

## DETAILED ITINERARY OF THE YACHT YOLITA II-8 DAYS-7 NIGHTS (DAY BY DAY) (THURSDAY TO THURSDAY)

### Day 1: Thursday morning:

#### Arrival at Baltra Airport, Galapagos



The flight from Quito (via Guayaquil) to the Galapagos is approximately 1 ½ hours on a Boeing 727. Upon arrival at Baltra travelers pass through an airport inspection point to insure that no foreign plants or animals are introduced to the islands and to pay the park entrance fee of \$100 . Guide will meet you, collect your luggage and escort you on the short bus ride to Puerto Ayora, capital of Santa Cruz Island, where YOLITA II yacht is waiting for you . Our crew will welcome you on board. After your lunch , you will have your first visit.

### Thursday Afternoon: PM: Santa Cruz Island: Highlands



During your visit to the highlands of Santa Cruz Island, you will walk through tunnels formed by rivers of red hot lava, gaze down into giant pit craters formed by collapsed magma chambers, trek through lush green cloud forest observing many colorful species of birds, and, seek out giant Galapagos Tortoises in the wild

The two gigantic pit craters offer another dramatic and exciting insight into the formation of these islands. Nestled in a cloud forest in the highlands of Santa Cruz this visitors site offers great bird watching, plant identification and nature trails. Los Gemelos are in fact surface magma chambers that were once filled with red hot, liquid magma. This magma was expelled or drained away leaving huge empty chambers just below the land surface. Over time, the ceilings of these caverns weakened and collapsed leaving two enormous holes in the forest that had grown over the top of them.

You'll see the lush green forest of endemic Scalesia and Galapagos Guava Trees is a cool and refreshing change from the heat of the coast. The forest is shrouded in clouds (or garua, a light mist) most of the year and so lush green vegetation is abundant as are a wide variety of birds including the bright red Vermillion Flycatcher, many species of Darwin Finches, Galapagos Doves and Yellow Warblers.

You'll have the opportunity to see a Galapagos Giant Tortoise in it's natural habitat. These enormous creatures roam freely between the national park areas and the agricultural zone. This visit offers the ideal opportunity to view these ancient creatures munching on lush green vegetation or wallowing in the mud of the seasonal pools that attract them from the lowlands during the dry winter season. Many bird species may be observed too, including migratory shore birds at certain times of year!

**Day 2:**  
**Friday Morning:**  
**AM: Rabida Island**



Disembark and make a wet landing on the mesmerizing red beaches of Rabida Island. Walk along the beach past sea lions, marine iguanas and a variety of birds, including mockingbirds, yellow warblers and Darwin's finches. Continue inland to the island's unique saltwater pond to search for the island's famous bright pink flamingos. There may also be time to snorkel and relax on the beach.

**Friday Afternoon:**  
**PM: Chinese Hat**



Chinese hat is a tiny Island just off the southeastern tip of Santiago Island is less than a quarter of 1 sq km in size. It is a fairly recent volcanic cone, which accounts for its descriptive name, it has the shape of a down-facing Chinese hat. The hat shape is best appreciated from the northside. Opposite Sombrero Chino, on the rocky shoreline of nearby Santiago, Galapagos penguins are often seen. There is a small sea lion cove on the north shore, where boats anchor and land at the visitor site. A 400 m. trail goes around the cove and through a sea lion colony and marine iguanas cover the landscape. The volcanic scenery is attractive, and there are good views of the cone. There are snorkeling and swimming opportunities in the cove.

**Day 3:**  
**Saturday Morning:**  
**AM: Bartolomé Island**



Bartolome Island itself is famous for its 'Pinnacle Rock' - probably the most photographed volcanic formation in the islands. Climb up a long wooden staircase comprising 360+ steps to the viewpoint on the summit that offers breathtaking views to nearly all the central islands in the archipelago. A short dinghy ride after the walk will allow you to photograph the Galapagos Penguins that live along the coastline.

The orange beach and surrounding coastline is great for swimming and snorkeling and there is the opportunity of seeing penguins, sea lions, rays, reef fish and white-tipped reef sharks. Lunch will be served with one of the most amazing volcanic backdrops found anywhere in the archipelago.

On this tour look out for: Penguins, Lava lizards, Snakes, Marine iguanas, Frigate birds, Blue footed boobies, Brown noddie terns, Brown pelicans, White tip sharks, Sting rays, Sea turtles.

**Saturday Afternoon:  
PM: Black Turtle Cove**



The excursion to Black Turtle Cove , (which is is a salt-water lagoon) provides passengers with a “panga” ride through the different mangrove species , red, white and black. During this excursion, the outboard motor of the small boat is turned off. This allows, in its quiet crystal clear waters, the close observation of Sea Turtles, White Tipped Reef Sharks, Spotted Eagle Rays, and Yellow Rays.

**Day 4:  
Sunday Morning:  
AM: North Seymour**



Located slightly to the north of the airport island of Baltra, North Seymour is a low, flat island, formed as a result of the uplift caused by magma build up below.

It is covered with low, bushy vegetation and contains the largest colony of Magnificent frigate birds in the Galapagos. Land iguanas are common here too. There is also a population of blue-footed boobies that perform an amusing courtship dance when nesting conditions are right, making this one of the highlights of the visit.

