



HIGHLANDS  
BIOLOGICAL STATION



# GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

FEBRUARY 19-28, 2020  ABOARD THE SANTA CRUZ II





Isolated from the mainland for millions of years, The Galápagos Archipelago is central to our

understanding of life's tenacious richness and drive toward change. Here on these magnificent islands 500 miles off the coast of Ecuador, we'll find the rich abundance of wildlife that so inspired Charles Darwin. Our home among the islands will be the new M/V *Santa Cruz II*, a versatile 235-foot expedition ship accommodating 90 guests. Designed for active exploration of the Galápagos, The *Santa Cruz II* also carries kayaks and a glass bottom boat that can be used at certain sites permitted by the National Park as well as snorkeling equipment. The ship has a superb staff of resident naturalists who will be on hand to explain the islands' natural wonders. The islands offer a variety of terrain to explore including lava fields, lush green vegetation in the highlands, and sandy beaches. Among the spectacular geology of these volcanic islands, we'll find the Giant Galápagos tortoises, flocks of frigate birds and blue-footed boobies, Darwin's finches and Galápagos penguins, colonies of marine iguanas and sea lions, along with other fascinating sea life. Each day offers several face-to-face encounters with animals and birds that are remarkably unafraid of humans. The program also offers the opportunity to explore Quito's celebrated historic center, a UNESCO world heritage site. The trip concludes in Guayaquil.

SHIP: M/V *Santa Cruz II*

COVER: LAND IGUANA



SEA LION



DRY LANDING



GALÁPAGOS TORTOISE



## Study Leader

Your study leader is **DR. JAMES (JIM) COSTA**, executive director of the Highlands Biological Station and professor of evolutionary biology at Western Carolina University. A field naturalist and historian of science, Jim has written extensively on the explorer-naturalists Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, co-discoverers of evolution by natural

selection. His books include *The Annotated Origin* (Harvard, 2009), *On the Organic Law of Change* (Harvard, 2013), *Wallace, Darwin, and the Origin of Species* (Harvard, 2014), *Darwin's Backyard: How Small Experiments Led to a Big Theory* (Norton, 2017), and most recently the co-edited volume *An Alfred Russel Wallace Companion*

(Chicago, 2019). Jim has been awarded research fellowships at Harvard's Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study (2004-2005), the Berlin Institute for Advanced Study (2012-2013), and the Humanities Institute of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library, New York Botanical Garden (2019). He teaches biogeography and the history of evolutionary biology, lectures widely in the US and Europe, and for many years co-instructed Harvard's summer program on Darwin and evolution at Oxford University. Jim has been a research associate of Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology for nearly 25 years, and as a regular travel program leader for the Harvard Alumni Association, he has led Galápagos Islands tours on numerous occasions and is an expert on Galápagos wildlife, ecology, and geology.





SEA TURTLE



SALLY LIGHTFOOT CRABS



SEA LION



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19

## USA/Quito

Depart the U.S. on a flight to Quito, Ecuador and transfer to the hotel upon arrival.

SWISSOTEL (MEALS ALOFT)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20

## Quito

Nestled in a high Andean Valley 9,350 feet above sea level, Quito is just 14 miles south of the equator and was declared the first "Cultural World Heritage Site" by UNESCO in 1978. This morning depart on an all-day city tour of Quito's wonderfully preserved colonial section, including the graceful plazas and arcades, the Cathedral's unique gorgoyles, and the impressive gilded interior of la Compañía church among other points of interest. Included is a visit to a traditional chocolate maker in an colorful area of the city filled with art and traditions. Welcome lunch is at the historic Casa Gangotena.

Evening is free. SWISSOTEL (B,L)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21

## Balra Island and Mosquera

Fly to Balra Island and transfer to the dock to board the *Santa Cruz II*. Welcome introductory briefing and lunch. After lunch, the *Santa Cruz II* relocates four nautical miles from Balra to Mosquera Islet, a small volcanic uplift between Balra and North Seymour. The island is a long and narrow sand bank surrounded by lava reefs. After a wet landing\*\*, pass the sea lion colonies and learn about the fragile marine and terrestrial ecosystems of Galapagos. The walk is easy as it is restricted to a few hundred metres of flat sandy dunes. This will also be a great opportunity for an introduction to snorkelling.

