



ECUADOR

GALAPAGOS WILDLIFE ODYSSEY ABOARD THE M/C ENDEMIC



- DURATION:** 9 days / 8 nights
- SEASON:** Year-round
- DEPARTURES:** Guaranteed with a minimum of 2 participants.
An exceptional itinerary departing once or twice a month.
- TRIP RATING:** Easy/moderate coastal tour & natural history Cruise, Grade (I) - This trip includes activities at elevations of up to 2,000' as well as a 6 day/5 night cruise with occasional wet landings (ankle to knee deep water) to reach the observation sites. Optional water activities include swimming, snorkeling, and kayaking with marine wildlife and easy hikes of up to 4 hours duration on occasionally rough or rocky trails. Anyone in reasonably good fitness and condition, who is able to walk unassisted for up to 4 hours, should be able to enjoy a visit to the *Enchanted Isles*.
- 2024 DATES:** On request throughout the year, subject to availability
The M/C Endemic won't be on dry dock during 2024

INTRODUCTION:

Galápagos National Park straddles the equator 600 miles west of Ecuador's Pacific coast. Undisturbed for centuries and isolated from the mainland, unusual species of birds, plants, reptiles and some mammals developed on the rocky, volcanic atolls of these stunning islands. Darwin's visit and subsequent studies of the island's flora and fauna in 1835 contributed to the formulation of his theory on the evolution of species and brought this fascinating ecosystem to the attention of the world. The park, Ecuador's largest, was established in 1959 to protect the archipelago's unique environment and wildlife. Its landmass consists of nearly 3,000 square miles which is divided between 6 large islands, 12 smaller islands, and over 40 islets. In 1986, the creation of the Marine Resources Reserve expanded the preserved area to include more than 27,000 square miles of ocean. This exciting program offers great value in the archipelago, featuring one of the most complete 6-day cruise itineraries, aboard one of the most comfortable vessels in these waters. It is an ideal opportunity to explore these remarkable islands, and to watch and photograph their unique wildlife.

Starting with an overnight in Guayaquil, our first day is spent touring this historic and vibrant city. Then, we catch a flight to Baltra Island and start exploring aboard our 16-passenger luxury mega catamaran. Accompanied by some of the best English-speaking naturalist guides in the Galápagos, we learn about the natural history of these enchanted islands, visiting the most outlying sites as well as important central islands. We learn about fascinating species such as marine and land iguanas, flightless cormorants, and the diving blue-footed boobies. Water activities include swimming with Galápagos green turtles or snorkeling with sea lions and fur seals! Enjoy beautiful views of white, olive or coral sand beaches and turquoise water and prepare to be impressed by the powerful forces of nature. Following the 6-day cruise we fly back to Guayaquil before returning home.

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DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY:

DAY 01 (SUN): USA / GUAYAQUIL

Arrive this evening to Ecuador's coastal and vibrant city of **Guayaquil**, located on the Guayas River. Meet your friendly Southwind guide and transfer 15 min by private vehicle to one of the city's finest hotels, the riverside [Wyndham Hotel](#).

DAY 02 (MON): GUAYAQUIL

Today, enjoy a private guided city tour of **Guayaquil** starting with the historical park to glimpse the beginnings of this important port, as well as its lively present-day culture and natural environment. The park's gardens burst with the region's endemic flora and offer the chance to learn about local birds, reptiles, and mammals. Next stop is a short walk along the Southern Malecon 2000, a boardwalk overlooking the river and home to Integration Plaza, the Southern Marketplace and **Cristal Palace**. A traditional Ecuadorian lunch is included at a restaurant to sample tasty local cuisine. We continue touring with Olmedo Plaza's monument to Jose Joaquin Olmedo, a recognized Ecuadorian poet. At the Morisca Tower, take in excellent views of the city while admiring this monument to the four elements of the planet. At the nearby **Ecu-Andino hat** workshop we learn about the elaboration of the famed Panama hats made of Toquilla straw. We wrap up touring by heading over to the old town neighborhood of **Las Peñas** (declared as Cultural Heritage in 1982) to stroll narrow streets while appreciating the magnificent wood architecture and colorful houses. In the late afternoon, we return to unwind at the modern and comfortable [Wyndham Hotel](#) overlooking the Guayas River. (B,L)

DAY 03 (TUE): GUAYAQUIL / BALTRA ISLAND / SANTIAGO ISLAND (GALAPAGOS)

