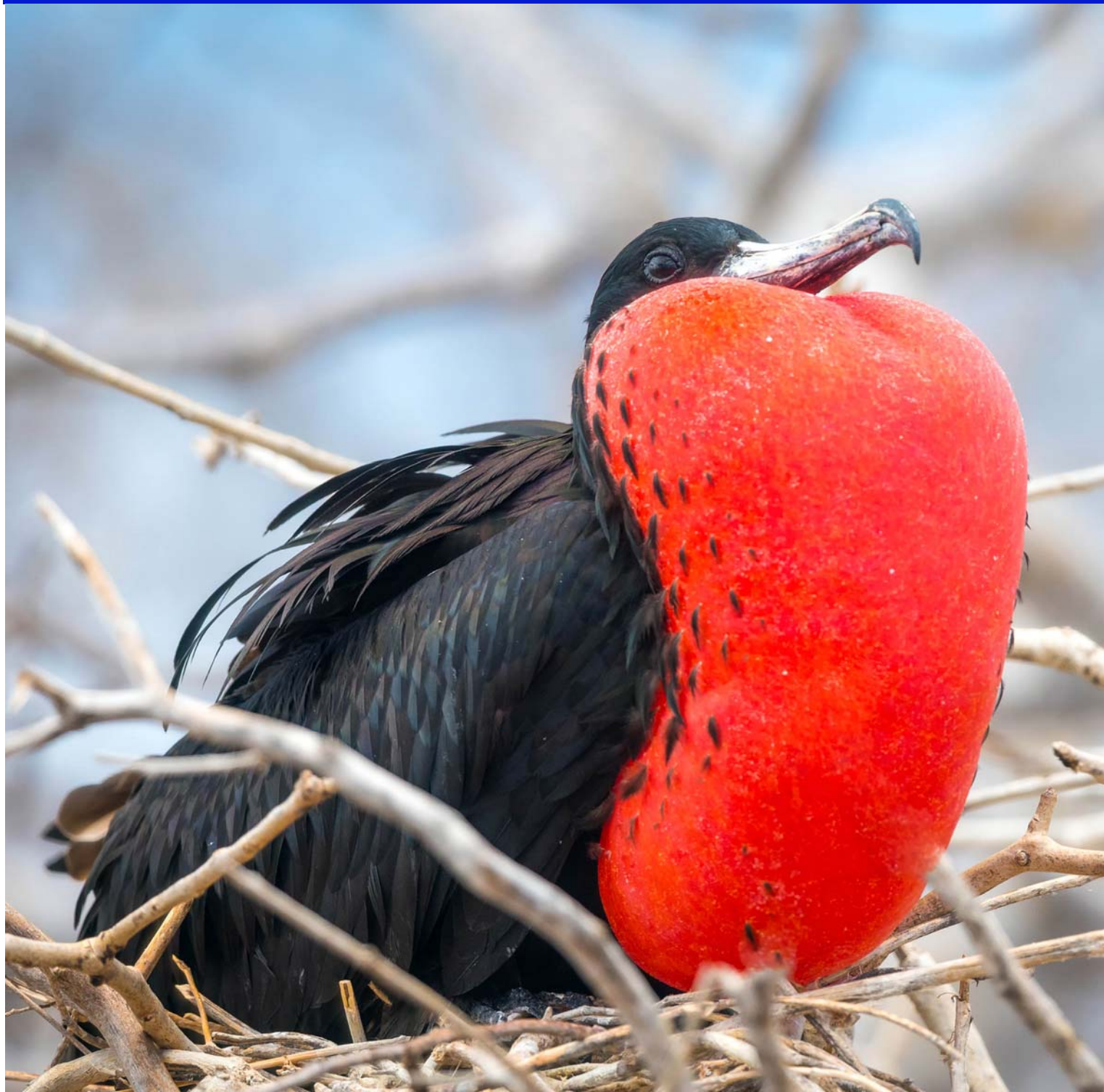




# ECUADOR & THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

16 DAYS - STARTING QUITO 9th APRIL 2021



# ECUADOR & THE GALAPAGOS

## Trip Outline

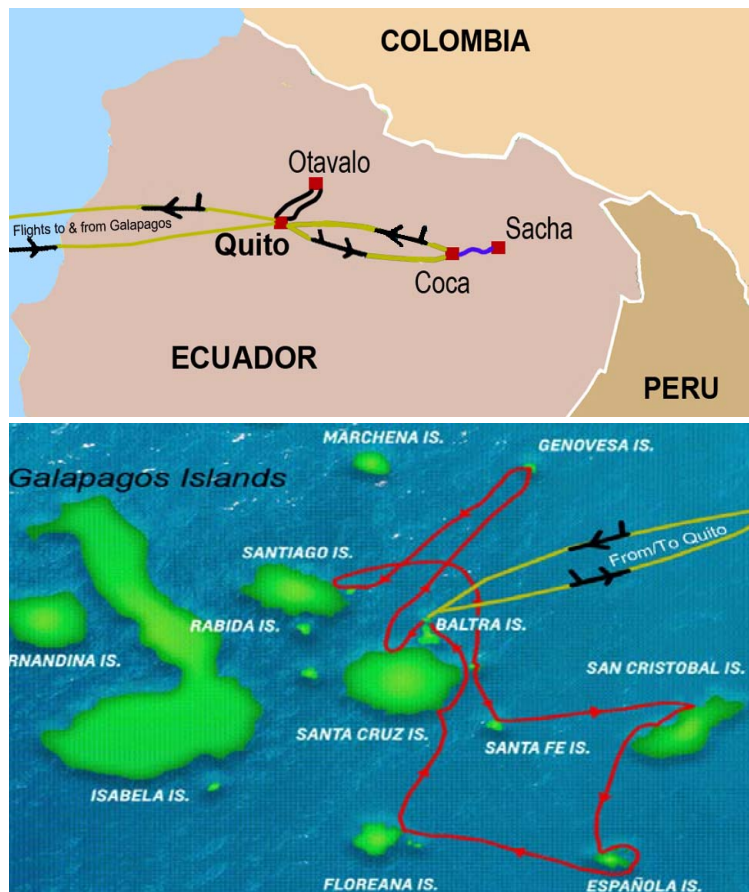
Ecuador is a microcosm of South America. Within its borders lie snow-capped mountains, smoking volcanoes, giant rivers, lush tropical coastal plains and dense jungle. And if this isn't enough to tempt the adventurous traveller then 1,000 km off the coast lie the world famous Galapagos Islands. These volcanic peaks, rising from the ocean floor, are home to many unique species of wildlife. Charles Darwin's observations of the islands' flora and fauna played a substantial part in the formulation of his theory of evolution. On this trip you will get to experience the many different facets of this intriguing country.

Your Ecuadorian adventure starts in the picturesque and colourful Andean town of Otavalo. The town is famous for its wonderful Indian arts and crafts market. We then visit Ecuador's capital Quito. Founded by the Spanish on the ruins of an Incan city, today the colonial centre is a UNESCO World Heritage site. You discover the city's highlights and travel out to 'Mitad del Mundo' to stand upon the Equator line.

