

Galapagos & Machu Picchu



Galapagos & Machu Picchu

12 days / 11 nights

We are delighted to have you on board for this journey of discovery to some of the most beautiful islands in the Galapagos. Wherever we sail, whatever we do, all the crew aboard the Santa Cruz will do the utmost to ensure your experience is truly, deeply moving and memorable.

Combine Galapagos with the vast and ancient history of Peru, a country full of color and mixture of cultures. Live the excitement of walking through the imposing Machu Picchu Citadel, one of the Seven New Wonders of the World. Meet the people, experience the adventure, live the traditions, delight your palate, encounter the past, embrace nature, feel the mystery



Flight



Accommodation



Transfer



Excursions



Art



Food



Day 01

... / Quito

(-/-/-)



Transfer Quito Airport / Hotel (private)

Welcome to Quito and Ecuador! At the airport, you will be greeted by a member of our organization, we will escort you all the way to your hotel, giving you a short briefing about Quito and the country in general with valuable information you need to know. Enjoy scenic colonial and artistic Quito, visit museums, monasteries and the golden altars of its many churches. Stand with a foot on each hemisphere on the Middle of the World memorial.

The capital of Ecuador has a setting that few cities in the world can match. During the 13th century it was the prosperous center of the Kingdom of Quitus. It later became the northern capital of the Inca Empire. In the 16th and 17th centuries, Colonial architects built formidable temples, monasteries and mansions, creating an urban jewel designated by UNESCO/UN as a World Cultural Heritage Site. Quito's artistic creativity awaits the visitor in cosmopolitan galleries and boutiques filled with contemporary paintings, sculptures and exquisite traditional crafts. Overnight in Quito

Note: Quito airport is located about one and half hours from Quito depending on traffic conditions, please make sure you do not leave anything behind.



Ecuador Cathedral

Day 02

Quito

(B/-/-)



Scenic tour of Quito (private)

Quito's colonial quarter, the largest and best preserved of South America, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We will stroll at the Independence Plaza, flanked by the Cathedral, the Presidential Palace, the Municipal Building and the Archbishop's Palace. We will visit the temple of La Compañía de Jesús* and its awesome gilded interior. We will continue to the Monastery of San Francisco, one the of great religious buildings of the New World; its impressive façade and atrium that lead to its Baroque interior influenced by Moorish style, with the winged Virgin of Quito at its main altar. The tour ends at a lookout point with a great view of Quito.

After the tour, you will be transferred to your hotel.



Overnight in Quito

*Tour visits to churches on Sundays are not allowed



Galapagos

Day 03

Quito/Galapagos

(B/L/D)



Shuttle transfer Hotel to Quito Airport for flight to Galapagos (shared)

5 Days / 4 Nights - SANTA CRUZ Eastern Islands (Saturday to Wednesday)

We're delighted to have you on board for this journey of discovery to some of the most beautiful islands in the Galápagos. Our itinerary together begins on San Cristóbal Island, the capital of the Galápagos Province. From here, we venture east along the northern shores of the island, visiting the fascinating site of Punta Pitt, taking us back to Charles Darwin's visit of 1835. We then sail west to the central islands of Santa Fe, with its beautiful tranquil bay (great for swimming and snorkelling), before continuing to the wild cliffs of South Plaza with their cactus, land iguanas and stunning marine birds.



The following day we visit the world-famous Charles Darwin Research Station on Santa Cruz Island, the most populous in the archipelago, with a range of activities on offer in the afternoon. Española Island awaits us on our last day, a favourite of many visitors, with its remarkable visitor site of Punta Suárez.



Galapagos Island



Here, we'll wander along the rugged coastline, home to hundreds of marine iguanas, sealions, marine birds, and even albatross (at certain times of year). In the afternoon, Gardner Bay provides a wonderful setting for a combination of beach-time, swimming or snorkelling. Wherever we sail, whatever we do, all the crew aboard the Santa Cruz will do our utmost to ensure your Galápagos experience is truly, deeply moving and memorable.



