

Wildlife Galapagos

La Pinta Galapagos Cruise



Deluxe class small ship – 48 passengers - lots of space - comprehensive itinerary – clear bottomed excursion boat – outdoor and indoor dining – good sized cabins – outdoor Jacuzzi – sustainably run

Explore the Galapagos Islands aboard the most luxurious of small ships.

A great cruise route taking you to outer islands including Genovesa and Fernandina.

Lots of opportunity to walk, snorkel and sea kayak on each day of your trip or ride in the glass-bottomed boat.

Travel with four naturalist guides for a fantastic small group experience.

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



The luxurious small cruise ship, La Pinta.



"We wanted a special treat for our wedding anniversary. Our trip on La Pinta was that and so much more. An amazing boat, lovely crew, delicious food and the Galapagos Islands to boot. Wonderful, thank you." Glenn M.

Holiday Itinerary

Day 01 | North Seymour | **island arrival**

La Pinta's main start day is a Friday though she offers various different length cruises within her 14-night circuit. You can choose to join the cruise for anywhere between three and 14 nights.

The first week (days 01–08) cannot be split. The second week (days 08–15) can be taken whole or can be split into two parts: a three and a four-night cruise.

This gives you the following cruise options within La Pinta's 14-night circuit of the Galapagos:

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

Day 08 to day 15 (seven nights, Eastern & Northern)

Day 01 to day 15 (14 nights, complete circuit)

Day 01 to day 11 (10 nights, Western & Eastern)

Day 11 back to day 08 (11 nights, Northern & Western)

Day 08 to day 11 (three nights, Eastern route)

Day 11 to day 15 (four nights, Northern route)

Fly to Baltra Island in 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 to the dock to board.

Please note: the following route is subject to change by the Galapagos National Park.



Sunbathing on sea lion beach, Espanola, Galapagos Islands

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

info@pura-aventura.com | www.pura-aventura.com | Pura Aventura, 18 Bond Street, Brighton, BN1 1RD. UK.



Wildlife Galapagos

La Pinta Galapagos Cruise



A marine iguana pile-up



Exploring Isabela Island.



A double cabin on board La Pinta



Blue footed boobies in the afternoon light off Isabela

Welcome introductory briefing, and lunch. Boat drill and other activities will be explained by the staff.

Afternoon disembarkation (dry landing) for a walk along the coast of North Seymour Island to observe the colonies of blue footed boobies, frigate birds, swallow tailed gulls as well as sea lions and marine iguanas.

There is an opportunity for snorkelling or coastal exploration before dinner back on board. (l,d)

Day 02 | Fernandina | zodiac exploration

Visit to Punta Vicente Roca, an amazing geological site on Isabela Island which lies almost on the equator.

It is an outstanding example on how the Islands were formed and how the forces of change have transformed the landscape and shaped the wildlife.

Explore the dramatic coastline in zodiacs as you look for wildlife both above and below the water. When the waters are calm enough the snorkelling is great as the walls of the tuff cones are full of colourful invertebrates and rich algae which sea turtles love to eat.

The afternoon brings us to the jewel of the Galapagos National Park, and youngest island, Fernandina. Disembark (dry landing) for a one-mile walk.

Punta Espinoza has an amazing combination of barrenness with much wildlife. Having no introduced mammals, Fernandina has a unique environment with the highest density of marine iguanas, sharing their space with sea lions, sally-light foot crabs, hawks, penguins and the flightless cormorant. (b,l,d)

Day 03 | Isabela | coral skeletons

Land in Urbina Bay this morning, where four miles of coastal seabed is exposed due to a dramatic uplift in 1954 when the volcano erupted.

The marine remnants of coral skeletons, some of them waist-high, are visited after a wet landing on the beach. Return to the beach to swim or snorkel directly offshore possibly with rays, sea turtles and sharks.

For those of you less inclined to swim, you can take time to relax and read a book on the beach.

Visit the cliff-side gallery of Tagus Cove for a clear view of some 19th 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. (b,l,d)

Day 04 | Rabida | mangroves & pelicans

Visit the island of Rabida, where the unusually 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.

This afternoon visit Dragon Hill (*Cerro Dragon*), 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. (b,l,d)

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

info@pura-aventura.com | www.pura-aventura.com | Pura Aventura, 18 Bond Street, Brighton, BN1 1RD. UK.



Wildlife Galapagos

La Pinta Galapagos Cruise



Informal outside dining on board La Pinta.



A sea lion streaks past upside down off Floreana Island



A young sea lion relaxes on the white sand



Golden rays swimming

Day 05 | Santa Cruz | Darwin Centre

After breakfast, visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station and the giant tortoise pens, including tortoise celebrities like "Lonesome George" within an impressive giant prickly-pear cactus forest home to many land birds.

These are the headquarters of scientific investigation, conservation and the National Park administration. Time for a stroll along the main street of Puerto Ayora before lunch at the Finch Bay Eco Hotel.

