

# Wildlife Galapagos

## Angelito Galapagos Cruise



Angelito yacht - superior tourist class motor cruiser - sixteen passengers - expert guide - varied itinerary - great crew - owner operated - sustainably run - relaxed atmosphere - attractive sun deck

Explore on board one of the Galapagos islands' friendliest boats.

Enjoy a varied route taking you to some of the furthest flung parts of the eastern islands.

Choose to join the cruise for four, five, seven, 10, 11 or the full 14 nights.

Walk, swim and snorkel to get close to the islands' wonderful wildlife.

Sail with naturalist guide trained by the Galapagos National Park authority.

This is a Pura *handpicked* holiday with an activity level of *low* and a comfort rating of *first*.



Your superior tourist class yacht Angelito.



**"Everything about the holiday was fantabulous the boat, the crew, the cuisine and to cap it all the experience of being privileged to meet some of the worlds most exotic creatures: sharks, boobies, iguanas, sealions, tortoises and turtles. The organisation was also superb from the time we stepped off of the plane to arriving back at Quito."** Tony C.

### Holiday Itinerary

#### Day 01 | North Seymour | **to the Galapagos**

Angelito's start day is a Sunday.

Angelito offers various different cruise options within its 14 night circuit. These are as follows:

You can join the cruise from:

Day 01 to day 05 (four nights)

Day 05 to day 08 (three nights)

Day 01 to day 08 (seven nights, route A)

Day 08 to day 15 (seven nights, route B)

Day 01 to day 15 (14 nights)

Day 05 to day 15 (10 nights)

Day 08 back round to day 05 (11 nights)

Fly to the Galapagos early this morning, a flight of around three hours since the islands are some 600 miles offshore.

When you arrive in the islands, you pay the national park entrance fee before heading down to the dock to board your boat.

After lunch, set sail to North Seymour island, an uplifted island which is home to large colonies of blue footed boobies and frigate birds.

Along the coast sea lions and marine iguanas surf on the waves. (l,d)

#### Day 02 | Bartolomé | **explore lava tunnels**

Start today with a visit to the small island of Sombrero Chino (Chinese Hat), south of Santiago.

Land on the beach alongside sea lions before exploring the lava tunnels of the interior.

Continue onwards to the small, barren outcrop of Isla Bartolomé. Walk to the top of the island on a wooden walkway for beautiful views across the eastern islands.

Head back down the hill to snorkel around the base of the emblematic Pinnacle Rock.

The visibility here is amongst the best of the week. You might be lucky and swim with penguins sharks. (b,l,d)

#### Day 03 | Genovesa | **watch birdlife**

Tower Island is basically formed by what remains of a submerged volcanic crater.

Being so remote, it is one of the less visited islands and therefore has some of the most abundant wildlife.

This morning you explore Darwin Bay, a coral sand beach, home to many frigate birds.

Questions? Ready to book? Call us on **01273 676 712**

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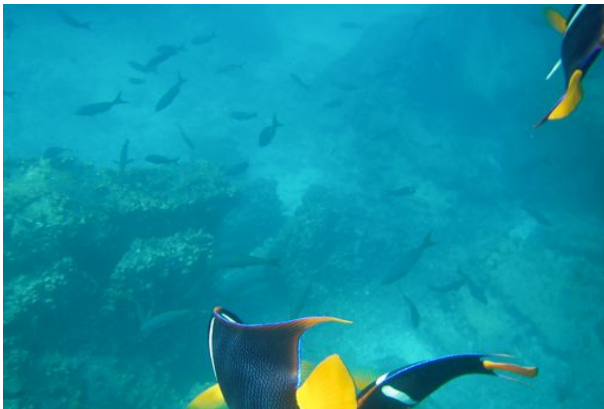
A frigate bird with distinctive inflated throat.



A giant tortoise on Santa Cruz Island



Sally Lightfoot crab on lava



Snorkeling the clear waters off Bartolome

After the walk, you can swim in the relatively warm northern waters perhaps with fur seals.

This afternoon you land at Prince Philip's Steps where you climb to a plateau passing red-footed boobies, and possibly short-eared owls. (b,l,d)

### Day 04 | Rabida | **snorkel with sealions**

This morning land at Puerto Egas, on the western shore of Santiago Island.