Saturday: Puerto Baquerizo Moreno/Punta Pitt (San Cristóbal Island)

Arrival by plane to San Cristóbal Island and transfer to the Santa Cruz, anchored at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the provincial capital of the Galápagos Islands. Cabin assignment, introductory talk, boat drill and lunch.



Punta Pitt (San Cristóbal Island)

In the afternoon, disembark on the eastern tip of the island at Punta Pitt, an eroded tuff cone, whose trail provides spectacular views of the shoreline. This is the only site in the Galápagos where the three species of boobies can be found together. We can walk or enjoy a panga ride along the coast.



Day 04

Santa Fe / South Plaza

(B/L/D)



Sunday: Santa Fe Island/South Plaza Island

After breakfast, we take the dinghy over to this idyllic sandy-white beach populated by many sea lions. The endemic land iguana, unique to this island, may be spotted during the morning walk amid the giant prickly pear cactus. Snorkeling and swimming from the panga rounds off our rewarding experience, or if guests prefer, the glass bottom boat for non-snorkelers.



South Plaza Island

Following lunch and a rest, we disembark in this channel, whose turquoise waters contrast brilliantly with the white sand and black lava of the shoreline. Beyond, a carpet of scarlet sesuvium succulents serves as groundcover for a grove of luminescent green prickly-pear cactus. Yellow-grey land iguanas sit beneath these, waiting patiently for pears to drop. Along the coastline one finds sea lion colonies, while frigates, swallow-tailed gulls and shearwaters glide, playing with the thermals.

Santa Fe Island



Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz Island

Day 05

Santa Cruz

(B/L/D)



Monday: Puerto Ayora and the Charles Darwin Research Station (Santa Cruz Island)

In the morning, we disembark (dry landing) for our visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station's giant tortoise Breeding Centre 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. Following our visit, we board our transport to enjoy lunch in the cooler highlands of Santa Cruz Island, a completely different ecosystem.



Santa Cruz Island

We have several options available for the afternoon (hiking, mountain biking or kayaking in Tortuga Bay), which can be discussed in advance with your Expedition Leader. At the end of the afternoon's activities, we return to Puerto Ayora and embark on the Santa Cruz.



Gardner Bay

Day 06

Española

(B/L/D)