In the afternoon, disembark (dry landing) to visit the highlands of Santa Cruz Island, a Scalesia forest and the twin pit craters geology formation, Los Gemelos.

From December to mid-April a visit to see the giant tortoises in the wild may be included, if weather conditions are good. (b,l,d)

Day 06 | Floreana | human history

Wet landing at the historic barrel that served as a post office to learn about the human side of the Galapagos, early inhabitants, pirates and whalers.

Here the old sailors' postal system still functions. 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.

Possibility to snorkel from the zodiacs around Champion Islet or take a ride on the glass-bottom boat.

A zodiac ride along Champion Islet may show the rarest land bird in Galápagos: the Charles Mockingbird.

Disembark at Punta Cormorant (wet landing) for an easy walk to see the flamingos that inhabit a brackish-water lagoon, and other birds.

Return to the beach and another possibility to swim; there is great snorkelling at this site or kayak from the beach. (b,l,d)

Day 07 | Santa Fé | sea birds & sea lions

Santa Fé is one of the oldest Galapagos Islands and one of the few that is not volcanically active.

There is no fresh water on the island so it has been relatively undisturbed by human activity.

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

See endemic species of land iguana, lava lizards and sea lions. You may also see frigate birds and Galapagos hawks.

The sheltered cove here is really quite beautiful, and offers some great snorkelling and swimming with manta rays, sea turtles, sea lions.

This afternoon, visit South Plaza, a small island off the east coast of Santa Cruz. Despite its size it is home to a great diversity of species and is famous for its extraordinary flora.

Walk an easy trail to the cliff tops to watch the waves crashing below as birds fly in front of you.

The island is also home to land iguanas and a sea lion colony, which always seems to include some playful pups. The prickly pear cactus trees complete the picture on this lovely, compact site. (b,l,d)

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

info@pura-aventura.com | www.pura-aventura.com | Pura Aventura, 18 Bond Street, Brighton, BN1 1RD. UK.



Wildlife Galapagos

La Pinta Galapagos Cruise



A sea turtle comes up for air



Nesting Waved Albatross on Espanola Island



A Nazca Booby stares out to sea on Espanola



Marine iguanas warming each other

Day 08 | Cerro Brujo | Kicker Rock

Sail to San Cristobal Island, where some clients will depart for the mainland, while others arrive.

Today is a changeover day so there may be clients leaving and joining the boat now.

Cerro Brujo is a beautiful white sand beach, one of the first places visited by Charles Darwin. Brown pelicans, blue-footed boobies, sea lions and marine iguanas are all found. The site is a dry land version of nearby Kicker Rock; Cerro Brujo is a striking, eroded tuff cone. (b,l,d)

Day 09 | San Cristobal | varied boobies

After breakfast, depart for your visit to La Galapaguera on San Cristobal's volcano to walk and explore.

This is one of the best places to see giant tortoises in the wild. You are also likely to see mockingbirds and lava lizards along the way.

At the end of your 4km walk, cool off with a swim or snorkel off the beach.

Punta Pitt is a colourful place with its different types of lava and diverse vegetation. Arguably the most spectacular visitor site on San Cristobal, it is home to a diverse range of species such as sea lions, lava lizards, marine iguanas, frigate birds and boobies.

In fact, Punta Pitt is the only place where you can see three species of boobies nesting in the same area.

There is a beautiful golden sand beach here. (b,l,d)

Day 10 | Espanola | sea birds & sea lions

After breakfast, disembark (wet landing) at a white coral beach where you can take a short walk and watch the sea lions, Hood mockingbirds, finches or enjoy the beach.

There is great snorkelling in this area (snorkelling equipment is available for guests at no extra cost), kayak or ride the glass-bottom boat.

Afternoon dry landing for an exciting walk on lava terrain to visit its unique sea bird colonies, including the Waved Albatrosses (May - December), colonies of Nazca- and blue footed boobies, swallow tailed gulls and the famous blowhole. (b,l,d)

Day 11 | Santa Cruz | Darwin Centre

For those yet to see it, this morning is a chance to visit the Charles Darwin Research Station before some clients depart from Baltra.

Today is a changeover day so there may be clients leaving and joining the boat now.

Clients joining the boat today will arrive and go straight to their first excursion, El Chato Reserve, another great spot to see wild tortoises.

You may also spot some highland birds, like cattle egrets, mockingbirds, finches or flycatchers. There are several lava tunnels in the reserve, which give a good chance of spotting the barn owl. (b,l,d)

Day 12 | Sombrero Chino | Chinese Hat

After breakfast disembark (wet landing) at Whale Bay, a beautiful olivine beach (caused by a volcanic crystal that forms in fast-cooling lava).

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

info@pura-aventura.com | www.pura-aventura.com | Pura Aventura, 18 Bond Street, Brighton, BN1 1RD. UK.



