



Galapagos & Quito for couples

-Itinerary highlights-



DAY 1: Saturday

Arrival to Quito: Quito’s “Mariscal Sucre” International Airport (UIO) is one of the busiest airports in South America, and the best one in the region at the 2018 at the World Travel Awards. It’s located about 11 miles east of the city.

Welcome to Quito: Quito is the capital and the largest city in Ecuador (population: 2.7M). At 9,350 ft. above sea level it’s the highest (constitutional) capital city in the world.

Transfer from airport to Casa Gangotena hotel: Enjoy your first night in this sophisticated family manor house turned boutique hotel smack dab in the middle of Quito. 1920s elegance, colonial charm, and the elegance and luxury of a bygone era, featuring a grand terrace perfect for soaking up the picture-postcard city views, and a restaurant serving modern Ecuadorian cuisine as good as you'll find.

DAY 2: Sunday

Pululahua Crater (weather permitting): is one of only two volcanic craters inhabited in the world, and the only one that is farmed. The land here is extremely fertile because it is volcanic soil. The caldera of this extinct volcano is approximately 3 miles wide, one of the largest volcanic craters in the planet.

Temple of the Sun: Its structure resembles a castle, and is the home of a temple that reveres the Sun like Ecuadorian pre-Columbian indigenous did, and at the same time it’s a museum and art repository for the famous Ecuadorian artist that constructed and owns this complex.

Intiñan Museum: This onsite museum located right on top of the Equator Line features interactive exhibits on how the Incas determined the middle of the Earth,



plus interesting science experiments such as balancing an egg on a nail and the affects of the Coriolis force on earth.

Middle of the World City: The grounds of this “city” contain the Monument to the Equator, which highlights the exact location of the Equator (from which the country takes its name) and commemorates the 18th century Franco-Spanish Geodesic Mission which fixed its approximate location. The complex includes museums, interactive exhibits, restaurants, shops, etc.

Welcome dinner at Itchimbia: Finish your first full day in Ecuador by enjoying dinner at an exclusive restaurant with arguably the best view of Quito by night.

DAY 3: Monday

Quito’s Old Town: Quito was the first city to be declared a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site because it has the largest, least-altered and best preserved historic center in the Americas. In last year’s World Travel Awards, Quito won the 1st place for Cultural Destination in South America!

Metropolitan Cathedral of Quito: known simply as La Catedral, is the Catholic cathedral in Quito, which makes it the seniormost Catholic church in the country.

The Church of the Society of Jesus: known as La Compania, is a Jesuit church best-known because of its large central nave, which is profusely decorated with gold leaf, gilded plaster and wood carvings. This is one of the most significant works of Spanish Baroque architecture in South America. It is Quito’s most ornate church and (according to many) the country’s most beautiful.

Church and Monastery of St. Francis: commonly known as “San Francisco”, is a 16th-century Roman Catholic complex. It fronts onto its namesake Plaza de San Francisco. The imposing structure has the

distinction of being the largest architectural ensemble among the historical structures of colonial Latin America. The style evolved over almost 150 years of construction through earthquakes and changes in artistic fashion.

La Ronda: Old-world La Ronda is the most romantic and magical street in Quito. The lantern-lit streets and floral balconies enhance the romantic ambiance, making La Ronda one of the crown jewels of Quiteño culture. A series of doorways open up to a courtyard and multiple art galleries, museums, craft shops, and elegant restaurants.

Virgin of El Panecillo: A 45-meter-tall stone monument of a madonna which was assembled on a high pedestal on the top of Panecillo hill. Locals claim that she is the only one in the world with wings like an angel. This hill and the virgin can be seen from anywhere in Quito’s Historic Center.

The Basilica of the National Vow: known as La Basilica, is the most important work of neo-Gothic Ecuadorian architecture and is one of the most representative of the Americas. It is the largest neo-Gothic basilica in the New World. The building is noted for its grotesques in the form of native Ecuadorian animals such as armadillos, iguana, and Galapagos tortoises.

Teleferiqo (weather permitting): this gondola lift runs from the edge of the city centre up the Pichincha Volcano. It’s one of the highest aerial lifts in the world, rising from 10,226 to 12,943 ft. The ascent takes about 20 mins. and is rewarded with the most amazing cloud-high views of Quito and the surrounding mountains, volcanoes and sky-capped peaks.

DAY 4: Tuesday



Flight to Baltra, Galapagos.

Transfer to the Infinity Yacht: The “Infinity” is a 161 ft, spacious and comfortable luxury yacht that accommodates 20 passengers in cozy cabins, equipped with private bath, hot water, A/C, TV. Onboard amenities include an ample sundeck, dining room, living room, bar, library, and snorkeling equipment and wetsuits that are available for rent.

Santa Cruz Island: Situated in the center of the archipelago, this is the second largest island after Isabela, and is known for sandy beaches. Its capital is Puerto Ayora, the most populated urban centre in the islands. The island is a large dormant volcano, and features a 1.2 mi lava tunnel that you can walk through.

