The Galapagos Islands Northern Cruise

Trip Code: CGN

Version:

WILDLIFE	GUIDED GROUP	LEISURELY
		2



HIGHLIGHTS

- Cruise aboard the recently renovated first-class Monserrat Yacht
- Observe the best wildlife the Galapagos has to offer on land and sea
- Hike, snorkel, and sail to the best wildlife spotting locations on the islands with a morning and afternoon excursion each day
- Learn about the history and biodiversity from our professional and qualified naturalist guides

- Choose from 2 stunning itineraries: The remote Northern and Western Islands or the classic Galapagos highlights of the Southern Itinerary

AT A GLANCE

- 8 days cruising the Galapagos Islands
- First-Class Monserrat Yacht
- Snorkelling and Walking excursions
- Iconic Wildlife
- Join at Quito

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

Set sail on an adventure of a lifetime on this Galapagos Islands Cruise. The Galapagos Islands offer some of the best wildlife encounters and experiences in the world, teeming with both land and sea life you are unlikely to see in such abundance anywhere else on earth! From walking alongside the island's iconic giant tortoises, snorkelling with sea turtles and climbing to island high points for stunning panoramas this adventurous cruise holiday showcases the very best of what the Galapagos has to offer. A photographer's paradise, the islands give a unique opportunity to capture wildlife up close on camera. From iguanas basking on the white sandy beaches, nesting seabirds, waved albatross, blue-footed boobies, penguins, sea lions, cormorants, and innumerable tropical fish and birdlife - the opportunities are endless.

We sail the islands aboard the first-class yacht, the Monserrat. Island-hopping in style we are treated to fine local and international gastronomy prepared by professional chefs onboard. Whether using the boat's observation deck, walking on the islands, or taking a panga ride into a hidden cove, our expert naturalist guides take us to the best spots and share their tips and knowledge for getting the most out of each experience.

The Monserrat Yacht alternates between two stunning 8 day itineraries, and while both of these options offer an incredible experience and cover the key wildlife experiences you would expect from the Galapagos, they visit different islands which makes for subtle distinctions in the flora and fauna you will encounter. So whether you are more interested in the unique birdlife on the more remote and pristine northern islands or the classic Galapagos experience of the southern islands you can be sure you won't be missing out!

The Northern Itinerary

Our Northern Itinerary covers the Northern and Western Islands and is the ideal itinerary for birdwatches. We start by exploring the volcanic island of Santa Cruz and 'Chinese Hat', before heading north to the more remote Genovesa, an island paradise for bird lovers, where we will witness an impressive colony of red-footed boobies. We continue to the pristine western reaches of the Galapagos Archipelago, visiting the islands of Isabel and Fernandina. Here we can spot more unique native species, in a region where no non-native species have ever been introduced. Flightless comorant, blue-footies

boobies as well as Galapagos Giant Tortoises and land and marine iguanas are all likely to be seen. We also explore the Bolivar Channel, an area boasting some of the highest diversity of marine life in the Galapagos. Heading back East to Santiago Island, we explore dark sand beaches and have opportunity to snorkel among turtles, rays and reefsharks before taking a panga ride into the ill-famed pirate's hideout of Buccaner Cove. Our final island visited is that of North Seymour Island, where we can walk alongside blue-footy boobies, pelicans and frigatebirds nesting sites.

Wildlife likely to be seen: Galapagos Giant Tortoises, Barn Owls, Land Iguanas, Flamingoes, Common Stilts, Pintail Ducks, Scalesia Trees, Sea Lions, large schools of tropical fish, Marine Iguanas, Galapagos Penguins, Red-Footed Boobies, Nazca Boobies, Mockingbirds, Finches, Palto Santo Trees, Swallow Tail and Lava Gulls, Yellow-Crowned Night Herons, Lava Herons, Galapagos Doves, Yellow Warblers, Great Frigate Birds, Manta Rays, Sea Turtles, Sally Lightfoot Crabs, Flamingoes, Black-Necked Stilts, Blue-Footed Boobies, Brown Noddy, Terns, Flightless Comorants, Galapagos Green Turtles, Reef Sharks and Pelicans.

It is important to note that itineraries in the Galapagos are always subject to change due to weather conditions, wildlife breeding, National Park Regulations or any unforeseen situation.

View our **Galapagos Islands Southern Cruise** for itinerary, dates, prices and to book.

Is this holiday for you?

