



VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS

ITINERARY

THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

Aboard *M/Y Coral I*
NOVEMBER 11–20, 2025

TANDAYAPA EXTENSION
NOVEMBER 19–23, 2025

© 2025



Waved Albatross © Michael O'Brien

A trip to the Galapagos Islands is like no other, for it involves total immersion into all aspects of the natural history of one of the world's elite destinations. It is one of the unique places on Earth where the wildlife is abundant, approachable, and utterly unafraid of humans.

The Galapagos Giant-Tortoise is the classic symbol of the islands, but the seabird colonies, Marine Iguanas, sea lions, and fish are equally captivating. Thousands of people from all over the world visit the Galapagos annually to experience the wildlife spectacles, to walk in the footsteps of Darwin, and to enjoy this remarkable form of tropical paradise. The best way, the only way, to really see the Galapagos is by ship, and Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is proud to offer a wonderful opportunity to cruise these islands aboard the 36-guest M/Y Coral I, a handsome and very comfortable vessel ideally suited for an intimate Galapagos Islands experience.

The history of the Galapagos is rich. Since their discovery in 1537, they have witnessed the ages of piracy and privateering, exploration and whaling, the arrival of Darwin, and all the scientists and collectors who came after. Through it all, the islands have endured a steady procession of those who would take from their bountiful supply of natural resources. It wasn't until 1934, however, that the government of Ecuador set the islands aside as a wildlife sanctuary. In 1959, the uninhabited areas were declared a national park in order to better preserve the unique flora and fauna. In 1962, the Charles Darwin Research Station on Santa Cruz began operation, and, in 1986, the government of Ecuador created the Galapagos Marine Resources Reserve. The Galapagos National Park now includes the 50,000 square kilometers of surrounding ocean that supports the entire ecosystem, and preserves over 90 percent of the land area as well as the marine resources.



Galapagos Penguin © Michael O'Brien

The government monitors the number of tourists permitted to visit the Galapagos, and the National Park Service has set strict behavioral guidelines for all visitors. All tourists to the islands must be accompanied by well-trained and licensed Galapagos guides. These guides are not only excellent naturalists; they also have a mandate to enforce behavioral guidelines, so that this special place will remain an outstanding natural laboratory and a superb destination for the visitor. There are over 50 official tourist-landing sites, all of them areas of significant interest for natural historians, where visitors can observe and photograph the wildlife at close range. Swimming and snorkeling at select spots are an essential element to this trip and add an underwater perspective on the rich life of the islands. You may find yourself nose-to-nose with a sea turtle or trying to keep pace with a sea lion! The assortment of tropical fish will prove that what is seen below water is as fascinating as what is encountered on land.

Like many oceanic islands, the Galapagos are volcanic in origin and, in fact, some islands are still young and active. Each island is different and has its own unique mix of wildlife and scenery. Climatically, most of the land at lower elevations is arid, seemingly barren and hostile but surprisingly rich in life. The surrounding marine environment provides the key to this contrast, for it supports most of the ecosystem. Several oceanic currents converge in the Galapagos, supporting an abundance of food resources and great diversity in marine fauna, including over 300 species of fish. Seabirds, sea lions, Marine Iguanas, and Sally Lightfoot Crabs may utilize the islands as breeding sites, but it is the abundance of food in the ocean that makes this possible.

Of the diversity of seabirds that occur here, six are endemic breeders, including the world's northernmost penguin, the only equatorial albatross, and the Lava Gull, one of the world's rarest gulls. The comical and tame Blue-footed Booby is one of the more abundant birds here, nesting on many of the islands and fishing the shallow inshore waters.

The Nazca and Red-footed boobies, on the other hand, are more restricted in their choice of nesting areas, and fish the deeper waters farther offshore. Elegant Red-billed Tropicbirds are a frequent sight, and cruising between the islands yields pelagic species like Galapagos Shearwater, Galapagos Petrel, Elliot's and Wedge-rumped storm-petrels, and Great and Magnificent frigatebirds. Outstanding among the land birds, of course, are the famous Darwin's finches. Other endemic land birds include the Galapagos Dove (surprisingly beautiful and distinctive), Galapagos Hawk, Galapagos and Brujo flycatchers, Galapagos Martin, and the Galapagos mockingbirds.



Red-billed Tropicbird © Michael O'Brien

Because the islands are so distant from the mainland, colonization of landform has been limited. There are 30 species of resident land birds, four native land mammals (two rats and two bats), and 22 species of reptiles. But in isolation and in response to the harsh climatic conditions, a high degree of endemism has evolved, and few of these forms now bear much resemblance to their closest relatives on the mainland. The plants, too, show a high degree of endemism. Among the many unique forms, the abundance and variety of cacti stand out, forming “forests” on some islands.

Aside from the legendary natural history of the islands, participants will enjoy a true tropical paradise. Awaiting the visitor are glorious sunrises and spectacular sunsets, strolls on white and black sand beaches, fascinating snorkeling, and moonlit nights under the stately Southern Cross. Any voyage to the Galapagos is remarkable and exhilarating, and though your time among the natural wonders may seem all too brief, your memories and photos will last a lifetime.

Those interested in extending their trip are encouraged to join our Tandayapa extension. Our three-day trip visits the Andean cloud forests in and around the Tandayapa and Mindo valleys, outside Quito, on the northwestern slopes of the Andes. Participants will experience beautiful mountain scenery and visit various local gardens and private reserves to witness the world’s greatest hummingbird shows.



November 11, Day 1: Travel to Quito. Participants should plan to arrive in Quito (Mariscal Sucre International Airport, airport code UIO) any time today. After clearing immigration and customs, you will be met outside the baggage claim by a representative of our local ground operator and transferred to the **Hotel San Jose de Puembo** where a room has been reserved in your name. As many flights from the United States do not arrive in Quito until mid- to late evening, dinner tonight will be on your own.

Hotel San Jose de Puembo is one of the better hotels in the city. Offering large, comfortable rooms, tasty cuisine, and good service, it is a perfect starting point for our tour. For those with extra time at the hotel, a walk through the gardens can be productive for a range of typical area birds including Eared Dove, Sparkling Violetear, Great Thrush, Hooded Siskin, Rufous-collared Sparrow, Golden Grosbeak, Scrub Tanager, Cinerous Conebill, and Rusty Flowerpiercer; and of particular interest is the Andean specialty, Black-tailed Trainbearer.

NIGHT: Hotel San Jose de Puembo, Quito

November 12, Day 2: Flight to San Cristóbal, Galapagos Islands; board *M/Y Coral I*. Following breakfast, we will transfer to the international airport for our group flight to the Galapagos Islands. En route, the flight may stop briefly in the coastal city of Guayaquil before continuing on. We will arrive at San Cristóbal shortly after noon, after which we will board the *Coral I* and begin our exploration of the islands.

The Galapagos Islands are as sensational a destination as any in the world. It is an archipelago consisting of 13 major islands and numerous islets and isolated rock towers, all volcanic in origin. While there are obvious similarities between all the islands, there is also a tremendous amount of variety that simply begs for exploration. The wonderfully unique natural history, otherworldly landscapes, and inviting waters provide visitors with numerous and varied activities.

We will visit the majority of the major islands and a few of the smaller islets as well. At each stop, versatile Pangas (Zodiac landing craft) will take us ashore, where our expedition leader and naturalist-guides will lead us on walks amidst the natural wonders of the islands, with commentary and interpretation as we go. There will be ample opportunities for photography and unlimited subject matter.



Galapagos Sea Lions © Michael O'Brien

NIGHT: Aboard *M/Y Coral I*

November 13–18, Days 3–8: Exploring the Galapagos Islands. We will spend a week exploring the Galapagos Islands and the surrounding marine environment. While our itinerary is subject to final approval by the Galapagos National Park, we plan to stop at all of the islands described below. The park service, however, strictly regulates visitation on the islands in order to protect and preserve the ecosystem. The result may be that we will need to deviate from our schedule at times. Weather conditions may also restrict

us from certain locations. A peculiarity of the islands is that most of them have two names, an English name and a Spanish name. This is a product of the rich history of the islands, in which they were alternately explored and named by the Spanish, then the English, and then ultimately claimed by Ecuador. The first name in the list is what we consider the primary name, while names in parentheses are secondary.

NIGHTS: Aboard *M/Y Coral I*

Santa Cruz (Indefatigable). Situated toward the middle of the archipelago, Santa Cruz is one of the largest of the islands and home to the headquarters of the Galapagos National Park and the world-famous Charles Darwin Research Station. Highlights of our time on Santa Cruz include a tour of the research station, an excursion into the scenic highlands to visit a Giant Tortoise reserve, and several shore landings on the island's north side.