**Sunday Afternoon:  
PM: Bachas Beach**



Las Bachas is a white sand beach that is a major egg-laying site for sea turtles, and the name Las Bachas refers to the indentations left in the sand by laying turtles or departing hatchlings. 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. Bachas is located at the northwest part of Santa Cruz Island, it is a memorable swimming location.

**Day 5:  
Monday Morning:  
AM: South Plaza**



A small but in the winter season a very colorful uplifted island just off the east coast of Santa Cruz Island. South Plaza has a unique landscape of Sesuvium plants and Opuntia cacti and provides some of the most interesting plant and wildlife observation spots in Galapagos. Land iguanas are easily seen from the trail, normally lazing in the shade of the cacti. Swallow-tailed gulls and frigate birds use the rising air off the sea to glide effortlessly over the escarpment. Towards the far end of the island a ‘bachelor colony’ of male sea lions can be observed. You

will eat lunch anchored close to the rocky seashore inhabited by a large colony of playful sea lions.

**Monday Afternoon:  
PM: Santa Fe**



The turquoise water of the stunning bay where you will be anchored offers the opportunity to snorkel with sea lions. You will land on the sandy beach of a beautiful protected bay where you will be greeted by colonies of sea lions. A short circular trail takes you along the cliff edge where you can most likely spot the iguanas as well as many lava lizards and even the Galapagos Hawk. The trail brings you back round onto a second beach that is also inhabited by sea lions and blue footed boobies sit on the rocks. Snorkel in the bay with sea lions and admire the many species of reef fish and occasionally sea turtle and rays. Lunch will be served whilst still anchored in the bay.

On this tour look out for: Sea lions, Land iguanas, Lava lizards, Swallow-tailed gulls, Lava gulls, Shearwaters, Storm petrels, Marine iguanas, Great frigate birds, Blue footed boobies, Brown noddie terns, Brown pelicans, White tip sharks, Sting rays, Sea turtles.

**Day 6:  
Tuesday Morning:  
AM: Hood (Española) Island—Punta Suarez**



One of the oldest of the islands, Hood is small and flat with no visible volcanic crater or vent. Punta Suarez is one of the most outstanding wildlife areas of the archipelago, with a long list of species found along its cliffs and sand or pebble beaches. In addition to five species of nesting seabirds there are the curious and bold Hood Island mockingbirds, Galapagos doves and Galapagos hawks. Several types of reptiles, including the brilliantly colored marine iguana and the oversized lava lizard, are unique to this island. When heavy swells are running, Punta Suarez is also the site of a spectacular blowhole, with thundering spray shooting 30 yards into the air.

**Tuesday Afternoon:  
PM: Hood (Española) Island—Gardner Bay**



Gardner Bay is on the eastern shore and has a magnificent beach. This beach is frequented by a transient colony of sea lions, and is a major nesting site for marine turtles. Around the small islets nearby, snorkelers will find lots of fish and sometimes turtles and sharks. On a trail leading to the western tip of the island you'll pass the only nesting sites in the Galapagos of the waved albatross, huge birds with a 6-foot wingspan. These huge birds nest here from April to December and represent the majority of the world's population of this species. (B,L,D)

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**Day 7:**  
**Wednesday Morning:**  
**AM: Floreana Island—Punta Cormorant**



Punta Cormorant offers two highly contrasting beaches; the landing beach is of volcanic origin and is composed of olivine crystals, giving it a greenish tinge. At the end of the short trail is a carbonate beach of very fine white sand, formed by the erosion of coral skeletons; it is a nesting site for green sea turtles. Between these two beaches is a salt lagoon frequented by flamingoes, pintails, stilts, and other wading birds. An old eroded volcanic cone called Devil's Crown is a popular roosting site for seabirds such as boobies, pelicans, and frigates and it is not uncommon to

see red-billed tropicbirds in rocky crevices. The center of the crown is an outstanding snorkeling spot full of sea lions and colorful fish.

**Wednesday Afternoon:**  
**PM: Floreana—Post Office Bay / Devil's Crown**



Wet landing on a greenish colored sand beach. Passengers will hike a well marked trail beginning in the Black Mangrove beds heading towards the back of the lagoon. The large, brackish lagoon holds one of the biggest populations of flamingos in the Galápagos. This island is best known for its endemic plant life, such as the Galápagos millwork, Passion flower, and unique button mangrove. Novice snorkelers can practice back on the main beach where the sea lions are playful, while experienced snorkelers can roam the waters

around Devils Crown, which is an old eroded volcanic cone and popular roosting site for seabirds such as boobies, pelicans, and frigates and it is not uncommon to see red-billed tropicbirds in rocky crevices. The center of Devil's Crown is an outstanding snorkeling spot full of sea lions and colorful fish. (B,L,D)

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**Day 8:**  
**Thursday Morning:**  
**AM: Santa Cruz Island - Charles Darwin Station**



This morning we will visit at Puerto Ayora on Santa Cruz Island the Charles Darwin Research Station. Founded in 1959 at the centennial celebration of the publication of Darwin's Origin of Species, the research station has an international team of scientists that studies the biology and conservation of the Galápagos Islands. The station conducts captive breeding program of giant tortoises, and we'll see the hatchlings of several subspecies that have been brought back from near-extinction. This will be a good chance to get a close photograph of the largest of our planet's tortoises. Afterward there should still be time to stroll the quiet streets of Puerto

Ayora (pop. 10,000), buy souvenirs, mail postcards and absorb the local charm of the social heart of the Galápagos Islands. -b-



Transfer to Baltra to take your plane to mainland.

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