A short flight over the Andes brings you to Coca where a motorized canoe on the Napo River brings you to Sacha Lodge - one of Ecuador's premiere rainforest lodges in the heart of the Amazon rainforest. With your expert rainforest guide you learn about the flora and fauna of this important biosphere. Walk atop the Canopy Bridge to see the forest from a different perspective. Seek out caiman, sloths, monkeys and an amazing assortment of stunning birdlife. Learn of the medicinal properties of plants and the traditions and beliefs of the native Indians. All this and more from the comfort of Sacha Lodge. After three nights in the rainforest you return to Quito for your flight to the remarkable Galapagos Islands.

On arrival at the Baltra airport you will transfer to the 'Fragata' which will be anchored nearby. The month of April is a wonderful time to be in the Galapagos and it's a great time to be joining a small group wildlife cruise. The weather is warmer, the seas are calmer and there is good underwater visibility. The warmer weather of February, March and April is when many of the land birds, sea lions, turtles and tortoises that you'll find on the Galápagos are breeding or nesting.

For the next week you will observe, swim and wander with some of the most amazing and friendliest wildlife on the planet. The wildlife, the flora and the dramatic geology of the islands will leave you spellbound. At the end of your time in these remote islands you will catch your flight back to Quito and to the end of your Ecuador adventure.