Walk along the coastline to see Galapagos fur seal basking in pools along the shoreline. The water here is improbably pretty.

Because you are walking on lava, this is one of the places in the islands where you have a degree of freedom to wander.

Continue on this afternoon to the island of Rabida, where the unusual coloured sand makes the beach look red from a distance.

Mangroves border a saltwater lagoon here, a popular resting place for flocks of pelicans.

Enjoy the opportunity to snorkel from the beach. (b,l,d)

### Day 05 | Santa Cruz | **see giant tortoises**

Visit the Charles Darwin Research Station today to learn about their breeding and conservation programs.

Walk amongst giant land tortoises in the extensive enclosures of the centre.

Meet 'Lonesome George', long thought to be the last of the Pinta Island giant tortoise sub-species but now apparently joined by a new species mate.

### Today is a transition day. If you are staying on board, you may be joined by new clients today.

After lunch, drive up to the Santa Cruz highlands to see giant tortoises in the 'wild'.

Really this is a farmer who has created a network of trails on his land where you will usually find giant tortoises.

Interesting but probably the most crowded part of your time in the Galapagos and the most stage-managed.

Depending on the season, this afternoon you might instead visit some very pretty rock formations and walk through the mature vegetation of the highlands – this is likely to be the most greenery you see all week. (b,l,d)

### Day 06 | Española | **seabirds and sealions**

Start today with walk to the rugged cliffs of Punta Suarez to see a spectacular blow-hole.

Along the way you should see a broad spectrum of birdlife, including blue-footed boobies, Galapagos hawks and albatrosses.

Return for lunch on board and an hour or so navigation to the next landing site on the east of the island.

Land on 'sea lion beach'. You can snorkel if you like but really it's just a lovely swimming beach.

All along the sand are sea lions basking in the sun.

Wander along the beach and enjoy watching them play in the surf. (b,l,d)

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Pleasant middle deck with dining room, bar and lounge.



Watch the sun set over the water from the top deck of Angelito



Relax on the sundeck.



## Day 07 | Santa Fé | **the oldest island**

Visit the small island of Santa Fé today, home to its own endemic species of land iguana, lava lizards and sea lion colonies.

The sheltered cove here is really quite beautiful, and offers some great snorkeling and swimming.

Santa Fé is generally recognized as the oldest island in the Galapagos.

Formed by an uplift in the earth's crust, rather than a volcano, Santa Fé is relatively flat compared to some of its neighbours.

Walk along the coast of the island this morning.

This afternoon you travel to South Plaza Island which is particularly good for seeing land iguana. (b,l,d)

## Day 08 | Santa Cruz | **Bachas beach**

Visit the quiet mangroves of Black Turtle Cove this morning.

**Today is a transition day. If you are staying on board, you may be joined by new clients today.**

This afternoon land at Bachas beach.

This very pretty coral sand beach is a nesting site for green turtles between November and March.

It is also a great place to spot birdlife and to swim and to snorkel. (b,l,d)

## Day 09 | Mosquera | **sea lions and snorkel**

Dragon Hill (*Cerro Dragon*) is one of the newer visitor sites on Santa Cruz.

Here you walk to a lagoon, home to flamingos, common stilts, pintail ducks and other species of birds.

There is a short walk up the hill for great views as well as the chance to see an iguana nesting site.

Continue to Mosquera which, at just 160m across, is less an island than a reef.

It is home to one of the largest sealion colonies in the Galapagos and is also home to many seabirds.

Enjoy a dinghy ride and/or a snorkel around the islet. If you are very lucky you may see orca. (b,l,d)

## Day 10 | Fernandina | **marine iguanas**

Visit the cliff-side gallery of Tagus Cove for a clear view of some 19<sup>th</sup> century pirate graffiti. It's strange to see vandalism in such a pristine place.

A dry landing leads to a 2km trail through lava formations leads you to Darwin Lake via some wonderful views of the surrounding volcanoes.

The lake itself is a salt-water crater lake, possibly formed by a tidal wave.

