E C U A D O R

FAMILY WILDLIFE DISCOVERY

A journey into two wildlife wonderlands: Amazon and Galápagos

Expertly designed for active families with kids ages 7 and up

DURATION: 12 days / 11 nights

SEASON: November through May

DEPARTURES: Guaranteed with a minimum of 4 participants.

TRIP RATING: Moderate natural history, educational and family-friendly Tour, Grade (II): This first-class soft wildlife adventure is an activity-oriented program featuring optional daily walking and boat tours through Amazon and Galápagos Island landscapes (2-4 hours in duration). Opportunities for swimming and snorkeling. The trip reaches a high point of 7,900' upon arrival in Quito; the remainder of the trip is near sea level.

2026 DATES: On request any week of the year during the travel season.
Options are available for other months: July-October.

INTRODUCTION:

Ecuador's lush Amazon rainforest and its dramatic Galápagos Islands are two of the most wildlife-rich regions in South America! Kids of all ages will be amazed by the open-air zoo of animals in their midst. On this trip, you'll find outdoor fun in nature for youngsters, as well as creature comforts for parents. Enjoy active easy-to-moderate adventure activities and epic fauna-spotting that everyone can share. Includes 4 days/3 nights in the Amazon and 5 days/4 nights in Galápagos.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS:

- Board a dugout canoe and paddle into the depths of the Amazon rainforest
- Spot mischievous monkeys and colorful birds in the forest treetops on a 118-foot canopy walk
- Meet a local Amazonian Kichwa family and learn about their culture and traditions
- Witness the fragile and remarkable interconnectedness of the Amazon ecosystem
- Learn about evolution in the place Darwin himself began hatching his theory
- Walk along the black lava landscapes and white sandy beaches of Galápagos
- Encounter Galápagos' charismatic cast of animals: sea lions, iguanas and blue-footed boobies!
- Snorkel in the clear island waters into a subaquatic world teeming with colorful life
- Find "teachable moments" and create vivid memories that will expand your child's worldview

DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY:

DAY 01: USA / QUITO
We arrive this evening to Ecuador's Andean capital, Quito, set in a wide valley between rugged volcanic peaks, at an invigorating 7,875 feet of elevation. We are met at the airport by a Southwind representative and transferred to the comfortable **Wyndham Hotel**, a modern facility located just 10 minutes from the airport. Meals are on your own.

DAY 02: QUITO / COCA / NAPO WILDLIFE CENTER
Transfer from the hotel back to the airport outside Quito for a spectacular 30-minute flight to Coca over the eastern Andes. We may see some volcanoes and peaks emerging from the clouds and perhaps the impressive Antisana snow-capped summit (18,715'). After landing in the vast emerald forest, we'll be greeted at the **Coca** airport with a private 10-minute transfer to the nearby Port Francisco de Orellana, gateway to the Amazon.

In the Amazon Basin, rivers are the roads and canoes are the main form of transit. To get deep into the rainforest, we will embark on a comfortable two-hour motorized canoe ride along the **Napo River** – one of the Amazon's main tributaries – with a boxed lunch en route. This is where the excitement begins! Along the way we see locals paddling their traditional canoes, as well as speedboats. Birds like herons, egrets, kingfishers and others can be spotted as the boat makes its way downriver toward the Napo Wildlife Center (NWC).

After arriving at NWC's entry dock, we leave the Napo River behind and disembark for a break and to stretch our legs. Then the exploration continues with a majestic and peaceful two-hour **dugout canoe ride**. We'll be surrounded by lush vegetation and trees overhead, paddling quietly along a narrow, 4.5 mile long creek that connects to the lake where the lodge is located. Chances are good of spotting various species of monkeys including Squirrel and Capuchin, and of identifying birds such as woodpeckers, trogons, tanagers and toucans. Arrive in the late afternoon to the NWC lodge, set against the incredible backdrop of the Añangu Lake within the **Yasunì National Park**. Relax and make yourself at home with a welcome soft drink and dinner. (B,L,D)

DAY 03: AMAZON: CANOPY WALK / JUNGLE TRAIL HIKE
After an early breakfast, we'll depart from the lodge to reach the finest canopy tower on the Napo. The 118-foot-high tower opened to guests in November 2004, offering a great way to experience life above the forest floor. This is the second tower at the NWC (the first is 88-foot high, attached to the dining hall allowing great views of the lake). The main tower is located across the lake, reachable by 30-minute walk along a trail deep within the terra firme forest. As you ascend the 12-floor metal tower, you pass through different levels of the forest and emerge on top of a huge Ceiba tree!