“Primicias” Ranch: Admire the gentle giants in this giant Galapagos tortoise refuge. Explore the ranch lush with fruit trees and populated by cattle, goats and giant tortoises, who won’t be frightened if you walk near them. The site provides the chance for some great photo ops.

First night onboard.

DAY 5: Wednesday

Isabela Island: This is the largest island in the archipelago, with an area of 1792 sq. mi and a length of 62 miles. This is the only populated island in the Galapagos.

Tintorerias: Group of small islets with huge biodiversity! Marine iguanas, Galapagos penguins, blue-footed boobies, Galapagos sea lions and marine turtles live here and adore the rocky-lava landscape.

Arnoldo Tupiza Breeding Center: Five species of giant tortoises have been bred in captivity in this center, where there are a

total of 330 juvenile and adult tortoises. It also features beautiful gardens that include native plants.

Wetlands: Complex trail network and mangroves estuaries where a wild variety of flora and fauna including tortoises, marine iguanas and flamingos live. It also showcases spectacular scenery of the bay, the town of Puerto Villamil, volcanoes, islets and rocks.

Wall of Tears: Historical site constructed by prisoners using infrastructure left by the US military after WWII. The wall is about 65 ft. tall and is said to have been the cause of thousands of deaths during its construction. Locals call it this name because it is said to emanate eerie cries and have a heavy energy surrounding it.

DAY 6: Thursday

Rabida Island: This little island is less than 2 sq mi. In addition to flamingos and the bachelor sea lion colony, pelicans, white-cheeked pintails, boobies and nine species of finch have been reported.

Dragon Hill: You’re back in Santa Cruz to visit this rocky, low-lying hill, a home to an impressive population of the Galapagos land iguana. These miniature dragons (hence the name of the site) roam around the island eating fruits, flowers and cacti.

Last night onboard.

DAY 7: Friday

Black Turtle Cove: The cove is a haven for a plethora of rare marine life and birds, making it a must-visit for wildlife enthusiasts. Naturally protected and virtually untouched by man, the cove is home to some truly remarkable species of animals and plants. The mangrove forest is



a protected national park, guaranteeing the safety and sustainability of its many rare and vulnerable inhabitants.

Transfer to Baltra Airport.

Transfer from Quito Airport to Casa Gangotena Hotel.

Dinner and drinks in La Floresta: Quito's most chic neighborhood features dozens of restaurants and bars with top of the line worldwide cuisine and décor. Some venues transition from restaurant to bar and even dance club as the hours and drinks flow, and the neighborhood becomes the best and safest area to bar-hop in the capital.

DAY 8: Saturday

Breakfast and San Pablo Lake: Enjoy a wholesome breakfast with local "bizcochos" and "queso de hoja" as you take in the breathtaking scenery and beauty of this majestic lake on the skirt of the Imbabura volcano.

Otavalo Indigenous Market: One of the largest and most famous markets in South America. The indigenous Otavalo people are famed for weaving textiles, usually made of wool, which are sold at the world-famous Saturday market. In this artisan market you will find anything from jewelry, clothing, and traditional home décor to (fake) shrunken heads.

Lunch at La Mirage Garden Hotel: This former hacienda is a paradise of plant life filled with a thousand fragrances from its bougainvilleas, hibiscus, roses and orchids. Exquisite cuisine is luxuriously served in the hotel's glass pavilions on the lawn, while watching peacocks strolling and hummingbirds flying by.

Shopping in Cotacachi: This little artisan town is famous for its leather goods and handicrafts. The city of Cotacachi holds a UNESCO medal for being free of illiteracy. In 2000 the entire canton was declared the first ecological county of South America.

Visit to Cuicocha Lake: The name of this crater lake comes from the guinea pig shape of the largest Island in the middle of it. These animals play a significant part in the everyday life of Ecuadorians, as they reproduce rapidly and need a minimum of food and care to survive. They make for a high protein meal especially for populations living in high altitude.

DAY 9: Sunday

Typical Coastal breakfast: Start your last day in Ecuador with a delicious homemade meal as you would experience it in the Ecuadorian Coast. From plantain empanadas to shrimp ceviche, you will enjoy a unique mix of flavors and sensations to prepare you for a long day.

Guayasamin's Home and Museum: In the former hillside home of the legendary painter Oswaldo Guayasamin, this wonderful museum houses the most complete collection of the artist's work, famous for his social justice themes. The visit includes entry to the "Capilla del Hombre" (The Chapel of Man), a purpose-built art museum dedicated to the peoples of Latin America.

Lunch in Cumbaya: In the last decade, this former small rural village close to the capital has become one of the most stylish, hip (and expensive) residential and entertainment areas to live in or around, and features world-class restaurants, country clubs, gastro-pubs, clubs and bars.



Papallacta Hot Springs: Located in a magical High Andes landscape, this spa and resort is an integral holistic experience that will awake all your senses. Discover the beauty of nature and the healing properties of mineral hot springs. This relaxing afternoon will prepare you for your trip back home tonight.

Transfer to airport: End of our services.

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