Land on the youngest of the Galapagos Islands, Fernandina. Walk to the jagged lava of Punta Espinosa to see marine iguanas warming themselves on the rock.

You may well need to watch where you are treading as there are lots and lots of them piled up against each other for warmth.

At this site you should also see the Flightless Cormorant, Sally Lightfoot Crabs, sea lions, sea turtles and perhaps even Galapagos Hawks. (b,l,d)

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Cabins on Angelito are simple but comfortable.



Fernandina Island: a marine iguana pile-up.

### **Day 11** | *Isabela* | **turtles and penguins**

A wet landing starts your visit to what might be the youngest land you will ever walk on.

In 1954 Urbina Bay was subject to a major uplift of the Earth's crust, rising almost four metres.

This dry scrubland just inland is home to land iguanas and giant tortoises. Enjoy a walk around the area before time on the beach to either relax or snorkel.

Get into the zodiacs (small boats) to explore the coastline around Urbina Bay.

First stop is a couple of small rocky outcrops where you should see penguins living alongside marine iguanas and blue-footed boobies.

Carry on in-shore to a series of mangrove rimmed lagoons.

Cut off the engines as you drift in the silence of the late afternoon looking for sea turtles, sharks and penguins in this unusual setting. (b,l,d)

### **Day 12** | *Isabela* | **whale watching**

Land at Punta Moreno, a stretch of land which has existed for only about 50 years. There is very still little sign of life on these fairly new lava fields although a couple of isolated lagoons are now home to some vegetation and birdlife.

Pass flightless cormorants on your way back to the boat.

Make your way directly to a nearby stretch of shore where you snorkel.

This afternoon navigate around the southern tip of Isabela looking for whales. (b,l,d)

### **Day 13** | *Isabela* | **hike a volcano**

Land in the small town of Puerto Villamil – the only inhabited part of Isabela Island. Enjoy exploring this small and remote settlement.

There are lagoons nearby which are filled with birdlife. The beach in town is very popular with surfers and swimmers.

Finally, you can visit the 'Wall of Tears' the only remnant of a particularly notorious penal colony located here between 1946 and 1959.

The wall was basically erected and dismantled to keep the prisoners occupied.

Travel into the highlands of Isabela above the town of Puerto Vilamil to walk on the *Volcan Chico* side of the Sierra Negra volcano which has one of the largest craters in the world.

Up here you should see lots of bird life, including short-eared owls. The views are also wonderful.

### **Day 14** | *Floreana* | **snorkel and walk**

Land at Punta Cormorant to walk across Floreana Island. Enjoy the somewhat incongruous sight of flamingos feeding in a lagoon just inland.

Carry on along a good path to a very pretty sandy beach where you may be able to spot rays and sea turtles.

Return to the boat to go snorkeling around the distinctive Devil's Crown crater, a submerged volcanic cone which

Swim through pretty coral formations and teeming marine life. You should see some sea lions and lots of fish. With luck you will see sharks – on a good day you might see hammerheads here.

Land at Post Office Bay to hear tales about this, the first inhabited island. The old sailors' postal system still functions here. You leave your letter in a barrel but not before taking out mail bound for your home port.

This way, all letters are slowly distributed around the world for free.

Walk down into a deep lava tunnel for a close look at the geology of these young islands.

### **Day 15** | *fly home* | **off the islands**

Sail past Daphne Island on your way to the airport this morning. (b)

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## Holiday Information

### Pura's opinion

Angelito is a characterful little boat.

The big advantage of her is that she is owner operated so the atmosphere on board tends to be superb.

Don't expect this to be a luxurious experience but she is perfectly comfortable.

The itinerary includes, amongst other islands, Genovesa and Espanola which is great particularly for birders. Depending on which cruise you choose, you can see almost all of the best islands over the course of a longer cruise. In particular the western side of Isabela.

### Star rating

Angelito is a tourist superior class motor sail boat.

### Accommodation

Passengers: 16 maximum

Cabins are all the same size. All have air conditioning, private bathrooms and single upper and lower bunks.

Cabins five – eight are on the upper deck so have larger windows and more light.

Cabins one – four are in the lower deck so have smaller windows/ portholes.