SANTA CRUZ II (B,L,D)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22

## San Cristobal Island

This is the first island Charles Darwin visited, landing on September 15, 1835 not far from where we will disembark. After breakfast, disembark (dry landing\*) at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the island's capital, and drive 40 minutes to the island's southern shore. At Cerro Colorado, visit the breeding centre for highly endangered giant tortoises in the midst of a fantastic deciduous forest, home to dozens of bird species, including the San Cristobal mockingbird and the San Cristobal lava lizard, both island endemics. In the afternoon, disembark (wet landing) on the eastern tip of the island at Punta Pitt, an eroded tuff cone, whose trail provides spectacular views of the shoreline. This is the only site in the Galapagos where the three species of boobies can be found together. We can walk or enjoy a panga ride along the coast. Opportunity for snorkelling, swimming and kayaking. SANTA CRUZ II (B,L,D)

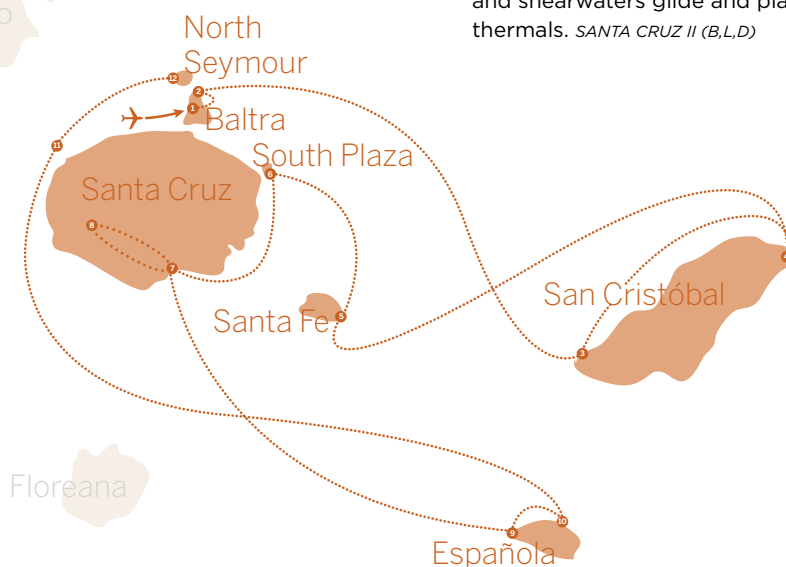
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23

## Santa Fe Island

After breakfast, take the panga over to an idyllic sandy-white beach populated by many sea lions (wet landing). The endemic land iguana, common on this island, may be spotted during the morning walk amid the giant prickly pear cactus. Snorkelling and swimming from the panga rounds off this rewarding experience, alternatively, the glass bottom boat is available for non-snorkelers, as well as an opportunity for kayaking. Following lunch and a rest, disembark (dry landing) in this channel, its turquoise waters contrast brilliantly with the white sand and black lava of the shoreline. Beyond, a carpet of endemic scarlet *Sesuvium* succulents serves as groundcover for a grove of luminescent green prickly-pear cactus. Yellow-grey land iguanas sit underneath, waiting patiently for pears to drop. Along the coastline find sea lion colonies, while frigates, swallow-tailed gulls and shearwaters glide and play with the thermals. SANTA CRUZ II (B,L,D)

