips on seven continents through our brochures, we also build private custom trips for discerning individuals, families, small groups and corporations.



BOOK YOUR TRIP...

Jim Bruce
Bruce World of Travel
60 St.Clair Avenue E.
Toronto, ON M4T 1N5
tel: 416-923-7337
info@bruceworldtravel.com
www.bruceworldtravel.com

Dates & Prices

DURATION	11 NIGHTS / 12 DAYS
DATES	Year round
PRICES	FROM \$6,350 (PER PERSON SHARING)
SGL SUPP	N/A