Galapagos Giant Tortoise © Michael O'Brien

Situated in Puerto Ayora on the south coast of the island, the Charles Darwin Research Station is a world-class facility designed primarily to ensure the survival of the Galapagos Giant-Tortoise. The paths, pens, and propagation facilities are all tastefully constructed. As we tour the grounds, our Galapagos guides will have much information to offer about the tortoises and the methods employed for reproduction and conservation. These long-lived and gentle creatures are the largest tortoises in the world, but their numbers were sadly reduced by centuries of relentless hunting and collecting, and now it is believed that only 11 of the 14 races still survive. Research at the station is still ongoing, and great effort is being made to ensure their long-term survival.

Meanwhile, the natural setting around the station is most attractive. Huge columnar cacti dominate the immediate precincts and make this area possibly the best in the Galapagos for viewing the Common Cactus-Finch. The whole area is loaded with finches and gives us more opportunities for sorting out this confusing group. Large Ground-Finches are found here and offer nice comparisons to the Common Cactus-Finches, while Vegetarian Finches perch quietly, munching on Muyuyu flowers. At the end of our

visit, we should have some time to explore the nearby environs of the research station and the shops and stores of Puerto Ayora.

Departing the research station, we'll ascend to the highlands in the island's interior. After lunch, we will visit a reserve to see wild giant tortoises. We should have little trouble locating the massive beasts as they feed in the open pastures of the reserve. Depending on the specific site we visit, we may even get to look for the diminutive Galapagos Rail, a rarely seen resident of the moist highlands.

At this elevation, mist from clouds sweeping the highlands (*garua*) creates a much wetter environment than at the low-elevation deserts, and tall *scalesia* trees dominate the botanical community here. Although our time here will be limited, in the mature forest here, we may encounter several of the finches of this upper life zone, most notably Green Warbler-Finch, Large Tree-Finch, and Woodpecker Finch, in addition to Dark-billed Cuckoo.



Large Ground-Finch © Michael O'Brien

San Cristóbal (Chatham). San Cristóbal holds one of the largest human populations in the islands and is home to one of two sizeable airports in the Galapagos. This island is one of the oldest, geologically speaking, and has had more time to erode. The resulting soil deposits are thicker here than on other islands and support an abundance of vegetation. An impressive variety of birds are found here including the San Cristóbal Mockingbird, a species found nowhere else.

Some of our activities on San Cristóbal may include a trip to the island Interpretation Center where we may note a number of bird species including Smooth-billed Ani, Dark-billed Cuckoo, and Common Cactus-Finch. The nearby waterfront at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno is often filled with Galapagos Sea Lions hauled up on the beaches, while Blue-footed Boobies, Brown Pelicans, and occasional Lava Gulls loaf on the boats and pilings.



Blue-footed Booby © Michael O'Brien

Española (Hood). Known for its dramatic scenery and abundant seabirds riding the updrafts along the windswept cliff faces, Española is virtually the only breeding ground for the rare Waved Albatross. We will land at Punta Suarez where we will have all morning for touring this small but critically important island. An established path leads from the boulder-strewn beaches through the drier uplands, promising more exploration and close encounters with nature.

Upon landing, the first bird we are likely to see is the Española Mockingbird. From a numbers standpoint, this species is among the rarest of the endemic birds in the archipelago. It is found only here and on one tiny islet nearby. Fortunately, they are conspicuous and easy to see and photograph. Turning our sights inland, we will be in pursuit of the equally rare Española Ground-Finch, another island-endemic, as well as the Gray Warbler-Finch. During our search, it is only a matter of time before we come across our first Waved

Albatross. These magnificent birds are arguably the signature seabird of the Galapagos Islands. Both big and bold, these marvelously patterned birds never fail to steal the show. Many of them will be at rest near a nest site while others may be engaged in the bill-clacking sequences that have made their courtship behavior famous. Photographic opportunities abound, and we will have ample time for enjoying them.



Punta Suarez, Española © Michael O'Brien



Española Mockingbird © Michael O'Brien

The wild, windswept cliff tops are indeed a sight to behold. With the rumbling Pacific far below, and the cacophony of bird calls all around, some people consider Española Island the premier Galapagos experience. There is simply so much to see here. Red-billed Tropicbirds arc by at high speed; Waved Albatrosses float by on outstretched wings; and Nazca Boobies dot the tips of eroded rock towers. Blue-footed Boobies are common and easily photographed, as well. Their comical antics are a sight to behold!

At some point we are bound to encounter the endemic Española Lava Lizard, perhaps sunning on the rocks or chasing a rival out of its territory. Española also has the largest race of the Marine Iguana, some of them

a rare red morph. Circling back toward the landing area, our excursion will conclude with a walk by several sea lion colonies scattered along the beach.

In the afternoon we may disembark at Gardner Bay, on the northeastern coast of the island, for a walk on an immaculate white sand beach to view Galapagos Sea Lions, Española Mockingbirds, and several species of finches.



Marine Iguana © Michael O'Brien

Floreana (Santa Maria, Charles). One of the few populated islands, Floreana possesses some of the best scenery and most interesting geography in the archipelago. Our time here will include several activities that afford exposure to different parts of the island. We will Zodiac cruise around Champion Island, lying just offshore, to look for the Floreana Mockingbird. Once occurring commonly on Floreana, this species was extirpated through the introduction of livestock that fed upon the trees and plants where the bird preferred to nest, and ship rats, whose predacious habits heralded doom for vulnerable eggs and nestlings. Remarkably, a number of pairs still survive on Champion Island, and we have a good chance of finding them. This cruise should also afford excellent views of nesting Swallow-tailed Gull and Red-billed Tropicbird, plus numerous other seabirds. Nearby is the Devil's Crown, an eroded out, half-sunken volcanic crater.

We will land on a green-sand beach at Punta Cormorant, so called because of the presence of the mineral olivine. From there a short path inland will take us to Flamingo Lagoon, where American Flamingos feed in their pink brilliance in the morning sun. The shallow brackish lagoon is also great for seeing White-cheeked Pintail and a variety of shorebirds. Continuing farther, the path ends at a spectacular white-sand beach with the consistency of flour. It is great fun to take your shoes off here and simply let the sand slide between your toes. The warm water is shallow and inviting, and gently washes the beach with each incoming roll of the sea. This is an excellent place to study the surf for the white-tipped reef sharks and inconspicuous marbled sting rays that occur here. The ambience at this site embodies the tropical island experience. On the way back, we will watch for the endemic Floreana Lava Lizard.

We will also visit historic Post Office Bay. In 1793 an English sea captain, James Colnett, visited the islands for the purpose of making navigational charts as he explored the area for its whaling potential. About this time, the first post office was erected on Floreana. This so-called post office was really nothing more than a barrel and was seen as a way for mail to be delivered to England and the United States. The idea was that whalers, sailors, and mariners would leave their mail in the barrel, and homebound ships would stop, pick

up the mail, and deliver it. The beach where the barrel was placed became known as Post Office Bay. While the original barrel is long gone, the tradition is alive and well. Most visitors to the island will deposit a post card and then sort through the stack, looking for a card to hand-deliver to somebody who lives nearby back home. During our visit to Post Office Bay, we will keep our eyes open for the very rare Galapagos Penguin, which occurs here in small numbers.



Swallow-tailed Gulls © Michael O'Brien

Genovesa (Tower). This island, an eroded and partially sunken volcano, is widely regarded as the wildest in the archipelago. Genovesa is also one of the most isolated of the islands, and, therefore, supports the largest colonies of breeding birds. A trip here is essential as it epitomizes the Galapagos experience. Not only are the sheer numbers of birds overwhelming, but their confiding nature allows for close-as-can-be experiences. Nesting birds, resting birds, and preening birds cover the bushes and the ground around us, allowing for dazzling photographic opportunities and easy study of their often fascinating behavior.

On the eastern side of Darwin Bay is a path (Prince Phillip's Steps) up the side of the crater and then overland to the other side of the island. We will be sure to walk as far as we can, as each step on the path reveals more fantastic interactions with nature. Nazca and Red-footed boobies are literally everywhere! If we are lucky, we may see them engaged in their entertaining courtship behavior. Genovesa Ground-Finch and Genovesa Cactus-Finch, both island endemics, will be new additions to our growing list of Darwin's finches, and we are also likely to see Gray Warbler-Finch and Large Ground-Finch. As the path winds toward the far side of the island, we will come upon the massive colony of Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrels, several million strong. The profusion of these little birds is simply mind-boggling, often appearing like a swarm of insects as they fly to and from the sea to their hidden burrows. This species is the only storm-petrel to visit its nesting colony during the day, possibly because of the near-absence of predators here. Only the endemic subspecies of Short-eared Owl hunts them; often these owls are sitting about, lending themselves to easy study as they pick at the hapless storm-petrels who fail to get away. Beyond the colony are the towering cliffs, where Magnificent Frigatebirds and sublime Red-billed Tropicbirds soar effortlessly by. The tropicbirds, especially, round out the scene. Their dazzling white plumage accentuates their deep red bills, and their long streamer tails blow about in the strong ocean breeze.

The sight of it all is unforgettable. The stark rock of the nearly barren island covered by thousands of birds, the air swirling with millions more, the deep blue Pacific reaching to the horizon—all of this is the Galapagos. All of this is wild nature.

