

David McGuffin's
EXPLORING
beyond
EUROPE



Ecuador and Galapagos – November 1-10 or 13, 2026
Updated 4/18/2026

We are going to the Galapagos Islands and Ecuador, and hope you will join us! I've been promoting this special "Beyond Europe" event for about a year, but perhaps you haven't heard about it. We are "filling the boat" with a group of adventurous alumni and friends, so this promises to be an exclusive once-in-a-lifetime tour for us. The group is limited to 16 passengers (eight staterooms), and we have a few spots remaining. I hope you'll consider joining Charlotte and me in November 2026 as we get out of Europe for a few weeks and share this chunk of South America with a special group of friends. I hope you'll be one of them!

I've spent years showing folks like you around my favorite European places. Europe, the culture, art, history, and people are my passions. For sure, I'll continue to operate tours there until the day I die. But as I grow older, I realize we all are given a finite number of days here on this Earth, so we'd better experience all we can while we can. So, I'm encouraging you to join me and explore Ecuador and the Galapagos together in 2026!

We have trusted our Ecuadorian friends and travel partners to help us design this fantastic adventure. Our friends, the Torres family, own the yacht M/C Anahi and know Ecuador and the Galapagos as only locals do. The adventure begins exploring capital cities, lush mountains, cloud forests, volcanoes, and the Galapagos Islands. Along the way, you'll meet Indigenous people, photograph varied wildlife, visit historic churches, ancient temples and monuments, rugged mountains, waterfalls, and volcanoes, and cruise the Galapagos on our private chartered catamaran yacht, the *M/C Anahi*.

David McGuffin



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Tour Overview

We've designed the tour in three segments, allowing flexibility to hop on or off depending on your time and budget.

The tour begins with five days of visiting Ecuador's capital, Quito, for cultural and historical introductions. In the countryside, visit the mountains, cloud forests, volcanoes, and park areas for wildlife and recreational activities. Then, flying from the mainland to Baltra Island, we'll board The Anahi, our private yacht catamaran, for a five-day adventure around the Galápagos. Enjoy seeing and photographing diverse and rare wildlife, sea life, flora, and fauna.

Still seeking more adventure in the Galápagos? Why not continue another four days aboard The Anahi? It is the perfect opportunity to discover the extensive biodiversity of the Galápagos Islands and also a route that visits the places with the most significant history of the islands' first residents.



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Accommodations

Swissotel Quito is a luxury hotel with easy access to the Old Town and sightseeing. This is the perfect place to begin your explorations in Ecuador. The Swissotel is recognized for its fine service, swimming pools, spa facilities, and excellent restaurants. <https://www.swissotel.com/hotels/quito/>

Hacienda El Porvenir is in a rural and scenic spot surrounded by four volcanoes, one of which is the famous Cotopaxi volcano. You'll enjoy your stay on this working ranch with all the comforts of home! <https://www.tierradelvolcan.com/hacienda-el-porvenir/>

Termas de Papallacta is a hot springs spa resort nestled in a majestic valley of the high Andes. The luxury cabin rooms open up to heated thermal pools for the guests' exclusive use. <https://www.termaspapallacta.com/>

The Anahi Catamaran Yacht has eight spacious cabins with ocean views and plenty of indoor and outdoor relaxation spaces. Owned by our friends and staffed by a professional crew, this is the ultimate way to experience the Galápagos islands. <https://yachtanahi.com/>

The accommodations and itinerary are subject to change.



Mainland Ecuador



The Anahi - Galápagos Island



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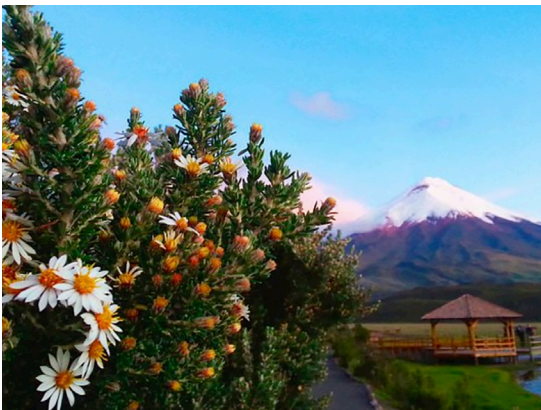


