

Galapagos Hiking & Kayaking Adventure

**Our Exclusive
Catamaran-Based
Odyssey is the Most
Unique & Exciting
Way to See the
Islands!**



It's no wonder Herman Melville called the Galapagos "The Enchanted Isles." This far-flung archipelago is unique on earth. Giant tortoises roam misty meadows. Sea lions loll, nonchalant, on pristine beaches. Iguanas bask on sun-baked lava while sea turtles, rays and penguins swim with snorkelers in turquoise waters. Paddling this primeval paradise is a privilege few visitors get to enjoy. We have one of the only Galapagos kayaking permits, with access to rare and remote places that guests aboard larger ships never see. Our deluxe catamaran whisks us between anchorages and provides comfortable accommodations when we're not kayaking or hiking ashore. Each day we explore a different island, either on foot or along the shoreline by kayak, or sometimes both. The islands are surprisingly diverse, with new discoveries at each location we visit.

- An exclusive, expertly guided active adventure in the world's most unique wildlife destination—plus a full day exploring the Andean cloud forest beforehand!
- Enjoy nature hikes, snorkeling and tropical sea kayaking—we hold one of the only paddling permits in the Galapagos
- Sleep comfortably aboard our luxury sailing catamaran, the *S/V Nemo III*, in private en suite cabins

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Day 1: Quito,

Ecuador

Arrive in Quito and transfer to San Jorge Eco Lodge via a scenic drive into the Andean highlands just outside the city.

Our accommodations are in a gracious 18th-century mountain hacienda surrounded by beautiful gardens and situated on 200 acres of untouched, protected land. This

botanical reserve was set aside to preserve the natural habitat of the many endemic plants, animals and more than 90 different species of birds, native only to the Andes region. Dinner is on your own this evening, in order to enjoy the lodge and its surroundings at your leisure.

Day 2: San Jorge de Tandayapa Hummingbird Sanctuary

This morning we drive to the San Jorge de Tandayapa Hummingbird Sanctuary where we'll spend a full day exploring the cloud forest with our local guide. As we wander along lush trails, we are surrounded by panoramic vistas, wildlife, tropical plants and flowers including 40 species of orchids and a multitude of birds. The reserve is part of the famous Chocó Endemic Bird Area of northwest Ecuador where as many as 500 different species thrive—one of the best birdwatching spots on the planet! Some 26 species of hummingbirds frequenting the feeders during the year, along with flocks of varied tanagers. Other birds we might see include toucan barbet, golden-headed and crested quetzal, plate-billed mountain toucan, masked trogon, Andean cock of the rock, and many more. We'll enjoy lunch at the open-air Hummingbird Restaurant, watching tiny whirring visitors frequent the feeders as we dine, offering great close-up photo

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opportunities. Returning to San Jorge Eco Lodge, we gather this evening for our official Welcome Dinner.

Day 3: Fly to the Galápagos / Board *S/V Nemo III*

Transfer to the airport in Quito this morning for our flight to the Galapagos. Our Expedition Leader meets us as we land on the island of Baltra, where



we transfer to the *S/V Nemo III*. This first-class sailing catamaran will be our home for the next week as we kayak Galapagos! Our first destination is Las Bachas on Santa Cruz, a white-sand beach that is a prominent nesting site for green sea turtles. Flamingoes are also frequently spotted here in the saline lagoons. Our Expedition Leader is an expert naturalist on the islands' flora and fauna, whose knowledge

enhances our discoveries at every turn. This afternoon we'll have an orientation to our kayaks, with an introduction to technique and safety, as well as a chance to get fitted into our boats.

Day 4: Santa Cruz Highlands / Charles Darwin Research Station

Discover a different side of Santa Cruz as we ascend to its misty heights. At the Tortoise Reserve, we view these ancient, amiable creatures in their



lush natural setting. Nearby, we explore a network of subterranean lava tubes. In Puerto Ayora, the main town on Santa Cruz, we'll visit the Charles Darwin Research Station where international scientists conduct research dedicated to conserving the unique habitats and species of the Galapagos.

Day 5: Cerro Brujo, Kicker Rock and Isla Lobos

Cerro Brujo on San Cristobal is an expanse of powdery white sand that's home to a large colony of sea lions as well as blue-footed boobies, pelicans, egrets and marine iguanas. We explore by kayak, paddling near a tuffstone cone where wave erosion has sculpted tunnels and caves. Then

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we sail aboard *Nemo III* to Kicker Rock, a dramatic volcanic tuff cone that rises 500 feet above the ocean's surface. Here we'll snorkel in deep water to observe and swim with sea turtles, rays of various kinds, as well as gentle reef sharks. By early afternoon we're bound for Isla Lobos, where we enjoy a delightful swim with the resident sea lion colony and look for



feeding marine iguanas.



