

Your expedition cruise to the GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS



Dear guest

Thank you for choosing to travel with us. We are as excited as you are about your expedition to the Galápagos Islands. This grand adventure will bring you to untouched, wild locations that are beyond imagination.

In this document, you will find important information about things you need to do before you go, what we recommend you pack, the experience when on board, and what to expect with wildlife and landings.

Clicking on the underlined links in the document will take you to our website, where you can find further details. Please make sure that you have an internet connection to do this.

You will receive one more mail from us approximately 2-4 weeks before your departure. This will contain your tickets for your itinerary and flights.

We very much look forward to welcoming you on board. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions:

Reservations: +1300-322-062 (AUS), +0800-005-201 (NZ)

Email: au.info@hurtigruten.com

Web: hurtigruten.com.au/expeditions/

Kind regards
Your Hurtigruten team

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Frequently asked questions »

FOLLOW US



BEFORE YOU GO

There are a few mandatory steps to complete before your expedition cruise to the Galápagos Islands.

1 **Fill in and return the Ship Manifest Information Form to Hurtigruten**

2 **Check your passport**
Please ensure your passport has a minimum of 6 months remaining validity at the end of your cruise.*

3 **Entry requirements (visa)**
Please make sure that you have the correct visa travel document that is required at the time of your expedition.

4 **Check your travel insurance**
A comprehensive travel/health insurance policy that also covers medical evacuation is obligatory.

For your convenience, we have gathered all required forms and important information about entry requirements on one web page.

[Entry requirements »](#)



Weather and packing

Checking the weather forecast for your destination before you leave is essential to ensuring you are packing appropriate clothes. Make sure you pack suitable clothes for the weather you're returning home to as well.

High altitude in Quito & Cusco (Machu Picchu)

Altitude sickness has a number of symptoms which you may experience when arriving at these locations. The symptoms can include headaches, insomnia, nausea, loss of appetite, and feeling lightheaded, or a bit short of breath. These effects are usually mild and are likely to last for a day or two. In the vast majority of cases, the best way to adapt quickly is to stay hydrated, avoiding alcohol, and eating light meals.

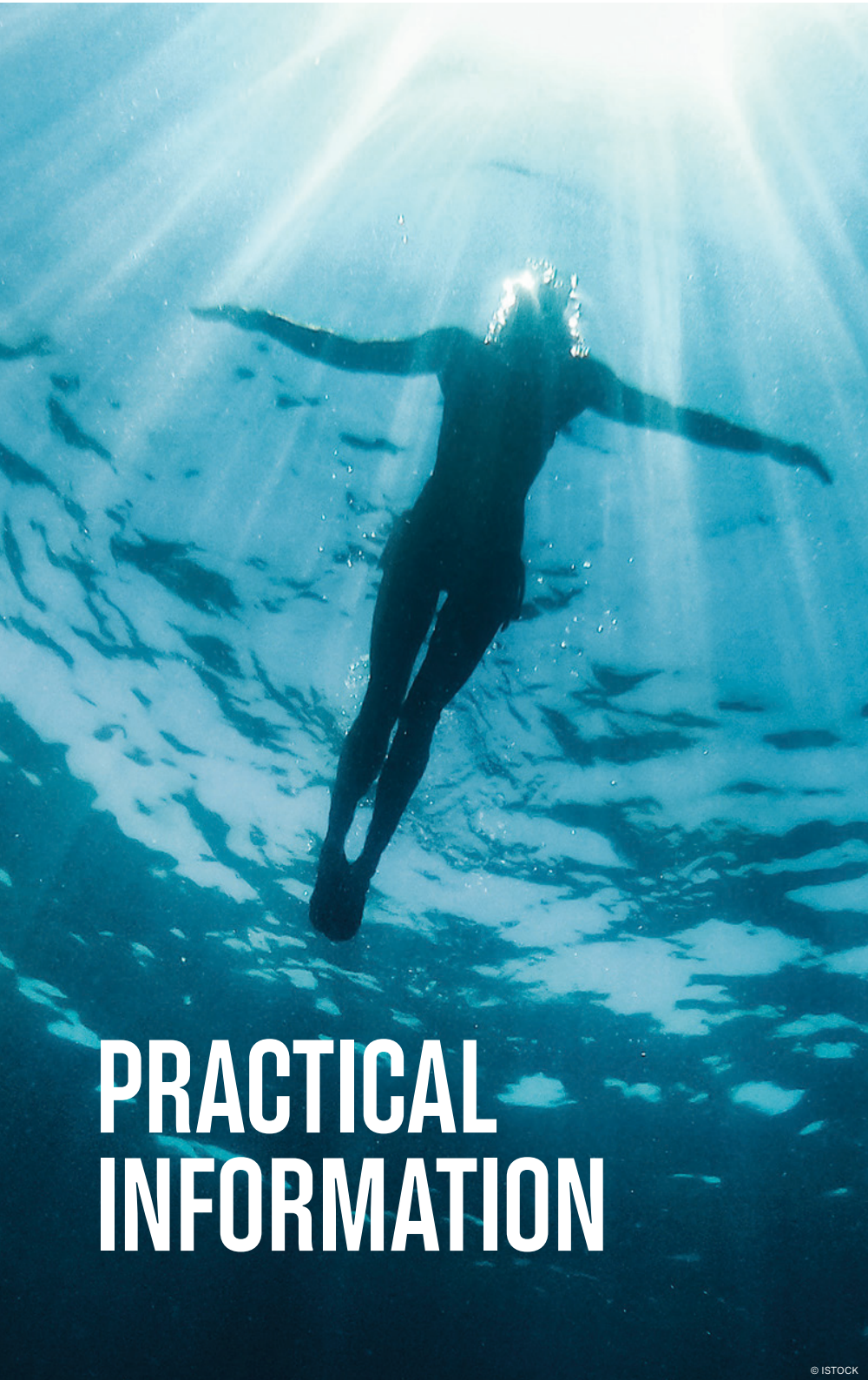
We recommend you pack:

- Clothes for both warmer and cooler days
- Insect repellent
- Polarized sunglasses and sunscreen
- A camera (in a waterproof bag)
- A memory card with a large capacity
- Sandals or shoes you don't mind getting wet
- Wide-brimmed sun hat
- Worn-in walking boots to use outdoors
- Short- and long-sleeved T-shirts with UV filter
- Swimsuit to use in our on-deck pool and hot tubs
- A pair of casual shoes for onboard use

[What to bring on your trip »](#)

You will receive a complimentary re-usable aluminium water bottle for use at water refill stations on board.





PRACTICAL INFORMATION

© ISTOCK

Wish to be more prepared?

From laundry and onboard Wi-Fi to prohibited items not allowed on board - here's everything you need to know before your expedition with us.

[Practical information »](#)

When guests are exploring the Galapagos islands with us onboard the Santa Cruz II, they will enjoy a relaxed atmosphere in high quality surroundings. Santa Cruz II is environmentally sustainable and socially conscious with the local community.

[Discover the Santa Cruz II »](#)



© SHUTTERSTOCK

Beyond imagination

From barren black volcanic rocks to white sand beaches, sapphire blue waters, and sherbet horizons. You'll awaken to animals from childhood dreams and swim with rainbow coloured fish. Learn more about your spectacular destination and attractions that you'll experience on your Hurtigruten expedition.

Are you ready to dive into an experience beyond imagination?

[Get closer to Galápagos Islands »](#)

Your adventure is safe with us



© KRISTIAN DALE

We care deeply about your safety, health and wellbeing. This is as true now as it has always been ever since we first began sailing in 1893, perhaps even more so. We've introduced several new procedures throughout all our ships, designed to keep you safe.

[Our safety policy »](#)

YOUR HAVEN TO THE HORIZON

Your expedition ship is your home away from home; casual, comfortable, and complete with everything you need for your adventure and more.

If you pictured an expedition as being on a rusty old frigate with faded décor, prepare to have your expectations blown away. From the get-go, you'll see that life on the ship is relaxed and the atmosphere calm and informal. Each public area of the ship has been designed with your viewing pleasure in mind. As you set foot on exotic shores together, you'll naturally grow closer with your fellow explorers. Enjoy swapping stories in the various seating areas dotted around the ship which usually have great views.



© METROPOLITAN TOURING / HURTIGRUTEN EXPEDITIONS

LOVING LOCAL FOOD

Prepare your tastebuds for mouth-watering meals on board.

These will often be inspired by the region's unique flavours and cooking styles. Then add in Signature Seafood Evenings and tastings that really showcase specialties of the local cuisine. Wherever possible, ingredients are sourced at local businesses in the ports we visit, reducing food miles and supporting coastal communities.

You'll also be spoilt for choice with sophisticated plant-based menus of gorgeous 'green' food, potentially healthier for you and for the planet too.