## Your Cruise Boat – M.Y. Fragata



MY Fragata is one of the few owner-operated vessels in the Galapagos and her 8 person crew pride themselves on ensuring you of a wonderful time on board. Cabins on Fragata are located on two of the four decks and there is both twin and double accommodation. All have individual AC, private en suite bathroom and beautiful wood floors and fittings.

The communal areas feature beautiful honey-colored natural wood. The main lounge is made for socializing - a perfect place to relax with a drink from the yacht's bar and listen to the talks from your naturalist guide. The dining room reflects the boat's friendly ambiance and meals are wholesome and delicious. There is a full size sundeck and a diving platform at the stern makes for easy entry and exit into the zodiacs and into the water. Snorkelling equipment can be hired on-board.

**Capacity:** 16 guests  
**Cabin Types:** Twin/ Dbl  
**Class:** Mid Range  
**Length:** 23 Metres  
**Engines:** 2 Detroit Diesel

**Cabins:** 4 Upper & 4 Lower Deck  
**Vessel Type:** Motor Yacht  
**Speed:** 9 Knots  
**Electricity:** 110V/220V  
**Tenders:** 2 x Zodiac Inflatables

# 2021 ITINERARY STARTS IN QUITO



**FRI 9 APR: QUITO-OTAVALO** – Upon arrival at Quito airport you will be met and transferred to your hotel in the picturesque Andean town of Otavalo. There are no activities planned so the remainder of the day is at your leisure.

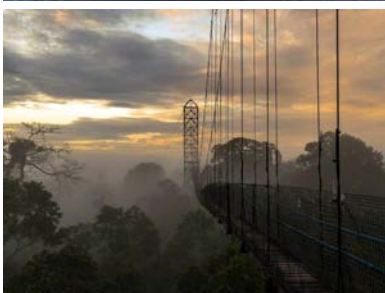


**SAT 10 APR: OTAVALO-QUITO** – Today you will explore the town of Otavalo, famous for its indigenous market. Saturday is traditionally the biggest market day of the week and the most colourful. Later you visit Cotachi village, known for its leather and a great place to meet local craft workers. You'll visit the Cuicocha crater lagoon before heading to Quito in the late afternoon. (B)

**SUN 11 APR: QUITO** – Following breakfast you start your tour of the colonial centre of Quito. First stop is at the neo-gothic Basilica Church and then the Plaza Grande, home to the Presidential Palace, the national Cathedral and the Archbishop's Palace. A highlight is the baroque La Compania Church with its volcanic stone face and its gold laden interior. In the afternoon you venture out to the 'Mitad del Mundo' monument situated on the equator line. Here you visit the Intinan Museum where you can experience a captivating combination of physics, folklore and Ecuadorian culture. You return to Quito in the late afternoon. (B)



**MON 12 APR: QUITO-COCA-SACHA LODGE** – This morning you transfer to the airport for your short flight over the Andes to Coca. This small city is located in the Amazon Rainforest at the confluence of the Coca and the Napo Rivers. Here you join motorised canoes on the Napo River and travel 2 hours downstream to Sacha Lodge situated on the edge of the Pilchiococha Lagoon. After settling in there is time to visit the Butterfly Centre, a magical place where you can observe a plethora of exotic butterfly species and learn about their life cycles. Following your first dinner in the jungle those who are feeling adventurous can head out on an evening walk through the rainforest to see different species of insects, snakes and other creatures only visible at night. (BD)



**TUE 13 APR: SACHA LODGE** – After an early breakfast head to the Canopy Bridge, one of the features making Sacha Lodge truly unique. Here, you can walk 275 meters through the forest at an altitude of 36 meters; a magical experience! It affords an excellent view of the canopy, where you can spot beautiful bird species and, with some luck, monkeys jumping from tree top to tree top. You then follow a trail through a Terra Firma and Igapo forest, while the native naturalist guide explains the flora and share their knowledge about traditional medicinal plants. After lunch you can choose between two hiking options. The first has a low difficulty level and leads you along the Napo River, while the second is a bit more challenging, following the Leoncillo Trail and giving you the opportunity to spot the dusky iti monkey. In the evening, a wonderful dinner is served in the restaurant. (BLD)



