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rediscovering the New World

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TRIP DETAILS
11 days / 10 nts - Ecuador

Departures Daily
Trip Ref 2394

ITINERARY IN BRIEF

PRICES FROM $3,352

Boobies and Incas

This trip includes 4 nights cruising around the Galapagos islands on board the Aida Maria, a 16 passenger tourist class motor yacht. You can of course select any **other yacht** and even cruise length, and we will send you the revised itinerary and prices by email.

Day 1: Arrive Quito
Upon arrival in Quito transfer from the airport to the hotel. Overnight in Quito.

Day 2: Quito - Galapagos (M/Y Aida Maria)
Transfer to the airport to board the flight to Galapagos.Fly from the Ecuadorian Mainland to the islands on an early morning 90-minute flight. As you prepare to arrive at Baltra, peer out the window. The landscape below will seem otherworldly - and it is for you have come to a place like no other. The Galapagos Islands are unique and you are about to see why. Your bilingual naturalist guide will greet you at the airport and assist you through customs. During lunch he/she will introduce you to the islands and specifically the flora and fauna you will encounter at our first destination: Las Bachas Beach.

On the sandy white beaches of Las Bachas we will get a close look at a sea turtle nesting area and a lake frequented by leggy pink flamingos and other migratory birds. Afterward, we cool ourselves off with our first dip in the deliciously blue Pacific Ocean. As this is our first evening together, the crew will invite us to a pre-dinner cocktail on the yacht before the welcome dinner. If the night is clear, as it usually is, the stars above will bedazzle; look for the Southern Cross, the Big Dipper (turned up-side down!) and Orion.

(Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 3: Genovesa, Darwin Bay - Prince Philip Steps
After We spend the entire day on Tower (Genovesa), considered to be one of the most spectacular Islands in Galapagos for bird species. Genovesa has 2 principal tourist places: Prince Philips Steps and Darwin Bay, this is one of the most famous places to watch animals like: fragate birds, mask boobies, red footed boobies, sea lions and seals. When you practice snorkelling and diving the sea lions and hammerhead sharks will swim beside you. The Prince Philips Steps is an rock with the shape of steps, this place was called of this way because the prince Phillips visited the island genovesa in the 60´s.

(Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 4: Bartolome - Santiago
Bartolome offers an explosive volcanic landscape. Get ready to climb above 270 feet to admire the dramatic spatter cones and the view of Pinnacle Rock that everyone wants. Later, take a walk on magical golden beaches where sea turtle nest (December to March). Don't forget to make time to swim near penguins, sharks and lava tubes

Santiago, on the eastern coast of James Island is Sullivan Bay. There you can admire a large area of fresh pahoehoe (ropey) lava flows dating from an eruption in 1897. A walk over this glazed black rock gives the impression of the still-molten lava, as every ripple, swirl, and bubble in its surface has been preserved. Tiny fragile Mollugi plants can be spotted growing out of fissures as they begin to colonize the arid terrain.

(Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 5: Daphne - Santa Cruz
Daphne is one of the central islands, north of Santa Cruz. There is a Daphne Major and Minor both are located north of Santa Cruz. Daphne

Minor is closed to the public and visits of Daphne Major are limited by the Galapagos National Park Service to less than 12 people per group. You also see masked boobies, red-billed tropicbirds, brown noddies and swallow-tailed gulls

Santa Cruz: A panga ride to Black Turtle Cove and through mangrove inlets, these lagoons provide refuge to rays, sharks, and sea turtles that will be clearly viewable from the boat.

At Cerro Dragon (Dragon Hill) a trail takes you through Palo Santo forests, a brackish salt-water lagoon and Opuntia cacti woodland, where we will be hoping to spot land iguanas and feeding flamingos.

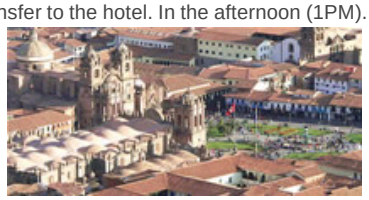
(Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 6: Galapagos - Guayaquil - Lima
After breakfast we sail to Santa Cruz Island, where we visit the world-famous Charles Darwin Station, a non-profit institution that dedicates itself to studying and protecting Galapaganean flora and fauna.In the late afternoon we return to town. The visit to Charles Darwin Station will complete your Galapagos adventure. From the station we will take a bus to the airport for departure.

Upon arrival in Guayaquil airport board the flight to Lima where there will be a transfer to the hotel. Overnight in Lima.

(Included meals: breakfast)

Day 7: Lima - Cusco
Transfer to the airport for the flight to Cusco. Upon arrival in Cusco, assistance at the airport and transfer to the hotel. In the afternoon (1PM). City tour of Cusco, including the Santo Domingo convent monastery. This former Colonial monastery was previously the Korikancha temple, one of the most important temples devoted to the worship of the sun. According to the chronicles, it was covered in gold Leaf and filled with golden representations of nature. Visit also the Cathedral, the most important temple of the city which houses the headquarters of the Diocese. After touring the most interesting sites of the city, you will be driven to the countryside outside Cusco to visit some of the remarkable Inca ruins in the area. Included are the cult centre of Sacsayhuaman, the temple and amphitheatre of Kenko, and the Red Fortress of Puca Pucara. At the end of the tour, transfer to the hotel. Overnight at Cuzco.



