

# Galápagos Islands Yoga Retreat

with Lori Gholson  
April 5th - 14th 2019



The Galápagos Islands, located 600 miles west of the Ecuadorian coast, are famous for their unique and fearless wildlife. They provided the inspiration and natural laboratory for Darwin's Theory of Evolution. The scenery is stark, volcanic and beautiful. The close interactions with the abundant wildlife engender joy and humility, fostering a renewed sense of wonder in the natural world, and a desire to protect it.

Join Lori in "The Enchanted Islands" for a week of yoga, while we immerse ourselves in the unique natural landscapes of this UNESCO World Heritage Site. What an extraordinary opportunity to experience the magic web of our lives, blending the richness and depth of yoga with the magnificence of Mother Nature. Yoga classes will be woven in, scheduled around our excursions.

Our trip will be based at the Semilla Verde Hotel on Santa Cruz Island. The accommodations are spacious, airy, and restful - truly delightful! Our schedule will include 3 full-day tours via boat to different islands with a certified Ecuadorian Naturalist Guide; we will have the opportunity to snorkel on these trips. We may swim with penguins and sea lions, observe Blue-footed Boobies at close quarters, and quietly sit with giant tortoises. We will also explore the highlands of Santa Cruz, and visit the renowned Charles Darwin Research Center in Puerto Ayora.

As we share this trip-of-a-lifetime, our days will be full of opportunities for close-up wildlife viewing, as well as cultural experiences. Our yoga practice will reflect our focus on the natural world and the wellbeing of all its inhabitants.

**Costs & Reservations**      Trip cost \$4,650 based on double occupancy

10 days, 9 nights - All accommodation and most meals included  
*Non-refundable* reservation deposit of      \$1,000 per person  
Final payment [due November 1st 2018]      \$3,650 per person

To register: please contact Lori Gholson at [yogamom@peak.org](mailto:yogamom@peak.org)  
Please mail all checks to: Lori Gholson, 24008 Ervin Rd., Philomath, OR 97370

The trip price includes:

- 2 nights accommodation in Quito, prior to and after Galápagos retreat
- Internal round-trip airfare from Quito to the Galápagos Islands
- 8 day, 7 night yoga retreat on Santa Cruz Island
- Yoga classes with Lori [most days, depending on our day trip schedule]
- Airport / hotel transfers
- Naturalist accompanied day trip with snorkeling to Bartolomé Island
- Naturalist accompanied day trips with snorkeling to *two* of the following three islands: Santa Fe, South Plazas, or North Seymour
- Naturalist accompanied visits to the Charles Darwin Center and the Highlands of Santa Cruz Island
- SICA cards [required for air transfer to the Galápagos]

*Not included:*

- x International flights, to and from Ecuador
- x Galápagos Park Entrance Fee [currently \$100 per person]
- x Personal insurance and trip protection insurance - *strongly recommended*
- x Dinner in Quito on 2 nights, indicated "individual dinner" in the itinerary
- x Alcoholic beverages
- x Tips to hotel staff, Naturalist guides, etc...
- x Items of a personal nature [laundry, telephone calls, bottled water, etc...]



## Cancellation Policy

*Before 1st November 2018:* The reservation deposit of \$1,000 is non-refundable and will be forfeited if you must cancel, and a replacement participant cannot be found. If a replacement is found the deposit minus \$100 handling fee will be refunded.

*After 1st November 2018:* Forfeiture of 100% of the total trip cost.

If for any reason Lori Gholson cancels the trip, you will be fully refunded.

**Important:** Participants should buy Trip Cancellation Insurance through a travel agent/insurance agent, in case you must cancel your trip and/or flights, and also for travel medical insurance coverage.

**Claire Smith** will be joining this trip to assist with organization and logistics. Claire and her husband have led natural history trips to the Galápagos and mainland Ecuador since 2005, and she had a delightful stay at Semilla Verde in 2017. Claire can assist you with booking additional nights in Quito, and a variety of cultural and/or natural history-oriented day trips in and around Quito.

Claire can be contacted at: [clairesmith164@gmail.com](mailto:clairesmith164@gmail.com)

Tel: 541-264-0082



**Sally Lightfoot Crab**

*All Photos by Eric Horvath*

## Daily Itinerary



**Galápagos Tortoise - one of the many that roam wild in the Highlands of Santa Cruz Island**

### **FRIDAY 5TH APRIL :**

### **International flight USA to Quito, Ecuador**

You will fly to Quito, the capitol of Ecuador, and will be met on arrival and transferred to our hotel. The tour price includes this night in Quito prior to our Galápagos departure. However, we recommend that, if possible you arrive at least one day earlier [i.e Thursday 4th April], to allow for unexpected travel delays. We can assist you in setting up any extra nights accommodation in Quito.

Night in Quito at Hotel Rincon de Puembo, a quiet hotel close to the airport.  
*Individual dinner.*

### **SATURDAY 6TH APRIL:**

### **Quito to Santa Cruz Island, Galápagos**

This morning we will fly as a group from Quito to the Galápagos Islands, 600 miles west of mainland Ecuador. After landing on Baltra Island, we will transfer by bus to Semilla Verde Boutique Hotel, our delightful “rural refuge” for the next week!