Back on the other side of the bay, an afternoon walk along the beach of Darwin Bay will take us through a colony of nesting Great Frigatebirds and many more Red-footed Boobies. Swallow-tailed Gulls are common and lounge on the waterfront. They surely must be one of the world's most beautiful gull species. At times they seem to pose for the camera. The much rarer Lava Gull is here as well, and like the Lava Heron that haunts the rocky coastline, this cryptic, smoke-colored denizen of the islands reflects adaptations to the volcanic surroundings.



Great Frigatebird © Michael O'Brien

Rábida (Jervis) - Located in the islands' central region, tiny Rábida lies south of Santiago Island and northwest of Santa Cruz. We'll disembark on a red sand beach and observe a large colony of sea lions, Marine Iguanas, mockingbirds, Yellow Warblers, and several species of Darwin's finches. Very close to the beach, hidden behind a strip of green saltbush, is a salt pond where we sometimes see America Flamingos as well as Brujo Flycatcher, a recent split from Vermilion Flycatcher. This is also a great place to snorkel from the beach, both for beginners as well as for experienced snorkelers, due to the unique combination of underwater species and submarine landscapes. Non-snorkelers can enjoy a panga ride along the coast or paddling on a sea kayak.



American Flamingo © Michael O'Brien

Bartolomé - Located off Santiago Island, this is one of the most recently created islands and represents a very fragile ecosystem still being formed. The Galapagos is among the most active volcanic sites in the world, and there is no better place for a lesson in geology than here, with the evidence all around us. A hike to the summit of Pinnacle Rock, the island's central volcano, offers fine views of spatter cones, eroded tuff cones, old lava flows, orange sand beaches and mangrove swamps. The walk up Pinnacle Rock is leisurely and takes us along a well-built boardwalk and up several flights of stairs. The scenery from atop is

brehtaking and is among the finest in all the Galapagos. To the east, the Daphne Islands are visible in the distance. The Daphnes are the site where Peter and Rosemary Grant did their landmark research on Darwin's finches, later written about in the prize-winning book, *The Beak of the Finch*, by Jonathan Weiner. We try to time this activity for the morning or late afternoon, when the sun illuminates the sky over the vast Pacific Ocean in a blaze of orange, yellow, and pink. Far below, our ship rests at anchor amid the serene waters of Sullivan Bay. The shoreline here often harbors a handful of shorebirds and herons, and is one of the easternmost sites where Galapagos Penguin is regular.

November 19, Day 9: Depart the Galapagos Islands; return to Quito. Today we will disembark the ship at Baltra. With memories and photos to last a lifetime, we must leave the Galapagos today and fly back to Quito on the mainland. Lunch today will be on your own; a variety of options are available at the airport in Baltra. Upon arrival in Quito, we will transfer back to Hotel San Jose de Puembo where a room is reserved in your name. We will convene at a set time for our final group dinner, and those with flights tonight will be transferred back to the airport after dinner.

Those departing Quito tonight will arrive in the USA on the morning of November 20.

NIGHT: Hotel San Jose de Puembo, Quito

June 20, Day 10: Departure for home. Participants are free to depart Quito at any time today. Those with flights before 12:00 p.m. will receive transfer to the airport from our ground operator. For those with flights departing after this time, arrangements can be made for late check-out along with transfers to the airport from the hotel at an additional charge.

NOTE: Although we will attempt to see as many bird species as possible following this itinerary, the emphasis on this trip will be birds AND general natural history. We believe the Galapagos Islands are an extraordinary destination where birds are just one component of the islands' unique biological heritage. Due to the nature of the expedition, weather conditions or government regulations may require changes to be made to the itinerary and/or the cancellation of certain shore excursions. Every attempt will be made to adhere to the itinerary described, within the limits of safety and time.

TANDAYAPA EXTENSION NOVEMBER 19–23, 2025



Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager © Michael O'Brien

On this optional three-day extension, we'll explore the beautiful cloud forests of Ecuador's northwestern Andes, sampling the magnificent diversity of hummingbirds, tanagers, toucans, trogons and more found only a short distance from Quito.

From the capital city, we'll head northwest, drop over a mountain pass and quickly enter a realm of towering tropical hardwoods, cloud-shrouded peaks and ridges, and lush river valleys. Our destination is the region centering on the Mindo and Tandayapa valleys, an area renowned as a premier place for seeing birds in Ecuador, particularly hummingbirds. As the site of some of the best infrastructure for eco-tourism in the country, it is an ideal stop for natural history observation in Ecuador.

The Mindo/Tandayapa region has much to offer in the way of birding potential, and we will focus on two locations, both of which host the types of extravagant hummingbird shows that contribute to the region's fame. Among the expected species is a remarkable collection of hummingbirds, including Violet-tailed Sylph, Brown and Collared incas, Lesser and Sparkling violetears, White-booted Racket-tail, Purple-bibbed Whitetip, and a host of woodstars, brilliants, trainbearers, and coronets. We'll also drive the old road that connects the town of Mindo to the Tandayapa Valley, making strategic stops with the hope of finding some of the more spectacular species of the deep forest and edge. This area, well off the main highway, is well known for hosting a dazzling assortment of tanagers, of which we will

see many, and other regional avian specialties such as Golden-headed Quetzal, Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan, and Toucan Barbet.

Any trip to the northwestern slopes is bound to be rewarding, but in this situation, as a short extension to the Galapagos Islands, participants gain experiences unlike any in the Galapagos while receiving a perfect introduction to the joys of birding in Ecuador.



November 19, Day 1: Travel to Quito. Those participants not participating on the Galapagos Islands cruise, should plan to arrive Quito (Mariscal Sucre International Airport, airport code UIO) any time today. After clearing immigration and customs, you will be met outside the baggage claim by a representative of our local ground operator and transferred to the **Hotel San Jose de Puembo** where a room has been reserved in your name. If your flight from the United States does not arrive in Quito until mid- to late evening, dinner tonight will be on your own. Should you arrive in Quito in time for the night's dinner, you are welcome to join the rest of the group.

Hotel San Jose de Puembo is one of the better hotels in the city. Offering large, comfortable rooms, tasty cuisine, and good service, it is a perfect starting point for our tour. For those with extra time at the hotel, a walk through the gardens can be productive for a range of typical area birds including Eared Dove, Sparkling Violetear, Great Thrush, Hooded Siskin, Rufous-collared Sparrow, Golden Grosbeak, Scrub Tanager, Cinerous Conebill, and Rusty Flowerpiercer; and of particular interest is the Andean specialty, Black-tailed Trainbearer.

NIGHT: Hotel San Jose de Puembo, Quito

November 20, Day 2: Tandayapa Valley and onward to our Séptimo Paraíso lodge in the Mindo Valley. Though our time at the hotel is limited, for the early risers we recommend taking a birding walk through the gardens around the swimming pool before breakfast.

After breakfast, we will leave the large capital city and head toward the Tandayapa Valley, a two-hour drive from our hotel. Here, we will enter a whole other world of undamaged cloud forest, rushing streams, a plethora of tropical birds, and glorious mountain scenery. These northwestern Andean slopes are home to many amazing places for birdwatching. Your tour leaders have wide latitude to determine the morning's destinations, but regardless of the sites we visit, the day is sure to be extraordinary.

One likely destination is Pacha Quindi, owned and managed by the Mindo Cloudforest Foundation, that happens to host one of the world's greatest hummingbirds shows imaginable. This reserve is set on a hillside overlooking the picturesque Tandayapa Valley and boasts an expansive outdoor deck, beautiful garden, and as many as 20 hummingbird feeders. What awaits the visitor is a hummingbird show unlike any other. The feeders are continually swarming with hummingbirds of all shapes, sizes, and colors. The middle elevation holds some of the highest diversity of hummers anywhere, hosting numbers of resident types and also attracting numerous other species normally found at higher and lower elevations.

It is not uncommon to see as many as 15 species in a two-hour period, with some of the world's most beautiful and striking hummers among them. Species to expect include Lesser Violetear side-by-side with Sparkling Violetear, Western and Andean emeralds, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Buff-tailed Coronet, Brown Inca, Violet-tailed Sylph, and others. If we are truly fortunate, we will encounter the incredible White-booted Racket-tail, lovely Gorgeted Sunangel, and glittery Green-tailed Trainbearer. Even the Collared Inca, one of the world's most captivating hummingbirds, both in beauty and style, is likely.



Collared Inca © Andrew Whittaker

Most of the surrounding valley and forest is lightly populated and largely preserved. The setting is idyllic and lends itself to further exploration. If we can pull ourselves away from the entertainment at this property, a check of the surrounding forest, and stops along the road to Mindo, may reveal some of Ecuador's most sensational birds. The list of possibilities is long and varied, but the "blue ribbon" species that we will watch for include Masked Trogon, Golden-headed Quetzal, Toucan Barbet, Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, Turquoise Jay, and the extraordinary Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan. These same cloud forests are also home to one of the highest diversities of tanagers that grace the Neotropics. Their names are as attractive as the birds themselves. We hope to find Golden Tanager, Beryl-spangled Tanager, Blue-capped Tanager, Blue-necked Tanager, Metallic-green Tanager, and others. Though unlikely, the Grass-green Tanager is possible, and the beautiful and bold Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager is probable.