Here you cross onto a wooden platform that is actually built into the tree, rewarded by an extensive panoramic view normally reserved only for the birds. The **Amazon Basin** contains 1,300 bird species, of which 567 have been recorded in this area so far -- flocks of colorful tanagers, oropendolas or flycatchers pass right through the canopy of the tree, scarlet or blue and yellow macaws fly by, and in nearby trees Spider or Howler monkeys search for fruit. Two species of large toucans call in the early mornings and afternoons, and the life of the forest canopy opens before you. Birds that are virtually impossible to see from the forest floor far below are suddenly right beside you, oblivious to your presence. The canopy tower opens a whole new world of discovery to guests of the Napo Wildlife Center!

We'll return to the lodge for a typical Ecuadorian lunch, followed by a break. An afternoon activity takes us along a terra firme trail. Hike through primary forest to discover the biosphere and walk among lush bromeliads and rare orchids. We may look for wildlife tracks on the forest floor and try to identify them. Looking down, we might watch a line of leaf cutter ants carrying pieces of bright green leaves to their nest. We have chances of viewing lizards, two and three toed sloths, colorful manakin birds or maybe even the unique and endemic Golden mantle tamarin monkey. After the hike, explore the lake and creeks by dugout canoe with great possibilities of running into the prehistoric looking hoatzin, a large bird with a long-frizzled crest and a bright blue featherless eye ring, or the brilliant blue morpho butterfly. Return to NWC in the evening for dinner and relaxation. (B,L,D)

DAY 04: AMAZON: CLAY LICK / KICHWA COMMUNITY

This morning is an early wake to reach the best and most easily accessible **parrot clay licks** in Ecuador, about 1.5-2 hours away. First, we paddle downstream on the Añangu creek to reach the Napo River. Then, take the motorboat for a 10-minute ride. Guests arrive just before the flurry of parrot activity kicks off at the clay lick between 7:30 and 8:30am. A total of 11 species of parrots, such as Amazon-Mealy, blue-headed, orange–cheek, as well as parakeets and macaws can be seen landing to eat the clay. Note: this visit depends on weather conditions, but usually proceeds.

The next stop is the Kichwa community of **Añangu**, reached by hiking along a densely vegetated forest trail. During this fun and enlightening cross-cultural visit, share time with a native family and learn about their daily lives. Return to the creek for a 30-minute hike through a terra firme forest until we arrive to the second parrot clay lick. With its unique weather conditions, this clay gives us the chance to spot different species of parrots and parakeets. Dozens of cobalt-winged parakeets remain on the top of the nearby trees searching for the best time to eat the salts, chemicals and minerals contained in the organic matter. Boxed lunch served at the parrot clay lick observatory or at the entry dock.

Back at the Napo Wildlife Center, the evening is at leisure to enjoy dinner and listen to the sounds of the forest come alive at dusk from the comforts of a relaxing hammock. We can also look for caiman or other nocturnal creatures with our flashlights, their glowing red eyes revealing the animals' location along the lake banks. (B,L,D)

DAY 05: COCA / GUAYAQUIL

Early departure and final canoe excursion back to the **Napo River**. The creek, part of this pristine wilderness found on one of the most biologically diverse places on earth, may reveal new fauna, such as the Giant river otter family of about 8 individuals that regularly fish in these waters, or Monk Saki monkeys. Always keeping an eye open for the myriad of tropical bird species we now recognize. Then, enter the docking area and board a motorized canoe for a 2-hour ride upriver back to **Coca**. As we navigate, we may see some locals fishing; with more than 2,200 species, the Amazon has more varieties of fish than the Atlantic Ocean. After saying good-bye to this fascinating region of the country, we check-in at the airport for the Coca-Guayaquil flight with connection in Quito.