**WED 14 APR: SACHA LODGE** – After breakfast, you begin your hike along Lagartococha. Besides enjoying beautiful nature, this trail also offers us the chance to learn more about the local people and their relationship with the forest. During the hike, your guide tells us more about the native people's beliefs. When you arrive at Lagartococha Lake, you take small canoes to explore the swamp and look for anacondas, caimans, and capybaras. Your group continues the hike on the other side of the lake, where you may spot capuchin monkeys or squirrel monkeys jumping from tree to tree. Back at the lodge, you have some time to rest before lunch. In the afternoon, you can fish for piranhas from the terrace of the restaurant, after which you can join others in a dugout canoe safari, navigating over small streams in the swamp area that will bring you to one of the most peaceful places in the jungle. Keep your eyes wide open, because wildlife, like the lazy sloth, is hiding behind every tree. The canoes will bring you to an ancient Kapok tree where a wooden tower allows you to see a stunning sunset from above. Afterwards, you return to the lodge for dinner. (BLD)



**THU 15 APR: SACHA LODGE-COCA-QUITO** – After breakfast, you depart for a short walk over the boardwalks to hopefully spot monkeys and tropical birds one last time, before returning by motorised canoes back along the Napo River to Coca where you are brought to the airport for your return flight Quito. On arrival at the airport you are transferred back to your hotel in the colonial centre where the remainder of your day is free to make some further discoveries. There will also be a briefing this evening to discuss your trip to the Galapagos. (B)





**FRI 16 APR: FLY QUITO-BALTRA-BACHAS BEACH** – Today you will transfer to the airport for your flight to the Galapagos. The tiny island of Baltra is home to Galapagos' main airport, and this will be the starting point of your experience in the Galapagos Islands. Your bilingual naturalist guide will meet you at the airport and assist you during the transfer on-board the M.Y. Fragata which will be anchored nearby. There will be a welcome ceremony and briefing session. In the afternoon there is an excursion to the North coast of Santa Cruz. It's one of the main nesting grounds for sea turtles in the archipelago. There is time for a swim in the clear waters before heading back on-board. Each night after dinner there will be a briefing going through the next day's activities, explaining what you can expect to see, the type of landing, how much walking and whether you will be swimming or snorkelling. (BD)

**SAT 17 APR: GENOVESA ISLAND** – 'The Cliff' is a flat lava rock formation that can be easily accessed by wooden steps and provides an amazing view of the surrounding habitat; you'll find red-footed boobies, swallow-tailed gulls, the Galapagos dove and many other species among the Palo Santo trees and lava cacti during the 2km walk. Following lunch the boat visits Darwin Bay, home to colonies of frigates and a great variety of marine life. (BLD)

**SUN 18 APR: BARTOLOME ISLAND-SANTIAGO ISLAND** – Bartolome Island features distinctive lava formations and ash-cones, as well as a 375-step wooden stairs that takes you 114 metres above sea level to the top of the volcano where spectacular views of the bays below await you. The prominent "Pinnacle Rock" is located on this island and is one of the most visited sites in Galapagos. Following lunch you can enjoy an amazing snorkelling spot on Santiago Island where you can share the water with penguins and sea lions or relax on the lovely white sand beach. (BLD)

**MON 19 APR: PLAZAS ISLAND-SANTA FE ISLAND** – Plazas Island was formed out of lava and is now covered by the Opuntia cacti. It contains the largest sea-lion colony in the Galapagos, as well as yellow and red-land iguanas and numerous species of birds. Following lunch you'll take a trail through a forest of giant cacti on Santa Fe Island where you'll spot dozens of swallow-tailed gulls, petrels, and lava gulls. Afterwards, swim with sea lions in the lovely turquoise waters. (BLD)

**TUE 20 APR: SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND-WOLF ISLAND** – Kicker Rock is a gigantic lava rock that sticks out of the Pacific Ocean's surface. The volcanic formation is split into two creating a surreal diving spot. The rock is frequented by an array of seafaring birds however the real attraction is the marine life: spotted eagle rays, sea turtles, white-tipped reef sharks, Galapagos sharks, and hammerhead sharks. The Witch's Hill on San Cristobal is home to blue and red footed boobies, rays and sea turtles. Following lunch you will visit Wolf Island (Lobos Island). There is no landing offered here but it is a great diving and snorkelling spot where the cold currents attract the rarer sea life. (BLD)