Day 6: Espanola

Espanola is one of the most prolific wildlife sites in the Galapagos. We hike to the headlands of Punta Suarez where bird life abounds, with Hood mockingbirds, blue-footed and masked boobies, magnificent frigatebirds and Galapagos hawks. Espanola is also the

world's main nesting site for the enormous waved albatross. In the afternoon we relocate to Gardner Bay. First we'll relax at an idyllic white sand beach where sea lions laze by the dozens and Pacific green sea turtles frequent the rocky part of the shoreline. We then set out for a sunset paddle along the north shore of the island, along a cliff formed by eroded cinder cones and layers of old basalt, observing giant cacti and many species of birds. Afterward, our catamaran awaits us in the quiet bay.

Day 7: Floreana

On Floreana, we hike through a palo santo forest to a brackish lagoon that's home to flamingos. Then, we travel aboard *Nemo III* a short distance offshore to Champion islet, one of the best drift-snorkel spots in the Galapagos. As the current floats us past the steep walls of these underwater volcanic formations, we'll spy large schools of colorful fish as we're followed by playful young sea lions. Following in the footsteps of pirates, whalers, convicts and colonists, we explore Floreana's rich history of adventure. One



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relic of this colorful past is the “Post Office Barrel,” established by British whalers in 1793, where travelers still leave mail for personal delivery by visitors passing through. Late this afternoon, pending conditions, we make a paddle around the mangrove shores of Post Office Bay, where large bull sea lions patrol the rocky territory and reddish marine iguanas bask near the tree cacti.

Day 8: Santa Fe & South Plaza

On Santa Fe, we do a short hike through a forest of prickly pear cacti, looking for the endemic land iguanas that wait patiently underneath for fruit to drop. Returning to our catamaran, we go snorkeling around a small islet, a natural aquarium with great reef diversity. Next, a two-hour paddle along Santa Fe’s north coast reveals large cliffs and sea caves used by many species of marine birds for nesting and roosting, as well as basking green sea turtles and sea lions. By noon we’ll be sailing for South Plaza, one of the smallest islands yet vibrant with diverse flora, land creatures and marine life. We ascend a trail among colorful plants to look for a completely different species of land iguana than we’ve seen previously, skirting scenic cliffs with dramatic views of the ocean. Overhead, red billed tropicbirds and Galapagos shearwaters fly in large numbers from nearby nests.



Day 9: Sombrero Chino & Bartolome

Sombrero Chino Island, our destination this morning, really does look like a Chinese hat! Our day begins with a two-hour paddle through the Bainbridge Rocks, shaped like a string of floating mushroom tops. We then snorkel in the channel, hoping the resident penguin family will join us. Sailing on to Bartolome, some of

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the best snorkeling in the Galapagos awaits around its submerged base, an underwater playground that's home to enormous schools of fish, permanently under attack by Galapagos penguins. Sleeping white-tipped reef sharks, sea turtles and stingrays are also common sightings.

Day 10: Santa Cruz / Return to Quito

Returning to Santa Cruz, we explore the

mangrove ecosystem of Black Turtle Cove. An early morning tender by panga, or dinghy, takes us inside a mangrove lagoon where spotted eagle and golden rays swim in schools, white-tipped reef sharks rest at the bottom, and sea turtles bask. Birds abound, too, and we'll likely see pelicans, herons and egrets feeding in the cove. Too soon, our time in the Enchanted Isles comes to a close—our return flight to Quito departs from Baltra Airport this afternoon. Back in the city, we enjoy a farewell dinner.



Day 11: Quito / Fly home

An early morning airport transfer is provided to meet departing flights.

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S/V Nemo III

Location

Galapagos Islands, Ecuador



The *S/C Nemo III* is a 75-foot luxury motor sailing catamaran. The vessel accommodates up to 16 guests in eight cabins of varying configurations, though we cap our trip at approximately 14 guests for a more comfortable and intimate nature adventure. All cabins are air conditioned and have en suite bathrooms with hot and cold water, plus storage space for personal items. Public spaces include lounge areas inside and out, a dining salon and small bar, and a sundeck with Jacuzzi, banquette seating and lounge chairs. The boat's hospitable crew attends to guests' every need, including three meals a day plus snacks to energize a daily round of active pursuits.

Although this sailing vessel is smaller and more simple than our larger motor yachts, we have chosen it for our hiking and kayaking trip because of its classic, sporty style and nimble nature, which perfectly complement the focus of this active adventure.

Group Size Limit

Approximately 14 Travelers

A very important feature of our Galapagos kayaking and hiking trip is the limited group size, as nature expeditions are best experienced with a small group of travelers.

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Please note: A minimum of 8 travelers will be required to operate our 2016-2017 departures.

Included:

Accommodations, meals from breakfast on Day 2 to breakfast on Day 11 (except lunch and dinner on Day 10), safe drinking water, services of professional Expedition Leader, boat crew, some gratuities, airport transfers, use of wetsuits and snorkel gear, permit fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from Quito, R/T air Quito to Galapagos (to be added to your invoice and subject to change through day of departure), most gratuities, alcohol, Galapagos tax and transit card (approximately \$110), items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry, etc.), travel insurance, optional activities.

Mandatory Insurance

Medical Evacuation and Hospitalization Insurance is mandatory for all trips. You will be required prior to the trip to submit proof of insurance and a contact number to get hold of your insurance provider from the field.