(11/1) DAY 1: SUNDAY- QUITO- Your adventure begins with a warm welcome in Quito. A private guide and transportation service will ensure a seamless transfer from the airport to your overnight hotel, providing comfort and peace of mind after your journey. **Most flights from the USA arrive in Quito around 8:00-10:00 pm.** *Sleep in Quito - The Swissôtel.*



(11/2) DAY 2: MONDAY- QUITO Historical City Tour and Gallery Visits- Delve into the heart of Quito's rich heritage with a comprehensive tour of the historic city center. Accompanied by a private guide, explore architectural marvels such as La Compañía de Jesus, known for its ornate Baroque design, and San Francisco, a grand convent and church complex. Visit the majestic La Catedral and the fascinating museums La Casa del Alabado and La Capilla del Hombre, where captivating galleries showcase Ecuador's artistic legacy. Then enjoy a group dinner in Quito. *Sleep in Quito- The Swissôtel. Breakfast and dinner is included today.*

(11/3) DAY 3: TUESDAY- QUITO-QUILOTOA-COTOPAXI- Embark on a scenic journey south from Quito to Quilotoa, a mesmerizing crater lake nestled in an ancient volcano. The vibrant turquoise waters and panoramic views create a breathtaking setting for exploration. Afterward, return to El Porvenir, where you can immerse yourself in the "Chagra" cowboy culture of Ecuador, gaining insight into the traditional way of life and the unique customs of the local community. *Sleep in El Porvenir- Hacienda el Porvenir. Breakfast and Dinner included.*



(11/4) DAY 4: WEDNESDAY- COTOPAXI or EL PORVENIR- Spend a day at Cotopaxi National Park or El Porvenir with a menu of activities tailored to your interests. Whether you prefer exhilarating hikes, scenic e-bike rides, horseback adventures, or pampering spa treatments, there is something for everyone. Embrace the beauty of the surroundings and enjoy a day of relaxation and adventure. *Sleep in El Porvenir- Hacienda el Porvenir. Breakfast included.*

(11/5) DAY 5: THURSDAY- COTOPAXI & PAPALLACTA- Travel northeast to Papallacta, and enjoy birdwatching in the lush forest, take leisurely walks along serene trails, or unwind in the rejuvenating hot springs and spa facilities. Papallacta offers a perfect blend of natural beauty and relaxation. *Sleep in Termas de Papallacta. Breakfast and Dinner included.*



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(11/6) DAY 6: FRIDAY- Fly to the Galapagos Islands - Your expedition cruise awaits, allowing you to explore this extraordinary archipelago's unique wildlife and pristine landscapes. Flying from Quito, our flight arrives at Baltra Island around noon (local time). Our guide will greet you there, waiting for your arrival and proceeding embarkation to Yacht Anahí. One of our crew members will handle your baggage directly to your cabin. The captain and the crew will welcome you on board, followed by cabin assignment and lunch.

Our first visit is to Bachas Beach, which is made of decomposed coral, making it white and soft, while it is also one of the favorite nesting places of sea turtles. Nearby, we can also find a small lagoon where we can observe flamingos, black-necked stilts, thrushes, and the remains of two abandoned barges dating to the 1940s. We will also find sea lions, marine iguanas, seabirds resting on the beach, and playful sea lions that like to swim with the visitors. Tonight, enjoy a welcome reception followed by a delicious dinner. Sleep aboard The Anahi for 5 nights. *Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner are included each day.*



(11/7) DAY 7: SATURDAY- Darwin Bay is our anchorage area within an ancient volcanic crater that has eroded into a fascinating geographical formation with a great diversity of seabirds nesting in the mangroves and cliffs. These include red-footed boobies, Nasca boobies, swallow-tailed gulls, Galapagos petrels, seabirds, Darwin finches, mockingbirds, and Galápagos doves. Enjoy a walk by the mangroves, where you can observe the fascinating life of these marine birds.

After lunch, visit one of the island's best bird nesting sites. This area is known as Prince Philip's Steps (locally known as "El Barranco"). We will have the opportunity to snorkel, kayak, hike, and take a ride in a panga, and with luck, catch a glimpse of the short-eared owl, a unique owl that hunts during the daytime.

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner aboard The Anahi.

(11/8) DAY 8: SUNDAY- Plazas Islands have unusual vegetation of a succulent called Sesuvium, giving the landscape a unique tint of red or green, depending on the season. It is also possible to observe land iguanas in the shade of the giant opuntia cacti. The main attractions of the Plaza Islands include land and marine iguanas,



sea lions, swallow-tailed gulls, lizards, frigate birds, and pelicans. In the afternoon, visit Santa Fe Island, where we can see two different trails. One of them leads to a beautiful viewpoint on the top of a cliff, where you can find endemic land iguanas. The other trail is a small circular path near the beach. Observe a colony of sea lions and take an opportunity to kayak, snorkel, panga ride, or walk to observe and enjoy nature. Then, we will return to the yacht for dinner.

