

**Travels in Galapagos and Nachu Picchu  
December 12 through December 27, 2019**

**Day 1 In Transit, Arrivals in Quito, Check-in**



Diana on the 767 from Miami, Florida to Lima Peru We flew on the 737 Max from ABQ to Dallas to Miami



**Sheraton in Quito where we stayed for the first two nights.**

**[We are on Board and on our way to Quito](#)**

## **Day 2 Orientation to Quito, UNESCO World Heritage Site, San Marcos**

*Quito, Ecuador's capital, sits high in the Andean foothills at an altitude of 2,850m. Constructed on the foundations of an ancient Incan city, it's known for its well-preserved colonial center, rich with 16th- and 17th-century churches and other structures blending European, Moorish and indigenous styles. These include the cathedral, in the Plaza Grande square, and ultra-ornate Compañía de Jesús Jesuit church.*

### **Touring Quito**



#### **Basilica del Voto Nacional (Basilica of the National Vow)**

**The idea of Quito's most impressive Roman Catholic church came about in 1883. A congressman, Father Julio Matovelle, suggested building a monument as a reminder of the consecration of Ecuador to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, its patron, and protector. A year later, the construction began to**

**take shape, and the first stone was placed in 1892.**





archipelago consists of 13 major islands, 6 smaller islands and many islets. They are part of the country of Ecuador,

What are the Galapagos Islands famous for? Giant tortoises on Isabela, marine iguanas on Fernandina,

blue-footed boobies nesting on North Seymour, and 17 other land, marine, and avian species not found anywhere else in the world are the major reasons for the Galapagos Islands' fame.





## [Travelling to Galapagos Island](#)

### **Day 4 Isabela, Urbina Bay and Tagus Cove**

Galápagos Islands

Isabela is the **largest island** in the Galapagos and is bigger than the rest of the islands combined. It's the third most populated and is the only island to have the **equator** run through it. **Puerto Villamil** is the largest town on the island and offers accommodation for tourists. Isabela is accessible by a public speedboat that departs from Santa Cruz Island and there is also a small airfield that is serviced by two local airlines, Embete and Air Zab. There are numerous sights that should be visited on the island; the **Giant Tortoise Breeding Center**, only open on weekdays, breeds and raises these Giant tortoises before releasing them into the wild; the enormous **Sierra Negra Volcano** which boasts impressive views from the rim of the crater on clear days and also boasts the second largest caldera in the world; **Las Tintoreras**, a lagoon where white tip sharks come to rest and although swimming is prohibited, to watch these sharks in their natural habitat is nonetheless remarkable.

### **Our Schedule for Today**

## Isabela Island

6:30 - Dry landing.

Tintorerías Islet

\* Closed shoes, water,  
camera, insect repellent.

1 mile loop trail / easy walk - gravel.

8:00 - Breakfast

7 hours navigation

10:30 - Galapagos Origen talk.

11:30 - Snorkel gear hang out

12:00 - Lunch

15:00 - Snorkeling time

off the Zodiacs

Back onboard after Snorkeling

Punta Moreno

16:30 - Dry landing

+ Hiking shoes, water, camera,  
walking sticks, sun protection

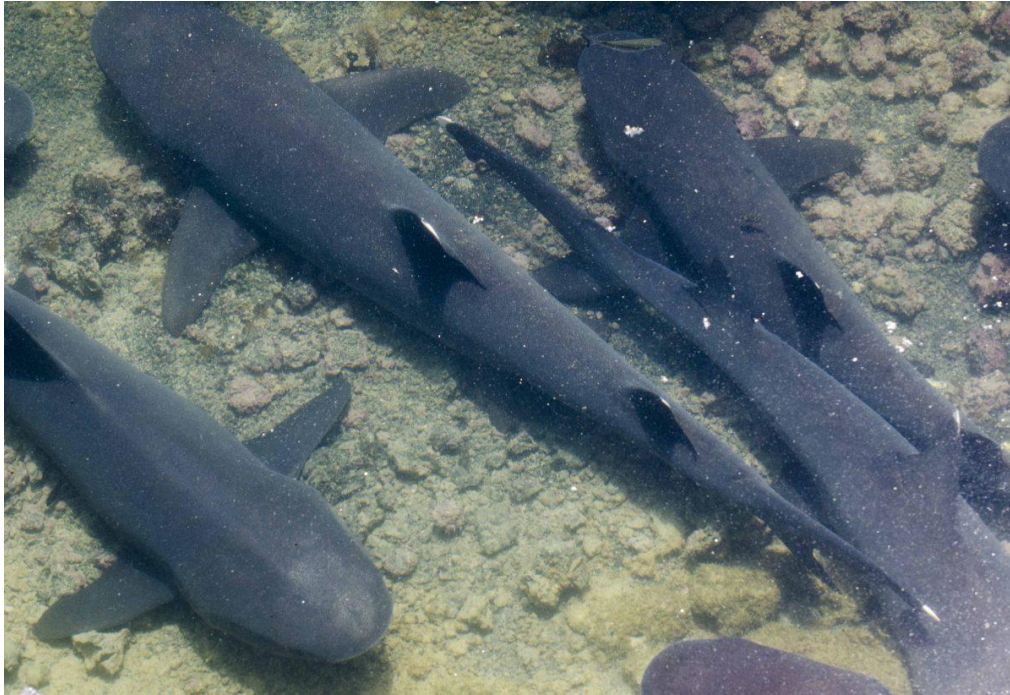
very rocky trail, young lava rock.