Arrive this evening to Ecuador's vibrant coastal port city of **Guayaquil**, located at the western banks of the Guayas River. Our friendly local staff greets you and bring you by private vehicle to one of the city's finest hotels just 15 minutes away, the riverside Wyndham Hotel for the night. Dinner is on your own to try some of the fine and gourmet restaurants at the Malecon 2000 walkway just outside your hotel. (B)

DAY 06: GUAYAQUIL

The full day of exploration and city tour of Guayaquil starts with a stop at the **historical park**, providing a glimpse into the beginnings of this important port city, as well as its lively present-day culture and natural environment. The park's gardens burst with the region's endemic flora. Here we can keep learning about the birds, reptiles, and mammals of this region and the elusive species of the Amazon. Then we go for a short walk to the Southern Malecon 2000, a boardwalk overlooking the Guayas River, where you'll peruse the Integration Plaza with its famous Southern Marketplace and Cristal Palace.

A delicious lunch is included at a traditional Ecuadorian restaurant with samples of fine local cuisine. Next, visit the Olmedo Plaza and see the monument to Jose Joaquin Olmedo, a recognized Ecuadorian poet. We also stop at the Morisca Tower for excellent views of the city and the monument to the four elements of the planet – earth, water, air and fire. Then, we visit the **Ecua-Andino** hats workshop and learn about the elaboration of the famed Panama hats made of Toquilla straw. For our final stop of the day, we head over to the oldest sectors of the city, the colonial neighborhood of **Las Peñas** (declared as Cultural Heritage in 1982) where we can walk the narrow streets and admire the magnificent wood architecture and colorful houses. Overnight at the Wyndham Hotel. (B,L)

DAY 07: GUAYAQUIL / GALAPAGOS

Transfer to the airport with check-in assistance for Guayaquil-Galápagos. Reception at the **Baltra** airport and private transfer (approx 45 min) to the Royal Palm Hotel, a Curio Collection Hilton property. Your home base for the next five days, the hotel is located in the highlands about 20 min above the port village of Puerto Ayora. After an orientation tour of the Royal Palm's grounds, lunch is included and served at the hotel.

This afternoon we visit the highlands, home to a unique Scalesia forest and a twin pit crater geologic formation called **"Los Gemelos."** Later, visit the nearby Rancho Primicias farm to see **giant tortoises** in their native habitat. These gentle giants are the largest tortoises in the world and can live to be up to 100 years old or older! Up until the 19th century, they were hunted by sailors in need of meat, which took a toll on their populations. They are now endangered, with an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 still surviving in the wild. Return to the Royal Palm Hotel for the evening. Dinner this evening is on your own schedule to try the Royal Palm restaurant or room service. (B,L)

DAY 08: GALAPAGOS: SEYMOUR ISLAND

Today join a small group, possibly other families with kids, for an excursion aboard Royal Palm's 16-person yacht to nearby **Seymour Island** for nature hiking and snorkeling. This picturesque island offers the opportunity for close-up encounters with many marine birds. Located slightly to the north of the island of Baltra, and a short boat ride from Santa Cruz Island, North Seymour is a low, flat island, formed as a result of the uplift caused by magma build up below. It is covered with low, bushy vegetation and contains the largest colony of magnificent Frigate birds in the Galápagos. On this island you'll find other iconic Galápagos creatures like lounging groups of land iguanas and a population of Blue-footed boobies. During the June-August mating season, you can see them kicking their feet and throwing their heads back in an amazing courtship dance ritual! Year-round, boobies are masterful divers. Watch them plummet from heights of up to 60 feet at speeds of up to 60 mph into the sea in pursuit of their underwater prey.