The outside spaces are nicely split up with a front deck for sunbathing and a shaded seating area at the back.

### Noise

You should be aware that on any small boat you will have noise from generators and from the engine when travelling.

The noise will be greater nearer the engines and generator which is to say cabins one – four.

### Stability

Being a small boat, you will get movement in the water though Angelito has a relatively flat keel. Movement will be most noticeable between July and October in the more exposed waters of the south west.

Note that you are likely to feel more roll in the cabins on the top deck than cabins below decks.

### Boat specification

Length on deck: 22m/70ft

Boat width (beam): 6.6m/22ft

Average speed: 10 knots

Crew: 7 plus one guide

### How active?

In the Galapagos, wildlife viewing is the main activity. There is some gentle walking and snorkeling.

Conditions underfoot in the Galapagos can sometimes be rough as the islands are volcanic. You should therefore be prepared for some walking over uneven terrain. You can always opt out of excursions.

### How responsible?

Pura Aventura is passionate about the places it visits.

To help preserve the integrity of these destinations we:

- Keep groups small to minimise environmental impact.
- Work directly with local businesses and organisations to directly benefit local economies.
- Work with local guides so that our holidays are more

interesting for clients and more beneficial locally.

- Make payment to suppliers before our clients arrive. The boat owners and most of the crew come from the islands which makes the enterprise sustainable.

### When should I go?

In the Galapagos, wildlife viewing is excellent year round. Weather and sea conditions do vary somewhat through the year: September is the coolest and choppiest-sea month. From October onwards the weather warms up and the waters calm down until the hottest, calmest-sea month of February.

### Not based in the UK?

We are very happy to discuss your requirements if you are not travelling to and from the UK.

Please call us on **+44 1273 676712** between 9am and 6:30pm GMT weekdays.

### How do I book?

As a tailor made holiday we need to check availability and prices before taking your booking. If you would like us to prepare you a detailed proposal then simply email [info@pura-aventura.com](mailto:info@pura-aventura.com) or call 01273 676 712 with your preferred dates plus any other changes you would like us to make.

Once you have the proposal and decide you would like to go ahead then please call in with the following:

- Full names
- Address
- Contact telephone numbers & email
- Deposit of 15%

Deposits can be paid by card, cheque or bank transfer, whichever suits you best (the balance of your holiday is due 60 days prior to travel).

We send you a confirmation email detailing all of the services agreed between us. We ask you to check through all of this carefully and sign off on the holiday.

### Prices & departures

<b>2012</b>	<b>3 nights   us\$1,300pp</b> <b>4 nights   us\$1,790pp</b> <b>7 nights   us\$2,600pp</b> <b>10 nights   us\$3,630pp</b> <b>11 nights   us\$3,970pp</b> <b>14 nights   us\$4,900pp</b>
Price includes	Fuel surcharge, Galapagos cruise with all meals, excursions and guiding while on board.
Not included	Galapagos park entrance fee (US\$110); flights to the Galapagos; personal expenses; tips.

*Prices per person based on two sharing. Prices quoted in US dollars but payment is made in pounds sterling at a rate set at time of payment.*

*Please reconfirm prices at time of booking*

**WGCOA012**

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## A year in the Galapagos

### January

Beginning of the rainy season. Land birds start nesting, generally after the first rain. On Hood (Española) Island adult marine iguanas become brightly colored (green/red/black). The green sea turtles arrive at beaches to lay eggs. Land iguanas mate on Isabela Island. Both water and air temperatures rise and stay warm until June. Ideal time for snorkeling.

### February

On Floreana Island flamingos start nesting in greater numbers. Marine iguanas nest on Santa Cruz Island. Peak nesting season for the Galapagos dove. Breeding season begins for black-tailed pintail ducks. End of nesting season for Nazca (masked) boobies on Hood islands. The highest water temperature reaches 25C (77F) temperatures remain high until April. Penguins move from Bartolomé Island to follow the cool waters back to the west.

