



Ecuador & Galápagos Islands Cruise: San Cristóbal to Santa Cruz

10 days | 16 days with Peru extension

If you think good things come in small packages, Ecuador's the best present of all. Introduce yourself to this South American country on this version of our Ecuador & Galápagos Islands Cruise. Begin in its UNESCO-listed capital of Quito, replete with remnants of Spanish colonial rule, before departing from San Cristóbal for an island-hopping expedition through the Galápagos. Wrap up with a visit to the indigenous city of Otavalo, then extend your trip into Peru—if you're feeling adventurous.



Your tour package includes

- 4 nights in handpicked hotels
- 4 nights aboard the M/V Galápagos
- Legend cruise ship
- 8 breakfasts
- 5 lunches
- 5 dinners
- 9 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 2 on-tour flights

Included highlights

- Cerro Panecillo
- Old Quarter Quito
- La Compañía
- Gardner Bay
- Floreana Island
- Snorkeling with sea turtles
- Punta Bowditch
- Giant tortoise nature reserve
- Otavalo market

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 2 hours daily across moderately uneven terrain, including cobblestone streets, unpaved trails, and sandy paths, with some hills.

Group size

15–35

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Quito → 3 nights

Day 1: Flight & late-night arrival in Quito

Welcome to Ecuador! Arrive in Quito late this evening and transfer to your hotel.

Day 2: Sightseeing tour of Quito

Included meals: breakfast, welcome lunch

Today, embark on a guided sightseeing tour of Quito.

- Drive up Cerro Panecillo hill for views of the city and surrounding volcanoes
- Sit down to enjoy an included welcome lunch
- Marvel at the neo-Gothic Basilica of the National Vow
- Enjoy a walking tour of the Old Town, passing by the Legislative Palace, Independence Square, and the Metropolitan Cathedral of Quito
- Enter La Compañía, the city's Baroque church, to view its gold leaf interior
- Step inside the 16th-century Monastery of San Francisco

Day 3: Free day in Quito

Included meals: breakfast

Enjoy a free day in Quito or add an excursion.

+ Antisana Ecological Reserve & Hacienda Lunch

Galápagos Islands → 4 nights

Day 4: Galápagos cruise & San Cristóbal

Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner

Fly to San Cristóbal, the easternmost island of the Galápagos, to board your cruise this morning.

- Enjoy an included lunch aboard the ship
- Disembark and hike to San Cristóbal's Frigatebird Hill for views of the bay, as well as birding opportunities to see the tropical frigatebirds

Sit down for an included dinner this evening.

Day 5: Española Island

Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner

Today, visit Española Island to explore one of the most picture-perfect beaches that the Galápagos has to offer.

- Relax on the white sand beaches and snorkel in the shallow waters just off the shore of Gardner Bay
- Get up-close to the friendly Galápagos sea lions who call the island home
- Look out for mockingbirds, finches, marine life, and more
- Enjoy an included lunch
- Visit Punta Suarez, on the western edge of the island, which is a wildlife hub for boobies, albatross, sea lions, iguanas, and more

Sit down for an included dinner this evening.

Day 6: Floreana Island

Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner

Floreana has something for both history lovers and wildlife enthusiasts.

- Stop at Post Office Bay to visit the oldest operating post office in the Pacific, where whalers used to leave letters to be picked up by returning voyagers
- Enjoy an included lunch
- See flamingos feeding in the lagoon, diamond stingrays swimming offshore, and green sea turtles exploring their nesting grounds in Punta Cormorant
- Explore the volcanic shore of Devil's Crown and snorkel for the chance to see yellowtailed surgeonfish, creolefish, turtles, spotted eagle rays, parrotfish, and hammerhead sharks

- Put on your snorkel and hit the water to get up close to green turtles, harmless whitetip reef sharks, and lots of fish in Champion Islet

Sit down for an included dinner this evening.

Day 7: Santa Cruz Island

Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner

Your day on Santa Cruz Island is all about wildlife and the sensation of being somewhere very few people have ever been.

- Pass a brackish lagoon with your guide and keep your eyes peeled for shore birds and flamingos
- Walk through dry zone vegetation before reaching Dragon Hill, where you'll enjoy panoramic views of the neighboring islands and spot land iguanas
- Enjoy an included lunch aboard your ship

- Relax on the powdery beach at Punta Bowditch during a visit to this recently opened area of the Galápagos
- Explore the salt pools and white coral that surround the water islet

Sit down for an included dinner this evening.

Otavalo → 1 night

Day 8: Transfer to Otavalo via Quito

Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner

Disembark the ship to further explore Santa Cruz Island in the Galápagos before making your way to Otavalo, a market town in the Andes Mountains.

- Journey to the Santa Cruz highlands, northwest of Puerto Ayora, to visit a giant tortoise nature reserve
- Walk through the humid forest landscape to see these slow-moving reptiles in action
- Return to Baltra and board your flight back to Quito on the mainland

Celebrate your trip at a farewell dinner this evening.

Overnight Flight → 1 night

Day 9: Otavalo market visit & departure

Included meals: breakfast

Visit the Otavalo market to browse the stalls, shop for indigenous crafts, and attend a local weaving demonstration. Then, stop to view the Quitsato Sundial, a monument located on the equator, where you'll view a demonstration of equatorial effects.

Afterward, relax in a dayroom before boarding your flight home late tonight or early tomorrow morning.