© ANDREAS KALVIG ANDERSON

YOUR ACTIVE ADVENTURE



Landings with expedition boats

Our small expedition boats allow you to land on beaches and terrain that would otherwise be too rugged for larger vessels to get close to. Try the glass-bottomed boat and observe marine life and reefs from above!

Nature walks

Exploring the various islands on foot turns an experience into an adventure. You'll be heading ashore a lot and walking on trails that lead through a range of distinct ecosystems.

Snorkelling

What could be better than drifting over a colourful reef and seeing marine life illuminated in the crystal-clear water? We have all the snorkelling gear you'll need and our

expert Expedition Team will bring you to some pretty amazing places. If you want to wear a wetsuit, we have some available in various sizes. Use of wetsuits is free of charge.

Kayaking and SUP boarding

Some places are ideally suited to exploration aboard a kayak. We have a number of sea kayaks onboard for such a purpose, and they're perfect for paddling the waters around Santa Fe, Española and Santa Cruz. Alternatively, why not try out SUP boarding – our expedition ship also carries a number of boards for your enjoyment.

Conservation and research centres

The Galápagos Islands are the focus for global conservation and research efforts. We'll visit the Charles Darwin Research Station, where

over 200 scientists and volunteers are engaged in projects to boost biodiversity. Another project, on San Cristobal, is set in a forest that doubles as a tortoise reserve.

Lectures and talks

Your Expedition Team are the most recent link in a chain of experts with many years of experience exploring the Galápagos Islands. They'll give in-depth lectures on a variety of topics to enhance your learning. The subjects chosen are specific to where you are on your cruise and will teach you about the Galápagos Islands, their wildlife, and current conservation efforts.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED



An adventure can be summed up into two things: journeying somewhere exciting and being adaptable to whatever comes our way. Both apply on your expedition cruise with us.

© GETTY IMAGES/HURTIGRUTEN

When you embark on an expedition with us, you'll be travelling to some of the most remote and pristine places on our planet. It's an adventure to beautiful coastal areas where nature is at its most raw, wildlife roam free, and where the elements rule. And we wouldn't have it any other way.

Open exploration

Itineraries on our expedition cruises are therefore not completely set in stone. This gives us the flexibility of responding to challenging elements and to grasp new opportunities for exploration as they arise. Whether wind or waves block our way or we see whales we want to observe for a while, the option to divert from our

course is an essential and exciting aspect of expedition cruises.

Our plans may sometimes need to be altered slightly or even changed completely, bringing us to places and surprises not originally on our route, but which will still be just as impressive. Certain days on several of our itineraries even have multiple possible sites we can visit. You can trust the ship Captain together with the Expedition Team to pick the best option, based on the conditions on the day.

It is this unpredictability and adaptability that are at the core of any expedition, and what makes it an adventure so different from

a standard cruise. Embark on a journey with us; a journey where you'll embrace pure adventure, become real explorers, and expect the unexpected. Together, we'll create unique and unforgettable experiences, working with nature, never against it.

EXCITING PRE-PROGRAMME



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The first part of your adventure takes place on land in Ecuador, where you'll get to explore Quito and visit Cotopaxi Volcano before we fly out to our Galápagos adventure.

Quito

Your journey of discovery begins in Quito, a city which straddles the equator and where it feels like spring is eternally in the air.

Quito was founded on an ancient Inca settlement, and today it's a bustling and modern place. Take a stroll and visit the Calle La Ronda, an ancient pedestrianised street

with links to poets and artists who have lived here. There are also several museums and beautiful churches to explore in Quito.

We will also visit the photogenic Sangolqui open-air market. The local indigenous people sell their produce here, and you'll see vibrantly-coloured legumes, fruits and vegetables. Food aside, clothing and other handicrafts can be purchased here, and it'll give you a chance to chat with the friendly stallholders.

Cotopaxi National Park, set amidst mountainous splendour, is only an hour-and-a-half's drive from Quito. You'll get up close and personal with one of Ecuador's natural wonders as we visit an active volcano of Cotopaxi and walk to a height of almost 12,800 ft. Meaning 'Neck of the Moon' in the local Quechua language, Cotopaxi has an almost perfectly conical form and is one of the highest volcanos in the world.

EXPLORE THE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

Discover some of the highlights and possible sites you might see on your expedition cruise in the Galápagos Islands.*

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North Seymour

Home to silver-grey palo santo trees, numerous bird colonies and thousands of marine iguanas.