A cruise is an excellent way of getting around the Galapagos and experiencing the best it has to offer. Staying aboard the yacht you will sleep in a twin/double cabin with modern en-suite facilities. The Upper deck cabins have a window to allow excellent views, whereas on the lower deck the cabins have portholes to ensure good natural light. There are many communal areas aboard the yacht, from the interior lounge and dinner room to the sun and observation decks, complete with sun loungers. Getting from the yacht to land is done by panga boat, a motorised inflatable dinghy allowing closer access to shore. There is plenty of opportunity for swimming and snorkelling and the guides will point out the best spots. Simple walks along the beaches and up small hills on the islands offer another excellent way of enjoying the wildlife, but no prior walking experience is necessary.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A professional and qualified naturalist guide
- All activities and excursions listed in the itinerary
- All accommodation as described
- All meals during the cruise
- Bed and breakfast basis for the 2 nights in Quito
- All land transport required by the itinerary
- Return flights from Quito to the Galapagos
- Airport transfers on arrival and departure
- Snorkelling equipment
- Wetsuit hire,
- Purified water tea and coffee on board the boat

What's not Included

- Travel Insurance
- Visas
- Galapagos National Park fee - $200 (payable in cash on arrival at the airport on Galapagos)
- Transit Control Card - $20 (payable in cash on departure from Quito Airport to the islands)
- Some meals as described in the meal plan
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional
- Tips / Gratuities to guides and crew
- Miscellaneous personal expenditure - drinks and souvenirs etc.
- Single Supplement

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

A single transfer from Quito Airport to the group hotel is provided in the morning of Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary. On the last day of the Land Only itinerary, there will be a single transfer back to Quito Airport timed to meet flights departing in the morning.

Meal Plan

All meals when on board the Monserrat Yacht are included. For the 2 nights on the mainland the hotel is booked on a bed and breakfast basis.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

All meals are provided aboard the Monserrat. The professional chef and kitchen staff will prepare a mix of local and international food to a high standard to be enjoyed either on the boat's sun deck or the interior dining room. A substantial breakfast, warm lunch and dinner will be served each day. There is no set menu as the chefs creatively adapt to the local produce on offer and the needs of the group. Most dietary needs can be met if the chefs are given enough notice (please inform us at time of booking).

The chefs will also provide a cooking class each departure, where guests learn how to prepare Ecuadorian style Ceviche - a traditional delicacy in which raw fish is cured in citrus juices - on the sun deck.

Accommodation

For the 2 nights on the mainland we stay in a lodge on the outskirts of Quito, situated 20 minutes from the Old Town. During the Galapagos cruise we stay 7 nights on the Monserrat Yacht. All cabins are modern, en-suite and have air conditioning. There are a mixture of twin and double cabins. The 6 upper deck cabins all have windows while the 4 lower deck cabins have portholes with great interior natural light.

The Monserrat underwent a complete renovation in September 2025. All guest cabins and social areas now feature elegant new furnishings, and the yacht now offers a Jacuzzi on the sundeck, an outdoor dining area, and two comfortable lounge spaces.

If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Single rooms are available for a supplementary cost. If you are planning on extending your holiday additional nights at the group hotel are available on request.

Group Leader & Support Staff

During the cruise you will have the services of two professional naturalist guides, an on board Concierge and 12 crew members.

Park Fees & Permits

The Ecuadorian government currently levies a Galapagos Islands Park entry fee of $200 USD per person . This is payable at the airport upon arrival in the park. It is not included in the cost of the tour, and must be paid in CASH. This fee funds Park maintenance and supervision in Galapagos, as well as ecological study, conservation and infrastructure development in Ecuador's other National Parks. Entry fees and the funds they generate for the National Park System are among measures taken by the Ecuadorian government to protect its natural heritage.

Spending Money

You will need $100 in cash ($200 from 1 Aug 2024) for the Galapagos park fees + $20 Transit Control Cards fee in cash on departure from Quito Airport to the Galapagos. Additionally to these essentials, approximately £350-400 per person (or equivalent in US dollars) should be allowed for tips, soft drinks, snacks, non-included meals and miscellaneous expenses. Alcoholic drinks, souvenirs, and optional activities are additional so you may wish to budget for these.

You should take your money in USD dollars to change into local currency. There will be the opportunity to change money at the airport and during the holiday. You will also be able to get currency from bank ATMs. Please be advised that slightly torn notes, notes that have been heavily marked or are faded may be difficult to exchange. It is best to bring notes in fairly good condition, in denominations lower than 100 USD. Credit cards are useful and it is a good idea to carry one in case of emergency.

Guidance on Tipping

Tipping is expected, although not compulsory, and is an expression of satisfaction with the persons who have assisted you on your holiday. As a guideline a per traveller tip of USD 200-400 per week for your guide and boat crew is suggested. Further smaller tips for local boat staff, hotel staff and guides on any excursions should be accounted for as well.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage and a daypack.

For the domestic flights to the Galapagos you are allowed a maximum of one piece of luggage per person weighing a maximum of 23 kg, plus one carry-on piece weighing a maximum of 10 kg.

For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

A good size daypack is also essential. If you don't wish to take all of your luggage with you to Galapagos, please ensure you have an extra bag you can leave behind at hotel storage and pickup on your return.

