



Itinerary

12 Day Machu Picchu Peru & Galapagos Cruise

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is the default version of the tour itinerary. Any extra nights, optional tours or other amendments, will not be visible on this version. If you have booked extras, Please contact info@myholiday2.com.au for a personalised version of your itinerary

DAY 1: Arrival to Lima, Peru

Welcome to Peru, one of the most fascinating countries in South America! If you have time after your arrival in Lima before settling in at your hotel for an overnight stay, we suggest you wander historical centre, which is packed with elegant Spanish colonial architecture, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Or why not walk along the oceanfront boardwalk in the upmarket Miraflores district. Here, you'll find many restaurants and cafés, as well as shops if you need to purchase anything ahead of your adventure. Lima is considered the food capital of Latin America, so be sure to try local dishes like ceviche, which is raw fish marinated in lime juice with onion and chilli.

MEALS: None

OVERNIGHT: Lima, Peru

DAY 2: Lima ~ Cusco: City of Incas and a Cultural Gem

In the morning, you'll take a flight to Cusco, the ancient seat of the Inca Empire. A local guide will take you to check in at your hotel, before inviting you on a guided tour of this enigmatic city. You'll see impressive Inca structures contrasted with ornate buildings from Spanish colonial times. Visit the 15th-century ceremonial compound of Sacsayhuaman, or admire the architecture of the Spanish Santo Domingo church, a convent built on the ruins of Koricancha, the Inca Sun Temple. After your tour of the highlights of this cultural and architectural gem, we'll return to the hotel for dinner.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Cusco, Peru

DAY 3: Visit The Lost World: Machu Picchu

An early morning transfer will take you to Ollantaytambo, in the Sacred Valley, from where you'll catch a train along the narrow-gauge line to Machu Picchu, passing through stunning highland scenery along the way. After around two hours, we'll stop at the small town of Aguas Calientes and take the short bus ride to Machu Picchu – the so-called Lost City of the Incas. You'll enjoy a guided tour of this once-hidden settlement, marvelling at the stonewalls, terraces and ramps that are carved into the mountain. You'll love the peaceful atmosphere of Machu Picchu as you gaze at the lowland jungle from this city in the clouds. After lunch, we'll return to Cusco where you'll enjoy your final night at the hotel.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Cusco, Peru

DAY 4: Cusco, Peru ~ Quito, Ecuador

The day begins with breakfast at your hotel. We'll then drive to the airport in Cusco for the morning flight via Lima to Ecuador. You'll arrive in Quito in the afternoon. At 9,350 feet, Quito is the second-highest capital city in the world, and its main draw is the exquisite Old Town which was founded on an ancient Inca settlement. A UNESCO World Heritage site, it's packed with well-preserved colonial-era architecture, including colourful plazas, magnificent churches and handsome monuments. If you have enough time in the evening, visit the Calle La Ronda, an ancient pedestrian street with links to the poets and artists who've lived here. It's lined with shops and cafes, and there are many handicrafts available to buy.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Quito

DAY 5: Quito City Tour & Equator Visit

Today you'll enjoy a guided tour of Quito's remarkable Old Town – one of the largest and best-preserved colonial-era quarters in South America. Wander through cobblestone streets as you admire the architecture – and sample some delicious chocolate made from the finest Ecuadorian cacao along the way. Next, you'll head to the iconic 'Middle of the World City', located around 16 miles north of Quito. After lunch, you'll visit the famous monument that delineates the imaginary line of the Equator. Have your camera ready to capture the moment you stand with one foot in each hemisphere.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Quito

DAY 6: Explore The Galapagos: Baltra Island and Mosquera Islet

After breakfast, a short flight will take you to Baltra Island in the spectacular Galápagos archipelago. A transfer brings you straight to the port where your comfortable expedition ship MS Santa Cruz II awaits. You'll get your first glimpse of the islands' incredible wildlife on Mosquera Islet, home to one of the largest sea lion colonies in the archipelago. We'll take our small panga boats ashore to get a closer look. As you stroll across flat and sandy dunes, look out for Blue-footed Boobies and Sally Lightfoot crabs, and learn about the marine and terrestrial ecosystems from your naturalist guides.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Santa Cruz II