Following breakfast, we're picked up at the hotel to return to the airport. Our guide assists with check-in for the 2-hour commercial jet flight to **Baltra Island**. On arrival to Galapagos, pass through an inspection point to ensure no foreign plants or animals are introduced to the islands. Meet your naturalist guide and transfer with other guests to the port. Board the luxurious motor catamaran, [M/C Endemic](#) waiting at anchor to begin your exciting expedition cruise through the archipelago. Settle-in to your spacious stateroom complete with your own private bathroom and private balcony. After a safety briefing and lunch, join your naturalist guide for an afternoon visit to **Sullivan Bay** on the east coast of Santiago Island. We land on a white coral sand beach and begin our walk over lava that flowed less than 100 years ago. This is the perfect place to see and feel the volcanic origin of Galapagos while admiring flora that grows in lava fields. Back on board we receive a briefing and a welcome cocktail before dinner. (B,L,D)

DAY 04 (WED): ISABELA ISLAND / SIERRA NEGRA VOLCANO

Isabela Island, the largest of the archipelago, encompasses more than half of the land area of Galapagos. At Humedales, we explore trails with a variety of flora and abundant bird life, including gallinules, finches, stilts and ducks. Another option for more challenge is a visit could be to **Sierra Negra Volcano**, one of largest craters in the archipelago offering mesmerizing views with great contrast in colors between lava fields, vegetation and fumaroles. On the way up Orquilla Hill, giant tortoises and marine iguanas appear in the undergrowth. The reward of the hike is spectacular scenery of the bay, the town of **Puerto Villamil**, volcanoes and islets. The Isabela wetlands have both endemic and introduced species. After lunch onboard, we visit the **Arnaldo Tupiza Breeding Center** where infant and juvenile giant tortoises are reared until they are ready to be released and survive in the wild. Another visit could be the Wall of Tears, a historical monument built in the 40's by prisoners of the then Isabela Island penal colony. (B,L,D)

DAY 05 (THU): ISABELA ISLAND / ELIZABETH BAY / URBINA BAY

This morning, discover the marine visitor site of **Elizabeth Bay** by zodiac visiting the Marielas islets home to the largest and most important **penguin colony** in the Galapagos Islands. The cove here is surrounded by red mangroves frequented by sea turtles, flightless cormorants, spotted eagle rays, golden rays, brown pelicans and sea lions. This afternoon, we visit **Urbina Bay** and follow a short trail to see coral formations and large colorful land iguanas. We are also on the lookout for giant turtles, flightless cormorants, blue-footed boobies, penguins and marine iguanas. Return to the ship for our expedition plan for Friday and a congenial dinner. (B,L,D)

DAY 06 (FRI): TAGUS COVE / FERNANDINA ISLAND (ESPINOZA POINT)

Tagus Cove involves a ride along the cliffs by zodiac to search for the endemic Galapagos penguins and flightless cormorants as well as other sea birds. A 30 min hike leads to the top of the cliff to view volcanoes and **Darwin Lake**, a saline lake saltier than the sea. After lunch, we venture to **Espinoza Point** with fascinating lava cactuses and thriving mangroves. Highlights here are the photogenic sea lions, penguins, flightless cormorant and one of the biggest iguana colonies among the islands. Throughout the day there are opportunities for swimming, snorkeling and kayaking. (B,L,D)

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DAY 07 (SAT): SANTIAGO ISLAND / RABIDA ISLAND

This morning, we discover **Buccaneer Cove** located just north of James Bay, known as a safe haven in the 17th and 18th century for pirates to stash their loot, take on fresh water and capture tortoises for food. It is a nice spot for a zodiac ride, snorkeling and kayaking. Blue-footed booby, Nazca booby, fur seals and Galapagos hawks can be seen.

Another option today is a visit to pristine **Espumilla Beach**, a popular place for marine iguanas and Sally Lightfoot crabs. The crabs attract the hunting herons, performing an interesting dance of predator and prey. With an abundance of marine life including octopi, moray eel and sharks, this is also a good location for snorkeling. In the afternoon, we explore **Rabida Island's** red sand beach, famous for its cactus groves and rock formations. This arid zone is home to native and endemic species. While walking the red sand beach, look for brown pelican nests and flamingos in the lagoon. Back on board we enjoy the daily briefing and a farewell dinner. (B,L,D)

DAY 08 (SUN): BALTRA ISLAND / GUAYAQUIL

Our final morning visit is a short hike at **Mosquera**, a small islet found between Baltra and North Seymour Islands. Although the island is characterized by arid vegetation, fauna abounds; lava gulls, herons, sea lions, Sally light foot crabs inhabit this sand bank with an extension of over 600 meters. It also hosts the largest populations of sea lions and orca whales that can be seen occasionally depending on the season. After breakfast back onboard and goodbyes to the crew, we disembark at **Baltra Island** and transfer to the airport to catch the flight to the mainland. Back in **Guayaquil**, meet up with Southwind's friendly staff and transfer to the familiar **Wyndham Hotel** to relax or stroll the Malecon 2000 boardwalk with leisure time. This evening dinner is on your own to try some of the city's gourmet restaurants that feature international and Ecuadorian cuisine. Travelers departing this evening have a transfer back to the airport and check-in assistance for the overnight flight home. (B)

DAY 09 (MON) GUAYAQUIL / USA

Arrive back to US this morning and make onward connections home.