Wildlife Galapagos

La Pinta Galapagos Cruise



View of Pinnacle Rock from Bartolome



A Galapagos gull at Punta Suarez



Looking out from the prow of La Pinta.

The trail leads you to an old water hole used by the former settlers.

There are some great views of the northwest side of Santa Cruz Island to enjoy.

Afternoon landing on the tiny island of *Sombrero Chino* (Chinese Hat).

This island is only visited by smaller vessels because the lava is fragile.

Explore the lava tunnels of the interior before dropping into the water to snorkel with the sea lions and penguins. (b,l,d)

Day 13 | Bartolome | **stunning views**

This afternoon, walk up to the top of Bartolomé Island on a wooden walkway for beautiful views across the Galapagos 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 and you might be lucky enough to swim with penguins and sharks.

Certainly the channels and rock formations underwater make for a beautiful snorkelling environment.

Afternoon wet landing at Sullivan Bay on 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 great degree of freedom to wander. (b,l,d)

Day 14 | Genovesa | **sea birds & sea lions**

Genovesa 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 birdlife.

Land at Prince Philip's Steps where you climb a steep path to a plateau passing red-footed boobies, and possibly short-eared owls.

Land at Darwin Bay, which is the largest tropical seabird colony on the planet.

The site is populated by red-footed boobies, Darwin's finches, doves, mockingbirds and Nazca boobies. The coral sand beach is home to many frigate birds. (b,l,d)

Day 15 | travel | **leave the islands**

Disembark at Baltra and transfer to the airport to take the flight back to the continent. (b)

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

info@pura-aventura.com | www.pura-aventura.com | Pura Aventura, 18 Bond Street, Brighton, BN1 1RD. UK.



Wildlife Galapagos

La Pinta Galapagos Cruise



Holiday Information

Pura's opinion

La Pinta is arguably the most comfortable of the Galapagos small cruise ships.

Very comfortable indeed, lots of crew and even a doctor on board.

La Pinta has a glass bottomed boat as well as sea kayaks for anyone who doesn't want to snorkel.

Shortie wetsuits are included from June through December to keep out the chill.

This is a luxury experience but on a small scale with just 48 passengers.

Accommodation

All cabins are a fair size.

All are outside with lower beds, some twin, some double. All have wardrobes.

There are 24 cabins in total.

17 double cabins with lower beds which are either set up as twins or doubles (beds pushed together). There are also 3 single cabins have one full size bed so can actually be used as a double but not a twin. These are all 16 sq metre cabins (175 sq ft).

There are also 4 triple cabins which include one full size bed and a sofa bed suitable for a child. These are larger at 22 sq m (236 sq ft).

The communal areas are large and very comfortable with plenty of different seating areas including two observation decks as well as a very large sun deck up top. Interior spaces are substantial.

Stability

Being a larger ship she is really quite stable in the water. In addition, the boat follows a route which is relatively protected from the prevailing winds (coming from the south west).

However, there is bound to be some movement and this will be most noticeable between July and October in the more exposed waters around Genovesa and the southern tip of Isabela.

Evolution boat specification

Length on deck: 63m/207ft

Boat width (beam): 12m/40ft

Average speed: 12 knots

Crew: 24 plus 4 guides & 1 doctor

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?

The owners of La Pinta set up the Fundacion Galapagos Ecuador in 1998 which is aimed at preserving the ecosystems of the Galapagos.

This has four main objectives, as follows:

- 1) Environmental education programmes for the island communities.
- 2) Solid waste recycling centre on Santa Cruz which sorts, compacts and sends back waste to the mainland for processing and manufacturing.

- 3) Coastal clean ups to collect any floating debris around the Galapagos to bring them back onto Santa Cruz for processing.
- 4) Community projects to engage locals in the sustainable use of resources. This ranges from handicraft production to a bakery supplying Galapagos boats with their provisions.

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 weekdays.

How do I book?

We need to check availability for Galapagos boats before taking your booking. 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).

Prices & departures – per person

2012	03 nights us\$ 2,427 04 nights us\$ 3,236 07 nights us\$ 5,663 10 nights us\$ 7,747 11 nights us\$ 8,475 14 nights us\$10,013
Price includes	7 night deluxe class Galapagos cruise in twin/double cabin with all meals, excursions and guiding while on board. Snorkel equipment and kayaking are included.
Not included	Galapagos park entrance fee of us\$110; flights to the Galapagos; personal expenses; tips. <i>Entrance fees and fuel tax subject to change.</i>
Please note	Single cabin rate is us\$8,304. Peak season surcharge of us\$200 is payable at Easter and Christmas.

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.

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

info@pura-aventura.com | www.pura-aventura.com | Pura Aventura, 18 Bond Street, Brighton, BN1 1RD. UK.



Wildlife Galapagos

La Pinta Galapagos Cruise



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.

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

info@pura-aventura.com | www.pura-aventura.com | Pura Aventura, 18 Bond Street, Brighton, BN1 1RD. UK.