In the afternoon, the yacht will anchor in the calm waters of **Bachas Beach**. A walk along the beach after lunch promises sea turtle nests, shorebirds, diving boobies and even the elusive Galápagos flamingos. If you're lucky enough to spot these rare pink birds, they'll be knee deep in their habitat of still water, in their resting position of standing on one leg. Snorkeling and easy swimming from the beach follows the walk. This is the first of several opportunities to explore the underwater world and see playful sea lions zip by graceful sea turtles. Lunch, soft drinks, water, towels and snorkeling equipment are included. Return by late afternoon to the hotel comforts an evening at leisure. (B,L)

DAY 09: GALAPAGOS: SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

Today will be spent exploring Galápagos' main island Santa Cruz, where the hotel is located. Embark on a private day excursion by vehicle and a walk to **Garrapatero Beach**, passing by the village of Bellavista and the viewpoint of the "Cascajo" en route. At this point we will stop to enjoy a phenomenal panoramic view of Santa Cruz and other islands of the archipelago. We continue to Cerro Mesa to observe its impressive crater and may see a sub-species of giant tortoise that lives in the wild around the crater. Walking among these creatures is like a trip back in time to the Jurassic era!

At Garrapatero Beach, mangroves, white sand, black lava, Pioneer cacti and turquoise water combine to create a spectacular setting. A small lagoon near the beach sometimes attracts pink flamingos and bahama ducks. You will have kayak rentals pre-reserved here to explore the coastal mangroves and look for wildlife. Drive to the nearby Rancho Fortiz Restaurant for a delightful typical lunch served buffet style.

This afternoon we continue to Puerto Ayora and join our guide for an exciting visit to the **Charles Darwin Research Station**, which carries out educational projects and conservation efforts to support the national park. The visit allows you to learn about their giant tortoise project and learn from international research staff who have made preservation of the Galápagos ecosystem a worldwide scientific priority. There will also be some time to stroll by the main street and waterfront in town before returning to the Royal Palm Hotel for dinner and the night. (B,L)

DAY 10: GALAPAGOS: SOUTH PLAZA ISLAND

Join a small group with other guests for an excursion aboard a 16-passenger yacht to the nearby **South Plaza**. This small island is full of fascinating wildlife, both in the water and along the cliffs: sea lions, land iguanas, swallow-tailed gulls, Opuntia cacti and vegetation that changes colors with the seasons. South Plaza is one of a very colorful pair of small, uplifted islands a short distance from the east coast of Santa Cruz, with its own unique landscape of Sesuvium plants and Opuntia cacti. As such, it provides some of the most interesting wildlife observation spots in Galápagos.

Land iguanas are easily seen from the trail, normally lazing in the shade of the cacti. You'll learn to tell the difference between these larger more yellow dragon-like lizards and their relatives the smaller sea iguanas, which pile up together in mounds of black bodies for warmth after a brisk dive into the water for food. Swallow-tailed gulls and Frigate birds use the rising air off the sea to glide effortlessly over the escarpment. Towards the far end of the island lives a 'bachelor colony' of male sea lions, formed when sea lions battle for special "king of the hill" status. The losers retreat and form

colonies. Lunch is served anchored close to the rocky seashore inhabited by a large colony of playful sea lions. After lunch, a short boat ride to **Punta Carrion** offers the opportunity for easy snorkeling and swimming around a shallow and protected cove. Return to the Royal Palm Hotel for the evening to enjoy the local cuisine and farm fresh ingredients in the hotel restaurant. (B,L)

DAY 11: GALAPAGOS / GUAYAQUIL

This morning, before saying goodbye to the Royal Palm, enjoy some time at leisure by the hotel pool or explore the nearby underground lava tunnel, one of the largest in the island. Private transfer and check-in assistance at Baltra airport for the Galápagos-Guayaquil flight. Reception on the mainland and 15-min transfer to the familiar **Wyndham Hotel,** where you'll have access to a dayroom. Enjoy a farewell dinner at one of Guayaquil's leading restaurants on your own, and transfer to the airport to board an overnight flight home. (B)

DAY 12: USA

Arrive in the 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. On DAY 01 depending on flights, availability and preference we can book instead the Rincon de Puembo Hotel, within 20 min from Quito airport. 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 less than 90 days prior to the scheduled departure will be accepted only if space is available and must be paid in full at the time of booking. Our Family wildlife trips are suitable for physically fit participants accustomed to outdoor activities age 7 and up. Day boat excursions are as a group and may include other families and children onboard. The excursion schedule is subject to national park regulation and may change. 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.).