NOTES ON THE ITINERARY: Although we do our best to adhere to the schedule listed above, the day-by-day activities on these itineraries are subject to change at any time for numerous reasons beyond our control including Galápagos Park Regulations and/or participant health, weather, sea and/or road conditions. The M/C Endemic also offers a different 6 day/5 night itinerary from Thursday to Tuesday with visits to Bartolome, Floreana, Santiago and Genovesa islands as well as a 5-day and a 8-day cruise. Reservations are recommended at least 4-5 months in advance (1 year or more for holiday departures) to ensure space on the trip of your choice. Reservations made less than 90 days prior to departure are subject to availability and must be paid in full at the time of booking.

Our Galápagos trips are suitable for physically fit participants accustomed to outdoor activities age 6 and up. Cruises may include families and children onboard. Hiking, driving distances and altitudes are approximate, times indicated are NET (they do not include lunch breaks, rest stops, time to explore the area, etc.).

2024 LAND COSTS:

Golden Suites

(Upper or Lower deck)

2-3 participants: from \$9,250 p.p.d.

4-6 participants: from \$9,000 p.p.d.

7-12 participants: from \$8,800 p.p.d.

p.p.d.=per person based on double or triple occupancy not including airfare.

Endemic's 8 Suites, measuring 344 square feet including balcony, are among the most spacious of similar luxury vessels and larger than most cabins on old-fashioned single-hulled yachts. The Suites have been conceived by professional designers for maximum comfort, natural light and elegance.

Each Suite has a comfortable private bathroom with L'Occitane products and either a king-size bed or two twin-size beds and a sofa/sleeper, panoramic sliding doors that connect you to a private balcony plus air conditioning controls and Satellite Internet. In addition, the M/C Endemic features a smaller Suite with a balcony for single occupancy. 4 upper deck Suites come with interconnected doors, ideal for families.

Peak Season cruises: For departures during Christmas and New Year, there is a Holiday surcharge of 10% per person,

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Single cabins are limited, and no children discounts apply during this period. Different deposits, cancellation fees and payments procedures apply for these departures. Please contact your Southwind Travel Consultant for details.

Children's Discount: Kids 6-11 years old at the time of travel are entitled to a discount of \$1,800 ppd on the *Wildlife Odyssey* Land Cost. Children's discounts are limited to one per two accompanying adults sharing a Suite together. No discounts are allowed during the Peak season (Christmas and New Year's departures). Other restrictions may apply.

ESTIMATED AIRFARE: The Land Cost DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY FLIGHTS. Southwind's ticketing specialist can assist with all your air travel – providing an airfare quote to match your itinerary, personalized support for seating, monitoring schedule changes and coordinating directly with the airlines if any adjustments are needed. You'll also benefit from access to lower contract fares for some routes. Ask about Business Class which is often a good value flying to Ecuador. Flights to Quito are offered by American Airlines (from Miami), United (Houston), Delta (Atlanta), JetBlue (Ft Lauderdale) and LATAM Airlines (Miami). Round-trip airfare from US gateway cities to Quito is about \$600-900 per person. Some carriers offer flights to Guayaquil (GYE) where we can assist with arrangements. You have the option to arrange your own flights or redeem award travel yourself if you prefer. Tickets should only be purchased after Southwind notifies you that your trip is confirmed. Round-trip fares to the Galapagos are approx \$550/person. Southwind coordinates your Galapagos flights in conjunction with your island visit, that fare is payable on your Southwind invoice. The airlines request that tickets match your passport name. Upon receipt of your deposit, Southwind provides flight booking details.