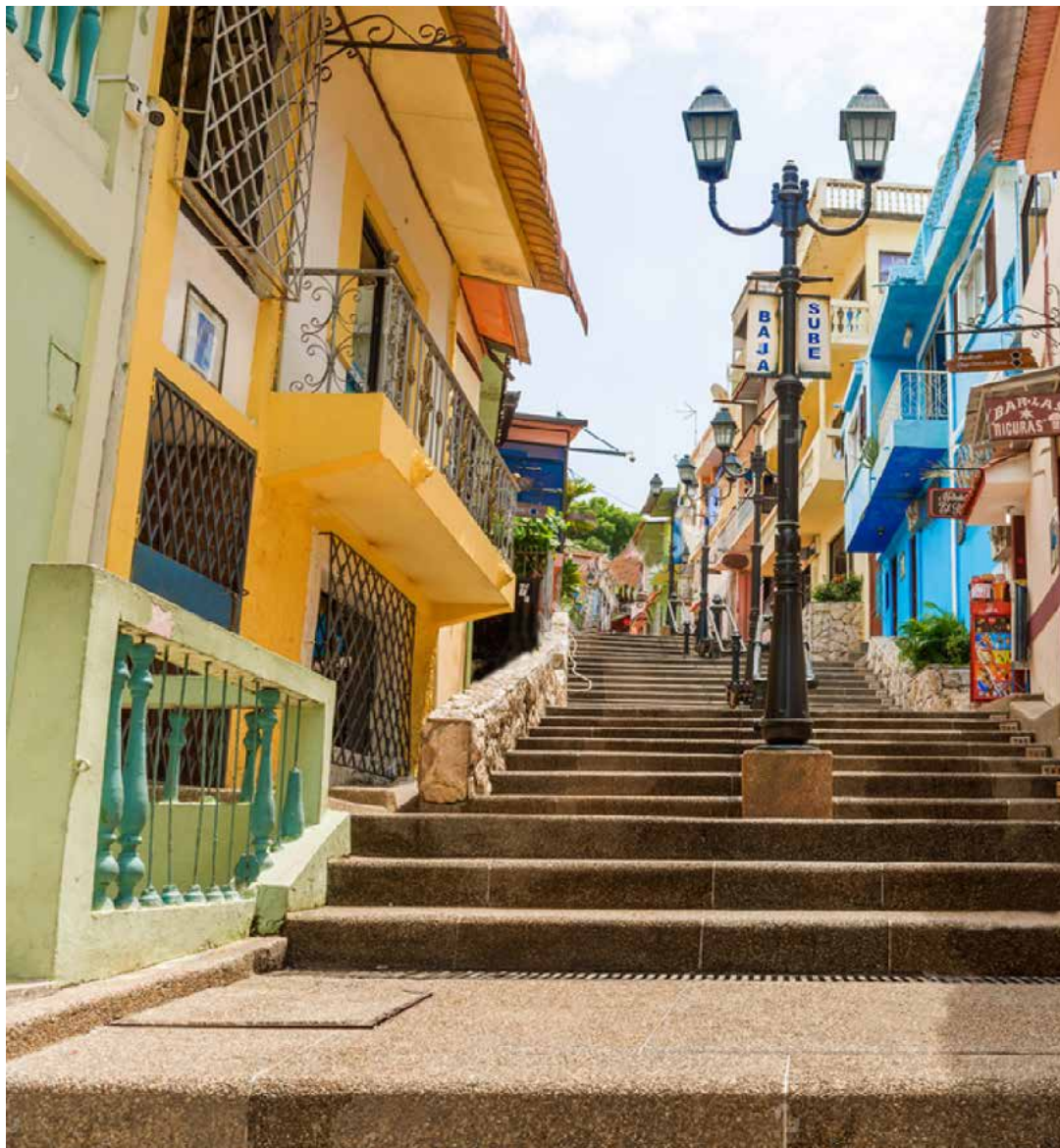
Tuesday: Punta Suárez/Gardner Bay (Española Island)

An exciting walk awaits at this site, where we enjoy its unique sea bird colonies, including waved albatrosses (April- January), Nazca boobies, blue-footed boobies, swallow-tail gulls as well as a view of the Galápagos famous "blow-hole". Also, look out for red-green-black marine iguanas. Back on board for lunch.



Gardner Bay (Española Island)

In the afternoon, the picture-postcard white coral beach of Gardner Bay provides a beautiful setting for observing sea lions, mockingbirds, finches as we relax. We can expect great snorkelling in this area.



Day 07

Baltra/Guayaquil

(B/-/-)



Wednesday: Baltra Island

On our last day, we disembark at Baltra Island and transfer to the airport to take the flight back to the continent.



Transfer Guayaquil Airport / Hotel (private)

Welcome to Guayaquil and Ecuador! At the airport, you will be greeted by a member of our staff who will escort you all the way to your hotel, giving you a short briefing on Guayaquil and the country in general with valuable information you need to know at first hand. Guayaquil is Ecuador's natural port, and its largest city with a population of three million. This tropical city the financial and commercial center of the country, lies on the banks of the Guayas River, thirty miles inland from the Gulf of Guayaquil. The people of Guayaquil are outgoing and open, they enjoy their city and are fiercely proud of their heritage. It is not surprising to hear the drama of Guayas, a brave indigenous leader, who in his desperation to avoid falling into the hands of the Spanish conquerors, decided to kill his wife, Quil, before drowning himself in the waters of the river. Their names were joined; a city was baptized.