2026 LAND COST:

4-6 participants: from $8,700 p.p.d.
7-12 participants: from $8,400 p.p.d.
Single Supplement: from $2,900

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

Children's Discount: Kids 5-11 years old at the time of travel are entitled to a discount from $600 ppd. Kids 12-17 years old at the time of travel receive a discount from $300 ppd on the *Family Wildlife Discovery* Land Cost. Discounts are not combinable, nor can they be used in conjunction with other promotional offers unless specified.

Note: End of the year or holiday departures could have a Land Cost surcharge of 10-20%. Please check with your personal Southwind Travel Consultant for more details.

ESTIMATED AIRFARE: The **Land Cost does not include international or in-country flights**. You have the option of arranging any of the flights yourself or to redeem award travel directly through your airline program. Southwind can help coordinate all your flights with our ticketing partner, to match your tour itinerary. You'll benefit from having a personal agent to purchase flights, arrange seating/cabin preference, monitoring schedule changes and working directly with the airlines on your behalf, if adjustments are needed after ticketing. Tickets should match your passport name and only be purchased after Southwind notifies you that your trip is confirmed. If you make a connection, a 2-hour minimum buffer is important between flights. 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) and LATAM Airlines (Miami). Round-trip airfare from US gateway cities to Quito is about $600-900 per person. Additionally, the local flights Quito-Coca-Guayaquil & Guayaquil-Galápagos-Guayaquil are estimated at $750 per person. Upon receipt of your deposit, Southwind provides flight booking details for your travel dates.

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. Arrival and departure transfers in the Amazon and Galápagos.
- Local and return flight reconfirmation, **in-country airport check-in and luggage assistance**.
- All **accommodations in first-class (4-5 star) hotels** as listed (or at similar hotels) on a shared basis with private bath. Advance bookings are recommended if you plan to customize the itinerary and arrive early or extend your stay. Triple/Quadruple rooms for families can be requested in advance, but cannot be guaranteed, as most hotels offer very few rooms with Triple/Quadruple beds. Likewise, very few connecting or adjacent rooms are available at certain hotels.
- Accommodations at the Amazon Lodge in comfortable cabins with private bathrooms and hot showers.
- 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 Southwind travel specialist before your reservation.
- All **guided tours and excursions** conducted in private or on a small-group basis (when other hotel guests may join), by knowledgeable, English-speaking naturalist native guides experienced with family travel (includes applicable entrance fees).
- An **English-speaking naturalist guide** will lead the Amazon segment of the trip (Day 02-05). A separate naturalist guide(s) will lead the activities in Galápagos (Day 07-11).
- Single Supplement provides single room accommodations in all hotels. Due to the limited number of rooms at the boutique hotels, making reservations well in advance is recommended.

NOT INCLUDED:

- US domestic, international flights, nor local flights within Ecuador.
- Galápagos National **Park entrance fee** of $200 per person ($100 per child 11 or under).
- Galápagos **Transit control card fee** of $20 per person.
- Tours, meals (at about $30-60 each per person) or other services not listed on the itinerary.
- Early arrivals, dayrooms or late check-outs at hotels.
- Alcoholic beverages nor items of a personal nature; such as clothing, equipment, laundry and phone calls.
- Tips to the local staff.
- Expenses incurred in trip preparation such as, but not limited to, non-refundable airline tickets, travel insurance, and additional expenses resulting from flight delays, schedule changes, cancellations, or missed connections.

OPTIONAL HOTEL UPGRADES:

All hotels in the Family Wildlife Discovery have been selected based on their outstanding adherence to international standards, attention to quality and detail, and rich offering of amenities and comforts for families. However, upon request, we can upgrade your stay to the finest properties or Suites to be found in each location for 5-star luxury and VIP treatment.

AMAZON LODGES:

We recommend and work with the three finest Lodges in this region, depending on availability and preference, we can select the best option for families on this custom trip. All of them offer similar lodging, facilities, and highlights.