### March

Height of the rainy season (this does not mean it rains everyday). Sporadic tropical rains, intense sun and hot climate. Air temperature can reach up to 30C (86F) high humidity. Warm waters excellent for snorkelers. Penguins still active in the water next to tropical fish! Deep surge from the northern currents on some shores, wet landings at places like Puerto Egas, Gardner Bay, Bartolomé can sometimes be a challenge. Marine iguanas nest on Fernandina. March 21st, the beginning of the summer equinox signals the arrival of the waved albatross to Española. Punta Vicente Roca (Isabela) can be an amazing site.

### April

Massive arrival of waved albatrosses at Española, amazing courtship starts. Eggs of green sea turtles begin to hatch. Eggs of land iguanas hatch on Isabela. End of hatching season for the giant tortoises. While the rains have ended, the islands continue to be quite green. Good visibility in the water for snorkelers.

### May

North Seymour's blue-footed boobies begin their courtship. Sea turtles are still hatching on Gardner Bay, Punta Cormorant and Puerto Egas. Most of marine iguanas' eggs hatch from nests on Santa Cruz. Palo santo trees begin to shed their foliage. Waved albatross on Española start laying their eggs. Ban-rumped storm petrels begin their first nesting period.

### June

Beginning of the cold (garúa) season. Giant tortoises migrate to the lowlands on Santa Cruz island for the nesting season. South east trade winds return. Currents become a bit stronger. Seas pick up in surge and wave action. Male frigatebirds show off their red pouches on North Seymour. Southern migrating birds stop in the Galapagos on their journey north. Some groups of Humpback whales migrate up to equatorial latitudes along the coast of Ecuador reach Galapagos.

### July

Sea bird communities are very active (breeding), specially the Blue footed boobies on Española. Flightless cormorants perform beautiful courtship rituals and nesting activities on Fernandina. American oystercatchers nest along the shores of Puerto Egas

(Santiago Island). Lava lizards initiate mating rituals until November. Cetaceans (whales & dolphins) are more likely to be observed, specially off the western coast of Isabela. Great month to see the four stages of nesting in Blue footed boobies: eggs, chicks, juveniles and sub-adults. Water temperature around 21C (68F).

### August

Galapagos hawks court on Española and Santiago. Nazca (masked) boobies and Swallow-tailed gulls nest on Genovesa Island. The temperature of the ocean drops to 18C (64F), this varies according to the geographic zones among the islands. Migrant shore birds start to arrive. Giant tortoises return to the highlands of Santa Cruz. Oceans are quite choppy, currents at the strongest levels, surge can be expected along the shores that face west or south. Popping season of sea lions has started. Western and central islands are common places for such sightings.

### September

The air temperature reaches its lowest levels (19C-66F). Galapagos Penguins active around Bartolomé. Snorkelers can swim with penguins active at the surface or torpedo-like while underwater. Sea lions are very active. Females have reached estrus stage, and so harem-gathering males are constantly barking and fighting. Shore fighting is common. Most intense sea lion activity on western and central islands. Most species of sea birds remain quite active at their nesting sites.

### October

Lava herons start nesting until March. The Galapagos Fur Sea lions begin their mating period. Blue footed boobies raise chicks all over Española and Punta Vicente Roca (Isabela). Giant tortoises are still laying eggs. Days are not always sunny. Garúa can be expected in most locations, except the western islands where most days have a misty start but after few hours of daylight it burns off. Sunrises in the west can be quite beautiful as the garúa covers only certain locations of the western volcanoes. Summits are clear, but low-lying fog covers the shoreline.

### November

Popping of sea lions continues. Sea lions are sexually active on the eastern part of the archipelago. Breeding season for the brown noddies. Some species of jellyfish can be seen around the islands. The Genus Physalia is commonly seen floating around Gardner and Tortuga Islets. Some can also be seen stranded on the shores of Flour Beach (Floreana). Band-rumped storm petrels begin their second nesting period. Seas are calm. South east trade winds decrease, generally great weather. Water temperatures rising and good visibility for snorkelers. Sea lion pups (specially at Champion Islet) play aqua-aerobics next to snorkelers. Most pups here are curious enough to nibble at fins of snorkelers.

### December

Giant tortoise eggs begin to hatch. Green sea turtles display their mating behavior. The rainy season begins, all of the plants of the dry zone produce leaves. Galapagos becomes "green". The first young waved albatrosses fledge. Great weather.

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