(Included meals: breakfast)

Day 8: Cuzco - Sacred Valley of the Incas
Take a trip to Urubamba, the Sacred Valley of the Incas. You will begin your tour visiting Awanakancha, where South American camelidae are bred. Learn about the llamas, alpacas and vicuñas superb fibres, as well as the ancient weaving techniques which are still in use. Proceed to Pisac where you will have the opportunity to bargain with vendors at its local handicrafts market. Enjoy lunch at a pleasant hostelry in the countryside and continue to the Inca fortress of Ollantaytambo. The site was built just as the Spaniards arrived and evidence of how it was is still visible. Overnight in Sacred Valley.

(Included meals: breakfast, lunch)

Day 9: Sacred Valley - Machu Picchu
Transferto Ollanta station to board the train to Machu Picchu. Upon arrival to Aguas Calientes you will take a 25-minute motorcoach ride to "The Lost City of the Incas", which was discovered by American explorer Hiram Bingham in 1911. Located on the left bank of the Vilcanota river lies the wonderful old city of Machu Picchu, which in quechua means "Old Mountain". According to research, Machu Picchu would have been one of the vacation residences of Pachacutec, the first Inca emperor between 1438 and 1470. However, some of its finest buildings and the evident ceremonial purpose of the main access road to the village, prove that it was used as a religious shrine. Machu Picchu is considered both a masterpiece of architecture and engineering because of its unique architectural and landscaping features. Prominent constructions among its buildings are the Main Square, the Royal Quarters, the Temple of the Three Windows, the Circular Towers, the Sacred Sun Dial and the Burial Grounds, among others of singular architecture and importance. Your guide will narrate and explain all about this splendid citadel, which is a truly amazing experience. Overnight near Machu Picchu.

(Included meals: breakfast, lunch)

Day 10: Machu Picchu - Cuzco
Morning at leisure (no guide included this day). We strongly recommend that you wake up early to see the sunrise over Machu Picchu. This is a once-in-a-lifetime sight. In the afternoon return by train and then transfer to the Hotel in Cusco.. Upon arrival in Cuzco transfer to the hotel. Overnight in Cuzco.

Optional: For hiking enthusiasts, we suggest a walk up to the peak of Huayna Picchu.

(Included meals : breakfast)

Day 11: Cuzco - Fly out from Lima

Transfer from the hotel to Cusco airport to board your flight to Lima, assistance on departure flight.

(Included meals : breakfast)

2010 Price per person

Category	Hotels	Price
SUPERIOR	Hotel Mercure (Quito) Aida Maria (Galapagos cruise) Jose Antonio (Lima) Picoaga (Cusco) Sol y Luna (Urubamba) Sumaq (Aguas Calientes)	$3,358

Prices valid until December 15 2010

(Prices can change without notice)

English / Spanish

Price includes:
Accommodation in double cabins with air conditioning and private bathroom, All meals on board, 2 daily visits to the islands conducted by bilingual naturalist guides, sightseeing, snorkelling opportunities and transfers in the islands. Evening lecture by guides regarding next days visits. Transfers in/out airports, piers, train or bus stations and hotels. Porterage at airport, pier, station and hotel on transfers. Entrance fees on sightseeing tours, Cusco Tourist Tax. Shared Group Services with Spanish/ English speaking guide on all tours (except when mentioned). Twin or double room in the hotel (assumes 2 pax) although if unavailable specific properties may be replaced by others of same quality. Meals as per itinerary. Hotel taxes.

Price does not include:
International air fare for Guayaquil-Lima ($600pp). Domestic air fares for Quito-Galapagos-Guayaquil ($580pp), Lima - Cuzco return ($390pp). International and domestic airport departure taxes. Galapagos cruise: MigrationCard/Ingala tax ($10pp), Galapagos entrance fee ($100pp), snorkeling equipment/wetsuit, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, gratuities to cruise guides and crew, bar, gifts, travel insurance. Meals not mentioned in the itinerary. Personal expenses (laundry, beverages, communications, etc)

Notes:
- A supplement may apply for solo travellers.
- This program is quoted with Aida Maria: Itinerary C.
- Galapagos Cruise itineraries are subject to change by the authorities of the Galapagos National Park or acts of providence. Recent changes to Galapagos National Park guidelines mean that cruise itineraries now vary greatly from departure to departure. The islands visited on each holiday will be determined by your departure date and the length of the cruise.
- Those guests wanting to hike Huyna Picchu located inside the Machu Picchu site, it is important that you advise us so we can purchase the entrance prior to your hike. The cost of the entrance is $15pp approx. This is Day 10 of this itinerary. In addition, there are two groups of 200 people each and the schedules are as follows: 1st group: 7 am / 8 am, 2nd group: 10 am / 11 am. Punctuality is important as you may loose your tickets

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