

THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

& AMAZON RAIN FOREST



with JC Raulston Arboretum Director Mark Weathington

January 18 - 29, 2020



You're invited! Join JC Raulston Arboretum's, Mark Weathington - Director and Curator of Collections, on an unforgettable journey to the legendary Galápagos Islands and Amazon Rain Forest of Ecuador. While based on the island of Santa Cruz we'll spend our days exploring the many nearby islands of North Seymour, Santa Fe and Plaza Islands. Visit the Charles Darwin Research Station and encounter remarkable species unknown anywhere else on earth. Certified naturalists will enlighten and expand your understanding of the amazing creatures and unparalleled diversity of the Amazon Rain Forest.

Come commune with the iguanas and snorkel with sea lions on this amazing adventure with JC Raulston Arboretum!

JOURNEY HIGHLIGHTS

Five days exploring the Galápagos Islands with naturalists ♦ Charles Darwin Research Station ♦ Unequaled diversity of wildlife ♦ Snorkeling with marine life ♦ Opportunities for short hikes on the Galápagos Islands ♦ Historic walking tour of the old colonial town of Quito, a World Heritage Site ♦ Knowledgeable, experienced local guides ♦ Intimate dining experiences ♦ A full day excursion to local markets and hot springs ♦ Travel with like-minded garden lovers



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EXPEDITIONS**

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TRIP AT A GLANCE

- 3 Nights Quito
- 2 Nights Casa del Suizo – Amazon Rain Forest
- 5 Nights Galápagos Islands
- 1 Night Return flight home



IT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ JC Raulston Arboretum's Mark Weathington - Director and Curator of Collections
- ✓ Full-time bilingual tour guide and naturalist
- ✓ Airport and hotel transfers in Ecuador with professional guides and drivers
- ✓ Six days of island hopping and exploration in the Galápagos Islands
- ✓ Three days in the Amazon Rain Forest
- ✓ Domestic flights to/from the Galápagos Islands
- ✓ Accommodations in charming 3 and 4 star hotels and lodges
- ✓ All breakfasts plus 12 additional multi-course meals
- ✓ Galápagos National Park Maps
- ✓ Entrance and excursions listed in the itinerary
- ✓ Gratuities for your tour guide and drivers
- ✓ Pre-tour suggested reading list
- ✓ Alumni appreciation discounts applied toward future expeditions
- ✓ A small, fun group of soon-to-be friends!

✓

NOT INCLUDED

- ✓ Optional round-trip air from the USA to Ecuador
- ✓ Travel Insurance
- ✓ Anything not listed on the itinerary
- ✓ \$120 Galápagos Islands National Park entrance fee



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TRIP FACTS AND PRICING



12 Days/ 11 Nights (*when including optional air*)
\$6,495 per person double occupancy
\$799 single supplement
Trip departs the USA on January 18, 2020
Trip returns to the USA on January 29
*Prices based on a minimum of 23 guests

\$995 DELTA AIRLINES DELTA

Optional group air from North Carolina to Ecuador via Atlanta on Delta Airlines. Includes all taxes, fees and airport transfers in Ecuador and day use of the airport hotel on the final day of your trip!

RESERVATIONS AND DEPOSITS

Early reservations are essential to guarantee a place on this departure. A \$750 per person deposit is due at time of sign up. An additional \$200 deposit is requested if opting for the group flight. Deposits are refundable for 30 days from your deposit date, minus a cancellation penalty of \$75 per person. Final payment is 90 days before departure. Deposits and payments can be made by check or credit card.

SAVE UP TO \$250

- ✓ Reserve by June 1, 2019 and save \$75
- ✓ Pay your final balance by check and save \$75
- ✓ JC Raulston Arboretum and Earthbound travel alumni save \$100



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“I have called this principle, by which each slight variation, if useful,
is preserved, by the term of Natural Selection.”

Charles Darwin

YOUR JC RAULSTON ARBORETUM ADVENTURE BEGINS ...