Toucan Barbet © Paul J. Greenfield

In the late afternoon we will check into Séptimo Paraíso for the night, a delightful lodge catering to birders and nature-lovers.

NIGHT: Séptimo Paraíso, Mindo

November 21, Day 3: Mindo (Séptimo Paraíso) and Milpe Bird Sanctuary; afternoon at San Tadeo.

Situated at the edge of the mountain forests that cloak the mighty Andes, the Séptimo Paraíso lodge provides a wonderful setting from which to begin the day. A system of trails takes the visitor into well-developed secondary forest near the lodge where an array of tanagers, manakins, and flycatchers may be found, while the lodge is continually buzzing with an onslaught of hummingbirds that are attracted to a battery of nectar feeders put out by the property managers.

We will offer a pre-breakfast walk around the grounds and/or near the Lodge. One of the more curious, attractions we may take advantage of here is the morning congregation of birds around the streetlights along the road, uphill from the lodge. These streetlights blaze throughout the night and tend to attract hordes of moths and other insects. Remarkably, the birds, even species typically associated with the deep forest, come out to the road early in the morning to feed on the insect cuisine. The morning ritual produces some interesting surprises, like Strong-billed Woodcreeper and a host of gorgeous tanagers, but we will

also likely encounter other birds that are easy to see. One of the best results of such easy birding is that we will likely gain outstanding views of the birds we are looking for.

After breakfast, we will head westward for a short ride to Milpe Bird Sanctuary, also owned and managed by the Mindo Cloudforest Foundation. Here, at a slightly lower elevation, we will be met by another subset of plant and animal species. Hummingbirds will be buzzing and fruit feeders may attract an array of tanagers and euphonias along with a possible motmot, barbet, araçari, thrush, sparrow or saltator. We will also be on the lookout for mixed-species foraging flocks that abound here. These flocks incorporate species from a variety of neotropical families and we will be watching for trogons, toucans, woodpeckers, spinetails, foliage-gleaners, xenops, woodcreepers and scythebill, tyrannulets, and flycatchers, becards, manakins, wrens, thrushes, vireos and greenlets, warblers, dacnis, chlorophonia and tanagers. We will head back to Séptimo Paraíso for lunch.

Back at the lodge, the nectar feeders will certainly produce an enthralling collection of hummingbirds—so many, in fact, that we will be simply overwhelmed by the variety of colors, shapes, and sizes of the 10 species or more likely to be present. Such favorites as Violet-tailed Sylphs and Brown Incas represent the larger end of the spectrum, while diminutive woodstars represent the smallest of the hummingbirds we'll see. In between are species bearing such angelic names as coronet, jacobin, violetear, racket-tail, emerald, woodnymph and brilliant. Possibly the most beautiful of them all, the Velvet-purple Coronet, is often seen better here than any other site. At times, the show is mesmerizing, with countless birds zipping through the gardens, clustering around the feeders, and peering out from nearby trees and bushes.



Velvet-purple Coronet © Paul J. Greenfield

After lunch, and a midday break (with some optional birding offered around the lodge grounds), we will visit a nearby property, no more than five minutes from Séptimo Paraíso, that is owned by a local community member who has designed a lovely birding garden, complete with fruit and nectar feeders. Here, we will be mesmerized by an array of spectacular tanagers and other visitors, all at point-blank range, offering wonderful photo opportunities and unbeatable viewing conditions—a feast for the eyes, for sure; Crimson-rumped Toucanet, the ‘flagship’ and gaudy Toucan Barbet, White-lined, Blue-gray, Palm, Black-capped, Golden, Golden-naped, and Flame-faced tanagers, the bioregional endemic Black-chinned Mountain-

Tanager, and Ecuadorian Thrush are all among the highlights we hope to see here. We will head back to our lodge to close out the day's activities.

November 22, Day 4: Morning departure from Séptimo Paraíso; return to Quito via the *Paseo del Quinde* Ecoroute. Our final day begins with a morning departure from Séptimo Paraíso as we initiate our return to the village of Puembo, located just east of Quito. We will spend the entire morning birding along the famed *Paseo del Quinde* Ecoroute, making several stops along this little traveled, forest-line road in search of mixed-species foraging flocks and any bird activity we can find. We will also visit Bellavista Cloud Forest Lodge to indulge in yet another hummingbird-fest; and, time permitting, we may also make a stop at Alambi Cloud-Forest Reserve at the base of the valley, with yet another hummingbird and plantain-feeder show along with a chance to check out a rushing stream with the hope of locating White-capped Dipper and Torrent Tyrannulet. Just northwest of Quito is a monument marking the location of the Equator. We also may have time to stop at this interesting landmark and learn the history of the early survey efforts to determine the Equator's exact location while, at the same time, establishing the meter as an official standard for accurate measurement. It is fascinating to understand how close the early surveyors came to marking the exact spot, as we know it today, through the use of more primitive instruments and tools.

We can expect a mid- to late-afternoon arrival at **Hotel San Jose de Puembo**. We will convene at a set time for our final group dinner and field checklist session. Those with flights tonight will be transferred back to the airport after dinner.

Those departing Quito tonight will arrive in the USA on the morning of November 23.

NIGHT: San José de Puembo, Quito

November 23, Day 10: Departure for home. Participants are free to depart Quito at any time today. Those with flights before 12:00 p.m. will receive transfer to the airport from our ground operator. For those with flights departing after this time, arrangements can be made for late check-out along with transfers to the airport from the hotel at an additional charge.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

TOUR LIMITS: The tour limit for the Galapagos Islands Cruise is 33. The Tandayapa Extension will be limited to 14 participants.

TOUR LEADERS: The Galapagos Islands Cruise will be led by **Michael O'Brien**, and **Louise Zemaitis**, and **Mark Garland**. The Tandayapa Pre-trip will be led by **Paul Greenfield** and **Remi Grefa**.



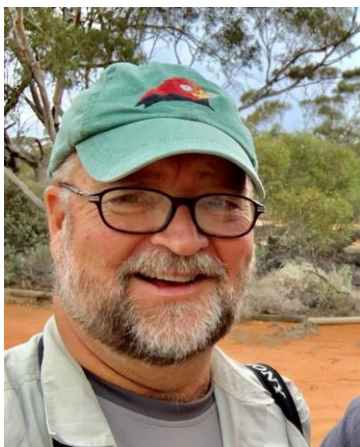
Michael O'Brien is a freelance artist, author, and environmental consultant living in Cape May, New Jersey. He has a passionate interest in bird vocalizations and field identification, and a serious addiction to migration and nocturnal birding. His travels have taken him throughout North and Central America and beyond. At home in Cape May, Michael serves as an Associate Naturalist with Cape May Bird Observatory for whom he conducts numerous workshops, and, for many years, conducted a fall songbird migration count. He is co-author of *The Shorebird Guide*, *Flight Calls of Migratory Birds*, and *America's 100 Most Wanted Birds*, and is primary author of *Larkwire*, an online and handheld application for learning bird sounds. His illustrations have been widely published in books and field guides, including the *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America* and the new Peterson field

guides. Michael also has an intense interest in butterflies, leads several “Birds & Butterflies” tours with his wife, Louise Zemaitis, and is coordinator of the Cape May Butterfly Count.



Louise Zemaitis is an artist and naturalist living in Cape May, New Jersey where she is a popular field trip leader teaching birding workshops as an Associate Naturalist with New Jersey Audubon's Cape May Bird Observatory. She also enjoys leading birding groups and lecturing at birding festivals and is known for her enthusiasm for all natural history subjects. Louise and her husband, Michael O'Brien, have been guiding young birders at birding events and conferences for many years. In addition to leading, Louise worked as field coordinator of the Monarch Monitoring Project in Cape May and served as compiler of the Cape May Christmas Bird Count for many years. An honors graduate of Temple University's Tyler School of Art (owner of Swallowtail Studio), she enjoys working as a freelance artist, and her illustrations have been widely published. Her proudest accomplishment has been the raising of her

two sons: Bradley, a conservation educator and artist, and Alec, a library scientist and musician.