Napo Wildlife Center (NWC) - Built and administered by the native Añangu Kichwa Community on ancestral land, Napo Wildlife Center is an exclusive lodge on the south bank of the Napo River offering access to one of the best wildlife experiences there is. This luxury Amazon eco-lodge includes the conservation of approximately 82 square miles (53,500 acres) of the most pristine Amazon rainforest within the Yasunì National Park, an important UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and the largest tract of tropical rainforest in Ecuador. The farthest and most remote of our selection of Amazon lodges, it requires the most time to reach but offers a commensurately deep and rewarding Amazon encounter. Small in scale, NWC is comprised of 16 luxury cabañas, 4 spacious suites and a large dining hall.

Sacha Lodge - The most striking feature of Sacha Lodge is its breathtaking location, poised on the edge of Pilchicocha Lake. The lodge is the closest to Coca, requiring the least amount of boat travel time to reach, making it appealing for younger kids. It was carefully designed to offer comfort to the traveler yet preserve the environment and rainforest ambience. An addition to Sacha's activities is the 940-foot-long canopy walkway. At approximately 94 feet above the ground, imagine exploring the rainforest up in the treetops! At a short distance from Sacha Lodge is Ecuador's most accessible parrot lick, an exposed clay riverbank where brightly colored parrots of several different species gather in the early morning. In ideal conditions (sunny and dry) hundreds of parrots will perch on and eat the exposed clay in a spectacular show of sound and color. Other highlights include the 135-foot observation tower, a short zip line and one of the largest butterfly farms in Ecuador. Sacha has 26 rooms with double or triple occupancy.

La Selva Lodge - Located at Garzacocha Lake, La Selva offers the complete Amazon experience, with canoe rides, night excursions, and wildlife galore. It prides itself on its surprising amenities – gourmet food, hot water, and a full-service spa! The lodge is every kid's fantasy; a place to hike, swim, fish, row and generally fool around. Parents can do all the activities with their kids or go in a separate group; they all will meet later to eat and share their experiences. For parents wanting a relaxing retreat, they can check out the uniquely designed Butterfly Spa. Inspired by the natural beauty and enchantment of the Ecuadorian Amazon, prepare to get pampered in new, innovative and traditionally crafted massage treatments. The observation tower is located 15' walking from the lodge and offers amazing views from its platform 115 ft up from the forest floor, allowing us to spot life in the surrounding forest canopy. La Selva now has 18 superb suites. These include Scenic Suites with private views overlooking Lake Garzacocha, 12 Superior Suites and three Family Suites.

GALAPAGOS HOTELS:

On Santa Cruz Island, chic, unique and sophisticated hotels stand out as a worthy alternative to the cruise experience. Galápagos travelers can now enjoy a land-based stay at one of our premier hand-selected lodges.

Royal Palm - The Royal Palm Hotel is an upscale secluded hideaway nestled in the lush highlands of Santa Cruz Island in the heart of the Galápagos. Exclusive, spacious, and tastefully designed, the Royal Palm was built to complement this natural paradise. Royal Palm is the established leader in luxury suites in Galápagos, with a long history of prestigious and high-profile guests, including British royalty! Its outdoor pool, extensive gardens, and newly renovated dining area are sure to please family members of all ages. Royal Palm has a great variety of rooms for any family configuration: 1 Luxury 2-bedroom Villa, 2 Luxury open-plan Villas, 8 Double king / twin queen Highland Villas, 2 Double four-poster king / twin queen Highland Family Villas, and 8 Double king / twin queen Casitas (some of them connecting).

Pikaia Lodge - September 2014 marked the opening of the newest addition to premier eco-luxury lodges on the island of Santa Cruz – Pikaia Lodge. Located on a hilltop with an amazing 360º panoramic view, it has earned elite status as a "Small Luxury Hotels of the World" member. A secluded property near the island's best beaches, Pikaia is poised attract those seeking an ultimate land-based experience. The site has its own private giant tortoise reserve. Day excursions are on the exclusive Pikaia I yacht according to 5-day and 8-day programs. Its sustainability accomplishments are many. Pikaia Lodge boasts the first carbon neutral accommodation in the Galápagos and one of the most advanced green lodges in the world.