Meal Key: B = Breakfast / L = Lunch / D = Dinner

DAY 1: Saturday, January 18 - Depart for Quito, Ecuador

Your exciting expedition to Ecuador begins today as you board your flight. After a late evening arrival in Quito, meet your local tour director at the airport and transfer to your deluxe hotel in central Quito. *Overnight in Quito at the Hotel Hilton Colon*

DAY 2: Sunday, January 19 - Discover Quito and the Botanic Gardens

On a guided morning tour of Quito you'll learn about its colonial past, history and culture. Visit the old town and see the Church of San Francisco, the first religious building constructed in South America by the Spaniards. See the facade of La Compania, the city's most ornate church. Admire the spectacular views of the Valley of Tumbaco. And on a clear day, you can see the impressive volcanoes surrounding the city. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. Afterwards continue your visit to the local botanical gardens to observe a diversity of plants from different altitudes and ecosystems. *Overnight in Quito at the Hotel Hilton Colon (B, L)*

DAY 3: Monday, January 20 - East to the Amazon

After breakfast, transfer by bus to La Punta Ahuano on the Napo River where you will board a canoe that will take you to your Amazon lodge. Enjoy the tranquility of the lodge and prepare to be amazed by both the wildlife and the Amazon culture. In the afternoon, visit Ahuano village for the opportunity to meet a local Quechua family and learn about their way of life before returning to the hotel. In the evening, dine together at the lodge. *Overnight in the Amazon Rain Forest at Casa del Suizo (B, L, D)*



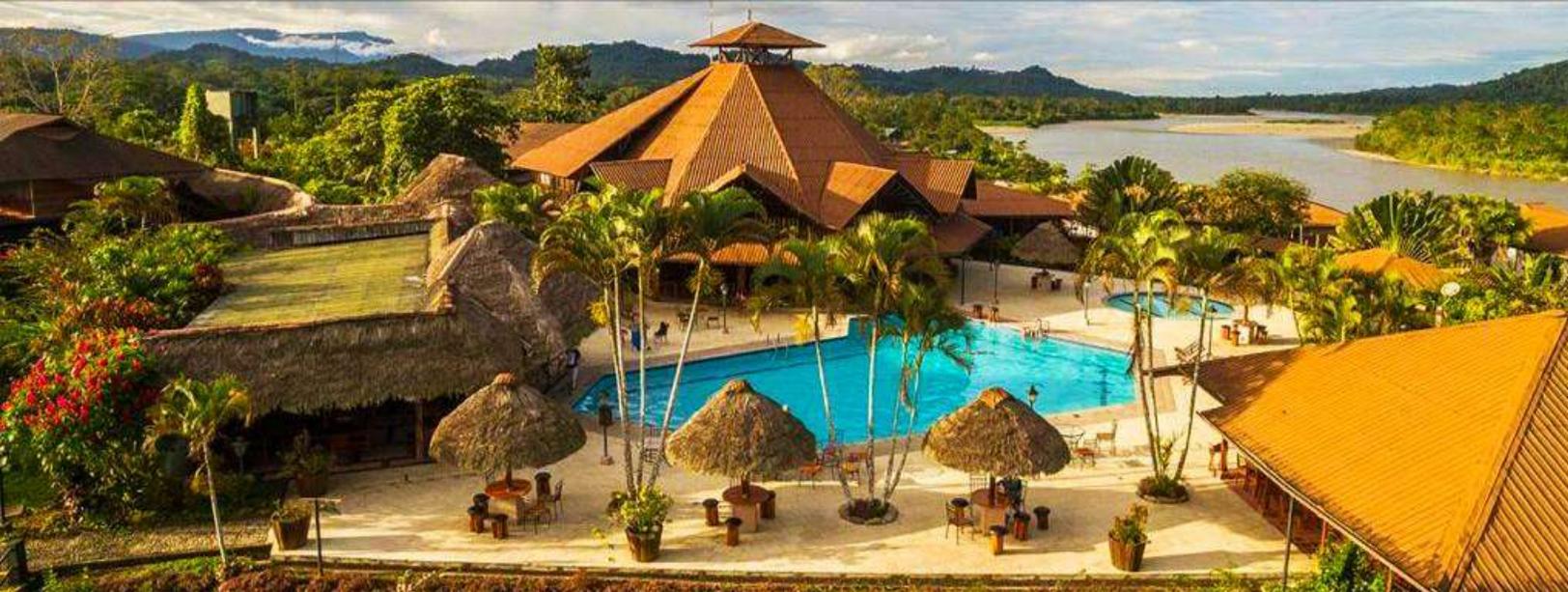
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La Casa del Suizo