**WED 21 APR: ESPANOLA ISLAND** – A congregation place for the blue footed and masked boobies, Darwin finches, Galapagos doves, and from April to June the albatrosses make this part of Espanola their nesting grounds. Take the 3 kilometre trail and visit the colonies of sea lions and marine iguanas at the blowhole known as "El Soplador" (the blower) that sprays water 25 metres into the air. In the afternoon the boat moves to the eastern side of the island to Gardner Bay. This is the nesting ground for almost all of the world's 12 thousand pairs of Galapagos albatross. Gardner Islet offers a magical landscape both above and beneath the water surface. Many small fish can be seen while snorkelling around the site as well as sea urchins and starfish. (BLD)

**THU 22 APR: FLOREANA ISLAND-SANTA CRUZ ISLAND** – Floreana holds a large lagoon where flamingos come to feed. The green sanded beach owes its colour to the olivine crystals present in the soil and it is the perfect texture for the sea turtles to lay their eggs during their breeding season from December to May. The Devil's Crown is a wave-eroded volcanic crater surrounded by coral reef that creates an impressive underwater landscape where you'll be able to find schools of colourful fish, sharks and sea turtles. In the afternoon visit the Charles Darwin Station and learn about the Giant Tortoises as well as the origin and formation of the archipelago. (BLD)

**FRI 23 APR: SEYMOUR ISLAND-BALTRA-QUITO** – Seymour Island is famous for being a gathering spot for blue footed boobies, frigates, swallow-tailed gulls, marine iguanas and sea lions. The island's vegetation is dominated by the Palo Santo tree and the climate is typically arid. After your visit you will reluctantly return to the Baltra Airport for your flight back to Quito. On arrival you will be transferred to your hotel in the colonial centre for your final evening. (B)

**SAT 24 APR: QUITO** – Your adventure in Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands ends after breakfast this morning. Taxis are available at the hotel or transfers can be arranged through Byroads. (B)

## Prices & Inclusions

### 16 Days – Ecuador & the Galapagos Islands

**Price:** USD \$8380 per person (Lower Deck twin-share)

**Upper Deck Supplement:** US \$150 per person

**Single Supplement Land & Cruise:** US \$3575 (Lower Deck)

**Single Supplement Land & Cruise :** US \$3725 (Upper Deck)

**Single Supplement Land Only:** US \$420

**Price includes:** Steve Mortimer as Tour Escort on Ecuador land package, return flights from Quito to Coca and to the Galapagos, arrival transfers in Quito, all transfers associated with your Galapagos cruise, 8 nights hotel, 7 nights on-board MY Fragata, local guides and qualified naturalist guide in the Amazon & Galapagos, meals as shown.

**Not Included:** Visa fees, travel insurance, international flights, additional meals, drinks, optional tours, spending of a personal nature, laundry, tips, departure transfer.

**Transportation:** On the mainland transport is by plane, air-conditioned minibus, motorised boats, canoes, & paddle canoes. On the Galapagos transport is by plane, cruise boat, zodiac/panga, air-conditioned minibuses.

**Accommodation:** We've selected wonderful colonial style accommodation in Otavalo and Quito and in the Amazon we use the magnificent Sacha Lodge. On the Fragata cabins are located on 2 decks and offer both twin and double beds, all with private en-suites (upper deck have larger windows).



150 year old hacienda in Otavalo



Comfort in Quito's historic centre



Ecuador's premier jungle lodge



Absolute comfort in the Jungle



MY Fragata – Lounge Room



MY Fragata – Sun Deck



MY Fragata -Twin Cabin Upper Deck



MY Fragata - Bathroom & Shower

**Fitness:** A moderate degree of physical fitness is required in order to get in and out of the canoes and zodiacs and to walk the jungle and island trails. The Amazon and Galapagos have limited medical facilities so you should also be in good health.

**Additional Expenses:** You must pay directly at the airport for your Transit Control Card (US \$20) and for your Galapagos National Park Entrance Fee (US \$100). As a guideline allow US\$7-\$12 for a light lunch and US\$12-\$25 for dinner on the mainland. Please also allow extra funds to tip your naturalist guides and crew.

**Bookings:** Travel on Q (Sydney) is the booking agent for this tour. Please book ASAP in order to secure your place and your preferred cabin type. A non-refundable deposit of AUD \$1000 per person is required with final payment due 90 days prior to tour commencement.