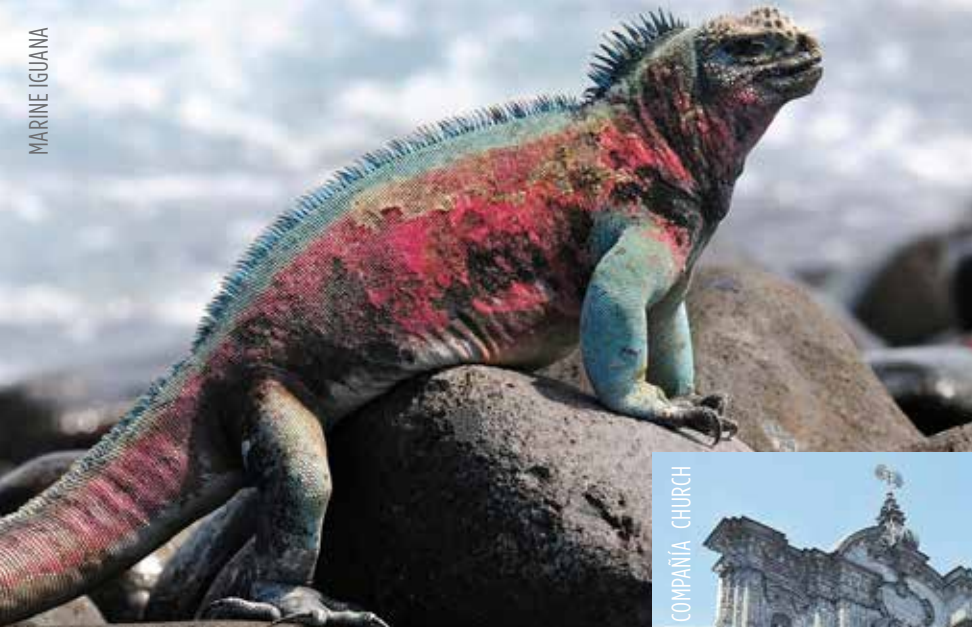
Santiago

Pinzón





MARINE IGUANA



FRIGATE BIRD



LA COMPAÑÍA CHURCH



QUITO



ESPAÑOLA ISLAND



## MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24

### Puerto Ayora and the Charles Darwin Research Station / Santa Cruz (Highlands)

In the morning, disembark (dry landing) for a visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station's giant tortoise Breeding Centre within an impressive giant prickly-pear cactus forest, home to many land birds. This is the headquarters of scientific investigation, conservation and the National Park administration. Following our visit, board our transport to enjoy lunch in the cooler highlands of Santa Cruz Island, a completely different ecosystem where we will see forests of endemic *Scalesia*, giant tree-daisies. There are several options available for the afternoon, which can be discussed in advance with your Expedition Leader. At the end of the afternoon's activities, return to Puerto Ayora and embark on the *Santa Cruz II*.

*SANTA CRUZ II (B,L,D)*

## TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

### Española Island

An exciting walk awaits at this site (dry landing). Enjoy its unique sea bird colonies, including Nazca boobies, blue-footed boobies, and swallow-tailed gulls as well as a view of the Galapagos' famous "blow-

hole". Also, look out for red-green-black marine iguanas. In the afternoon (wet landing), the picture-postcard white coral beach of Gardner Bay and the nearby islet of Osborn provides a beautiful setting for observing sea lions, cheeky Española mockingbirds, and finches as we relax. Expect great snorkelling in this area. Opportunity for swimming and kayaking as well. *SANTA CRUZ II (B,L,D)*

## WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

### Eden Islet (Santa Cruz Island) and North Seymour Island

After breakfast, a panga ride to Eden Islet, a small islet located off the coast of Santa Cruz, to observe blue-footed boobies diving into the water, reef sharks and frigates. There's a chance to snorkel and, if weather permits, ride in the glass-bottom boat and kayak. North Seymour was lifted from the ocean floor by a volcanic event, and its origins as a seabed give the island its low, flat profile. A tiny forest of silver-grey Palo Santo trees stands just above the landing (dry landing), usually without leaves, waiting for the rains to burst into bloom. North Seymour is practically one giant rookery, teeming with colonies of blue-footed boobies, two species of frigatebirds, swallow-tailed gulls, tropicbirds, and others, as well as sea lions and marine iguanas.

*SANTA CRUZ II (B,L,D)*

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27

### Baltra Island

Disembark at Baltra Island and transfer to the airport to take the flight back to Guayaquil on the mainland. Upon arrival, check into the hotel to rest and freshen up. In the early evening, gather for a festive farewell dinner. Hotel Oro Verde (B,D)

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

### Guayaquil / U.S.

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for the international flights back to the U.S.

**PLEASE NOTE:** depending on your return flight schedule, you may depart for flights back to the U.S. late evening on February 27 or early morning or early afternoon on February 28. The hotel room at the Oro Verde Hotel is included in the program cost for the night of February 27 and passengers may choose to use it until their flight home in the evening or stay the night and depart in the morning on the 28th. Other flight schedules may become available in 2020.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The itinerary and program are subject to change without prior notice, due mainly to adjustments in the policies and regulations of the Galapagos National Park.