Mark S. Garland is a naturalist who has been sharing his enthusiasm for nature with others professionally for over 40 years. He holds B.S. and M.S. degrees from the University of Maryland's College of Agriculture. His work experience includes six years as a Ranger/Naturalist with the National Park Service, 17 years with the Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS), now known as Nature Forward, and four years with New Jersey Audubon Society's Cape May Bird Observatory. He has also led tours for Smithsonian Journeys, Massachusetts Audubon Society, Riveredge Nature Center, and Betchart Expeditions. For 14 years he taught week-long birding classes in Cape May for the Road Scholar program by Elderhostel each spring and fall. He teaches one or two sessions each summer at the Hog Island Audubon Camp in Maine. From 1984–2001 and from 2006–2016 he planned and operated the Nature Travel Program for the ANS. He has also organized and led many private

tours. Mark is the author of the book *Watching Nature: A Mid-Atlantic Natural History* (1997). Mark founded the Cape Charles, Virginia, Monarch butterfly research project in 1995, and from 2015–2022 he was Director of the Monarch Monitoring Project in Cape May. He has co-authored three scientific papers on the Cape Charles Monarch migration project and one on the Cape May Monarch studies. From early 2015 he

authored the “Birders Question Mark,” Q&A Column for *Bird Watchers’ Digest*. For over 15 years he appeared regularly on the weekly radio program Metro Connection on Washington D.C.’s public radio station WAMU. He has written regular columns for the *Cape May Star and Wave*, for birdcapemay.org, and for the *Audubon Naturalist News*; one of the latter pieces was awarded the Excellence in Mass Media Award by the American Association of University Women in 1995. Mark is a frequent speaker at various events, ranging from nature and birding festivals to bird club monthly meetings. In March 2019 he was awarded the Paul Bartsch Award for Distinguished Contributions to Natural History from the Audubon Naturalist Society.



Paul Greenfield grew up near New York City and became interested in birds as a child. He received his B.F.A. from Temple University, where he was a fine arts major at the Tyler School of Art. Since 1972, he has lived in Ecuador where his fascination for birds and art has culminated in the completion of 20 years of work illustrating *The Birds of Ecuador* (Cornell University Press, 2001), which he co-authored with Robert Ridgely. The Spanish version was published in 2006 and *The Birds of Ecuador App* was launched in 2018. Paul is also co-author of *Birds of Western Ecuador, a Photographic Guide* (Princeton University Press, 2016) with Nick Athanas. He has participated in the discovery of a number a new avian species to science and has painted several frontispiece illustrations of these newly described taxa. Paul is very involved in saving Ecuador’s avian diversity and important habitats through his involvement with

various foundations, as well as working with and inspiring local governments and communities to get involved in the protection of “their” biodiversity as a pioneer and promoter of birding tourism throughout Ecuador. He was the lead author of Ecuador’s *National Strategy of Bird Tourism* (2006), and its Update (2010). He has been showing visitors the birds of this fascinating country for nearly five decades and has led many Ecuador bird tours. Paul and his wife, Martha, live in Quito.

GALAPAGOS ISLAND INFORMATION

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: Prices quoted are per person based on double occupancy. All staterooms have two lower beds or one double bed with private facilities. Cabins will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis.

Junior Stateroom	\$11,195
Standard Plus Stateroom	\$10,495
Standard Stateroom	\$ 9,995

Single accommodations are limited to four cabins at 1.4 times the double rate. After these cabins are reserved, single cabins are available at two times the double rate. You will be charged the single price if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

Included in your cruise package:

- Seven nights aboard the *M/Y Coral I* in the Galapagos Islands
- Hotel accommodations in Quito on day 1 and day 9
- Meals beginning with breakfast on day 2 through dinner on day 9 (excluding lunch on day 9)
- Galapagos National Park entry fee and entry fees to all sites shown in the itinerary
- All port charges and service taxes
- Quito land transfers including airport to hotel on day 1; hotel to airport on day 2; airport to hotel on day 9; and hotel to airport on day 10
- Land transportation while in the Galapagos Islands

- Services of the tour leaders and naturalist guides in the Galapagos
- Domestic airfare Quito-Galapagos-Quito*
- Gratuities to onboard naturalists, staff and crew of the *M/Y Coral I*

Not included in your cruise package:

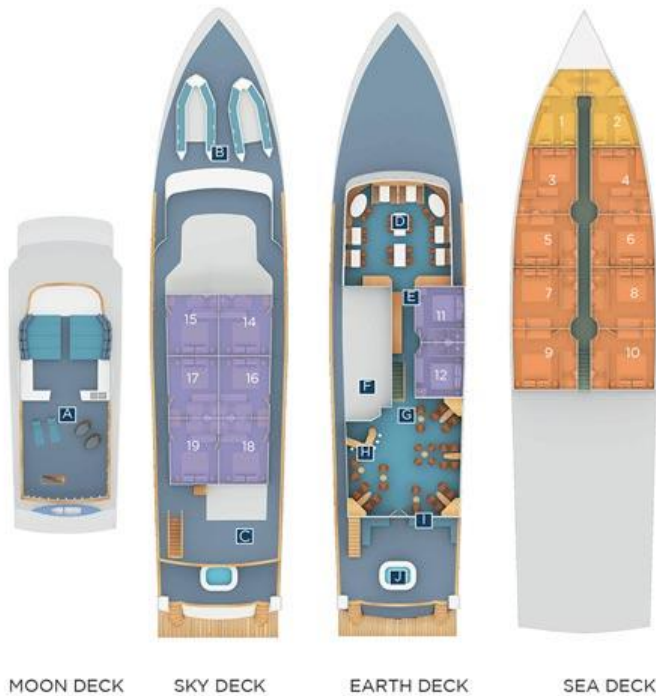
- International roundtrip airfare from your home to Quito
- International or domestic departure taxes
- Passport expenses
- Transfers, meals and accommodations not included in the itinerary
- Insurance for baggage loss, accident, or trip cancellation
- Items of a personal nature including laundry, postage, internet usage, alcoholic beverages
- Emergency evacuation charges
- Fuel surcharges
- Gratuities to VENT leaders

***Please Note: Domestic roundtrip airfare Quito-Galapagos-Quito is included in the tour fees. At the time of printing of this information, the approximate cost of these air segments is \$600 but is subject to change without notice until the time of ticketing. Victor Emanuel Nature Tours reserves the right to assess a surcharge for this air ticket should costs increase before ticketing.**

Galapagos expeditions are intended for persons in reasonably good health. Walking conditions may vary from simple to moderately difficult on certain islands including walks over rocky and uneven surfaces. Travelers with disabilities, heart and/or respiratory problems, or other significant physical limitations or conditions are advised not to participate in expeditionary cruises. Please be advised that medical conditions that are discovered at any time during or prior to boarding and which, in the sole and reviewable opinion of the Captain, may jeopardize the health or safety of the Passenger or any other individual, will be grounds to deny the Passenger permission to board the ship at the point of embarkation, and/or to require the Passenger to leave the ship and terminate his or her continued participation in the cruise. By forwarding the expedition deposit, you certify that you do not have any physical condition or disability that would create a hazard for you or other passengers. Victor Emanuel Nature Tours reserves the right to decline, except, or detain you or any other passenger should your health, actions, or general deportment impede the operation of the expedition or the rights, welfare, or enjoyment of other passengers.

CORAL I

Deck plan



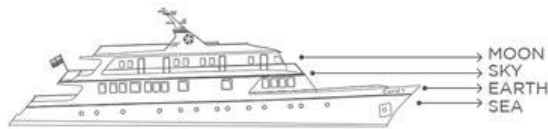
SOCIAL AREAS:

- Moon Deck**
- A** Sun & Shadow Terrace
 - B** Al Fresco BBQ
 - C** Stargazing Area
- Sky Deck**
- B** Dolphin Observation Deck
 - C** Roofed Terrace
- Earth Deck**
- D** Restaurant
 - E** Boutique
 - F** Bar
 - G** Lounge
 - H** Library
 - I** Jacuzzi
 - J** Embarkation Area

CABIN INFORMATION:

Sea view cabins with the following general features:

- Lower twin beds or double beds
- Private bathroom
- Safe-deposit box
- Air conditioning
- Phone service for internal calls
- LCD TV with multimedia system



36 Guests
Expedition Yachts

CABIN CATEGORIES:

- Junior
- Standard Plus
- Standard

Cabin No.	Cabin Category	Triple accomm.	Deck	Cabin Area: with WC	
				m ² approx.	ft ² approx.
1	Standard		Sea	8,8	94
2	Standard			8,8	94
3	Standard Plus			12	129
4	Standard Plus			12	129
5	Standard Plus			11	118
6	Standard Plus			11	118
7	Standard Plus	o	Earth	12	129
8	Standard Plus	o		12	129
9	Standard Plus			12	129
10	Standard Plus			12	129
11	Junior		Earth	11	118
12	Junior			11	118
14	Junior	•	Sky	12	129
15	Junior	•		12	129
16	Junior			12	129
17	Junior			12	129
18	Junior			12	129
19	Junior			12	129

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS:

- Length:** 131 ft (40 m)
- Wide:** 28 ft (8.5 m)
- Decks:** 4
- Made in:** Germany
- Rebuilt:** 2004
- Refurbished in:** August 2018
- Guest Capacity:** 36
- Crew:** 11
- Speed:** 12 knots
- Cruise speed:** 10 knots
- Guides:** 3 multilingual naturalists
- Life Rafts:** 4 for 25 pax each
- Dinghies:** 2 for 20 pax each
- Kayaks:** 3 doubles transparent
- Safety:** ISM, SMC, ISSC, IOPP, DOC
- Electricity:** 110v

Total cabins: 18
Max. capacity: 36 passengers - double accommodation / connected cabins.