Galapagos Safari Camp - The fanciful and exclusive Galápagos Safari Camp wins visitors over. A small luxury tented camp in the highlands of Santa Cruz Island, it offers a different and exotic way to experience Galápagos in a setting of rustic elegance. Guests stay in comfortable safari tents and spend time lounging and dining in the cozy main lodge. There is also a 3-bedroom family suite in addition to the 9 double tents. With its own on-site farm, expansive views, an infinity pool, and nearby reserves of giant tortoises in the wild, everyone in the family will find their niche.

Finch Bay Eco Hotel - An excellent hotel choice located in a private beachfront area just across the bay from the town of Puerto Ayora. Adjacent to Galapagos National Park, the hotel adheres to principles to help protect the delicate eco-preserve through green practices. Enjoy the small beach directly in front of the property and sun on the terrace, a drink by the pool and lunch or dinner in the waterfront restaurant. Indulge at the new Spa, experience a beautiful sunset and feel the enchantment of these unique islands together with family. Look across from the terrace and witness the spectacle of Galápagos life. As the main coastal hotel in our Galápagos selection, Finch Bay is recommendable during the 'garua' season (June to October) when the highlands are mistier and cloudier than the coast.

GALAPAGOS CRUISES:

For families that may prefer a cruise over a land-based adventure, Southwind works with only a handful of the foremost vessels operating in the Galápagos Islands. Our strict criteria for choosing these vessels include safety, comfort, quality guides, and optimized itineraries. List of recommended yachts on our website.

Napo Wildlife Center, Amazon

Royal Palm, Galápagos

M/V Santa Cruz II, Galápagos

AMAZON & GALAPAGOS GUIDES: Southwind works with some of the most experienced native naturalist guides in the Amazon & Galápagos. All speak fluent English and have exceptional skills at identifying and locating bird and wildlife species. Many have worked with foreign scientific expeditions and research teams. Most of them have families of their own and understand the family travel dynamic. Their experience, outstanding personalities, and sense of responsibility have endeared them to our Ecuador travelers for many years.

OPTIONAL TRIP EXTENSIONS: Families with extra days can extend to Otavalo and the Lake District, the Avenue of the Volcanoes south of Quito, Cuenca and the southern highlands or Mindo and the Western Cloud forest. All extensions require a minimum of 2 participants. To view the extensions on our website, click on 'Extend Your Trip'.

WEATHER: November through May are ideal months for the highlands of Galápagos, while October through February are ideal for the Amazon. December-June is the wet (but less crowded) season in the Ecuadorian highlands. June through October are the slightly colder "garua" months in Galápagos.
Ecuador's Amazon Region: Temperature in the Amazon region are warm and humid, usually reaching the upper 80's or lower 90's during the day. The wet season is from March to September and the dry season is from October to February. In fact, from December to March, the Ecuadorian Amazon offers drier weather than the Peruvian Amazon
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 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 and 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: For peace of mind to help protect your travel investment, having coverage is important in case of unexpected trip cancellation due to illness or health/medical condition/injury requiring medical treatment by a physician. Other benefits can include tour delay/interruption from flight issues, weather events, strikes, medical quarantine or emergency accident/illness with evacuation to nearest treatment by US standards. Southwind recommends the **Worldwide Trip Protector Deluxe** from Travel Insured International. We can provide an eQuote on request tailored to your trip or a policy can be purchased directly from TII online or by phone at 800-243-3174. Coverage can also be done through any provider of your choice.

NEXT STEPS: Please contact Southwind to speak with a personal Travel Advisor to help fine tune your travel plans and to receive a custom itinerary with a land cost quote based on your travel dates. You can reach us by filling out our Private Trip Request form, by email at info@southwindadventures.com, by phone at 800-377-9463 or by text to 303-972-0701.

Reservations can be made up to 60 days before departure, provided tour services and hotels are available. Due to the popularity of Galápagos and the limited number of hotels, we recommend making reservations at least 4-5 months in advance for non-holiday or about 1 year prior for holiday departures. Once your trip is confirmed to operate, you will receive pre-departure planning materials, flight booking assistance and advice to help prepare for your exciting vacation.

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

Southwind Adventures, Inc
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