



Highlights

- Care for the iconic Galapagos giant tortoise
- Survey other species, like sea lions & petrels
- Help maintain the national park
- Facilitate the restoration of natural habitats
- Visit the Charles Darwin Research Centre

Accommodation

Shared guesthouse

Transport

Private minibus, boat, foot

Responsible Travel

We offset 100% of carbon emissions associated with your in-destination transport. We're committed to being fully climate-positive by 2024!

By travelling with us, you're making a positive contribution to the economies of communities around the world and supporting local jobs.



Galapagos

Giant Tortoise Conservation

1 Week

Join this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit the unique and stunning Galapagos Islands. Volunteers have the chance to work hands-on with the world-famous giant tortoise, supporting the hard work of local conservation workers.

Projects Abroad have unique access to the Galapagos National Park and partnerships with dedicated conservationists. Prepare to be wowed by the incredible biodiversity that inhabits this remote tropical archipelago.

Visit the Charles Darwin Research Center and hear about the continuous research and conservation that goes on around these impressive islands.



Day 1

Welcome to Ecuador

On arrival day, a Projects Abroad staff member will be waiting to collect you from San Cristobal port or airport.

A minibus collects you and takes you to your accommodation in the hills outside of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno.

After you reach your accommodation on the eco-reserve, you'll have time to get settled in and rest after the long journey. Later, you'll meet with local staff for an induction course to learn about the area, local customs, and priorities for the week.

Day 2

Conservation Work

You'll begin your first day of conservation work at the Tortoise Breeding Centre. This will include activities such as:

- Feeding giant tortoises
- Cleaning the enclosure and bathing pools
- Maintaining walkways

After lunch, you'll go snorkelling in the sea and see a wide variety of marine life. Later in the day, you'll assist with survey work of frigate birds and sea lion populations in the area, before heading off for a well-deserved dinner.

Day 3

Conservation Work

Alien plants are one of the greatest threats to the endemic species and ecosystems of the Galapagos Islands. Eradicating these species is crucial to help indigenous plants thrive. Today, you'll visit the Otoy Plantation and help to remove plants, such as blackberry bushes and replace them with indigenous species.

After lunch, you'll help with a coastal clean-up of San Cristobal's beaches. By removing the litter from local beaches we protect local animals from unnecessary dangers and keep the natural environment as clean as possible.

In the evening, you can take a walk around town and visit the sea lion beach.



Day 4

Conservation Work

Returning to the Tortoise Breeding Center, you'll continue working alongside conservationists. Other activities you will take part in include:

- ▶ Removing alien plants
- ▶ Taking care of baby tortoises
- ▶ Cleaning baby tortoise pens

Later in the day, you'll go bird watching before dinner.

In the evening, you can learn more about the local culture and take part in dance lessons in the town.

Day 5

Trip to Santa Cruz

A day off from conservation work is well deserved. Volunteers are taken to Santa Cruz Island by speedboat to see more of the Galapagos.

Here, you can explore impressive lava tunnels at the giant tortoise farm, El Chato Tortoise Reserve. Here you'll have plenty of opportunities to see the giant tortoise in its natural habitat, roaming free.

In the afternoon, you will visit the stunning Tortuga Bay, famous for its black sea turtles and marine iguanas. Relax on the sand or swim in the beautiful blue water. This is the perfect way to round off the day.

Day 6

Visit the Charles Darwin Research Station

While in Santa Cruz, volunteers are taken to the Charles Darwin Research Centre. Learn about the lasting impact Darwin's voyage to the Galapagos left through the research conducted in his name over the past 60 years.

Take a look around the Exhibition Hall to see the huge skeleton of a Bryde's whale, small presentations and natural history collections.

At the end of the day, you'll take a speedboat back to San Cristobal Island.

Day 7

Saying Goodbye to the Galapagos

After an amazing week of learning, sightseeing and new experiences, it's time to leave the Galapagos. You'll be picked up from your accommodation by a staff member and taken to the departure point.



Wildlife

Conservation volunteers in the Galapagos will focus on the iconic giant tortoise, along with sea lions, petrels, and other birds. Around every corner, there are incredible wild animals to spot.

Some other famous Galapagos animals include albatross, marine iguanas, and blue-footed boobies. Many of these can't be found elsewhere, making their sightings in the wild a special moment.



Food

Like many island cultures, the Galapagos has a strong fishing history, where visitors can enjoy the freshest and most delicious seafood. Lobsters, clams, and shrimp are particularly popular.

The iconic dish of the Galapagos is considered to be encebollado, which is a hearty and satisfying fish soup. Vegetarians can enjoy lentil stew, beans, and fried plantain. We'll cater to all dietary requirements and preferences.

Get in Touch!

We've designed our trips to maximise your impact and experience. If you have any questions or specific requests, please don't hesitate to get in touch!

We have Project Experts available 9:00-17:30 (GMT) Monday-Friday to help you with anything you might need.



Culture

Visitors to the Galapagos will enjoy the ultimate in island culture: a slower, more laid-back and considered approach to life. The population comprises a mix of immigrants from the Amazon Rainforest as well as cities in mainland Ecuador.

The Galapagos revolves around a culture of respect for the environment and the protection of wildlife. Visitors embodying these values will be welcomed by warm and friendly local people.



Community

The protection of the Galapagos Islands depends on the hard work of the community, working together for a common cause.

Volunteers who are granted the privilege of entering this special area are expected to contribute to keeping it clean and minimizing damage.

Catholicism is widespread in Ecuador and these religious beliefs underpin a strong commitment to the community.

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