Robert Grimstone, the owner, and his lovely, attentive staff are dedicated to providing an incredibly comfortable and welcoming environment, and we will soon feel at home. Their ethos is to promote ecological responsibility, and a sustainable economic



future for the Galápagos. The extensive reforestation of the 12-acre hotel property with native *Scalesia* trees speaks to their desire to provide a near-natural habitat in which wildlife abounds. If we are lucky, we may be able to sit quietly with the Giant Galápagos Tortoises that wander freely through the grounds of Semilla Verde!

The hotel has 9 en-suite rooms, each with sliding glass doors to a private terrace and hammocks to enjoy the views over the forest to the ocean. On arrival, we will be welcomed with a refreshing drink, followed by lunch, the first of many delicious meals! The hotel uses an abundance of fresh, local ingredients, and food preferences can be accommodated.

We will then have the opportunity to settle into our rooms, unpack, and perhaps explore the grounds before yoga practice in the late afternoon. Dinner at Semilla Verde.

**SUNDAY 7TH - FRIDAY 12TH APRIL:**

**General Schedule - details TBA**

The exact details of our day-to-day schedule will be determined when we know the dates and departure times for our excursions [see below]. These are governed by the National Park Service and are carefully controlled to ensure only a certain number of visitors to each site.



**Galápagos Penguin - Bartolomé Island**

This retreat will offer full-day trips to 3 spectacular outlying islands:

- **Bartlomé, and two of the following three:**
- **Sante Fe; South Plazas; North Seymour.**

We will have the opportunity to see a variety of the unique endemic fauna and flora, for which the islands are so famous. These trips will involve travel on a safe, 16-passenger boat, accompanied by an excellent Certified Ecuadorian guide. The island excursions are full-day events, and there will be ample opportunity for snorkeling, as well as land-based explorations. The undersea world of the islands is extraordinary and not to be missed!

Naturally, there are no guarantees of what animals we will encounter, but we will likely observe reef sharks, Galápagos sea lions and penguins, marine iguanas, blue-footed boobies, and several species of Darwin's finches. Mask, snorkel, and fins are provided. Lunch will be on board the boat. Expect long days!

Our exciting expeditions will be balanced and complemented by our yoga practice at Semilla Verde. The studio is a beautiful airy and light-filled space. Panoramic windows provide views of the tortoise pond, gardens, and forest. It is fully equipped with mats, blocks, straps, and blankets. Lori expects to offer yoga on at least 5 days, totaling approximately 12-14 hours during the week. Again, this will be dependent on the final schedule for our excursions.





During the week, we will also have a chance to explore the Highlands of Santa Cruz, and the bustling town of Puerto Ayora, home to the renowned Charles Darwin Research Station. There will be the opportunity for a kayaking excursion. We will enjoy two meals in Puerto Ayora - including our final group dinner on Friday evening. These are included in the trip price. All other meals will be at Semilla Verde Hotel.

#### **SATURDAY 13TH APRIL:**

#### **Santa Cruz Island to Quito**

We will have our final breakfast at Semilla Verde, before transferring to Baltra for our morning flight back to the mainland. We will arrive in Quito late afternoon. On arrival in Quito, we will be transferred to our nearby accommodations: Hotel Rincon de Puembo. Night in Quito [hotel accommodation is included in tour price].\*  
*Individual dinner.*

#### **SUNDAY 14TH APRIL:**

#### **International flights Quito to USA**

You will be transferred from the hotel to the airport in time to catch your flight home.

\* Please note that alternatively you can plan to fly home *late* on the evening of Saturday 13th. A number of airlines have flights leaving around 11pm, or later. Please schedule your flight to depart home *after* 11pm on Saturday 13th April.

Pam Davis at Willamette International Travel can assist you with booking flights and with Travel Insurance. Tel: 1-800-821-0401.

You do *not* need to book the internal flight—round trip Quito to the Galápagos Islands—as this is included in the tour price. Our group will all be traveling on the same internal flights.

#### **PREPARATION**

Participants will be sent a Trip Information Package, including details regarding travel documentation, flights, money and tipping, health & safety, “What to bring”, etc...

#### **CLIMATE**

In the Galápagos in April the weather is typically warm/wet, with the highest annual air temperatures. The skies are usually clear and the temperature can exceed 30C (86F), although it is humid and heavy rains occur. Be prepared for plenty of heat and sun. The sea surface temperatures in the Galápagos are atypically cold for an equatorial region. Consequently, the marine climate here is considered subtropical. In April the ocean is typically calm and sea temperatures are warmer than in other seasons. Most snorkelers will find that they need a ‘shortie’ wetsuit for warmth. Our boat has snorkels, masks, and flippers available for our use at no charge.

Quito is nestled in an intermontane valley of the Andes at 9,000 ft elevation. Rain can occur, and one may want a jacket in the evenings.

