

Castine Kayak partnering with Explorers Corner to bring you to the world! Kayaking in Darwin's Paradise Sea Kayaking Journey Among the Enchanted Galápagos Islands

2009 Season Dates

Dec. 12 - 22, 2008

Dec. 19 - 29, 2008

Dec. 26, 2008 - Jan. 5, 2009

Jan. 2 - 12

Jan. 9 - 19

Jan. 23 - Feb. 2

Feb. 27 - Mar. 9

Mar. 6 - 16

Mar. 13 - 23

Mar. 20 - 30

Mar. 27 - Apr. 6

Apr. 3 - 13

Apr. 10 - 20

Apr. 17 - 27

Apr. 24 - May 24

May 1 - 11

May 8 - 18

May 15 - 25

May 22 - June 1

May 29 - June 8

June 5 - 15

June 12 - 22

June 19 - 29

July 3 - 13

July 10 - 20

July 17 - 27

Aug. 7 - 17

Aug. 14 - 24

EASY TROPICAL SEA KAYAKING EXPLORATION, EASY DAY HIKES
3 NIGHTS HOTELS, 7 NIGHTS ON CATAMARAN AT SEA
2 DAYS OF TRANSPORT TO AND FROM YOUR HOME



Galápagos without the large tour boat? Kayaking from place to place to get up close and personal with the marine life? We think that experiencing this natural wonder of the world with its rich flora and fauna from a kayak is the ultimate way to go. It's finally possible now thanks to our friends in the Galápagos who have secured a very special permit for Explorers' Corner, allowing us to bring eight guests to sea kayak among these famous, enchanted islands. Imagine...no big group! Just you and a few of your coexplorers. It's a more intimate and unusual way to experience Galápagos and

Explorers' Corner is happy to be able to offer it to you. We have the perfect small, sporty sailing vessel for getting us to all the most special spots. Our elegant and famous catamaran, the Galápagos Vision, was built by Philippe Jeantot, three-time "round-the-world sailing champion." It has 4 double and one single cabins, great lounges both inside and out, plus a friendly crew who will fix a full board every day. If you want to sleep with the sea lions, there are even a few comfy mattresses on deck for sleeping under the stars!

Just envision yourself in the Galápagos in the warm, misty ocean air pulling your paddle out of the clear, blue water and silently floating... when suddenly a marine turtle comes up for air right next to you! Or imagine gliding into a solitary bay and finding a beach inhabited solely by sea lions, marine turtles or large, curious marine iguanas. Yes it's true, we'll feel alone in the famous Galápagos wilderness as we kayak by day and travel by night.

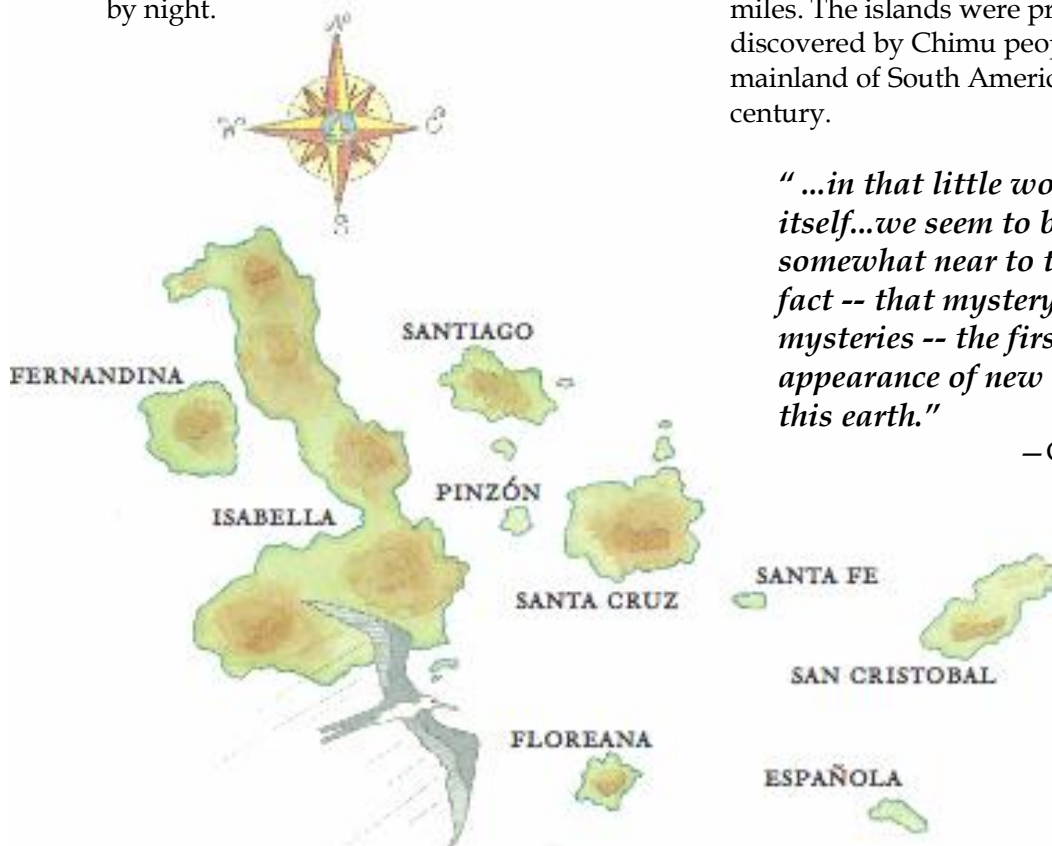
Every day, we will explore different islands either on foot or by kayak, and in the late afternoons our catamaran will pick us up and deliver us to yet another spectacularly beautiful Galápagos habitat to explore--there are so many. Not only are our kayaks designed to propel you safely and swiftly through the water, but they are also easy to jump from for a quick dip. Apart from kayaking there is a lot of swimming, beachcombing and snorkeling to be done.