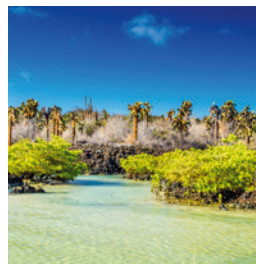
Santa Cruz Island

Home to the Charles Darwin Research Station, an optunia cactus forest, and the cool highlands where giant tortoises thrive.



Baltra Island aka South Seymour

A section of ocean floor blasted to the surface has made this flat island an ideal base from which to start exploration.



Santa Fe Island

White sand beaches, sea lion colonies lazing in the sun and the perfect island for a spot of snorkelling.



San Cristobal Island

Visit the Cerro Colorado Tortoise Reserve and see these gentle giants lumbering around in their six-hectare protected forest.

Did you know?

In 1835, Charles Darwin sailed to the Galapagos Islands where the various finches inspired him and lead to his theory of natural selection.

An astonishing **97 %** of the Galápagos landmass is designated a national park and the surrounding waters have been named a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Throughout the year, the Galapagos Islands see an average of **12 hours** of sunlight each day.

The Galapagos region offers a rare view of constellations and stars from **both** the Northern and Southern Hemisphere at the same time.

In 2008, Ecuador was the first country to officially recognise the rights of nature. Rather than treating nature as property, Ecuador recognises that nature has constitutional rights.

GALÁPAGOS: AN EVOLVING STORY

DISCOVER
with us

Around five million years ago a series of violent volcanic events began in the Pacific Ocean hundreds of miles from the coast of South America. The result was an archipelago of rocky and barren islands inhospitable to life.

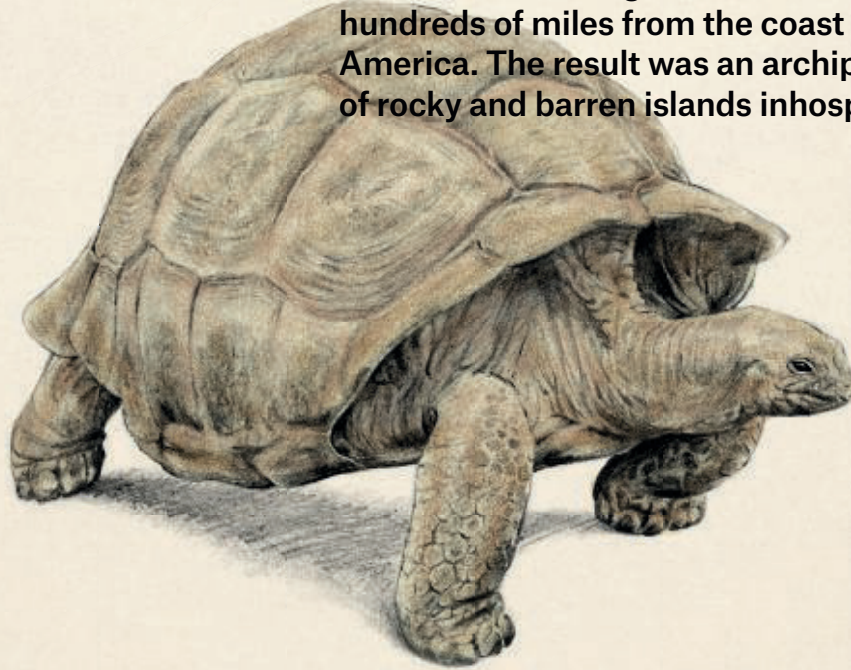


ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES/HURTIGRUTEN

As these young islands were cooling off, animal species began to arrive from the shores of Central and South America and colonise. Upon arrival, they had to rapidly adapt to what for them was a radically new environment. These adaptations led them to evolve in an entirely new way, separate from their continental relatives.

An unintentional discovery

The first person known to have set foot in the Galápagos Islands was the Spanish Bishop of Panama, Tomás de Berlanga. His ship went off course towards the Galápagos, and when he stepped ashore in 1535, he found the land to be teeming with creatures acting in what he thought was a strange manner. "The birds here are so silly," he later wrote to the King of Spain, "they know not how to flee."

Pirates!

Sometimes, the Galápagos Islands seemingly become invisible. Far from being mysterious, this is caused by a dense veil of fog. Due to this phenomenon, the islands were nicknamed *Las Encantadas*, meaning the 'enchanted' or 'bewitched' isles.

The fabled vanishing isles began to be talked about by seafarers, and were put on the map in 1570 for the very first time. They were given the name of *Islas de los Galápagos* – meaning 'Islands of the Giant Tortoises'. Later, during the 17th and 18th centuries, the sea pirates used the Galápagos as a safe harbour. Unfortunately, the buccaneers killed thousands of the easily caught giant tortoises, removing what is now known to be a key species for ecosystem health on the islands.