DAY 4: Tuesday, January 21 - A Full Day in a Private Nature Reserve

This morning, after a canoe ride you can hike in the Misicocha Private Nature Reserve for approximately two hours while viewing the beautiful flora and fauna up-close. The Amazon Rain Forest is the world's largest ecosystem, so be sure to keep an eye out for the innumerable species of tropical plants and insects. Enjoy the views as you cross suspended bridges and fly through the rain forest on a short zip line basket ride. At the end of the hike, take a rafting trip on a traditional balsa log raft. The balance of the day is at leisure. You may choose one of the *optional* tours, including such as the Rescue Center or Canopy Adventure Park. Tonight, savor dinner with the group at the lodge. *Overnight in the Amazon Rain Forest at Casa del Suizo (B, L, D)*

DAY 5: Wednesday, January 22 - The Andes Cloud Forest and Natural Hot Springs

This morning, board a canoe for the return trip to La Punta Ahuano and enjoy a scenic drive through small villages, stopping for lunch in Tena. After lunch, continue to the hot springs at Papallacta, tucked away in the Andes Mountains. After relaxing at Papallacta hot springs, we continue on to the Wyndham Quito airport hotel for an overnight and dinner. *Overnight near Quito airport at the Wyndham (B, L, D)*

DAY 6: Thursday, January 23 - Fly West to the Galapagos Islands

After an early breakfast, transfer to the airport for the flight to the Galápagos Islands where you will spend the next five days island hopping with your naturalist. Upon arrival in Baltra you'll board the ferry for a short transfer to Santa Cruz Island and then continue by motor coach to Puerto Ayora. Passing through the highlands of Santa Cruz, you'll see the enormous change in vegetation from dry areas full of cacti to rainforest and fern zones. This afternoon visit the Charles Darwin Research Station to learn about island conservation and the huge efforts to preserve this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Enjoy an independent lunch at a local restaurant. This evening we'll have a "welcome to the islands" dinner at a local restaurant. *Overnight in Puerto Ayora at Hotel SolyMar (B, D)*



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DAYS 7, 8 & 9: Friday, January 24 to Sunday, January 26 - Explore the Galapagos Islands

Over the course of the next four days you'll enjoy full-day boat excursions to many of the nearby islands. Each of these islands has its own unique beauty to offer. North Seymour is a flat island and home to magnificent frigate birds like the Blue-Footed-Boobies. South Plaza Island is home to a large colony of sea lions and offers excellent examples of the typical flora like towering cacti "trees" which form the principal diet for land iguanas and cactus finch.

Bartholomew Island is a tiny island which boasts one of the most spectacular views of the archipelago from Pinnacle Rock. Climb to the 375 foot peak to enjoy this stunning view. Santa Fe is one of the oldest islands of the Galápagos and in its tranquil bay, one can find green sea turtles and spotted eagle rays while sea lions bask in sun on the beach. *Overnight in Puerto Ayora at Hotel SolyMar (B, L, D)*

DAY 10: Monday, January 27 - Relax on Santa Cruz Island

Today explore Tortuga Bay and a local beach near the town of Santa Cruz. Here you can just enjoy the beach and have a relaxing time. There is also the option to rent a kayak here. Later this morning, transfer by a local boat to the pier where a bus will be waiting to take us to the highlands of the Santa Cruz. Along the way there is lunch at a local ranch, a visit to a lava tunnel, and visit to see the famous giant tortoises in their natural environment. Return to the hotel in time for dinner. *Overnight in Puerto Ayora at Hotel SolyMar (B, L, D)*



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DAY 11: Tuesday, January 28 - Free morning and return to Quito this afternoon

This morning is at your leisure. Later, transfer to the airport for your flight to Quito. Upon arrival in Quito, you'll be met and transferred to a nearby hotel where you will be able to use a room to change and get ready for a farewell dinner. Transfer to the Quito airport and fly back home. (B, D) * Delta group flight departs at 11:40 pm this evening.