- o child sofa bed
- sofa bed

TANDAYAPA EXTENSION INFORMATION

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for Tandayapa Extension will be announced in April 2025. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the group does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement may be applied.

Included in your fee:

- Hotel accommodations for three nights: day 1, Quito and days 2-3, Séptimo Paraíso
- All meals from breakfast on day 2 to dinner on day 4
- Land transfers including airport to hotel on day 1 and land transportation during the tour
- Guide services provided by VENT leaders and drivers (including gratuities for the drivers)
- Entrance fees

Not included in your fee:

- International roundtrip airfare from your home to Quito and return
- Transfers and accommodations other than those stated in the itinerary
- Meals before breakfast on day 2 or after dinner on day 4
- Insurance for baggage loss, accident, evacuation, or trip cancellation
- International or domestic departure taxes
- Passport expenses
- Items of a personal nature including phone calls, laundry, postage, emails, and alcoholic beverages.
- Fuel and currency surcharges
- Gratuities to VENT leaders

TOUR REGISTRATION: A deposit of **\$2,000** is required to reserve a space on this cruise, with a second deposit of **\$3,000** due 210 days prior to departure (April 15, 2025). The balance of the cruise fee is due 150 days prior to departure (June 14, 2025).

The deposit for the Tandayapa Extension is **\$1,000** per person with the balance of the tour fee due 150 days (June 22, 2025) prior to the tour departure date.

If you prefer to pay the initial deposit using a credit card, your deposit must be made with MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. If you would like to pay your initial deposit by check, money order, or bank transfer, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at <https://ventbird.com>) should then be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

This cruise is designed for persons in reasonably good health. By forwarding the expedition deposit, you certify that you do not have a physical condition or disability which would create a hazard to you or other passengers. VENT reserves the right to decline to accept or retain you or other passengers should your health, actions, or general deportment impede the operations of the expedition or the rights, welfare, or enjoyment of other passengers.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc.

MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE REQUIREMENT: This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may **NOT** be available. **For this reason, travel insurance which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the

Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™ program. Through Ripcord, “emergency evacuation” can be purchased as a stand-alone benefit or as part of a comprehensive travel insurance policy. If you choose not to purchase insurance through Ripcord, you are required to obtain it through another provider.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES: In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

CRUISE CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS:

Cancellation by participant:

\$1000 of your initial deposit is non-refundable if cancellation occurs up to 210 days prior to the departure date. For cancellations that occur between 209 and 151 days, both deposits are non-refundable; cancellations within 150 days of the departure date are 100% non-refundable whether previously paid or not. Any refunds will be reduced by applicable airline cancellation penalties. No refunds will be made in the event of “no shows” or cancellations made on the day of sailing.

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
210 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$1,000
Between 209 and 151 days before departure	No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance will be refunded
Fewer than 150 days before departure date	No refund available

Upon cancellation of the transportation or travel services, where you, the customer, are not at fault and have not cancelled in violation of the terms and conditions of any of the contract for transportation or travel services, all sums paid to VENT for services not received by you will be promptly refunded by VENT to you unless you otherwise advise VENT in writing. This policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside the services described in the tour itinerary.

Due to the nature of the expedition, weather conditions or government regulations may require changes to be made to the itinerary and/or the cancellation of certain shore excursions. Every attempt will be made to adhere to the itinerary described within the limits of safety and time. In the event of changes, passengers have no right to any refund or other compensation. Expedition fees are based on group participation. Should you choose not to take part in any activity or make use of services provided, no refund will be made.

TANDAYAPA EXTENSION CANCELLATION & REFUNDS:

Cancellation by Participant:

Refunds, if any, for any cancellation by a participant are made according to the following schedule: If participant cancels 180 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$500** per person

will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. If cancellation is made between 179 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the tour fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available.

If participant cancels:

180 days or more before departure date

179 to 151 days before departure date

150 days or less before departure date

Participant's refund will be:

Participant's deposit minus \$500*

No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance of the tour fee will be refunded

No refund available

*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

Cancellation by VENT:

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A “**Force Majeure**” event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with Redpoint Travel Protection as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its **Ripcord** plan. Designed for all types of travelers, Ripcord is among the most comprehensive travel protection programs available.

Critical benefits of Ripcord include a completely integrated program with a single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims; **medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice**; comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is

available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote, or to purchase travel insurance, please visit:

<https://ripcordtravelprotection.com/ventbird>; or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help and Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, mid-payment, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip cost in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Coronavirus (COVID-19):

In line with the decision made by the federal government (including the CDC), Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a **Coronavirus FAQ** page on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics. Please visit the **Coronavirus FAQ** page at the following link: https://redpointtravelprotection.com/covid_19_faq/.

AIR INFORMATION: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

BAGGAGE: Please limit your luggage to one soft-sided wheeled bag and one carry-on bag. The airlines strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag.

Due to airline weight restrictions, and space limitations aboard ship, we ask that you pack as efficiently as possible as you prepare for this expedition.

Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for the most updated information: <http://www.tsa.gov/>

CLOTHING: For your trip to the Galapagos Islands, comfortable, casual clothing in the expedition spirit is all that is necessary. The Galapagos are desert islands on the equator, and you should be prepared for warm daytime temperatures and sun most of the time. The mornings may be marked by light overcast and fine mist. Since the islands of the Galapagos are widely distributed, conditions can vary considerably from island to island. The highlands of Santa Cruz are usually cooler than the surrounding lowlands.

We suggest the following:

- **Shorts** – 1 or 2 pair; ideal for comfort and when outside on decks while cruising between destinations.
- **Pants** - 1 or 2 pairs of lightweight pants; Cotton or other thin materials are ideal for field trips; sea watching from the ship's decks, and for evening recaps, social hours, and dinners. Denim and corduroy are acceptable but are heavier and warmer materials. Many people are comfortable simply wearing field-clothing at all times.
- **T-shirts** – Several t-shirts (short and/or long-sleeved), will provide comfort throughout the voyage, especially during cruising times.
- **Field clothing** – For birding field trips and for the pre-trip. Many people now favor the lightweight designer shirts that offer well-ventilated seams, numerous pockets, and roll-up sleeves that button down. Matching pants contain numerous pockets and removable zipper-seamed pant-legs that alter pants to shorts. Columbia, REI, and other manufacturers of outdoor apparel (including those who make cheaper, more cost-effective knock-offs) make these products, and they are easily found in most outdoor or sporting goods stores.
- **Rain poncho or light water repellent jacket** – Highly recommended. In the event of rain, morning mist, or an overcast sky.
- **Warm sweater or fleece** – May come in handy for the cool highlands.
- **Casual wear** – Other items of attire that you may find appropriate for a relaxed atmosphere, such as short-sleeved button-down shirts.
- **Swimsuit** - Essential since snorkeling is an important element to our Galapagos trips.
- **Hat** - A hat for protection from the sun is absolutely essential. Baseball caps provide some protection for your face, but wide-brimmed hats are superior for providing better protection for other exposed areas, such as the ears and neck.

For the Tandayapa Extension, lightweight field clothing is the norm for most areas visited, with a sweater or jacket for extra warmth, with lightweight long-sleeved shirts that dry quickly. Also important is a hat for sun protection, rain jacket, poncho or umbrella. At higher elevations the temperatures can be as low as the 40s on occasion and you should be prepared to layer for warmth. Consider bringing gloves and a stocking cap if you know that you chill easily. There is a strong possibility that we will be out in at least some mist or light rain when in the cloud forest, so a good umbrella or rain jacket is essential.

FOOTWEAR: Consider bringing two pairs of shoes. For the time on the boat, a deck shoe or tennis shoe is certainly adequate while some may prefer sandals with straps or other open-toed footwear. For shore excursions, there will be numerous “wet landings”. Some people prefer using “water shoes” for wet landings, while others prefer to land in bare feet, then put on shoes and sox after toweling off. “Water shoes”

are generally the most popular option. Various brands include *Teva*, *Nike*, *Keen*, and *LaSportiva*. These shoes feature qualities that lend themselves to use while in the water and while on land including a rubber outsole for traction, tough polyester webbing for durability, hydrophobic mesh lined interior, and “single-pull” cinch-type laces. These are merely examples, but any sporting goods stores will offer a selection of such shoes. For those who prefer more stability, a light hiking boot or trail walking shoe will do the job, particularly when we are on the various islands and walking on old lava flows.

***Please note that whatever shoes you use for landings on the islands will stay at the back of the ship while on board. You will, therefore, need a different pair of shoes or sandals to wear while on board the ship.**

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Laundry service is not available on this cruise. However, there is a dryer on board, which is available for participants to use.

