

## 8-DAY PROGRAM



## GLA GROUP TRAVEL SAMPLE ITINERARY

*EXAMPLE ITINERARY ONLY: DURATION, DATES, COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES ARE CUSTOMIZABLE*



## GALÁPAGOS: Preserving Nature's Wonders™

Encounter different species of exotic island and marine life, many of them found nowhere else on Earth!

### OVERVIEW

In this program, you will experience one of the most pristine natural environments in the world, where Charles Darwin first developed the theory of evolution. Volunteer alongside conservationists to help preserve this UNESCO-designated heritage site and unique ecosystem. Besides volunteering, you'll be able to explore two different islands, snorkel with sea lions, and see the world-famous Galápagos tortoises. Galapagos, being so unique, truly is the experience of a lifetime.

### THIS ITINERARY INCLUDES:

- **8 days / 7 nights of accommodation**
- 12 community service hours
- 1 free chaperone per 10 students
- 2 expert GLA staff members
- Medical & evacuation insurance
- 13-20 students (price is per student)

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- ★ Restore the habitat of native Galápagos tortoises
- ★ Explore the natural wonders of two majestic islands
- ★ Snorkel with sea lions and spot iguanas, sea turtles, and blue-footed boobies
- ★ Explore the colonial center of Quito

## SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY SERVICE

The native wildlife of the Galápagos faces danger to its local habitat and biodiversity from invasive plant species introduced to the archipelago by mankind. Prepare to get your hands dirty! Work at a tortoise refuge center, digging up invasive plants, helping with groundwork, and preparing habitat for the tortoises. You'll plant trees to help protect endemic species and restore the natural habitat of the local wildlife.

## SAMPLE ITINERARY: DAILY BREAKDOWN

*The actual schedule of activities will vary by program session.* The information detailed here is typical for what you can expect to experience; however, service work and activities vary depending upon the needs of our local community partners, various celebrations and customs, the weather, and the specific needs of the student group.



### DAYS 1 - 2: GETTING ORIENTED

Fly into Quito, Ecuador's capital, where GLA staff will be waiting to greet you! We'll drive to the hotel near the airport, where our group will spend our first night while we prepare for Galapagos with leadership curriculum and team-building.

The following day, we'll catch an early morning flight to the Galápagos archipelago and journey to our destination island of Santa Cruz, the second largest island in the Galapagos Island chain. We'll meet our local guides upon arrival and go to our Home Base.

In the afternoon, you'll receive an orientation to our service site—a tortoise reserve in Santa Cruz Island's highlands. We will work to restore the landscape to its once pristine state, which is a prime habitat for the giant Galápagos tortoises. This is laborious and dirty work, but our efforts are incredibly important to the islands' long-term health and to preserving this unique landscape.

### DAY 3: SERVICE, GEMELOS CRATERS, & LAVA TUNNEL

We'll continue eradicating invasive species that have taken over the land. In the afternoon, we'll take an excursion to some of the Galapagos' most unique locations, such as Los Gemelos – two impressive earth craters – and walk through a massive lava tunnel! In the evening, we'll engage in a debate exploring different viewpoints on conservation.

### DAY 4: TORTUGA BAY & CHARLES DARWIN CENTER

Today, we'll explore Tortuga Bay, a lovely beach named for the black sea turtles that nest here. Relax and soak in the day with your peers and spot wildlife. We will do some leadership activities on the beach and reflect on how we can bring the culture and learnings back home. We will then walk to the Charles Darwin Center and National Park Breeding Center in the afternoon to learn about their work on the islands. This will help us to wrap our heads around the delicate and unique ecosystem of the islands.







## DAY 5: JOURNEY TO SAN CRISTÓBAL & SNORKELING

Today, we journey to San Cristóbal, the easternmost island in the Galápagos archipelago and one of the oldest geologically. Once we arrive, we will settle into our Home Base in town, enjoy an energizing lunch, and spend the afternoon at Tijeretas Beach, where we'll snorkel. You may even have a chance to swim with sea lions as you watch for majestic sea turtles and fish. On the Galápagos Islands, there is always something new and unique to see!