**Travel on Q** (Carole Grassby and Tina Briggs)

**Tel:** (02) 9357 6800 **Email:** [travel@travelonq.com.au](mailto:travel@travelonq.com.au)

**Currency:** Due to the volatility of global currencies the tour price is quoted in US Dollars however you will pay for your tour in Australian dollars using the buying rate set by Westpac on the due date of your final balance.

**Transfers:** An arrival transfer is included; however the departure transfer is not and can be arranged on request. Travel on Q will be able to assist with your flights and advise you on your best options.

**Extra Nights in Otavalo & Quito:** Additional nights can be booked pre and post tour however you must advise Travel on Q well in advance to ensure availability.

**Cabin Share:** If you are a single traveller and are prepared to share with someone of the same sex we can try to match you up but this cannot be guaranteed.

**Other Travellers:** There could be other guests on the Galapagos cruise who have been booked 'last-minute' by the vessel's owner and not by Byroads.

**Visas:** Ecuador visas are not currently required by Australian or New Zealand citizens. Check with Travel on Q for other nationalities.

**Documentation:** Upon receipt of final payment, a comprehensive field guide will be mailed and you will be sent the relevant tour and accommodation vouchers prior to departure.

**Itinerary:** The itinerary can be subject to change with little notice by the Galapagos Park authorities and also due to weather in the Galapagos and the Amazon.

**What Next?** Contact Travel on Q to discuss your travel plans and to make your booking. Further information is also available at [www.byroads.com.au](http://www.byroads.com.au).



Byroads Pty Ltd, Trading as Byroads Travel (ABN 88615738746)



# BOOKING FORM

Byroads Travel is the operator of your tour. Byroads Travel (henceforth referred to as Byroads) is a registered trading name of Byroads Pty Ltd (ABN 88 615 738 746). Travel on Q Pty Ltd (ATAS 10482 / ABN 40 059 566 184) is the sole booking agent for Byroads.

## RESERVATION AND DEPOSIT

A deposit is payable on all tours. The amount payable is stated in the Byroads brochure. This deposit must be paid to Travel on Q and accompanied by a signed booking form. When paying a deposit for your tour and signing the Booking Form you accept these conditions. Your Byroads tour booking will only be confirmed once the deposit and signed booking form have been received. This Booking Form forms the basis of your contract between you and Byroads.

## PAYMENT

Payments may be made to Travel on Q by direct deposit or by credit card. If paying by credit card the following surcharges will be applied to the cost of your tour arrangements: 1.5% for Visa and MasterCard, 3.5% for American Express, and 3 % for Diners Club.

## FINAL BALANCE

The balance of your tour payment is due 90 days prior to the start of your tour. If, for any reason, the balance payment is not received by the due date, Byroads reserves the right to treat such failure to pay the balance as a cancellation and to apply the appropriate cancellation charges.

## CANCELLATION BY YOU

If, for any reason, you cancel your tour booking, Byroads shall apply the following cancellation penalties. Charges are per person:

- \* Cancellation up to 90 days prior to departure, forfeiture of the total deposit
- \* From 90 to 60 days prior to departure, 30% of tour price shall be retained
- \* From 60 to 30 days prior to departure, 50% of tour price shall be retained
- \* Within 30 days prior to departure, no refund will be made

In addition to the above charges, cancellation fees may also apply to any domestic airfare component of your tour. No refund will be made after your tour has commenced or in respect of lost or unused tickets, hotel coupons, meals or any other services not utilized.

## AMENDMENTS

Up to 90 days prior to the departure of your tour, any amendment to a confirmed reservation will incur a fee of \$50 per change per file, in addition to any charges levied by Travel on Q, airlines, or any other service provider. From 90 to 30 days prior to departure, any amendment to confirmed travel arrangements will incur a fee of \$100 per change per file. Once documents have been dispatched, any amendment will incur a fee of \$150 per change per file.

## TOUR PRICES

Byroads tour prices and provisional tour prices are based on tariffs and prevailing rates of exchange when tours were costed. Prices are subject to change without prior notice. In the

event of fluctuations in currency exchange rates, service providers' tariffs, fuel prices or any other cost that affects the price of your tour, Byroads reserves the right to adjust tour prices at any time up to the day of departure.