CONDITIONS:

The Program: While in the Galapagos Islands, most travel will be aboard the *M/Y Coral I*, where cruising among the islands is interspersed with shore excursions. We will spend time on many of the major islands, which will involve short Panga (Zodiac) rides from ship to shore. While some of our landings will be dry, many will be wet (meaning that water up to the knees is possible), and participants need to prepare accordingly (see **Footwear**, below).

Due to the fact that the Galapagos Islands are one of the world’s great natural history destinations, this trip is more than a birding tour. While we will certainly work to see as many bird species as possible, especially the endemic ones (those found nowhere else), we will take time to appreciate all facets of natural history, including geology, botany, herpetology, and even star-gazing. The Galapagos, however, is also a place to have fun! Some days will include opportunities for snorkeling in different bays on different islands. This activity is something we strongly encourage participants to take advantage of, as what we see below the water surface is every bit as beautiful and impressive as what we see on land. For information regarding snorkeling gear, please refer to the “Swimming and Snorkeling” section below.

Shopping opportunities in the Galapagos are very limited, but the outdoor shops at Puerto Ayora and the Charles Darwin Research Station on Santa Cruz offer a fine variety of clothing, books, wood carvings, post cards, and souvenirs.

The Ship: The *M/Y Coral I* is a 131 ft. yacht that accommodates up to 36 passengers in 18 cabins. This small ship cruise vessel has two cabin classes. All cabins have a private bathroom, air conditioning, plenty of storage space, and modern furnishings. Junior Cabins have a picture window, Standard Plus cabins have a porthole. You can chill out on the upper Moon Deck, where you will find a sun terrace, BBQ area, and observatory. Alternatively, there is a covered terrace and an indoor lounge/bar. You can also pickup essentials from the onboard boutique, and luxuriate in the Jacuzzi. The restaurant is bright and airy. This vessel preserves the smaller boat atmosphere and attention to detail we look for when selecting the right vessel for VENT trips to the Galapagos.

Dining: Meals are served in single-seating with unassigned tables for an informal atmosphere and easy mingling. The menu is international but with an Ecuadorian flair. The chef is able to accommodate dietary restrictions. Please advise the VENT office of any special dietary needs.

While at Sea – While cruising at sea, you’ll have options to join your leaders on the viewing decks for sea watching or remain below decks and relax in the passenger lounge or your stateroom. The seas in the

Galapagos are generally calm, but some inter-island crossings may require transits through moderately rough water.

While on Land – Walking conditions on land are generally not difficult, yet it is important to pay close attention to footing and terrain. The diversity of topography in the Galapagos Islands guarantees that you'll experience a variety of terrain, from soft sand, to coarse gravel, to rocky trails, to sharp and uneven lava flows. Walks along sandy and rocky beaches and along trails through brush frequently involve outings of varying length. The highlands of Santa Cruz feature some trail walking through open forest, but the degree of difficulty of these activities is low. However, note that it is often misty in the highlands, which means trails may be muddy in spots (rubber boots provided at the tortoise reserve). No participant will be expected to participate in any activity for which they are not physically capable or comfortable with.

Zodiac Landing Craft – Expedition cruise ships carry fleets of Zodiac landing craft (known as *Pangas* in the Galapagos Islands). Developed as a means for gaining access to places where larger vessels cannot go, Zodiacs are employed to bring greater intimacy to your travel experience. Each craft is constructed of high performance plastimer fabrics and outfitted with a powerful motor and designed to withstand the challenging conditions of the Galapagos environment. During your cruise you'll make numerous excursions to shallow bays and along rocky coasts and land on isolated beaches, coming face-to-face with an assortment of wildlife. Each craft holds as many as 10 passengers. Although flat-bottom design allows for direct on-shore landings, passengers will need to walk through shallow surf on some occasions.

Swimming and Snorkeling – There will be opportunities for swimming and snorkeling at select sites along the cruise route. The M/Y *Coral I* is fully equipped with snorkeling equipment (shorty wetsuits, masks, snorkels, flippers); for those who wish, you are also welcome to bring your own equipment. If you get cold easily, we recommend bringing your own wetsuit and one that is full-length and rated to comfortably insulate you in water temperatures in the 50s (though water temperatures in the 60s are more expected).

For the Tandayapa Extension – The physical demands of a trip to the Tandayapa/Mindo area are light. All birding areas are accessed by wide paved and dirt roads. Feeder watching at several properties is effortless. Elevations reach over 9,000 feet on this tour route.

CLIMATE & WEATHER:

For the cruise: The Galapagos Islands has two different climates. The period from January to June is known as the warm/wet season with warm air temperatures and clear skies, but with occasional heavy rain. Temperatures range from 81–95°. From June to December, the season is known as the “garua” or cool/dry season, when air temperatures are cooler, but conditions generally drier. The mornings can be overcast and misty with the lowlands virtually free of precipitation, while the highlands are much wetter. Temperatures during the day range from 68–77° and the evenings are in the 50s.

The water temperatures in the Galapagos vary throughout the year. It can range from cold, 62-68°F between June and December, to a rather warm 80-85°F from January to May.

For the Tandayapa Extension: The city of Quito is located at 9,000 feet. Nights can be cool with temperatures dropping to 50–60° and daytime highs usually 70–75° and sunny. Most of our birding will be in the Mindo/Tandayapa area about 1½-2 hours northwest of Quito at an elevation of about 5,000 feet. Temperatures here will be mild (60-80°), but rain or heavy fog is a possibility.

EQUIPMENT: One of the most important aspects of having an enjoyable travel experience is being prepared with proper equipment. The following items will come in handy during your Galapagos adventure:

- **Backpack** – Good for carrying extra clothing, field guides, supplies, and optical equipment during all landings and excursions
- **Dry bags** – Excellent for keeping cameras or other items of value dry during zodiac rides; bring several different sizes. Note that grocery-type plastic bags are not permitted on the Galapagos as these can be deadly to sea turtles and other wildlife.
- **Notebooks and pens**
- **Polarized sunglasses with good UV protection**
- **Sunscreen, lip balm, skin lotions**
- **Personal toiletries**
- **Cameras, lenses, memory cards, and extra batteries**
- **Collapsible walking stick**
- **Tissue packs**

BINOCULARS & SPOTTING SCOPES:

Binoculars – You should bring a pair of binoculars that are in good repair. We strongly recommend good binoculars of 8x32, 8x42, or 10x42 magnification. We recommend that you do NOT bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like “minis” because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. You will find that 8x32 or 8x42 binoculars are compact and light enough.

Spotting Scopes – Your tour leaders will have scopes available for group use throughout the trips. Additionally, in the Galapagos most wildlife viewing will take place on a moving ship or zodiac, or among the birds and animals at very close range. Therefore, you do not need to bring a spotting scope.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

PASSPORTS – A passport valid for at least six months after your return date is required to enter Ecuador. You will also want to make sure you have at least two blank pages for stamps. If you need a passport, you may visit www.state.gov/travel/ for information on how to get or renew a passport.

As a safety measure, photocopy the first two pages of your passport. Keep the photocopies in a safe place, so if your passport is lost you will have proof of identification. Your passport should be signed and easily available at all times. You will need it for check-in at the airport on your first day of departure, so **do not pack it in your checked luggage**. On board ship, it is customary for the purser to hold all passports for clearance with Customs and Immigration authorities. Your passport will be collected prior to or upon embarkation and returned upon disembarkation.

VISAS – Visas are not required for U.S. or Canadian citizens to enter Ecuador. For citizens of other nationalities, please check with the consulate or embassy of Ecuador for information on entry requirements.

CURRENCY & MONEY MATTERS: Your trip to the Galapagos includes all necessary expenses, including all meals aboard the ship. You will want to bring enough cash to cover such extra expenses as taxi rides (if you come early or stay after the program), gifts, laundry, gratuities, and meals on your own before and after the cruise, and personal items. Cash and credit cards are recommended for meeting expenses during the cruise. Small denominations of cash are best as the places we visit may be unable to provide change for large bills. Shipboard accounts can be paid with cash or credit cards (Visa or MasterCard) although gratuities should be made with cash.

The unit of currency in Ecuador is the U.S. Dollar (\$USD).

Should you extend your vacation beyond what is offered in the cruise program, you'll want to consider carrying bills in small denominations. Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted. Please inquire about the use of American Express and Discover. ATMs are available in some places while on mainland Ecuador. Please check with your bank and credit card issuer for more information regarding banking and the use of ATM and credit cards overseas.

ELECTRICITY: Electricity in Ecuador and aboard the ship is 120v. Plugs are of the Type A style, ungrounded with two flat blades. No adapter is necessary.

INTERNET SERVICE: Wi-fi is available at the hotel in Quito and on the ship.