SERVICES INCLUDED:

- Comprehensive **pre-departure planning packet** and expert travel advice.
- All **in-country transfers** as scheduled. Ground transportation in comfortable private vehicles with professional drivers.
- Local and return flight reconfirmation, **in-country airport check-in and luggage assistance**.
- Galápagos National **Park entrance fee** of \$100 per person (\$50 per child 11 or under).
- Galápagos **Transit control card fee** of \$20 per person.
- All **accommodation in first-class (4-5 star) hotels** as listed (or at similar hotels) on a shared basis with private bath. Advanced bookings are recommended if you require double beds (King/queen) for couples, or plan to arrive early or extend your stay.
- All **meals** indicated on the itinerary (B=breakfast; L=lunch; D=dinner). **Vegetarian diets accommodated** on request (advance notification required). For other diets, consult your travel specialist before making a reservation. Bottled or filtered water is provided on the cruise and mainland.
- All **guided tours** and excursions listed on the mainland (including applicable entrance fees), accompanied by a bilingual resident guide in Guayaquil.
- Arrival and departure transfers in the Galápagos.
- Captain's welcome and farewell cocktail during the cruise.
- Accommodations on the Luxury, 16-passenger, **M/C Endemic** in an outside Suite with private bath. Snorkeling gear & wetsuits, kayaks, paddleboards and yoga mats are provided on board at no extra cost.
- Experienced sailing crew and staff of 10 plus 1 top Naturalist guide and 1 Cruise service officer.

NOT INCLUDED:

- US domestic, International nor local flights to/from the islands.
- Early arrivals, dayrooms or late check-outs at hotels.
- Alcoholic beverages, nor items of a personal nature like laundry, telephone calls, internet service, souvenirs etc.
- Tours, meals (at about \$30-45 each per person) or other services not listed on the itinerary.
- Tips to the local staff as warranted.
- Any expenses incurred in preparing for this trip, such as, but not limited to, non-refundable airline tickets or travel insurance, nor additional costs resulting from flight schedule changes, cancellations or missed connections.

M/C ENDEMIC:

The [M/C Endemic](#) maiden voyage was on July 8th, 2018. Being the first vessel of a new generation of catamarans, the Endemic is one of the most modern luxury catamarans cruising the Galapagos. It gathers elegant exteriors, spacious areas for high-end accommodation, social, and open areas. Navigations between the islands are sleek and fast due to Endemic's design which delivers superb stability when cruising around the archipelago.

On board the Endemic, the eight Golden Panoramic Suites are airy and comfortable, four of them are located on main

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deck and the rest on the upper deck. Each suite has a private balcony; all suites have personalized marine air conditioning control and panoramic views of the islands due to its floor to ceiling/wall to wall sliding glass doors instead of walls toward the outside. A small social area, closet/drawer, desk and sofa-bed are part of each suite as well. Matrimonial king size or two single twin beds are available in each suite for flexible accommodation. Private bathroom, hot and cold water and amenities.

On the Main Deck, the Endemic in the front features a briefing area for meetings, lectures, and it is also the point of information for Galapagos travel with videos, books, and personalized assistance. The interior passengers lounge and dining area also offer panoramic views of the islands while enjoying exquisite cuisine. Two platforms allow passengers on and off the catamaran, offering super easy access to the yacht.

Passengers access our Upper Deck through interior steps. There are four suites, a sun terrace and a secluded social area for relaxation and wildlife observation. Passengers can also reach the upper levels of the Endemic through our exterior steps. On the Sky Deck, the vessel features al fresco dining, bar, exterior passengers lounge, BBQ station, jacuzzi, sun chair and seating area. It is a shaded area where delicious drinks are served while enjoying the views.

ON BOARD: A typical day on board begins with a beautiful sunrise and breakfast served generally at 07:00. Afterwards, at about 08:30, we join our English-speaking naturalist for a 3-4 hour shore excursion. (Certified by the Charles Darwin Research Station and the National Park Service, the guide aboard this catamaran is typically level III, meaning they have achieved the highest level of certification and experience.) We board our zodiac, or small motorized dinghy, and travel to a specified visitor's site for disembarkation. We may have either a dry landing on a rocky beach or special jetty, or a wet landing where wading through knee or thigh deep water is required. Once on shore our guide will explain the unique features of this location and talk about the life forms we encounter as we hike along designated trails and beaches. There is typically time for swimming or snorkeling before lunch for those that enjoy these activities.

Lunch is onboard with siesta time while cruising to the next visitor site. In the afternoon, a 3 hour excursion might include snorkeling amid colorful tropical fish, swimming with sea lions or cruising in the zodiac to view marine birds and wildlife along the cliffs if there is not a designated landing site. Guides will discuss the next day's activities and special features of the observation sites we visit as well offer lectures about natural history of the islands before we enjoy a delicious dinner featuring Ecuadorian as well as international specialties, which is served on board at about 19:30. The ship guarantees all its departures with a minimum of 8 passengers and a maximum number of 16. Southwind offers this trip for a minimum of 2 passengers. There will be other travelers on board the vessel who have booked through other tour companies or travel agencies. They will not participate in the full Southwind program that includes the other mainland services and does not count toward group size for land cost pricing.