## DAY 6: ISLA LOBOS ADVENTURE & BEACH TIME

Today, we explore the unique Isla Lobos! Isla Lobos is a small, flat island off San Cristóbal Island's coast. Beside its rocky shores lie calm waters where conditions for swimming and viewing marine life are optimal, and visibility can reach up to 40 feet. The island is most known for its resident sea lion population that plays in the turquoise waters and dots the white sands. Birdwatch for blue-footed boobies, Darwin finches, brown pelicans, and frigate birds. Enjoy time exploring this otherworldly landscape before returning to San Cristobal. In the afternoon, we will visit another nearby beach for some final R&R before wrapping up our time on the islands with a reflective leadership activity.



## DAY 7: TRAVEL TO QUITO

Today, we will catch our flight back to Quito. Take a final look at the stunning Galapagos islands from above as we lift off over the Pacific.

## DAY 8: DEPARTURE DAY

After an early breakfast, we'll take advantage of the day before departure. Depending on timing, we'll first visit the Mitad del Mundo monument, where you'll stand between the Northern and Southern hemispheres. Then, we'll head to Old Town Quito to explore the cobblestone streets and colonial center. Finally, we'll head to the airport. The GLA team will help you check in and see you off on your return flight home! ¡Adiós Ecuador!

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## TRAVELING TO ECUADOR

**GLA HOME BASE** | We'll stay at a local hotel in Quito at the start and end of our journey. In the Galápagos, we'll spend several nights on Santa Cruz island and another few nights on San Cristobal Island.

**FOOD** | Ecuadorian meals usually contain rice or noodles with fish or chicken. Other common dishes include soups and patacones (fried plantains). Resources are limited in the remote Galápagos, so we'll be conscious of eating locally and sustainably..

**CLIMATE** | Located 600 miles west of Ecuador, the Galápagos has a tropical and semi-arid climate but experiences a cool, dry season each summer. We're likely to experience clouds and mist during our time of travel

**FLIGHTS** | Most group travel clients opt to travel together on the same flight, whether that be a group booking or individually-purchased tickets. GLA's partner travel agency, StudentUniverse, can be a helpful resource in finding and booking flights that meet the groups' budget and logistical requirements.

## LEADERSHIP

Global Leadership Adventures started as an educational institute, so we continue to think and act like educators—not tour operators—as we deliver life-changing programs. We intentionally weave a leadership curriculum into the daily experience on our programs. Through group discussion, meaningful service, workshops, speakers and excursions, staff guide students to reflect on program events through the lens of leadership, and celebrate outstanding examples of leaders they encounter in the local community. Lending this context to the experience creates opportunities for students to dig deep into their vision, purpose and knowledge of themselves and the world.

## ABOUT GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ADVENTURES

**Global Leadership Adventures** was founded in 2003 by Fred Swaniker, a native of Ghana, TED Fellow and educational entrepreneur whose work has been praised by Barack Obama. Born as a global extension of the revolutionary African Leadership Academy, Global Leadership Adventures now operates programs centered around leadership, sustainable community service projects, and meaningful travel across Africa, Asia, Europe or the Americas. Through life-changing adventures, we strive to inspire the next generation to realize their potential to transform the world and their role in it.

## Our Expectations

### **Be present**

Our mission at GLA is “to inspire the next generation to realize their potential to transform the world and their role in it.” To that end, we expect GLA students to maintain high standards of personal behavior and to be open-minded. The culture may be different, sometimes shockingly so. GLA will challenge students as they are expected to work hard and be present physically and mentally for all activities. We also ask students to take a step back from regular use of technology - particularly their smartphones - so as to maximize their engagement with the program and their fellow participants. Students may get hot, dirty and bug-bitten along the way, but their contribution can transform the community. The goal is for each student to return home having had a life-changing experience.

### **No tolerance**

GLA has a no-tolerance policy towards drugs, alcohol, tobacco and disruptive behavior. Those who violate or are suspected of violating this policy will be immediately dismissed from the program at the sole discretion of GLA staff.

### **Community-Led experiences**

GLA makes every effort to offer thoughtfully crafted programs for teens and young adults. Detailed planning and exhaustive communications with partners are indispensable parts of our program development process. However, occasionally service and activities are adjusted from session to session, due to weather, changing needs of our local community partners and/or various cultural celebrations and customs. We expect participants to be open-minded and flexible, willing to embrace the experience when plans change. GLA makes every effort to communicate adjustments to students and families with advance notice. We expect you to be open-minded and flexible.

### **Mentorship**

GLA is not a therapy program. Our staff are highly skilled, professional, caring and fun, but they are not licensed therapists. GLA programs can be physically and emotionally demanding, and applicants should be in good physical and mental health.