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner aboard The Anahi.



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(11/9) DAY 9: MONDAY

- Punta Pitt is one of the most beautiful and impressive sites in the Galápagos and a favorite seabird nesting site. In our morning visit, we will be able to see both species of frigate birds and boobies and their



nesting sites. Then, we will return to the yacht for lunch.

After lunch, navigate towards Kicker Rock, an impressive rock formation known locally as 'León Dormido.' We will circumvallate the massive rock formation, giving the possibility to see a multitude of blue-footed boobies, masked boobies, pelicans, and sea birds that will delight us with their majestic flights. Later, we head towards Isla Lobos, an islet separated from San Cristóbal Island by a narrow stretch of calm waters. On the islet, take a walk to observe frigates, blue-footed boobies, masked boobies, and a colony of sea lions. Also, enjoy snorkeling, probably with sea lions and colorful fish. The atmosphere is tranquil and has primitive beauty, a typical environment of the Galapagos Islands. *Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner aboard The Anahi.*

(11/10) DAY 10: TUESDAY- Our guide will take us to the top of San Cristóbal Island after breakfast. Following, our tour has two options. The first option starts from Puerto Baquerizo Moreno and involves visiting the El Junco Lagoon. For hundreds of years, rainwater and condensation have caused an accumulation of water in the caldera of an extinct volcano, creating a paradise for frigate birds and turtles.

Alternatively, we will visit the D. Rodriguez (Cerro Colorado) Tortoise Breeding Center. There, we will have a pleasant walk along a path that allows us to be in close contact with the giant Galapagos tortoises, varying from the smallest to the oldest of giants.

Option 1: Your tour ends today with a transfer to the airport in Baltra for your flight back to Quito or Guayaquil. **Most flights from Quito to the USA are red-eye, departing between 10:00 pm to 12:30 am.**

The accommodations and itinerary are subject to change.

Option 2: OPTIONAL EXTENSION- (11/10) DAY 10: TUESDAY Continue aboard the M/M Anahi for four nights.

Visit the Interpretation Center of San Cristobal to learn about the islands and their natural and human history. Join a walk from the interpretation center to the top of "Cerro Tijeretas" hill for a panoramic view of the Pacific Ocean's geographical formations, including the famous Kicker Rock. After dinner, you may disembark and go into the city for a walk to visit cafes and bars. *Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner aboard The Anahi.*



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(11/11) EXTENSION DAY 11: WEDNESDAY- Punta Suárez: A destination of great interest due to the incredible abundance of birds and endemic species like the Española Mockingbird, the Galápagos lava lizard, the marine iguana of the venustissimus subspecies, and more. We can also observe seagulls and other tropical birds that live on the rocky slopes. Among the more interesting attractions of the island is the waved albatross, as the entire world population of this species comes to breed here between March and December. Punta Suarez is one of the most sought-after land visits of the Galapagos, where we can find hundreds of Nasca boobies, colonies of sea lions, large colonies of marine iguanas, and different species of birds.



After lunch, explore Bahía Gardner with its gorgeous white coral sand beach. This beach is excellent for relaxing, swimming, and snorkeling. Here, we can find a large colony of playful sea lions and local species of snakes, while we will undoubtedly see Darwin’s finches, mockingbirds, and, with luck, various species of rays, sharks, fish, and sea turtles in the water. Kayaking is optional in the area, as well.

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner aboard The Anahi.

(11/12) EXTENSION DAY 12: THURSDAY- Our morning visit to Punta Cormorant stops by one of the largest flamingo lagoons of the archipelago, located between two volcanic hills that give the area a unique atmosphere. There are flamingos and various sea birds, the most frequent being black-necked stilts, white-cheeked pintails, and other migratory birds. This is a unique area due to the high percentage of endemic plants. Here, we can see a unique “Green Beach” (due to the high percentage of olivine crystals in the sand) and a “Flour Sand Beach,” which is composed of coral reefs. These are among the most fascinating beaches in the islands. Then, we return to the yacht to begin our snorkeling activity at “Devil’s Crown,” a sunken volcanic crater where the interior of the formation is ideal for coral reefs, making it one of the most fascinating marine sites in the Galápagos.