OPTIONAL TRIP EXTENSIONS: Travelers with a few extra days may wish to include a visit to Quito and the Lake District, the Amazon Rainforests, Cuenca and the southern highlands or Mindo Cloud forest and the Western rainforest. Extensions require a minimum of 2 participants. To view the extensions on our website, click on ['Extend Your Trip'](#).

COMBINATION TRIPS: For those who would like to spend an extra week exploring South America, and wish to see other areas of interest, all our *Galápagos Wildlife Odyssey* departures have been designed to coordinate with our tour to Machu Picchu in Peru for the once-in-a-lifetime 13-day program. Please contact your Southwind Travel Specialist for details.

FAMILY ADVENTURES: A visit to the enchanted Galápagos Islands makes an ideal family vacation. Adults and children alike love communing with wildlife and the water activities. Children age 6-11 are welcome aboard and qualify for special discounts.

PRIVATE GROUPS: Special charters of the M/C Endemic (or any of our other vessels) are available for private parties. We suggest making charter arrangements 3 years in advance.

WEATHER: The Galápagos Islands have a surprisingly cool, sub-tropical climate. Weather is regulated by the cold Humboldt Current (flows north-westward along western coast of South America and out to the islands) during the dry season and the warm waters from the Panama Basin during the wet season. The islands only receive an average of 10" of rain per year so it is never "rainy". Temperatures vary according to the trade wind strength.

December – June: Cooling currents subside and temps rise. Many consider this the hot/wetter season. Daytime highs are upper 80's-low 90's and 70's at night. The water temp is at its warmest (ave 72-76°F). Feb-Apr have the highest

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precipitation levels (1-2"/month), rest of year is less than 1"/month.

July – November: The trade winds pick up and the climate becomes cool & breezy. Many consider this the cool/drier season. Daytime air temp average is 73°F and 62°F at night. The ave water temp is 68°F. The sea can be a bit choppy during these months and the sky can be misty, a phenomenon locally called “garua.”

TEMPERATURES	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
MAX AIR TEMP	84	86	88	86	82	78	76	74	76	77	78	80
MIN AIR TEMP	70	74	74	72	72	68	66	64	62	64	66	68
AVE SEA TEMP	74	76	76	76	74	74	72	66	68	70	72	74
AVE RAINFALL	1	1	2	1.5	0.75	0.25	0.5	0.25	0.5	0.25	0.5	0.5

Temperatures are given in degrees Fahrenheit and rainfall amounts are in inches.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: We strongly recommend purchasing coverage to protect your trip investment. Travel insurance is important in case of unexpected events prior to departure causing the need to cancel or change your dates. Weather, natural events, medical reason, quarantine, local strikes, personal injury/illness (for you, your traveling companion or family members at home), could require itinerary interruption or changes. Missed connections, delayed arrival, lost/delayed baggage or the need for medical attention or evacuation are also reasons why coverage is important. Southwind recommends **Travel Insured International** which offers coverage options at a good value. If you, your traveling companion or a family member has a pre-existing medical condition, you can still receive coverage if a recurrence of the condition forces you to cancel your trip, but you do need to purchase a plan **within 21 days of your deposit**. Southwind can provide eQuote for insurance to review upon receipt of your deposit and Trip Reservation eForm. [Learn more about coverage offered by Travel Insured International](#)

HOW TO SIGN UP: Please complete Southwind’s [Trip Reservation eForm](#). There are fields for up to 6 travelers per form with the same address. The deposit is **\$2,000 per person**, [please click here to pay your deposit](#) by any major credit card through our secure CardConnect system. In the total amount due box, enter your deposit amount (without a comma) based on the number of travelers in your party. If you prefer, you can also call us at 1-800-377-9463 to make payment arrangements by phone or send a check. You will receive confirmation of your deposit. Once your trip is confirmed by Southwind, you will receive comprehensive pre-departure planning documents by email.

Land Balance: Final payment is due at 120 days by Visa, Mastercard, Discover, American Express or check. You will receive a trip invoice indicating your balance due. Provided services and space are available, reservations can be accepted up to 60 days before departure.

Galápagos vessels are relatively small compared to other cruises, so they typically sell out several months in advance. Early booking is required for most departures.

Cancellation Fees and other policies are outlined under the [Terms & Conditions](#) on Southwind's website.

We look forward to having you travel with us in Ecuador!

Southwind Adventures, Inc

Your Latin America Travel Specialist since 1990

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