**\*DRY LANDING:** Guests step from the panga (dinghy) onto rocks or a dock.

**\*\*WET LANDING:** As the dinghy edges onto a sandy beach, guests step into around 20 cm (8 in) of water and wade ashore.





SWALLOW-TAILED GULLS



BLUE FOOTED BOOBY



GALÁPAGOS PENGUIN



NAZCA BOOBY

## What to Expect

This program has been exclusively designed for the Highlands Biological Station and Foundation, family and friends to explore the Galápagos Islands. This is a moderately active program. In the Galápagos, walks are approximately one to two miles long (sometimes over uneven and rocky terrain) at a leisurely pace suitable for wildlife observation. There will be wet landings on many islands. Dinghy or glass bottom boat rides along the coast and shorter walks are available for participants as an alternative to longer and more challenging excursions. There are opportunities for swimming and snorkeling and sea kayaking (snorkeling equipment, wetsuits, and kayaks are available aboard Santa Cruz II) and internet service although available can be spotty. The Galápagos Islands are at sea level and temperatures range between the 70s and 90s°F in the islands. Travel is by regular scheduled commercial airlines, motor coach, air-conditioned ship, and inflatable "Zodiac-style" dinghies. Quito has a spring-like climate for most of the year due to its high altitude (9,252 feet).

## Program Cost Includes

- Educational program of lectures and discussions with Dr. James Costa.
- All accommodations as specified in the itinerary including a 5-star hotel in Quito and Guayaquil.
- A 7 day/6-night cruise aboard MV Santa Cruz II, airport/hotel/pier group transfers.
- All meals throughout the Galápagos cruise and on the mainland as specified in the itinerary.
- Internal roundtrip airfare to the Galápagos Islands
- (Quito/Galápagos/Guayaquil)
- Galápagos National Park entrance fee
- Professional English-speaking guides throughout
- Taxes, service and portage charges
- Basic gratuities to land based guides and drivers
- Leadership
- Coordination and administration

## Program Cost Does Not Include

- International airfare (quoted separately)
- Customary shipboard gratuities; international departure tax from Ecuador (usually included in cost of international ticket)
- Excess baggage charges
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Personal items such as wetsuit rental, laundry, fax or telephone calls
- Alcoholic beverages, dishes or beverages not included with meals
- Room service
- Passport fees
- Individual transfers
- Medical expenses, travel insurance, optional extensions or deviations from the scheduled tour. Tip to the tour director is at the passengers' discretion.
- Any increases in the in-tour airfare (included as part of the program cost), airport taxes, security, or fuel surcharges imposed after the initial pricing of this program are not included.



DARWIN SUITE

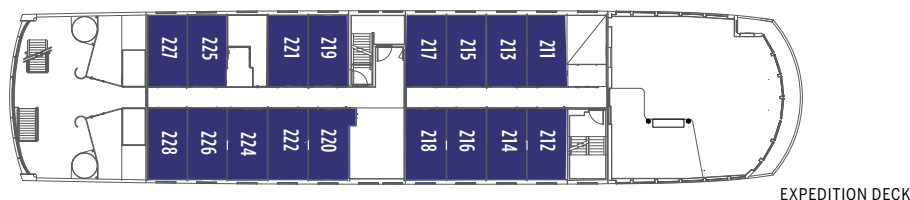
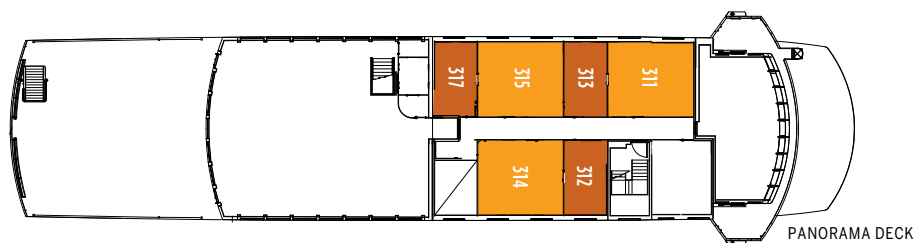


