

Treasures of South America

36days/35nights – weekly departures

Experience the many facets of the Treasures of South America. Visit the Ancient sites of the Andean region, the glorious Galapagos Islands and the Amazon jungle, the mysterious Easter Island, before relaxing on the beaches of Tahiti in one ultimate journey.

This itinerary can be tailor made to fit into daily guaranteed departures.

Itinerary:

Day 1 AUSTRALIA - SANTIAGO

On arrival you will be met and taken to your hotel.

Day 2 SANTIAGO (B)

Half day tour of Santiago's cultural historical monuments, artistic districts and panoramic sights.

Day 3 SANTIAGO - QUITO (B)

Transfer to airport, fly to Quito. On arrival you will be met and taken to your hotel.

Day 4 QUITO (B)

Half day tour of Quito and Middle of the World monument.

Day 5 QUITO - GALAPAGOS ISLANDS (B,D)

Transfer to, fly to Baltra and transfer to dock and board the Galapagos Legend for the start of your four day cruise. This luxury ship caters for 100 passengers in twin share cabins with private bathrooms and includes full board, all meals and guided visits to the islands.



AM – Baltra airport

Departure from Quito or Guayaquil to Baltra (2 ½ hours flight). Passengers are picked up at the airport by our naturalist guides and taken on a ten minute bus drive to the pier to board the M/V Galapagos Legend.

PM – Highlands – Pit Craters (Santa Cruz)

Dry landing. A 45-minute bus ride will take us to the Santa Cruz highlands, located to the northwest of Puerto Ayora, where we will find a natural reserve with giant tortoises*. These enormous and slow-moving reptiles are responsible for the island's name and therefore approaching them in their humid and forested abode is always an inspiring adventure. They can weigh between 250 and 300 kg and can live up to 150-200 years. Additionally, travelers can walk inside surprising lava tubes*; we also visit Pit Craters created from the collapse of surface materials into chamber fissures underground. It's a great place to spot Vermilion Flycatcher as we walk inside an endemic Scalesia forest.

Day 6 Santiago - Bartolome (B,L,D)

AM – Egas Port (Santiago)

Wet landing on a beach of black volcanic sand, visited by Darwin in 1835. The first section of the trail is comprised of volcanic ash (eroded tuff) and the other half of partially uneven terrain is comprised of volcanic basaltic rock lounging the shoreline.

The unique, truly striking layered terrain of Santiago's shores is home to a variety of resident and migrant birds, including the bizarre Yellow-crowned Night Heron and astounding array of marine wildlife including lobster, starfish and marine iguanas grazing on algae beds alongside Sally Light-foot Crabs. Colonies of endemic fur seals swimming in cool water pools formed by volcanic rocks are also a highlight.

PM – Bartolome

Dry or wet landing. We discover a fascinating moonscape* formed by different volcanic parasitic cones —lava bombs, spatter, cinder cones —as we hike to the summit for impressive views of the surrounding islands, including the eroded tuff cone Pinnacle Rock*. We also encounter marine iguanas, lava lizards and blue-footed boobies*.

Beach time is a great opportunity to snorkel and see (perhaps swim with) Galapagos Penguins, sea turtles and White-tipped Reef Sharks among a great variety of colorful fish. For many visitors, this may turn out to be the best of snorkelling experiences*; the water here is generally clear, without too much surf and full of marine life.

Due to its geographical location, the lack of vegetation is immediately noticeable. Pioneer plants are observed, so called because they are the first to establish roots on new ground. They include *Tiquilia nesiotica* (which is endemic to the island) and *Chamaesyce* (known as sand mat or spurge in English), lava cactus, and *Scalesia* bushes. Behind the beach we have dunes covered by mangroves.

Day 7 Santa Cruz - North Seymour (B, L, D)

AM – Dragon Hill (Santa Cruz)

Dry landing. We walk by a brackish lagoon where feeding flamingoes can be occasionally found. The trail leads across typical dry zone vegetation* up to Dragon Hill, an important nesting ground for endemic land iguanas*, offering lovely views of the anchorage and neighboring islands. The forest is home to mockingbirds, Darwin’s finches, Yellow Warblers and Galapagos Doves.

PM – North Seymour

Dry landing. This is perhaps one of the busiest tourist destinations on the archipelago. Off of Baltra Island (where the airport is located) and not far from Santa Cruz, North Seymour is the most accessible for day trips out of Santa Cruz’s main port, Puerto Ayora.

An approximately two hour walk amidst large nesting colonies of blue-footed boobies*, magnificent and great frigatebirds*, and swallow-tailed gulls for an in depth encounter with sea bird breeding cycles and as well as sea lions. You will also encounter sea lions, land iguanas, and on a lucky day, you might even come across a Galapagos Snake.