1 mile walk - no shade

18:45 - Briefing

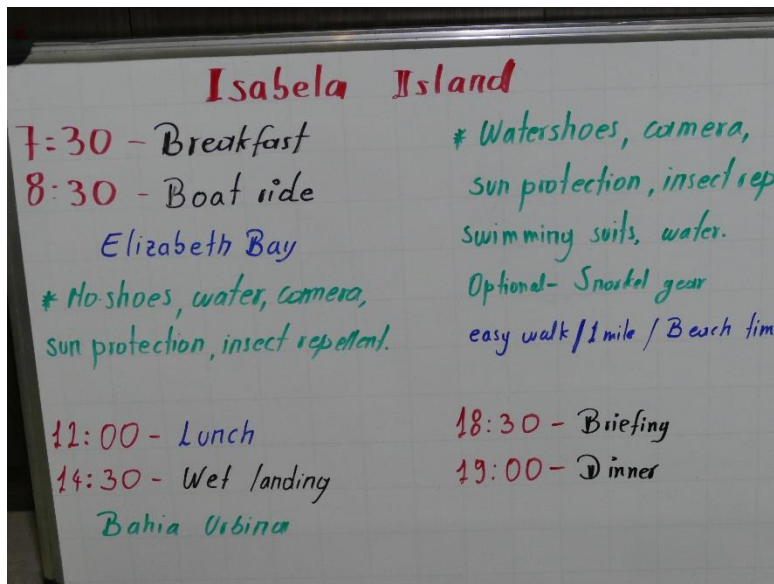
19:15 - Dinner





## [Hiking on the Island of Isabela](#)

**Day 5 Isabela - Elizabeth Bay, swimming, and surfing**  
Galápagos Islands



**A Huge Beached Sealion**

### [Enjoying the other side of Isabela Island](#)

**Day 6 Party as we cross the Equator**  
Galápagos Islands





[Many Pictures of our day](#)

[The Equator Dance and Snorkeling](#)

## **Day 7 Not - Santiago Island**

The main attraction on Santiago island is **Puerto Egas** on the west of the island. There is a lava shoreline where eroded rock is the home to a variety of wildlife including iguanas that bask in the sun and tide pools that contain thousands of Sally Lightfoot crabs. The snorkeling is also fantastic as many tropical fish can be viewed.

The focus on conservation on Santiago has been a success over the last decade, as previously, non-native species had been introduced causing severe problems to the local flora and fauna. Goats caused massive erosion through trampling and competed for much of the food with the local herbivores; pigs dug up turtle nests as well as other ground nesting birds and destroyed their eggs and donkeys were destructive to the Opuntia cactus. Major conservation projects led to the eradication of these species leading to rapid recovery. This island is regaining a pristine status.

## [Visiting Santiago Island](#)

## [Visiting Santiago videos](#)





## Day 8 - Santa Cruz - Highlands, Wild Tortoises, Charles Darwin Station Galápagos Islands

This is the second largest island in the Galapagos and is the **most populated** with some 12,000 locals. **Puerto Ayora** is located in Santa Cruz, the most populated town on the Galapagos. The town boasts a hospital, schools, banks, shops, hotels, restaurants and numerous Internet cafes. Overall, it has the best infrastructure on the Galapagos. There are a variety of tours that can be designed by tourists from Santa Cruz including kayaking trips, hiking tours of the highlands, diving and snorkeling excursions, horseback riding outings and boat trips to nearby islands.

The **Charles Darwin station** is a must see on Santa Cruz. It is located about 1km west of Puerto Ayora and contains fascinating and detailed information about the history of the flora and fauna of the Galapagos. **Tortuga Bay** is another must – a beautiful beach filled with a profusion of wildlife that includes the Giant tortoise, Marina iguanas, Galapagos crabs and Whitetip sharks. **Garrapatero beach** is also unique and no guide is needed to visit; swimming and snorkeling are also allowed. There is a small lagoon situated behind the beach where flamingos and Bahamas ducks can be spotted. **Las grietas** is similarly remarkable - a canyon filled with crystal clear waters and an abundance of tropical fish.





