



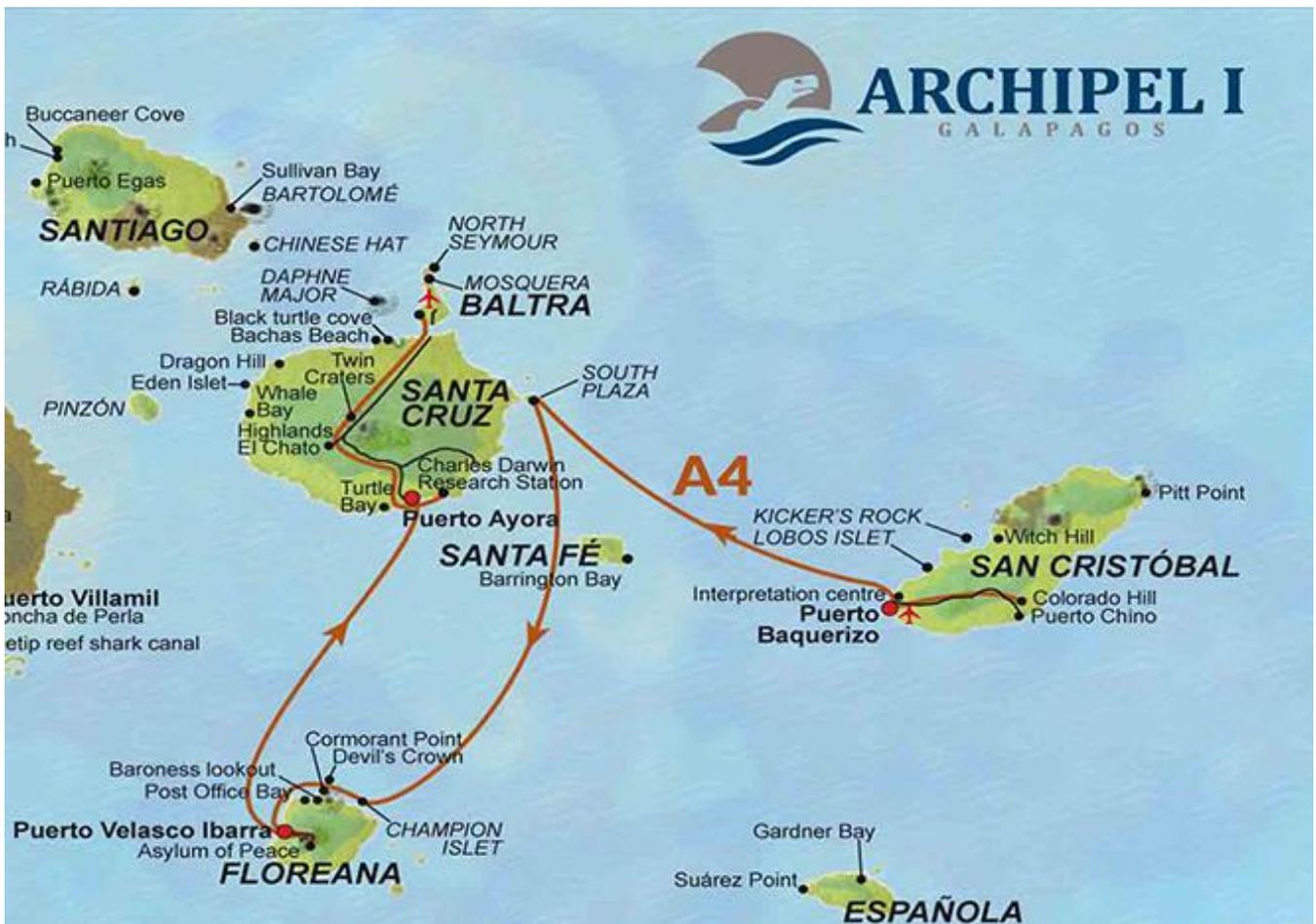
ARCHIPEL I

GALAPAGOS

ARCHIPEL I - ITINERARY A

4 DAYS/ 3 NIGHTS

Monday to Thursday



Day 1 – Monday

AM – Arrival at San Cristóbal airport (SCY)

Upon arrival at the Sin Cristóbal Airport, travellers pass through an airport inspection point to make sure that no foreign plants or animals are introduced to the islands, and to pay the park entrance fee

of \$100 (unless it has been prepaid). A guide will meet you, help you collect your luggage, and escort you on a short bus ride to the harbour.