Day 8 Santa Cruz - Baltra (B)

AM – Bachas Beach (Santa Cruz)

Wet landing on the north side of Santa Cruz; behind the beach lie two small flamingo ponds with iguanas, coastal birds, Darwin finches, mockingbirds, and gulls, as well as interesting native and endemic vegetation, red and black mangroves, salt bushes, and much more. This beach is one of the main nesting sites of sea turtles* in the Galapagos. A female can lay eggs 3 or 4 times with an average of 70 eggs each, but then spend 3 or 5 years without breeding. At this paradisiacal site we will also find the remains of barges that sank long ago, once property of the United States Navy when they operated an airbase on Baltra Island during World War II. That is why the beach is called “Bachas” because the word “barges” in English was hard to pronounce for the local people.

Baltra airport

Finish your cruise for your flight back to the mainland. On arrival transfer to your hotel

Day 9 QUITO - AMAZON CRUISE(B, D)

Transfer to airport for flight to Coca. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your ship, The Manatee Amazon Explorer, a 30 passenger vessel, cruising through the Ecuadorian Amazon Basin.

Day 10-11 MANATEE AMAZON EXPLORER CRUISE (B L D)

Manatee Amazon Explorer cruise

Day 12 MANATEE AMAZON EXPLORER CRUISE – QUITO – LIMA (B)

End of cruise. Fly to Lima via Quito. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel.

Day 13 LIMA (B)

Half day tour of Colonial and Modern Lima.

Day 14 LIMA - CUZCO (B)

Transfer out for flight to Cuzco. Transfer to hotel in the Sacred Valley.

Day 15 SACRED VALLEY (B, L)

Full day tour of the Sacred Valley of the Incas, visiting the ruins of Ollantaytambo and the colourful local market of Pisac.

Day 16 SACRED VALLEY - MACHU PICCHU (B, L, D)

Start your 2 day journey to the unforgettable ruins of Machu Picchu by boarding the Vistadome train to Aguas Calientes. Catch a bus to the mountain where you will be guided through this beautiful forgotten citadel, home of an incredibly advanced civilisation.



Day 17 MACHU PICCHU - CUZCO (B)

Free morning. Return by train to Cuzco, transfer to hotel.

Day 18 CUZCO (B)

Guided half-day tour of the ancient Inca capital of Cuzco.

Day 19 CUZCO - PUNO (B, L)

A spectacular Andean Explorer train journey across the Altiplano to Puno on the shores of Lake Titicaca.

Day 20 UROS & TAQUILE ISLANDS (B, L)

Full day tour to the reed islands of Uros and Taquile Island.

Day 21 PUNO - LA PAZ (B, L)

Full day crossing of Lake Titicaca from Puno to La Paz onboard a catamaran cruise ship. On arrival, transfer to hotel.

Day 22 LA PAZ (B)

Half day city tour of the La Paz & Moon Valley.

Day 23 LA PAZ - LIMA - BUENOS AIRES (B)

Transfer to airport for flight to Buenos Aires. Transfer to your hotel.

Day 24 BUENOS AIRES (B)

Half day tour of South America's stylish capital, Buenos Aires, whose architecture and boulevard are influenced by a strong European heritage. Visit the bohemian street market of La Boca, the tango barrio of San Telmo and the famous Recoleta cemetery, home to the resting place of Eva Peron

Day 25 BUENOS AIRES (B, D)

Free day to discover this exciting city or go shopping. In the evening, experience the tango in all its glory and sample the succulent local beef with a dinner and show.

Day 26 BUENOS AIRES - IGUAZU FALLS (B)

Transfer to airport for your flight to Iguazu Falls. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Afternoon tour of the Argentinean side of the Falls including the Devil's Throat.

Day 27 IGUAZU FALLS - RIO DE JANEIRO (B)

Morning tour of the Brazilian side of the falls before flying to Rio de Janeiro. Transfer to your hotel.



Day 28 RIO DE JANEIRO (B)

Tour and cable car trip to one of the city's favorite landmarks Sugar Loaf Mountain, the famous granite and quartz peaks overlooking the Guanabara Bay for a fantastic view

Day 29 RIO DE JANEIRO (B)

Visit to the top of Corcovado Mountain, catching a small through the Tijuca forest before reaching the top to see the iconic Christ the Redeemer statue. Evening samba show and dinner.

Day 30 RIO DE JANEIRO - SANTIAGO (B)

Transfer to airport for flight to Santiago. Overnight

Day 31 SANTIAGO - EASTER ISLAND (B)

Flight to Easter Island. Afternoon tour of Orongo, including the Rano Kao volcano.

Day 32 EASTER ISLAND (B, L)

Full day tour of the Souther coast of the Island including Rano Raraku quarry and Anakena beach.



Day 33 EASTER ISLAND - PAPEETE (B)

Day at leisure before flying to Papeete, Tahiti. On arrival transfer to hotel.

Day 34 PAPEETE (B)

Half day Circle Island tour of Tahiti

Day 35 PAPEETE - AUSTRALIA

Transfer to airport for flight home.

Tour Inclusions:

- International economy airfares ex MEL/BNE/SYD
 - 9 internal flights within South America
 - Accommodation with private facilities
- Meals as indicated (34 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 7 dinners.)
- Return economy Vistadome train to Machu Picchu
- First class catamaran journey across Lake Titicaca
 - Transport by air conditioned vehicles and
 - Comprehensive sightseeing and excursions
- Meeting service and airport transfers with English speaking local guides