Physical Requirements

This trip is rated ***Moderate to Difficult***

General physical fitness and mobility are essential to participate in this trip, as well as some prior experience with kayaking. Activities include mainland and island hiking, kayaking, swimming and snorkeling. The location of our pre-cruise accommodations on the mainland is at 9,000-9,500 feet in altitude, and some walking on a steep hillside between individual guest rooms and the lodge is necessary. Our mainland cloud forest hike is approximately two miles long at 5,500 feet in altitude. Our island hikes in the Galapagos are often on trails that are rough and uneven, sometimes traversing lava fields and navigating sharp or slippery rocks. Constrained by the nature of the park trail systems and the size of the islands, most of our hikes will be from one to one and a half miles long. When weather and conditions permit, our trip will include five opportunities for sea kayaking, each outing about two hours in length. Some prior paddling experience is required, as a couple of these excursions require some technical knowledge to navigate through breaking waves and rough water. Most activities on this trip will range in length from one to three hours, and we will often have several activities in one day while in the islands. Travelers are not required to participate in every activity.

Important Information

There is perhaps no more appropriate destination for travelers than the Galapagos Islands. With rare and friendly wildlife found at every turn, the islands exhibit the beauty and intricacies of nature in a remarkable setting. Our highly trained Expedition Leaders are on hand to help bring it all alive in a personalized manner. The key to the success of our Galapagos adventures is our small group size—we boast one of the lowest guide-to-guest ratios of any operator in the islands. The *Nemo III*, our intimate sailing

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catamaran, accommodates just 12 guests plus our Expedition Leader and sailing crew. This trip is the most unique Galapagos experience available for travelers who are interested in (and physically capable of) getting "out there" on foot and by kayak. In addition to land-based and paddling excursions, we'll have the opportunity to snorkel almost every day while in the islands— a major part of any comprehensive Galapagos experience. It will be a top highlight, for certain!

Please note: The itinerary provided is meant as a guideline and is subject to change without notice. On rare occasions, it may be necessary to deviate from our regular itinerary for reasons beyond our control. In these instances we will provide the best available alternative.

Getting There & Getting Home

Arrive in Quito, Ecuador, anytime on Day 1 and depart anytime on Day 11. We are prepared to handle all your round-trip travel arrangements, including flights for your extensions. We can serve you best if our staff makes your reservations, as our staff is intimately familiar with the special requirements of this program and can help arrange the most efficient and cost-effective travel.

Potential Upcoming Dates for 2017

- March 10, 2017 – March 19, 2017
- March 24, 2017 – February 2, 2017
- March 31 April 9th (newly added northern islands circuit!)
- April 7, 2017 – April 16, 2017
- April 21, 2017 – April 30, 2017

2016 Fees (*prices subject to change, for reference only, potential 5-7% increase in 2017*)

Category 1 Cabin: \$5,795 per person (Double Occupancy)

Category 2 Cabin: \$6,095 per person (Double Occupancy)

Cabin Categories

Category 1: # 1, 2, 7, 8

Cabins 1 and 2 have two twin beds and are approximately 65 square feet. Located on the main deck.

Cabins 7 and 8 have one double bed and are approximately 72 square feet. Located on the lower level at the rear of the ship.

Category 2: # 3, 4, 6

Cabins 3, 4 and 6 have one double bed and an upper twin and are approximately 90 square feet. Located on the lower level.

Prices excludes internal air and park tax. Prices are based on double occupancy and are given in US Dollars. 2016 and 2017 dates and fees may change slightly.

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Other Fees

Internal Flights: Adults: \$550; Children 11 & under: \$350 (2015 & 2016)

Galapagos Park Fee & Transit Card: Adults: \$120; Children 11 & under: \$70

Holiday Surcharges: \$200 (2015); \$400 (2016)

To Book YOUR trip of a lifetime: Contact Castine Kayak at 207-866-3506 or castinekayak@gmail.com with a **Deposit:** \$500 (non-refundable)



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Single Supplement

If available, 1.5 times regular rate on a first-come, first-served basis on our scheduled trips on the *Nemo III* only (singles are not available on the *Nemo II* due to space restrictions). If requested, we can also match you with a roommate during your stay on the boat. If one is not available, you will not be charged the single supplement for the boat portion of the trip, but you will be required to pay the supplement for the mainland portion of the program (\$300 for 2015 and 2016).

Triples and Roommate Matching

Triple cabins are available on the *Nemo III* in Category 2 rooms only (there is one lower double bed and one raised single bed). All 3 passengers receive a \$500 per person discount. In order to accommodate roommate matches for single guests interested in sharing a room, we may upgrade cabins at no charge to our guests.

Child Pricing

Children 14 and under will receive a \$500 discount off all departures upon receipt of a valid passport copy. We recommend a minimum age of 12 years old given the demands of the activities and nature of the boat.

Dates & Pricing Notes

Prices are per person based on double occupancy and are given in US Dollars. Dates for 2017 will be similar to 2016 dates and will be allocated to guests on a first-come, first-served basis. 2017 dates and fees may change slightly. *Guests who reserve their space prior to final pricing confirmation will receive the lowest rate within the range offered.*