DAY 12: Wednesday, January 29 - Return home with a lifetime of memories!

Most flights for the US depart Quito very late in the evening or early in the morning. You'll arrive back in the States today!

YOUR JC RAULSTON ARBORETUM HOST



Mark Weathington - Director and Curator of Collections

Mark Weathington is the Director of the JC Raulston Arboretum at NC State University where he is passionate in his work to connect people with plants. His career in public horticulture has also included the Norfolk Botanical Garden where he served as Director of Horticulture and the Atlanta Botanical Garden as a horticulturist.

Mark travels extensively searching for new plants to diversify the American landscape and lecturing on a variety of topics in horticulture to further the JC Raulston Arboretum's vision of "Planning and Planting a Better World." His explorations and speaking engagements have taken him to China, Taiwan, Japan, Ecuador, Europe, Mexico, New Zealand, and throughout the US.



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DESCRIPTIONS FOR THE ISLAND HOPPING

*This list is intended as a sampling of the islands that will be visited while in the Galapagos archipelago.
The exact itinerary will depend on weather conditions and National Park permits.*

BARTOLOMÉ ISLAND

Bartolomé is one of the "younger" islands in the Galápagos archipelago. This island, and Sullivan Bay on Santiago Island, are named after naturalist and lifelong friend of Charles Darwin, Sir Bartolome James Sullivan, who was a lieutenant aboard HMS Beagle.

With a total land area of just .5 square miles, this island offers some of the most beautiful landscapes in the archipelago. The island consists of an extinct volcano and a variety of red, orange, green, and glistening black volcanic formations.

Bartolomé has a volcanic cone that is easy to climb and provides great views of the other islands. Bartolomé is famous for its Pinnacle Rock, which is the distinctive characteristic of this island, and the most representative landmark of the Galápagos.

It has two visitor sites. At the first one, one may swim and snorkel around Pinnacle Rock; the underwater world there is really impressive. Snorkelers are in the water with the penguins, marine turtles, white-tipped reef sharks, and other tropical fish. The bay is also an excellent place to go swimming. The twin bays are separated by a narrow isthmus. Galápagos penguins are frequently seen and a small cave behind Pinnacle Rock houses a breeding colony. Seasonally, Bartolomé is the mating and nesting site for the green turtles. The herons use the gentler beaches.

NORTH SEYMOUR

The endemic plant of this island is the lignum vitae tree, an icon of the site. In the summertime they look like dead trees, but after the February rains, they become green overnight giving the island a very special appearance. Other plant species abundant in the area are the Opuntia cactus, Croton, Castile and Sesuvium. Sometimes you can watch green iguanas taking shade under bushes. These animals were introduced in Seymour to test whether they can survive another landscape as they are found usually in Baltra. Frigates can be observed along the walking trail along with other species such as lava gulls, sea lions, brown terns, pelicans, tropical birds.



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ISLA SANTA FE

Santa Fe Island, also called Barrington Island after Admiral Samuel Barrington, is a small island of 9 mi² which lies in the center of the Galápagos archipelago. Geologically it is one of the oldest, since volcanic rocks of about 4 million years old have been found here. The vegetation of the island is characterized by brush, palo santo trees and stands of a large variety of the prickly pear cactus *opuntia echios*.

The visitor sites are Barrington Bay on the northeastern side. There is great snorkeling with white tip sharks, sea turtles, rays, and colorful fish. Large numbers of sea lions are found in the bay.

PLAZA ISLANDS

Just east of Santa Cruz Island, the Plaza Islands are distinct for their native populations of flora and fauna, but only South Plaza Island has a landing site. As you cross the jet black lava rock, you will see one of the largest populations of land iguanas in the Galápagos Islands and one of the most unique. It's here where male marine iguanas have bred with female land iguanas to create the only hybrid land/marine iguanas in the archipelago. The remaining land iguanas, though smaller in size than other island populations, feature vibrant yellows and reds and enjoy the local delicacies of Opuntia cacti and the indigenous Sesuvium. Visitors will also see several big groups of sea lions, including one significant bachelor colony.

QUESTIONS AND RESERVATIONS

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-Trip Details Subject to Change -

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