Please note that Galapagos is a protected National Park so your luggage will be checked before arrival and departure to and from the islands. Don’t bring any food, seeds or other organic material that could affect the delicate ecosystem of the islands.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the ‘Dates and Prices’ table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THOSE TRANSITING THROUGH THE USA

If your flights pass through the USA, even if only in transit, you will require either a visa or an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation). Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can apply for an ESTA under certain conditions*. This must be done online via https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov, no later than 72 hours prior to travel and applies whether entering the country by sea or by air. You will need to have a biometric passport to apply for an ESTA. The fee is currently US$40 *(as of 30/09/25).* Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely be refused boarding.

*If you have visited Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen since 2011 or have dual nationality with any of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA. You will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate instead. Additionally, if you have travelled to or have been in Cuba since the 12th of January 2021, you will not be eligible for an ESTA visa waiver and will need to apply for a US visa. You should consult the US State Department website to determine which you will need.

When completing the ESTA application form you will be asked to enter your 'Point of Contact' information. This is not required if you are only transiting through the USA.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THOSE TRANSITING THROUGH CANADA

UK citizens will require an ETA (Electronic Travel Authorisation), and you must get this before boarding any Canada-bound aircraft or ship, or entering on a land border. The fee is CAD$7 and you should apply for it at http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta-start.asp. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office

Entry requirements can change regularly so please ensure you have the most up to date information before travelling by checking visa entry requirements at the relevant embassy in your country of residence: (US Embassy in London: http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html)

Visa Ecuador

UK and USA passport holders do not require a visa for short stays.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Currency

The unit of currency in Ecuador is US Dollars.

Climate

Located on the Equator, the Galapagos climate is tempered by the Humboldt Current, so you do not experience extreme heat found elsewhere at this latitude. The warmest weather is December to June, when temperatures range from 22-33°C, and the water temperature is in the mid 20s. From July to November, temperatures are cooler and range from 18-24°C, when average water temperature rarely reach 21°C.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

The Voyage of the Beagle | By Charles Darwin
Galápagos: World's End | By William Beebe
Evolution's Workshop | By Edward J. Larson
Lonesome George: The Life and Loves of the World's Most Famous Tortoise | By Henry Nicholls
Birds of Ecuador and Galápagos | By Clive Byers

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

CGI Equipment List

Please try to keep the weight of your baggage to a minimum. See the 'baggage allowance' section for further details.

YOU SHOULD BRING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- Walking shoes or trainers
- Sandals (teva-style) or shoes that are comfortable when wet
- Lightweight trousers / shorts / skirt
- T-shirts and/or casual shirts
- Socks & Underwear
- Lightweight waterproof jacket
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Sunhat
- Sunglasses
- Daypack 25-30 litres
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottles (approx 2 litre per person) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Washbag and toiletries - preferable biodegradable
- Antibacterial handwash
- Swimwear
- Small swim towel (poncho-style or sarong for changing on the beach are useful)
- Torch and batteries
- Plug adapter
- Insect repellent
- Basic First Aid Kit. Including: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE OPTIONAL:

- Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Binoculars
- Camera with extra memory cards and batteries
- Rash vest
- Snorkelling gear - although this is provided you may wish to take your own
- Flip-flops
- A small drybag - for keeping your camera and essentials dry
- Motion sickness tablets
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

NOTE:

All specialist equipment required for the activities on this holiday are provided.

Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary joining in Quito. For clients making their own flight arrangements, Quito airport is the most convenient for transfers to the group hotel. Please refer to the 'Joining arrangements & transfers' for further details.

Flight Inclusive Information

Limited seats are available at the advertised flight price, please book as early as you can. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures and/or upgrades, we will provide you with an alternative quote. It is likely that flight payment will be in advance of your final holiday balance. Booking a flight inclusive package means you will benefit from full financial protection, eases your holiday planning, and leaves us to deal with airlines and schedule changes. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Quito. Outbound flights will depart from the UK in the morning arriving late afternoon. Return flights will depart from Quito in the evening on the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK the following morning. Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Please be aware that there are often only a limited number of seats available at the advertised price. To avoid paying flight supplements, we recommend that you book as early as possible, especially during peak times. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures, we will contact you with an alternative quote. Please note that you may be asked to pay for your flights in advance of your final holiday balance. Note that if you book a package including flights with KE you will benefit from full financial protection.

Why Choose KE

CGI Why KE

This Galapagos Cruise Holiday is perfect for those wishing to combine activity and adventure with a twist of luxury. The Monserrat is the only first-class yacht in the Galápagos operating with two expert Naturalist Guides for just 16 guests, providing a more personalized and enriching expedition experience.Most days will have 2 opportunities to both hike and snorkel, along with other exiciting excursions on the panga boats. On the mainland, we stay in a comfortable lodge outside of the city, a place to relax in nature before and after our adventure. In the Galapagos, this small group cruise provides first class hospitality and once in a lifetime experiences, that wouldn’t otherwise be possible on a larger cruise.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 11/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change