## TOUR OPERATION

Although Byroads will endeavour to ensure that tours are operated as advertised, an express condition of making a reservation is the acceptance by you that the tour itineraries, schedules, advertised accommodation, sightseeing and mode of transportation as outlined in the Byroads brochure and/or supplied in the pre-departure information are subject to change without prior notice. If for any reason Byroads is forced to cancel a tour before it commences, all monies paid in respect of the tour will be refunded in full less any credit card fees collected.

Unforeseeable circumstances such as force majeure, adverse weather conditions such as floods or earthquakes, airline flight rescheduling, technical faults with transportation and road conditions may also have a consequential effect on the content of your tour after it has commenced. Any decision made in respect of tour services provided by Byroads to reroute or amend the itinerary due to the above or similar circumstances shall be at the sole discretion of Byroads. Byroads and Travel on Q shall not be liable for any claim whatsoever arising from such events that affect the schedule and content of your tour.

## HEALTH AND FITNESS

Byroads operates soft adventure tours. All participants are required to be fit and healthy. Some of the hotels used by Byroads may not have lifts or porters so you must be prepared at times to carry your own suitcase. Before travelling with Byroads, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with any health requirements applicable to areas through which you will be travelling.

## ACCEPTANCE OF RISK

You acknowledge that the nature of the trip is adventurous and participation involves a degree of personal risk. You will be visiting places where the political, cultural and geographical attributes present dangers and physical challenges greater than those present in our daily lives. We use information from government foreign departments and reports from our own contacts in assessing whether the itinerary should operate. However it is also your own responsibility to acquaint yourself with all relevant travel information and the nature of your itinerary. You acknowledge that your decision to travel is made in light of consideration of this information and you accept that you are aware of the personal risks attendant upon such travel.

## PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Australian passport holders must have at least 6 months validity on their passport after the date of return to Australia. Visas are required for a number of our tours and it is your responsibility to obtain them. Travel on Q can assist with this process. Non Australian passport holders are asked to check passport and visa requirements at the time of booking.

## ITEMS NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR COST

The cost of your Byroads tour includes hotel accommodation, transportation, transfers as

specified, sightseeing and meals as indicated in the tour brochure. It does not include international airfares, airport departure taxes, unspecified meals, optional sightseeing, additional transfers, gratuities for hotel staff, guides and tour leaders, items of a personal nature such as laundry, phone calls etc. or any other incidental expenses.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is an express condition of travelling with Byroads that you have comprehensive travel insurance including full cover for repatriation. It is highly recommended that you take out travel insurance at the time you pay the deposit to guard against any unforeseen circumstances. If on the first day of your tour you cannot provide evidence that you have purchased comprehensive travel insurance you will be required to purchase a policy before proceeding with your tour.

## LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

We contract with a network of companies, government agencies and individuals to assist in the running of our trips as agent for these third parties. We are not responsible for the acts and omissions of these third parties. To the fullest extent permitted by law:

(i) any liability for any loss, death, injury or damage which you may suffer (directly or indirectly) in connection with or arising out of your participation in a trip, or any breach of the Booking Conditions, is excluded;

(ii) Travel on Q acts only as agent for Byroads and accepts no responsibility for the acts and omissions of Byroads or any of its associated service providers for any inaccuracies in information provided, negligence, loss, damage, omission, accident, detention, diversion or theft in regard to luggage or any personal belongings whatsoever.

(iii) you release Byroads and its officers, employees, agents and representatives from any liability and expressly waive any claims you may have against us arising out of or in connection with your participation in a trip; and

(iv) any condition or warranty which would otherwise be implied by law into these Booking Conditions (Implied Warranty), is excluded.

To the extent an Implied Warranty cannot be excluded, our liability in respect of the Implied Warranty is limited to (in our absolute discretion): (a) the provision of a similar trip to an equivalent value; or (b) a refund of the total amount received by us from you in connection with your booking.

Any claim by you is excluded to the extent that it is for indirect or consequential loss, loss of profits or economic loss, however it arises, or for indirect, special, punitive or exemplary damages.

## APPLICABLE LAW

The laws of Victoria, Australia govern these Booking Conditions to the fullest extent allowable. Any disputes in connection with a trip or these Booking Conditions must be initiated in the courts Victoria, Australia.