Day 08

Guayaquil/ Lima

(B/-/-)



Transfer from your hotel to the Guayaquil Airport (private)



AM: Transfer Lima Airport / Hotel (private)

Upon arrival into Lima International Airport, you will be met by our representative and private driver and will be transferred to your hotel. Our representative will assist you with check-in procedures and provide you with a detailed itinerary, vouchers covering all the services included in your tour and additional information on the organization of your Peru trip. You will also receive a contact information sheet with all the hotel details as well as our offices contact information for each city and a 24-hour emergency number.



PM: Half day Lima City tour & Larco Museum (private)

Enjoy a half day guided sightseeing tour to the most attractive and important sites in Lima, the "City of Kings". Visit Lima's Historical Center, passing by Plaza San Martin, Plaza Mayor, the Government Palace, the City Hall, the Cathedral and its Religious Art Museum (closed on Sunday and Saturday pm; Santo Domingo Convent is provided instead on these days) as well as San Francisco Monastery and its famous underground crypts known as the Catacombs.



Lima's Historical Center



Larco Museum



Continue your visit through the residential Districts of San Isidro and Miraflores, passing by the Huaca Pucllana, a Ceremonial and Administrative Centre of the Lima Culture built in the II Century A.C. that the Incas considered as “Ñaupallaqta” or Sacred Town. Also, visit El Olivar Park with olive trees brought from Spain in the 15th Century, the Central Park of Miraflores and El Parque del Amor, or Peruvian Love Park.

Your visit continues with a stop at the Larco Museum, for an excellent overview of Peru’s ancient past as it holds the best private collection of pre-Columbian art in the country. The museum chronologically exhibits hundreds of ceramic, textile, metal and precious stone pieces and inside you will find the vault which safeguards precious pieces of gold and silver with semiprecious stones.



After the visit you will enjoy dinner at Café del Museo Restaurant, located inside the Museum compound. Then you will be driven back to your hotel.



Overnight in Lima



Awanacancha

Day 09

Lima / Cusco / Sacred Valley (B/-/-)



Transfer Hotel / Lima Airport (private)

At the appropriate time, our representative will meet you at the hotel lobby and transfer you to the Lima Airport to board your next flight. Our representative will assist you with check-in procedures and all departure formalities.



Transfer Airport / Sacred Valley Hotel including Awanacancha Textile Center & Pisac Market en route (private)

Upon your arrival in Cusco, you will be met by our representative who will assist you with your luggage and drive you to your hotel in the Sacred Valley.



En route towards the Valley, you will have the chance to visit Awanacancha, an Andean textile center whose key objective is to maintain the wealth of the Inca's textile art and keep their traditions alive. Awanacancha means "the palace of weaving" and as its name announces, it is all about textile production. Here you will learn about the dyeing techniques and instruments used for hundreds of years in the weaving of these famous textiles.



Pisac Town



Continuing through the Sacred Valley, head to the town of Pisac to visit the Pisac Market, which was the place of reunion for all artisans of the region to get together and exchange or buy and sell their products. Originally held only on Sundays, but due to the increase of tourism in the area during the XXth century it became increasingly popular to the point that now it is held daily.

After the tour, you will continue to the Sacred Valley.



Overnight in the Sacred Valley



Moray Terraces

Day 10

Sacred Valley

(B/L/-)



Full day Maras Salt pans, Moray Terraces & Ollantaytambo (private)

Enjoy a journey through the Sacred Valley of the Incas, to the salt fields of Maras and its seemingly never-ending terraces, where salt extracted from springs is stored. Although these waters have been used for centuries, even before the time of the Incas, Maras was founded by the Spanish in 1556. It supplied salt to the southern highlands during the viceroyalty, so it was an important town. The use of Maras Salt dates back thousands of years and is inherited from generation to generation and managed communally.