TIME: Ecuador stays five hours behind Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and does not observe Daylight Savings Time. Both countries stay one hour behind Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) from March 9-November 2, and on the same time as Eastern Standard Time (EST) for the rest of the year. The Galapagos Islands operate on Galapagos Time (GALT) and stay 6 hours behind GMT, or one hour behind the current time in Ecuador. However, to avoid confusion with airline flight times, **the *Coral I* will stay on mainland time throughout our cruise.**

HEALTH: Your continued good health and safety is a priority. A ship-based program presents a different style of travel to that of our traditional land-based tours. Passengers who are not fit for an expedition-style cruise, including those with physical disabilities that affect mobility and balance; heart or immune deficiencies; or other conditions associated with poor health, are advised not to join the cruise. The crew aboard the *M/Y Coral I* is trained to handle medical emergencies and is in contact with other vessels as well as the nearest sources of help in the islands. Any condition that cannot be dealt with on board, and that requires emergency treatment, will result in the evacuation of a debilitated passenger, either by boat or helicopter. If there is any doubt as to your physical fitness to travel, consultation should be sought with your doctor before registering for this trip.

VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

Although some people are averse to using Immodium, it can be useful for dealing with traveler's diarrhea in the unfortunate event it occurs. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19

illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour.

Malaria and Yellow Fever: Malaria and Yellow Fever are very serious diseases transmitted by mosquitoes; however, their occurrence in Ecuador is limited primarily to lowland areas east of the Andes (both diseases) or only locally on the west slope up to about 5,000 feet (Malaria) or 7,500 feet (Yellow Fever). Neither disease occurs around Quito or Guayaquil, the Andes above 7,500 feet, or in the Galapagos. We feel the possibility of contracting either disease is extremely low to non-existent. For this reason, the CDC does not recommend prophylaxis for either disease.

Food and Water: At all destinations, food and water is safe to consume unless otherwise indicated by your tour leaders. Bottled water is provided.

Sun Exposure – The sun’s ultraviolet rays are more dangerous at the equator than most other places in the world. Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. Severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

Motion Sickness – Since our cruise route will not take us far from shore, travel in rough water is not expected. However, those travelers especially sensitive to motion sickness should be prepared. Most cruise ships typically carry a supply of anti-motion sickness medication for general availability to passengers. We recommend that you consult your physician for an appropriate medication.

Biting Insects: Mosquitoes and Chiggers are occasionally a problem in some areas. This tour visits areas where chiggers are known to occur. Chiggers are tiny parasitic mites found in most warm weather areas of the southern United States and the world’s tropics. They are especially numerous in grassy areas, where, in the immature stage, they attach themselves to other animals or humans who make contact with the grass as they pass by.

Insect Repellents – There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- Picaridin: A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- Herbal insect repellents: Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

An insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

- Permanone® (Permethrin) is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for **pre-treatment** of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is

being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment has to be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.

- Insect Shield® apparel: Clothing pre-treated with Permanone is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> (click on Travel Health).

SUGGESTED READING: A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

For many decades, the Galapagos Islands have received great acclaim and publicity as a world-class destination. As a result, there is a wealth of material available on the Galapagos to help prepare you for your trip, and this list offers only a few of the many possible suggestions. Aside from the above-mentioned websites, almost all of the major natural history magazines also have articles on the Galapagos from time to time. Finally, most major bookstores will also offer a variety of books pertaining to the Galapagos.

Birds:

Galapagos Islands:

Swash, Andy and Rob Still. ***Birds, Mammals & Reptiles of the Galapagos Islands***. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2nd edition, 2006. This is an excellent pocket guide, composed entirely of photographs, to all of the birds, mammals, and reptiles of the Galapagos. It is by far the single best resource for quick and easy identification of all the more prominent forms of life found in the archipelago. Its treatment of seabirds and the mockingbirds and finches of Darwin fame is very good.

Tanadayapa Extension:

Ridgely, Robert S. and Paul Greenfield. ***The Birds of Ecuador: Field Guide***. Cornell University Press. June, 2001. This is the primary field guide choice for birders traveling to Ecuador. A note of caution, however, is that this book is large and heavy. If you do not wish to bring it with you for such a short trip on the Ecuador mainland, your tour leader will have a copy available for group use.

Mammals:

Shirihai, Hadoram and Brett Jarrett. ***Whales, Dolphins and Other Marine Mammals of the World***. Princeton Field Guides. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006. This is one of the best field guides available for information on identifying the world's ocean-going mammals.

Fish:

Humann, Paul and Ned DeLoach. **Reef Fish Identification: Galapagos**. New World Publications, 2nd edition, 2003.

Wildflowers:

McMullen, Conley K. **Flowering Plants of the Galapagos**. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999.

Galapagos Natural History:

Jackson, Michael H. **Galapagos: A Natural History**. Calgary, Alberta: University of Calgary Press, revised edition, 2016. This book is more of a companion to a field guide, but offers a far more in-depth look at all facets of the Galapagos Islands. It gives nice overviews of all aspects of the archipelago's natural history, yet does so in a way that is very user-friendly. It is structured in a way that is well-suited for the first-time visitor who possesses nothing more than a casual interest, but also for the more serious-minded observer who prefers a more substantive body of work. It is certainly one of the better all-around resources for the Galapagos, as it provides much information but avoids becoming bogged down in overly scientific or technical information.

Kricher, John. **Galapagos: A Natural History**. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006. Written by an accomplished ecologist, John Kricher, this book provides a comprehensive overview of Galapagos history and wildlife.

Stewart, Paul D. **Galapagos: The Islands That Changed the World**. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007. This is one of the newer guides to the human history and general natural history of the Galapagos Islands. Though we have not yet tested it in the field, the reviews of this book are highly favorable. An added bonus is the 150 color photographs that further illuminate the islands.

Galapagos Historical:

Beebe, William. **Galapagos: World's End**. Dover Publications, 1988. A great naturalist's account of his expedition to the islands in 1923.

Barlow, Nora. **The Autobiography of Charles Darwin**. New York: Norton Co. 1958.

Browne, Janet. **Charles Darwin: Voyaging**. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996. A vivid picture of Darwin as a man and scientist.

Darwin, Charles. **Voyage of the Beagle**. England: Penguin Group, 1989. Originally published by Henry Colburn, 1839. A chronicle written by Darwin himself of the classic five-year expedition that would forever cement his place in history.

Treherne, John. **The Galapagos Affair**. New York: Random House, Inc. 1983. This book is something of a classic, as it deviates from the standard Galapagos fare, which tends to focus on science or related topics, and recounts some of the human history of the islands. In particular, this is a sordid story of three unrelated German parties who settled independently on Floreana Island. As the three groups invariably come into contact, the results are quite mixed and replete with lurid tales of intrigue, lying, deceit, strange disappearances, jealousy, and murder. At the end of this wildly entertaining novel, the reader will come away left to draw his own conclusions.

Galapagos Science and Evolution:

Attenborough, David. **The Life of Birds**. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998. Created by the legendary nature documentarian, this book is an instant classic.

Darwin, Charles. **The Origin of Species: by Means of Natural Selection**. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968. Originally published by J. Murray, London, 1859.

Larson, Edward J. **Evolution's Workshop: God and Science on the Galapagos Islands**. Basic Books, 2001. Written by a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, this outstanding book delivers an excellent historical treatise of the Galapagos Islands in an enjoyable and easily readable style. In 243 pages

(short for such a project), the reader is taken on a 500-year historical rampage that begins with the discovery of the archipelago in 1537 and builds through the age of pirates and privateering and on to the monumental achievements of Charles Darwin, and then through the great collecting expeditions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and finally to the establishment of the islands as a national park and modern conservation concerns. Aside from reciting dates and events, Larson effectively frames his narrative with a sense of time and place against a backdrop of religion and politics. The effect is that the reader not only gains a profound appreciation for the accomplishments of the greatest scientific minds of the time, but also for the very real struggle that played out permanently following Darwin, surrounding god, science, and man's role in the world around him. Finally, one of the finer points of this story is the humanistic approach that Larson takes in recounting this history, as all the major players were revealed in-depth, including their successes and character flaws.

Mayr, Ernst. ***Evolution and the Diversity of Life***. MA: Harvard University Press, 1976. A great resource written by one of the great evolutionary biologists of the 20th century.

Quammen, David. ***The Flight of the Iguana***. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998. Written by the author who produced *Song of the Dodo*.

Weiner, Jonathan. ***The Beak of the Finch: A Story of Evolution in Our Time***. Random House Incorporated, 1995. This is an award-winning story of long-term research on the Darwin's finches done by Peter and Rosemary Grant, who worked with them for more than 20 years. A highly insightful and readable story.

SUGGESTED APPS:

Merlin Bird ID by Cornell Lab. Cornell University. Highly recommended! This free download from the App store is a remarkable machine-learning ID tool to help birders of any skill level identify birds through sound ID, photo ID, or based on a few simple questions. Photos, recordings, and ID text included for more than 10,000 species worldwide. Free "Bird Packs" need to be downloaded for each region. The Galapagos bird pack is 115.9 MB.

TIPPING: Tipping (restaurant staff, porters, drivers, local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that tips are not expected and are entirely optional. Tips should be given directly to your tour leader; they should not be sent to the VENT office.

RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT: Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "**VENT**") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on February 5, 2025, and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

GPS:20240611 / GPSE:2020608

Rev: 02/05/25-PS & DE