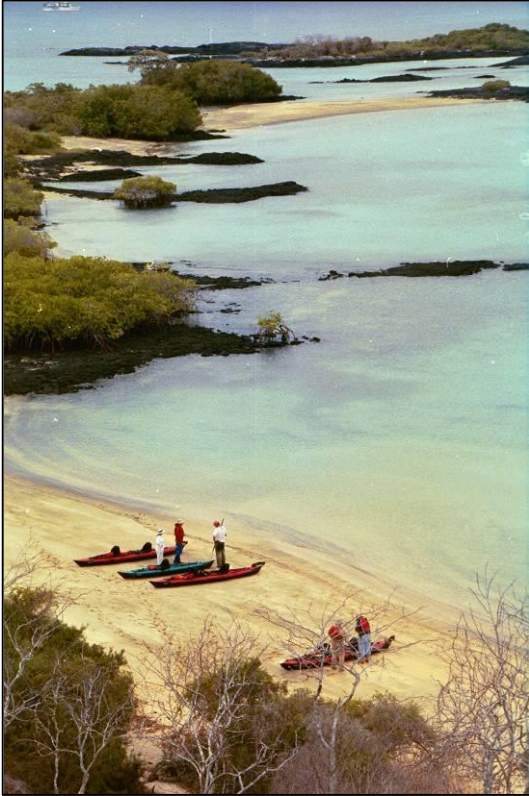
And last but certainly not least, we will have an Ecuadorian naturalist travel with us so we can get the most out of these amazing islands and learn from a professional about their natural history.

And just so you have the total picture. . . the Galápagos Islands lies in the Pacific Ocean about 600 miles east from the South American coast and straddles the equator. There are thirteen large islands, six smaller ones and 107 islets and rocks, with a total land area of about 3,000 square miles. The islands were probably first discovered by Chimu people from the mainland of South America in the 15th century.

"...in that little world within itself...we seem to be brought somewhat near to that great fact -- that mystery of mysteries -- the first appearance of new beings on this earth."

— Charles Darwin





Day-to-Day Itinerary

The Galápagos National Park requires itinerary submission, review and approval in order to steward responsible eco-tourism. **At any time we may be instructed by officials to reorganize our destinations or change them completely.** Your flexible attitude and spirit of adventure are appreciated by the Islanders, who so graciously let us visit their park.

Day 1. Friday: Flight from home to Quito, Ecuador.

Transfer to hotel in Quito. Dinner on your own (it is likely you will be on a plane during dinner, arriving late at night). (No meals - in transit)... [Hotel Vieja Cuba](#)

Day 2. Saturday: explore Quito and surroundings.

After breakfast, you'll have a chance to stretch your legs after your flight. We will

provide a half-day city tour (lunch on your own) or you may arrange, for an extra charge, to have a guide take you to the outstanding Otavalo market, rent bicycles, visit a butterfly farm, or enjoy another of the many activities around this bustling city and its spectacular natural surroundings. We will meet back at our hotel later in the day to introduce ourselves over drinks and enjoy a welcome dinner before getting briefed about our coming adventure!

[B,D... Hotel Vieja Cuba](#)

Day 3. Sunday: Galápagos. Transfer to airport and flight to San Cristobal.