Following lunch, visit the “Post Office” bay, which has served as a letter exchange station from the 18th century until today, when the crew of a whaling ship utilized a wooden barrel as the exchange point. Sailors and tourists have used this system to communicate with people from around the world until today. The idea is to bring letters or postcards to their destination by hand, creating a unique “postal service.” This site was also the landing place for the first island settlers, who eventually went to the highlands for fresh running water. Then, we will visit the Asilo de la Paz, one of the first occupied areas of the archipelago by the German Wittmer family. We may see a pod of dolphins, manta rays, and sea turtles if we are lucky.

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner aboard The Anahi.

(11/13) EXTENSION DAY 13: FRIDAY- After breakfast, visit the famous Fausto Llerena Interpretation Center to see the different sizes and species of the Giant Galapagos Tortoises. If we have time, we can also visit a special wing of the area to see “Lonesome George” on display, an icon of conservation and the islands. Then, we will visit “Los Gemelos,” an iconic natural sinkhole formation, before we cross Baltra Island with a local ferry and take a bus to the airport. Our trip ends here with the return flight to Quito. *Breakfast aboard The Anahi.*

Most flights from Quito to the USA are red-eye, departing between 10:00 pm to 12:30 am.

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INCLUSION ECUADOR MAINLAND

- Five nights in superior hotels
- All breakfasts
- Three group dinners
- All excursions, entrances, and sightseeing indicated in the itinerary
- Tips for the guides and drivers**
- Transfers from the Quito airport to your first hotel**
- Bilingual tour guide and escort
- Entrance fees and admissions to group sights and activities**

EXCLUSIONS ECUADOR MAINLAND

- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks
- International flights
- Personal travel insurance
- Spa treatments and activities
- Equipment rental such as bicycles, hiking gear, horseback riding, etc.

INCLUSION YATCH ANAHI

- Round Trip Flights from Ecuador to the Galápagos islands**
- All meals indicated in the itinerary
- Coffee and tea station as well as purified water dispenser
- Excursions mentioned in the program
- Transfers to and from the Anahi Yacht Catamaran**
- Bilingual naturalist guide certified by the Galapagos National Park
- Entrance fee to Galápagos National Park**
- Traffic Control Card (required for national park entry)**
- Tips for the guide and crew**
- Mask and fins for snorkeling

EXCLUSIONS YATCH ANAHI

- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Additional alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks
- International flights
- Personal travel insurance
- Surcharges for increased fuel costs
- Neoprene suit for snorkeling

**** Denotes this element is an exclusive inclusion on this David McGuffin tour. Typically, most tour operators in the Galapagos do not include this item in the tour price. David's tour pricing philosophy has always included many "extras" in the published tour cost.**



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ECUADOR & GALAPAGOS in 10 days
\$7149 per person sharing a double or twin room

<https://davidmcguffin.com/tours/ecuador-galapagos/>



GALAPAGOS EXTENSION in 4 days
\$3150 per person sharing a double or twin room

Limited single rooms are available upon request. Please contact us for details.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE AND PROCESSES

To reserve a seat on this tour you must agree to these Tour Conditions and provide us with a deposit of \$2500 per person. We accept credit cards, personal checks, bank drafts, and money orders made payable to David McGuffin's Exploring Europe (in US dollars). If you sign up for a tour less than 120 days before its departure, the entire tour price must be paid, and is non-refundable after 7 days.

DEPOSITS & PAYMENTS:

A \$2500 deposit is required at sign-up.

This deposit is non-refundable fourteen (14) days after we confirm your tour enrollment via email.

Final payment is due 120-days before departure date.

CANCELLATIONS:

Your \$2500 deposit is non-refundable after 14-days..

119-0 days before departure - Your entire tour cost is non-refundable.

Cancellations will be effective when the written notification is received at David McGuffin's Exploring Europe by mail, e-mail, or fax.

CREDIT CARD FEES and HOW TO AVOID THEM

There is a 3% fee for credit card payments. Avoid these convenience by paying with ACH direct bank withdrawal or check. Details are provided when registering and making online payments.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Everyone is highly encouraged to purchase comprehensive travel insurance covering tour cancellations, emergency medical, and other unexpected events. We recommend insuring in three segments: deposit, airfare, final payment. More insurance information available here: <https://davidmcguffin.com/travel-insurance/>



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