DAY 7: San Cristóbal Island & Giant Tortoises

Your first stop today is the Cerro Colorado Tortoise Reserve – a breeding centre for the endangered giant tortoise. It's also home to other endemic species, including the San Cristobal Mockingbird and lava lizard. The giant tortoise is probably the most iconic of all Galápagos wildlife, with a lifespan of over 100 years. Here, they thrive, ambling around forests similar to their natural habitat. Up to August 2024 we'll call at Cerro Brujo, on the island's west coast. With its white coral beaches, you'll literally be walking in Darwin's footsteps as the naturalist visited here in 1835. There are plenty of sea and shore birds to look out for here, as well as sea lions. After August 2024* we'll instead likely explore Punta Pitt in our small panga

boats. This is the only site in the Galápagos Islands where you might see three species of boobies. Enjoy a nature walk, explore the coastline by boat, or snorkel and swim in the crystal-clear water. *Note – this is dependent on local authority restrictions.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Santa Cruz II

DAY 8: Santa Fe and South Plaza Islands

We start the day with a scenic nature walk on the blissful beaches of Santa Fe, home to the endemic Barrington land iguana and a colony of sea lions. You can swim or snorkel from our small panga boats, take a kayak for a paddle around the island, or join a trip in our glass-bottomed boat to observe the marine life below. After a delicious lunch, prepared by our onboard chefs, we head to South Plaza Island. Keep an eye out for frigatebirds, Swallow-tailed Gulls and Galapagos Shearwaters gliding on the breeze. Here, among a dazzling array of flora, land iguanas laze by the shore while marine iguanas slip in and out of the water.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Santa Cruz II

DAY 9: Santa Cruz Island & Charles Darwin Research Centre

Today we pay a visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station in Puerto Ayora. A giant tortoise breeding centre, here you can see recently hatched tortoises and Darwin's famous finches – the birds he used as a basis for his theory of evolution by natural selection. There's also an impressive forest of prickly pear cacti that's home to many land birds. Enjoy a cooler climate over lunch in the lush highlands, where giant tortoises shuffle about munching on grass and wallowing in pools. You'll have time for another activity, such as mountain biking or visiting sugar plantation.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Santa Cruz II

DAY 10: Española Island: Lava Lizards and Incredible Birdlife

Your Galápagos Islands cruise reaches Española, the archipelago's most southerly island. Birdlife here is truly extraordinary – look out for Nazca Boobies, Blue-footed Boobies and Swallow-tailed Gulls, and the mighty Waved Albatross on cruises April through December. It's also a chance to spot red Española lava lizards and marine iguanas, as well as see the famous blowhole, El Soplador, blasting water 75 feet into the air. After lunch on board the ship, we'll head to the picturesque coral beach of Gardner Bay and nearby Osborn Islet, to seek out sea lions, mockingbirds and finches. If you're feeling active, you can go snorkelling or kayaking.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Santa Cruz II

DAY 11: Eden Islet & North Seymour

The wealth of wildlife watching opportunities continues at Eden Islet, where we hope to see Galapagos green turtles, rays and friendly reef sharks. On the shore, look out for distinctive frigatebirds with their rubbery, red throats. You can swim or snorkel to explore the reefs. Alternatively, see the reefs from our glass-bottomed boat or by kayak. After lunch, we'll sail to North Seymour. The island is a great site for spotting colonies of Blue-footed Boobies and Swallow-tailed Gulls. Sea lions and marine iguanas also congregate here, attracted by the bountiful sea life in its waters.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Santa Cruz II

DAY 12: Baltra Island ~ Back to Quito

Your expedition cruise draws to a close as you disembark at Baltra Island. A transfer will take you to the airport in Baltra for your flight to Quito to connect to your international flight, or if you prefer, continue to Guayaquil for another adventure. To explore more of Ecuador, why not extend your stay and join one of our optional Post-Programmes. As you leave this fascinating region, you'll take with you incredible memories of amazing wildlife and wonderful experiences few have the privilege of seeing.

MEALS: Breakfast