Please note: If you're traveling on the tour extension to Peru, you will overnight in Quito.

Arrive Home

Day 10: Arrival home

Please note: Due to varying flight schedules, some travelers may depart on the morning of day 10, arriving home later that evening.

+ Peru extension

Fly to Lima to experience the best Peru has to offer—and, yep, that includes Machu Picchu. Continue your trip to see the legacy of the conquistadors and uncover the Lost City of the Inca, all with your expert Tour Director at your side.

Quito → 1 night

Day 9: Otavalo market visit

Included meals: breakfast

After your visit to Otavalo market, enjoy a free afternoon in Quito.

Lima → 1 night

Day 10: Flight to Lima

Included meals: breakfast

Fly to Lima, Peru this morning and get settled in to your hotel.

Cuzco → 2 nights

Day 11: Flight to Cuzco & folklore show

Included meals: breakfast

Fly to Cuzco and spend free time getting acclimatized to the city's high elevation. Tonight, get a taste of Peruvian cuisine during an included dinner as you watch a traditional folklore show featuring indigenous dances from around the country.

Day 12: Sightseeing tour of Cuzco

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Set out on a sightseeing tour of Cuzco, the UNESCO-recognized ancient capital of the Inca Empire.

- Stroll through ruins at Kenko, the “red fortress” of Puca Pucara and Sacsayhuaman, which was once completely covered in gold
- View the towering Cristo Blanco statue, a thank-you gift from the Palestinian refugees who took shelter in the city during World War II

- Stop at the colonial-era Plaza de Armas to enter Cuzco Cathedral
- Walk through the city center and step inside the Convent of Santo Domingo, built by the Spaniards where the Inca temple of Koricancha stood

Spend a free evening in Cuzco or add an excursion.

+ Peruvian Cooking Demonstration & Dinner

Machu Picchu → 1 night

Day 13: Aguas Calientes via the Sacred Valley

Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner

Today, you'll transfer to Aguas Calientes, the gateway to Machu Picchu. First, make a stop in the Sacred Valley to see the sights.

- Peruse the colorful stalls of the wide-open Pisac Market, where you'll find local fare and traditional crafts on display
- Enjoy an included lunch in Urubamba
- Continue to the ancient Ollantaytambo ruins to explore still-standing Incan homes
- Board a train to Aguas Calientes

Sit down for an included dinner this evening.

Please note: Travelers must submit full passport details by Tour Finalization Date or risk being denied entry to Machu Picchu due to scarcity of tickets and daily entrance restrictions.

Cuzco → 1 night

Day 14: Sightseeing tour of Machu Picchu & train to Cuzco

Included meals: breakfast, lunch

On today's guided tour, you'll uncover the lost city of Machu Picchu, one of the most spectacular archaeological sites on the entire South American continent.

- Tour the ruins of the ceremonial center, cultivation terraces and guard house
 - Visit Funeral Rock, the Main Temple, Temple of the Three Windows, Chamber of Ornaments, the Sacred Plaza, the Intihuatana stone, the Temple of the Sun, the Rock Quarry, the Ritual Fountains and the Condor Temple
 - Enjoy an included lunch before taking a scenic train ride back to Cuzco for the night
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Overnight Flight → 1 night

Day 15: Flight to Lima, sightseeing tour & departure

Included meals: breakfast, farewell lunch

Fly to Lima this morning. Then, enjoy a farewell lunch before setting out on a guided tour, which highlights Lima's modern and colonial quarters.

- Visit the Miraflores district and Parque del Amor
- View Plaza Mayor and the Municipal Palace in Lima's historic center
- Enter the Cathedral of Lima and descend into the catacombs below the Church of San Francisco

Later, relax in a dayroom before boarding your overnight flight home.

Arrive Home

Day 16: Arrival in the U.S.

Arrive home.

Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: goaheadtours.ca/EC1 | 1-800-754-5066

Day 3: Antisana Ecological Reserve & Hacienda

Lunch

\$149CAD/\$159CAD* (9 hours, departs in the morning, lunch included)

Journey through the valleys of the Andes Mountain range to visit the Antisana Ecological Reserve. This reserve was created in 1993 to protect Ecuadorian wildlife and ecosystems and is home to Antisana volcano, the country's fourth-largest. Join your Tour Director on a walk to see a recent lava flow, snowcapped mountains, and the picturesque views surrounding Lake Mica. Of course, it wouldn't be a nature walk without seeing some of the local flora and fauna. Take part in some bird-watching to try and spot the silvery grebe, black-faced ibis, and elusive Andean condor. Then, enjoy lunch at a local restaurant located on a hacienda, or traditional ranch, before traveling back to Quito.

Extension excursion options

Day 12: Peruvian Cooking Demonstration & Dinner

\$175CAD/\$185CAD* (3 hours, departs in the evening with dinner)

Watch as an expert chef prepares a traditional Peruvian meal during a cooking demonstration at one of Cuzco's top restaurants on this culinary excursion. With the beautiful Andes Mountains as your backdrop, you'll discover how Peruvians use locally sourced ingredients to create authentic dishes. You'll also learn how to make causa de pollo, a dish made of chicken and potatoes, and tiradito de trucha, a popular seafood-based meal. Afterwards, enjoy a delicious three-course dinner crafted by the expert chef in the restaurant.

*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at goaheadtours.ca/terms