EXPLORER TWIN



## Santa Cruz II

Completely refurbished in 2015, the Santa Cruz II is a 90 passenger expedition vessel, ideally suited to cruising the Galápagos Island. The ship boasts five spacious decks, with modern interiors with 50 cabins located across three decks: Horizon, Expedition and Panorama decks. Most cabins can accommodate either two twins or one double bed. Horizon Deck Explorer, Expedition Deck Explorer and Panorama Deck Explorer cabins each measure 163 square feet and the Panorama Deck Darwin Suite measures 325 square feet. Many cabins can be interconnected. A limited number of single (127 square feet) and triple cabins (192 square feet) are available. All cabins have DVD players, flat-screen televisions, and iPod docking stations. Guests can relax in the beautifully designed communal areas and viewing platforms, two lounge bars, a well-stocked library, two indulgent ocean view hot tubs and a state of the art gym. Both indoor and outdoor dining options are available. The ship has a medical doctor aboard, with a fully equipped infirmary, free of charge.



## Program Cost (per person, double occupancy)

CABIN CATEGORY	DOUBLE	SINGLE
<b>HORIZON DECK Explorer</b>		
Family cabin (max capacity 3)	\$8,095	—
<b>HORIZON DECK Explorer</b> (max capacity 2)	\$8,395	\$9,390
<b>EXPEDITION DECK Explorer</b> (max capacity 2)	\$8,595	\$9,590
<b>PANORAMA DECK Explorer</b> (max capacity 2)	\$8,745	9,740
<b>PANORAMA DECK Darwin Suite</b> (max capacity 2)	\$9,395	—
<b>HORIZON DECK Voyager</b> Designated Single Cabin (max capacity 1)	—	\$9,190

## SAMPLE AIRFARE

Atlanta/Quito/Guayaquil/Atlanta  
(as of March 2019 and subject to change) ..... \$884

*There is one designated single cabin. Any other cabins for twin/double use, but used as a single are limited to 3 cabins and prices are show on the chart.*



## Terms & Conditions

### RESERVATIONS, DEPOSITS, AND FINAL PAYMENT

To reserve a space on this tour, please mail a non-refundable deposit of \$1,000 per person payable to "HIGHLANDS BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATION", along with the completed reservation form, to: Highlands Biological Foundation, P.O. Box 580, Highlands, NC 28741. Deposits may be charged to a credit card. Reservations are acknowledged in order of receipt. Final payment is due November 11, 2019 and must be paid by check. Royal Adventures handles all invoicing. CST #2009579-40

### CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

Notification of cancellation must be received in writing by the Highlands Biological Foundation or Royal Adventures from the participant. Should you have to cancel, the following terms will apply: cancellations received within 14 days of booking will receive a full refund of the trip deposit. Cancellations received up to 100 days prior to departure will be assessed a cancellation fee of \$1,000 per person. Cancellations received within 100 days prior to departure are subject to a 100% penalty of all deposits and payments, regardless of booking date. There are no refunds for unused meals, accommodations, or other trip features or for any part of the program on which you choose not to participate.

### PHYSICAL HEALTH

Participation on this program requires that passengers be in generally good health. Normal activities include leisurely walks, often over uneven terrain and excursions aboard Zodiac-type dinghies and wet and dry landings. It is essential that persons with any medical problems and related dietary restrictions make them known to us well before departure.

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance as the cancellation penalty in the brochure will apply. An application for trip cancellation insurance will be available upon confirmation. Depending on the level of policy, the pre-existing medical conditions exclusion is waived if the insurance is purchased within 15 days of initial deposit. Neither Highlands Biological Station and Foundation nor Royal Adventures accept liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a non-refundable airline ticket or other expenses incurred by tour participants in preparing for the tour.