Towards the end of today we were snorkeling and Diana was thrown up into the rocks.

## [Hiking on the Island of Santa Cruz](#)

### [Video taken on the Island of Santa Cruz](#)

## **Day 9 - Santiago Island and Bartolome Island** Galápagos Islands

### [In and around Santiago and Bartolome](#)





**Day 10 -**

### **[Goodbye to the ship and staff](#)**

**We are now on our way to Peru as our tour of the Galápagos Islands is complete.**

**Our tour Guide in the islands has developed a wonderful Summary.**

**[A summary of our tour by our tour guide Fabian Sanchez](#)**

### **Day 11 - Fly to Lima via mainland Ecuador**

Lima

### **[Some of the Sites in Lima Peru](#)**

Lima

We visited the Museo Larco housed in an exquisite 18th century vice-royal mansion, built over a 7th century pre-Columbian pyramid and surrounded by beautiful gardens. The museum's galleries exhibit the finest and most magnificent gold and jewelry treasures from Ancient Peru and the renowned erotic collection, one of Peru's most celebrated attractions. Founded in 1926 and located in Lima, the Museo Larco holds the largest and most important archaeological collection of Ancient Peru in the world. Peru is known worldwide thanks to the legendary Inca

Empire on the Andes Mountains; however few are aware that this society existed only for the last 100 years before the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores. The Museo Larco portrays to us an engaging narrative, recounting 5000 years in the development of Peru's pre-Columbian history; thus becoming the ideal means to understand and enjoy Ancient Peru. On the Museum's terraces overlooking its vibrant and stunning gardens, find Museo Larco's Café restaurant, where one can savour the best of Peruvian and International cuisine. All in all, it's accurate to say that to become fascinated by Peruvian history, the journey begins at Museo Larco!



During lunch the restaurant surprised us with a pre-birthday present for tom

**Day 12 - Fly to Cusco, Transfer to Sacred Valley, Pisac Market**  
Sacred Valley







The Sacred Valley is a region in Peru's Andean highlands. Along with the nearby town of Cusco and the ancient city of Machu Picchu, it formed the heart of the Inca Empire. Stretching roughly 60 kilometers, it's an area of fertile farmland and Spanish colonial villages like Pisac and Ollantaytambo. Pisac is known for its Sunday handicraft market and hilltop Incan citadel

### [Some of the Sites in the sacred Valley](#)

#### **Day 13 Ollantaytambo Ruins, Chinchero Town Weaving**

Sacred Valley

### [Video of the Oilantaytambo Ruins](#)

The Ollantaytambo Ruins, or Ollantaytambo Archaeological Park, is widely considered the most important Inca sight in the Sacred Valley. The Sacred Valley is a section of the Urubamba River Valley northwest of Cusco.

### [Some of the Sites in the Oilantaytambo Ruins](#)

#### **Day 14 - Aguas Calientes, Machu Picchu, UNESCO World Heritage Site**

Aguas Calientes/Machu Picchu

### [Diana and I spent Christmas Day hiking in Macho Picchu](#)

Machu Picchu is an Incan citadel set high in the Andes Mountains in Peru, above the Urubamba River valley. Built in the 15th century and later abandoned, it's renowned for its sophisticated dry-stone walls that fuse huge blocks without the use of mortar, intriguing buildings that play on astronomical alignments and panoramic views. Its exact former use remains a mystery.



Surprise Birthday Party







## **Day 15 Orientation to Aguas Calientes, Train & Bus to Cusco**

Cusco

Aguas Calientes is a town in the Urubamba River Valley, in southeast Peru. It's known for its thermal baths and as a gateway to the nearby Inca ruins of Machu Picchu. The town center is full of eateries and shops, anchored by the central Mercado Artesanal, a craft market. Northwest, along the river, are Los Jardines de Mandor gardens with orchids and birds.

[Diana dancing on the Train as we head for Cusco](#)



[Diana dancing on the Train \(A Video\)](#)

**Day 16 - Sacsayhuaman Ruins and Introduction to Cusco**  
Cusco





Hiking at 14,000+ feet was difficult...

Sacsayhuamán, often spelled Saqsaywaman or Xacxaguaman, is a citadel on the northern outskirts of the city of Cusco, Peru, the historic capital of the Inca Empire. The site is at an altitude of 3,701 m. The complex was built by the Incas in the 15th century, particularly under Sapa Inca Pachacuti and his successors.

### [Sights and sounds of Sacsayhuaman Ruins](#)

### **Day 17 -Program Concludes, Flights to the U.S.**







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## [Fairwell Dinner and Celebration of Tom & Diana Wedding Anniversary](#)

**What a Fantastic Trip**