Early morning flight to Galapagos – we may refuel in Guayaquil during our flight out to the Islands. Our naturalist guide will meet us upon arrival at the airport and take us to the new Interpretation Center in San Cristobal. The government of Spain funded the center's construction, and it is used to educate local people about the importance of conservation. After the visit to the museum we transfer to the catamaran and have a lunch while we get ship/safety instructions. Later in the afternoon we will take a truck ride up to the Galapaquera – a natural habitat for the tortoises that inhabit the inland heights of the island. After dinner, we will have a chance to stroll along the harbor in San Cristobal and have a drink at a local café. At night we motor or sail (conditions permitting) 3 miles northeast and we will lay anchor at Isla Lobos.

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Day 4. Monday: Isla Lobos – Kicker Rock.

In the morning we go ashore at Playa Ochoa, where we can swim with the sea lions in the aquamarine waters and watch the comical blue-footed boobies. Here we will receive a thorough safety, equipment and paddling technique talk by our sea kayaking guide and all the kayaks will be fitted to each individual paddler.

We are now ready for a short paddle back to Isla Lobos, a great place for iguana and frigate bird watching. After a short hike and an early lunch, we will paddle 2-3 hours to Kicker Rock along the northern shores of Isla San Cristobal. Kicker Rock (Leon Dormido) is a cone-shaped rock formation, abruptly rising almost 500 feet from the ocean surface. Sea lions and blue-footed boobies cavort nearby – a great place to put the kayaks in the water and explore the caves and narrow channels – you will be in for a surprise! In the evening we will have a sunset dinner at Kicker Rock and start to sail or motor to Isla Espanola.

[B, L, D... M/V Galápagos Vision](#)



Day 5. Tuesday: Espanola; Punta Suarez and Gardner Bay.

In the morning, we will hike 1 to 2 hours to the headlands of Punta Suarez, one of the archipelago's most prolific wildlife habitats. Marine iguanas with traces of red and green (a color combination unique to this island) pile one on top of the other, impervious to our stares. Bird

life is abundant here and includes mockingbirds, blue-footed and masked boobies, frigate birds, and the waved albatross. After an early lunch we will launch our kayaks for a 2–3 hours paddle to Gardner Bay. On the way we crisscross through an idyllic archipelago of islets and paddle the white beach in front of the Baroness Viewpoint – a good place to ascend and get a full view of the coastline. Along the coast we can expect to see sea turtles from our kayaks. Finally we glide



into Gardner Bay, where we will have a chance to walk along a long sandy beach, enjoy lovely views, and swim and kayak with the irrepressibly friendly Galápagos fur seals. Keep an eye skyward for the endemic Galápagos Hawk, the only raptor in the islands, as well as tame yellow-crowned night herons and American oystercatchers. This paddle may be reversed, depending upon wind direction. [B, L, D... M/V Galápagos Vision](#)

Day 6. Wednesday: Floreana, Post Office Bay and Punta Cormorant.

At Floreana (also known as Charles Island or Isla Santa Maria) we will follow in the

footsteps of pirates, whalers, and colonists as we explore this island. One relic of this colorful history is the “Post Office Barrel,” established by British whalers in 1793, where you can still drop off mail. After having visited the mail drop-off site and a brief spelunk into a nearby cave, we will paddle for 1 1/2–2 hours eastwards to Punta Cormorant. Halfway through the paddle we will kayak up to the beach and hike up to the Empress viewpoint. Nearby, Palo Santo trees surround a brackish lagoon that hosts flamingos. We will do a hike here (1 hour) to watch the flamingos in the lagoon and walk over to a pristine bay known for its turtle nesting areas and schools of manta rays off shore. After lunch we will paddle to a fabulous snorkeling spot, the center of an eroded volcano, Devils’ Crown, full of colorful marine life. It’s also a popular roosting spot for seabirds. We’ll snorkel in the swift current – we often get lucky and spot white-tipped reef sharks here. After dinner we motor/sail for Isla Santa Fe.

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Day 7. Thursday: Santa Fe kayaking and the Charles Darwin Research Station.