### RESPONSIBILITY

Royal Adventures, its owners and employees act only as agents for the various independent suppliers and contractors providing transportation, hotel accommodations, restaurant and other services connected with this tour. Such travel and

services are subject to the terms and conditions under which such accommodations, services and transportation are offered or provided, and the Highlands Biological Station and Foundation and Royal Adventures and their respective, employees, agents, representatives, and assigns, accept no liability therefor. The Highlands Biological Station and Foundation and Royal Adventures, assume no liability for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or other irregularity which may be caused by the defect of any aircraft or vehicle or the negligence or default of any company or person engaged in carrying out or performing any of the services involved. Additionally, responsibility is not accepted for losses, injury, damages or expenses of any kind due to sickness, weather, strikes, local laws, hostilities, wars, terrorist acts, and acts of nature or other such causes. All services and accommodations are subject to the laws of the country in which they are provided. The Highlands Biological Station and Foundation and Royal Adventures reserve the right to make changes in the published itinerary whenever, in their sole judgment, conditions warrant, or if they deem it necessary for the comfort, convenience or safety of the tour participants. They reserve the right to withdraw this tour without penalty. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour, or to substitute another qualified leader or special guest. Baggage and personal effects are the sole responsibility of the owners at all times. The price of the program is given in good faith based on current tariffs and rates, and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, airfare, or fuel increases will be passed onto participants. Neither the Highlands Biological Station and Foundation nor Royal Adventures accept the liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable airline ticket. The air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. As part of the consideration and right to participate in this tour, each participant will be asked to sign a liability release.

**TOUR SIZE** This tour exclusively designed for the Highlands Biological Station and Foundation is limited to 20 participants on a first come-first save basis. The minimum group size is 15. Should the minimum not be met, we reserve the right to levy a small group surcharge.

**QUESTIONS** Please visit [highlandsbiological.org](http://highlandsbiological.org), email Jim Costa ([costa@email.wcu.edu](mailto:costa@email.wcu.edu)), or phone (828) 787-1712. Or, call Katie Howe, Royal Adventures (925) 820-6260 or 1-800-453-4754 or e-mail [katie@royaladventures.com](mailto:katie@royaladventures.com).

# GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

FEBRUARY 19-28, 2020 • ABOARD THE SANTA CRUZ II

Enclosed is a deposit for \_\_\_\_\_ (\$1,000 deposit per person) to hold \_\_\_\_\_ place(s) on the "Galapagos Islands" trip February 19-28, 2020. Final payment is due November 11, 2019.

NAME AS ON PASSPORT DATE OF BIRTH

NAME AS ON PASSPORT DATE OF BIRTH

NAME AS ON PASSPORT DATE OF BIRTH RELATIONSHIP\*

NAME AS ON PASSPORT DATE OF BIRTH RELATIONSHIP\*

### CONTACT INFORMATION

ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP

HOME PHONE OFFICE PHONE

E-MAIL

### PAYMENT OPTIONS

- ☐ Pay by check made out to "Highlands Biological Foundation"
- ☐ Please charge the deposit of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per person to:
- ☐ AMEX ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ DISCOVER CARD

CARD NUMBER

EXP DATE SEC CODE

### CABIN PREFERENCES

- ☐ Horizon Deck Explorer ☐ Expedition Deck Explorer
- ☐ Horizon Deck Explorer ☐ Panorama Deck Explorer
- (Family Triple Cabin) ☐ Panorama Darwin Suite

☐ I wish to have single accommodations (*limited availability—please call*)

☐ I will share accommodations with: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I /We will take care of my/our own international flight arrangements to Quito with a return from Guayaquil.

☐ Please make round-trip flight arrangements from: \_\_\_\_\_ to Quito with a return from Guayaquil.

*I/We confirm that I/We have carefully read the Terms and Conditions and Responsibility section of this brochure and agree to their terms on behalf of myself and of my party named above.*

SIGNATURE DATE

SIGNATURE DATE

## To Book

Return the form (right) with credit card authorization or check payable to "Highlands Biological Foundation" to P.O. Box 580, Highlands, NC 28741.

Phone: (828) 526-2221. Fax: (828) 526-2797 or visit [highlandsbiological.org](http://highlandsbiological.org)



SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND

## HIGHLIGHTS

**EXPLORE** the Galápagos Islands for 7 days with expert naturalists.

**ENHANCE** your experience with lectures and discussions from Dr. James Costa.

**SNORKEL** alongside sea lions, sea turtles and Galápagos Penguins.

**MARVEL** at the Giant Galápagos Tortoises, Blue-footed Boobies, and Magnificent Frigatebirds.

**VISIT** Quito, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with its old city center, plazas, gilded churches, and museums—rich with Spanish Colonial and Pre-Colombian history.



PHOTOGRAPHING A LAND IGUANA