A dawning era of protection

Like the pirates before them, 18th century whalers had a terrible impact on the islands. Even more giant tortoises were killed, and they introduced other species with devastating effects for the native ones. In fact, their damaging legacy would later serve as the basis for implementing strong conservation and restoration measures in the Galápagos.

You're the latest chapter in this story

By the 1920s, people from various countries started to arrive to live on the islands, and in 1959 the islands were declared a National Park by Ecuador. Soon after came the concept of responsible tourism to show off the archipelago's beauty without harming its fragile ecosystems. The new ethos is to cherish and protect these unique isles – and we'll make our visit as low-impact as possible.



DISCOVER WILDLIFE

THE "BIG 15" CHECKLIST

One of the most defining factors of Galapagos is the wide selection of animal species that are endemic to the islands. The "Big 15" animals are the most iconic breeds across the archipelago. During your trip to Galapagos, you are likely to encounter the majority of these animals.

Fauna of the Galápagos Islands

Arguably, no other place on Earth can compete with the Galápagos Islands in terms of unique wildlife experiences. Not only are there many endemic species, but they are also unafraid of humans, making photographic encounters all the more rewarding. As such, guests will be instructed in how to remain at a safe distance, ensuring we do nothing that would disturb the unique creatures and ecosystems in these remarkable island havens. Remember that these are natural habitats, so we can't guarantee that certain animals will appear during your trip.

- Galapagos Giant Tortoise**
The Galapagos Giant Tortoise is an endangered animal that has the ability to live well over 100 years.
- Flightless Cormorant**
This animal is the only type of cormorant that cannot fly.
- Galapagos Albatross**
This is the largest bird in the region, with a wingspan over eight feet long and a weight of 11 pounds.
- Galapagos Penguin**
This is the only type of penguin that can be found north of the Equator.
- Red-Footed Booby**
These active birds often travel almost 90 miles in their search for food.
- Blue-Footed Booby**
This species has bright blue webbed feet that are jarring upon first glance.
- Marine Iguana**
This endemic breed is the only marine lizard species across the entire globe that spends time in the ocean.
- Galapagos Sea Lion**
Although they spend much time basking in the sun, they have playful personalities.
- Land Iguana**
These large reptiles can live up to 60 years, growing to stretch over three feet long.
- Galapagos Flamingo**
Because of their consumption of shrimp, these birds have some of the brightest features of any species.
- Santa Fe Iguana**
Although these creatures can easily blend in with their environment, they typically have a yellow colouring.
- Greater Frigate Bird**
The greater frigate birds are distinctive because they have a large, red pouch that can be found on the underside of their neck.
- Galapagos Hawk**
Because this species is endemic to Galapagos, it has a very small worldwide population count.
- Galapagos Fur Seal**
These small seals are social, but their population has decreased steadily for multiple years in a row.
- Nazca Booby**
With a black monochrome body and an orange beak, this species is the largest of the booby family.

SUSTAINABILITY

Exploring our blue planet for more than a century has taught us the importance of being green.

Over decades, our Captains and crew, Expedition Teams and returning guests have witnessed the impact of climate change on vulnerable polar areas with their own eyes. We want the Arctic, Antarctica, and everywhere in between to remain places of pristine nature, pure water and clean air.

Sustainability is therefore at the heart of who we are and what we do. From the beautiful natural world to remote communities, we want to ensure our expedition cruises protect them both. In line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, we're able to offer you greener and more sustainable expedition cruises on and for the planet.

Want to know more?

Visit [our sustainability web page](#) »



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HURTIGRUTEN FOUNDATION

**Collaborating for change:
Creating a footprint we can be proud of.**

Hurtigruten Foundation is a platform for taking a stance and volunteering in worthwhile causes – together. Working closely with guests, partners and organizations, Hurtigruten believes we make a genuine difference, by minimizing our operational impact and maximizing the positive contribution we make to local communities. Since the Hurtigruten Foundation was established at the end of 2015, a total of 3,200 000 NOK has been donated to date for 34 projects in eight countries.

Hurtigruten Foundation is funded by direct donations and several onboard initiatives, including auctions, fund-raisers, and primarily the "Green stay" programme, where a donation is made for every day you ask us not to clean your cabin, thereby saving energy, detergents and water. We invite you to join us and leave a footprint we can be proud of!

Visit [the Hurtigruten Foundation web page](#) »