PM – Colorado Hill / Tortoise Breeding Centre

Cerro Colorado Tortoises Protection and Growing Centre, located approximately 40 minutes by bus from the southeast of the island, was built to improve the status of the population of island tortoises. The centre includes a large corral, a Visitor Centre, breeding centre and an interpretative trail. Along this trail, it is possible to see different species of native and endemic plants as well as birds like the San Cristóbal mockingbird, yellow warblers, many species of finches and the Galapagos flycatcher.

On your visit to Colorado Hill, you will be able to discover the amazing and emblematic giant Galapagos tortoises in the tortoise breeding centre, and maybe even get to see one hatch (seasonally)! In addition, you will get to see how much hard work is put into saving the last local giants of San Cristóbal.

Day 2 – Tuesday

AM – South Plaza

South Plaza is located to the east of Santa Cruz Island, and forms part of a pair of islands known as “Islas Plazas”. Despite its small size, some of the most interesting and outstanding species of the Galapagos are found here. The Plazas land iguanas are smaller than their relatives on other islands. Throughout the island there are several hybrid iguanas, a result of crossing a marine iguana with a land iguana. They are unique and can be recognised at first glance by their black/grey color, with a land iguana’s crest, but face and tail of the marine iguana. The big population of iguanas is due to the presence of tuna, their favourite food. Swallow tailed gulls nesting in the rugged cliffs are seen along with other seabirds as: audubon shearwaters, red-billed tropicbirds, frigate birds and brown pelicans.

PM – Santa Fe

Located in the southeastern part of the Galapagos, this island was formed from an uplift rather than being of volcanic origin, which is why it is mostly flat. There are some theories which claim that this could be the oldest island in the Archipelago. Santa Fe is home to a number of endemic species like the Galapagos Hawk, Galapagos snake, Galapagos mockingbird, rice rats and one of the two species of lands iguanas of the islands. After disembarking into the beautiful and clear waters you will be in contact with one of the many sea lion colonies. Along the trail many salt bushes can be seen as well as the giant prickly pear cactus - gigantism is a characteristic of oceanic islands. There are many possibilities to snorkel with playful sea lions and tropical fish.

Day 3 – Wednesday

AM – Champion Islet (Floreana)

Bottlenose dolphins frequently escort our passage to Champion Islet and you can see them from nearby jumping the wakes! Underwater, Galapagos sea lions are playful acrobats that become the number one attraction. There are also lots of reef fish, and perhaps a green Pacific turtle.

An inflatable dinghy ride along the shoreline of this islet offers sightings of lots of seabirds that are endemic to the archipelago, including Galapagos penguins, blue-footed boobies, magnificent frigate birds, red-billed tropicbirds, swallow-tailed gulls and lava herons.

A birdwatcher's wish is to get a glimpse of the Charles mockingbird on top of prickly pear cacti. This mockingbird is a scientific and historic key species, because it put Darwin on track of his theory of 'adaptive radiation'.

PM- Loberia & Asylum of Peace (Floreana)

The Asylum of Peace Island is of historical interest for guests. This hike goes past a mesmerising cave and visits a fascinating freshwater spring. La Loberia beach is an ideal spot to enjoy the ocean, as well as the playful sea lions that live there.

Day 4 – Thursday

AM – Charles Darwin Research Station

Although the great majority of Galapagos visitors come here to observe and appreciate natural wonders, it is also interesting to learn how the protection and conservation of the islands are carried out. The main attractions are the National Park information centre, the Van Staelen Exhibition Hall, the Breeding and Rearing Centre for young tortoises, and adult Galapagos tortoises in captivity.

PM – Transfer out to Seymour Ecological Airport (SCY)

Assisted by the naturalist guide and some crewmembers, the dinghy will bring you and your luggage to the Baltra, where we will take the shuttle back to the airport.