The protected small bay on Santa Fe’s northeast coast and extremely picturesque anchorage will provide us with a great trail where we will explore the wildlife and flora on an early morning hike. One of these leads to a scenic viewpoint on top

of a cliff, and eventually leads to an area where a species of land iguana unique to this island can sometimes be seen. From the north coast we paddle 2 hours to the northeastern point of Santa Fe, where there are caves where the brown noddies nest and there are also possible sightings of marine sea turtles. This is also a very good spot for snorkeling off the kayaks. We will have lunch aboard the ship while sailing 2 hours to Pto. Ayora. This village is the home of the Darwin Research Station, where international scientists conduct important biological and conservation research. Up to seven species of Darwin’s finches through the bushes in the vicinity. We also see some of the more famous denizens of the islands here: the giant Galápagos sea tortoises, and the smaller Saddle-backed tortoises. These lumbering creatures are difficult to spot in the wild, so this may be your only chance to see them. Once pushed to the brink of extinction, they are making a comeback, thanks to the efforts of the naturalists working here at the Darwin Station. After this early afternoon visit at the station, we stroll through the street of the Pto. Ayora. We will stop and have a drink in one of the local cafes and in the evening we board the Galápagos Vision for dinner. After this full day, we motor/sail to James Bay on Isla San Salvador at night.

[B, L, D... M/V Galápagos Vision](#)





Day 8. Friday: James Bay to Buccaneer Bay, Isla San Salvador.

After a well deserved breakfast we start paddling north to Buccaneer Bay, stopping (if the surf allows it) on different beaches along the way (one of them has a lagoon behind it – often a good spot for flamingoes and turtle nests). Before we arrive at Buccaneer Bay we pass under the impressive steep bluffs of northwestern San Salvador – this is a powerful oceanic spot! At North Buccaneer Bay we meet up with the Galápagos Vision and head back to St. James Bay while having a late lunch. In the afternoon, we do a coastal walk south of St. James Bay – this spot is known to have great blow holes and marine iguana sightings (We even discovered a wild tortoise here!) At night we will motor/sail to Isla Sombrero Chino (Chinese Hat) A very active day!

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Day 9. Saturday: Sombrero Chino - Isla Bartolome

This is a good Galapagos penguin spot! The morning is spent leisurely snorkeling and swimming with the sea lions in the protected bay between Chinese Hat and San Salvador. For those who are super active – there is an optional hike along the coast of Chinese Hat. We take an early lunch and have a 3-5 hour paddle to Isla Bartolome along the frozen lava flows of San Salvador’s coastline – it is like paddling along side the moon! If the swell conditions allow it, we go around the entry point to Sullivan Bay where we rest on the white coral sand beach. From here it is only a short paddle to Isla Bartolome – famous for being the backdrop in the movie “Master and Commander”. We end this active day by climbing to the top of this island for its famous view of the double bays of Isla Bartolome. A memorable goodbye

impression of the Enchanted Islands! At about 5 o'clock PM we have to head back to San Cristobal—about an eleven hour boat ride overnight.

[B, L, D... M/V Galápagos Vision](#)

Day 10. Sunday: San Cristobal.

Isla San Cristobal, where we say farewell to our yacht crew and naturalist. We will transfer to the airport and fly back to Quito in the afternoon. Farewell dinner at a traditional restaurant in Quito.

[B, L, D... Hotel Vieja Cuba](#)

Day 11. Monday: Return home.

Transfer to Quito airport and flight back to home destination.

[B... Return Home](#)

Land Cost

Group size 7-8: \$4,490*

Group size 4-6: \$4,990

Single Supplement: \$100

Internal Flights

\$395

Park Fee

\$100



**Price does not include international airfare or mandatory trip insurance. Prices are given in US Dollars.*



What's Included?

- Expert leadership and support personnel
- All accommodations as noted
- Meals as noted (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner)
- Group airport transfers
- All kayaking gear and safety equipment
- Sightseeing as noted in the itinerary
- Ground transportation

What's Not Included?

- International airfare (home/Quito r/t)
- Insurance of any kind: mandatory evacuation insurance, suggested cancellation insurance
- Visas
- Excess baggage charges
- Airport taxes
- Medical immunizations
- Items of a personal nature (clothing, sodas, liquor, snacks, laundry, etc.)



Explorers' Corner

Explorers' Corner endeavors to foster a community of explorers that dare to make true travel dreams-only limited by the world and our imaginations. Explorers' Corner is a mostly-referral specialty adventure travel company offering unique destinations and/or experiences, custom adventures and "old-world" one-to-one customer service.

Dr. Olaf Malver, who has lead hiking, climbing and sea kayaking trips and expeditions on all seven continents for over 25 years, founded Explorers' Corner. He's visited over 100 countries and has operated expeditions to diverse locations such as Pakistan, Nepal, the Antarctic, Greenland, Indonesia, Vietnam, Panama, the Nicobar Islands, Zanzibar-and many other "frontier destinations."

We're here to answer any of your questions about this trip or other trips Explorers' Corner offers. Don't hesitate to visit our web site at www.castinekayak.com, call us at 207-866-3506 or email us at castinekayak@gmail.com.

The World is Ours to Explore!