Continue your excursion to admire the Moray terraces, believed to be a former gigantic agricultural laboratory, an astronomical observatory or a place of worship, or maybe all three. It is thought that Moray was used for plant adaptation to new climatic environments thanks to its circular terraces in immense cone-shaped depressions of 47 to 84 m that resemble giant fingerprints or contour lines.



Ollantaytambo



Lunch will be served at a local restaurant where you will enjoy a varied buffet lunch in an incredible setting.



Then, you will head to the Inca fortress and citadel of Ollantaytambo. This site was built just as the Spaniards arrived and evidence of how it was constructed is still visible. This fortress was believed to be constructed in order to guard the entrance to this part of the valley and protect it from possible invasions of tribes from the jungle lowlands. Later it served as a temporary capital for Manco Inca, leader of the Inca resistance in 1537 during the Spanish conquest of Perú, who fortified the town to stop the advance, as Cusco had fallen under Spanish domination.

After the tour, you will be transferred to your hotel.



Overnight in the Sacred Valley



Machu Picchu Citadel

Day 11

Cusco / Machu Picchu / Cusco (B/L/-)



Full day excursion to Machu Picchu via roundtrip train (private)

Morning transfer to the train station for an amazing train journey to the famous Inca Citadel of Machu Picchu, the great mountain-top city abandoned by the Inca Empire, reclaimed by the jungle and lost to humanity until its rediscovery in 1911. The legendary 'Lost City' is without a doubt one of the world's most impressive archaeological sites. Built by the Incas on the summit of "Machu Picchu" (old peak), overlooking the deep canyon of the Urubamba river in a semi-tropical area 120 Kms (75 miles) from the city of Cusco at 3,400 m.a.s.l (11,155 f.a.s.l).

Along the way, you will enjoy the changing landscape as you travel from Andean highlands to the beginnings of the jungle ("eyebrow of the jungle"), before finally arriving at the town of Machu Picchu (ex-Aguas Calientes).



Sacred Sun Dial



From here we will board the bus that will take you on a 20-minute ride up to the citadel of Machu Picchu, or Lost City of the Incas, which sits upon the summit bearing the same name, and is one of the most representative and recognized examples of Incan architecture.

A guided tour of the Citadel includes the Main Plaza, the Circular Tower, the Sacred Sun Dial, the Royal Quarters, the Temple of the Three Windows and various burial grounds. Buffet lunch at the Machu Picchu Sanctuary Lodge is included.



In the afternoon, return to Cusco by train and upon arrival at the train station you will be met by our representative and private driver for your transfer to the hotel.



Overnight in Cusco



Plaza de Armas

Day 12

Cusco / Lima / ...

(B/BL/D)



AM: Cusco Walking City tour (private)

Today you will enjoy a guided tour of Cusco, the Imperial City, where you will admire the finest examples of Inca history and architecture. Visit the city's most important historical monuments that reveal the influence of different cultures: the Plaza de Armas, the Cathedral dating from Spanish viceroyalty times, built with great slabs of red granite renaissance style in contrast with the baroque style silverwork of its interior and, the Santo Domingo church built upon the foundations of the Inca Temple Koricancha.(only Mon thru Sat).

After the visit you will walk back to your hotel.



PM: Hotel / Airport (private)

At the appropriate time transfer to Cusco Airport to board your flight to Lima. Upon arrival in Lima you will be met by our representative who will assist you with your luggage and escort you to your bus.



Lima Airport assistance (private)

Upon arrival into Lima International Airport, you will be met by our representative who will assist you with check-in procedures and any departure formalities for your next flight.

Discover the intensity of Peru with Metropolitan Touring

A person wearing a blue jacket and a red backpack is standing on a stone terrace, holding a camera and taking a photograph. The terrace is part of an ancient stone structure with a thatched roof. In the background, there are misty, green mountains and a valley. The scene is captured from a high vantage point, looking out over the landscape.

For bookings and further information please contact your
Sales Expert