



Ecuador Galapagos Luxury Wildlife Adventure on Alya

A Cloud Forest Lodge Retreat & 5-Night Galápagos Cruise

Thank you for checking out our adventures and for downloading this itinerary. Please note that this itinerary may be subject to change depending on the specific departure date. Be sure to check with us before scheduling any flights.

We love talking travel!
Contact us at info@mtsobek.com
or call **800-974-0300**



Feel the difference

with **Mountain Travel Sobek**

Unrivalled Expertise

MT Sobek started it all! Since our first Everest Base Camp trek in 1969, we've been leading award-winning adventures and building authentic connections in far-flung locations around the world. We were named Best Adventure Tour Company in 2022 by USA Today's 10 Best Readers' Choice Awards.

Unique Trip Design

Our adventures are perfectly paced, with incredible attention to detail-the right mix of fun, learning, and challenge that guarantees lifelong memories. Plan nothing, enjoy everything. We take care of all of the logistics so that you can have more time to do what's most important: relax, take in the experience, and enjoy!

Small Groups

We keep our groups intentionally small-usually fewer than 10 people. This allows you a more intimate experience with the people and wildlife you encounter. With a smaller group size, we can take advantage of many unexpected invitations and opportunities that would be impossible with larger groups.





Leading the Way

World-Class Local Guides

Our knowledgeable and passionate expert guides effortlessly create an immersive local experience for you. They are trained to the highest professional standards and are at the heart of everything we do. They make it possible to meet the challenges of adventure travel, and help create lasting memories and lifelong friendships... we can confidently say our guides are the best in the business.





Why take this trip with us?

REASON 1

MT Sobek was one of the first North American companies to bring visitors to the Galápagos Islands, with an inaugural charter for the Sierra Club in 1970.

REASON 2

We charter truly small (maximum 16-passenger) vessels, including the luxurious Alya catamaran, for a fully MT Sobek-operated experience with our own expert naturalist guide and a dedicated Quito office.

REASON 3

This trip is the perfect blend of two South American wildlife treasures, the Andean cloud forest and the Galápagos, joined into one deluxe adventure.

At A Glance

ACTIVITIES

Cultural touring in Quito, cloud forest walks, and Galápagos Island cruising by luxury catamaran, with daily panga rides, hikes, kayaking, and snorkeling.



LODGING

Deluxe accommodations throughout, from the boutique hotel in Quito, to the eco-lodge in the cloud forest and our new luxury catamaran with private balconies.



CLIMATE

Dec-May has temperatures 76-86°F and water temperatures of 70-75°F. Jun-Nov has temperatures of 67-77°F and water temperatures of 65-72°F. In the cloud forest, expect 60s-70s°F year-round with rain year-round, especially Nov-May.



KNOW BEFORE YOU BOOK

"What a total comfort to know that with MT Sobek, you're in the hands of professionals who have been doing it so long and so well. That was part of why we landed on them as our operators for our dream trip, and everything about the experience they gave us-from tailored expertise to unswerving professionalism-confirmed the company's emphasis on excellence." - Alex M.



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A Cloud Forest Lodge Retreat & 5-Night Galápagos Cruise

Experience two incredible wildlife destinations-Ecuador's Andean cloud forest and Galapagos Islands-in comfort and refinement on this small-group adventure. Discover UNESCO-listed Quito, then venture into the cloud forest for a stay at Kapari Lodge. Take trail walks in search of toucans, tanagers, hummingbirds, as well as orchids, butterflies and bromeliads. In the Galapagos you'll cruise in style aboard 16-passenger luxury catamaran Alya. Hiking, snorkeling, and kayaking under the guidance of MT Sobek's dedicated naturalist guide gets you amazingly close to the wildlife both underwater and on land.

10 Days

Start: Quito, Ecuador

End: Quito, Ecuador

Departing:

Activities: Adventure Cruising, Safari & Wildlife, Family Friendly

Lodging: Luxury Hotels, Luxury Small Ship

Group Size: 10-16 Guests

ACTIVITY:



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"MT Sobek answered our questions before we asked them. They coordinated the trip from arriving at our destination until we flew back out. They think of the details and information that we did not know we needed. All of the staff was so helpful, informative, and friendly."

- Michelle G.

Check mtsobek.com for date-specific pricing.

The Itinerary

DAY 01

Arrive in Quito

Welcome to the historic city of Quito, the capital of Ecuador. An MT Sobek representative will meet you outside customs at the airport and escort you to your deluxe boutique hotel located in the heart of the Old Town. After settling in at the hotel, the rest of the day is free to unwind, take advantage of the spa services or begin your exploration of this dynamic city. Dinner is on your own tonight.

TRANSPORTATION: 1-hour private van transfer from airport to hotel

DAY 02

Cultural Experience & Quito Old Town Center, Journey to the Cloud Forest

After breakfast, participate in one of the interactive Illa Experiences and learn how local artisans make a local product using authentic ancestral methods. Afterwards, set out on a guided tour of colonial Quito. The city's UNESCO-listed old town contains the best examples of Colonial Baroque architecture in South America! Depart Quito in the early afternoon, stopping for lunch on the rim of Pululahua Crater, and journey northwest into the cloud forest, witnessing a drastic change of landscape as you descend from 9,186 to 3,200 feet above sea level. Stretch your legs at Alambi, a private riverside reserve, and take advantage of your first chance to see some of the beautiful birds from this area. Continue down to Kapari Nature Lodge, your home for the next two nights - a perfect oasis of comfort housed within the Andean Chocó biosphere reserve, one of the most biodiverse places on the planet.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 2.5-hour private van transfer

ACTIVITY: AM 1-2 hours/1 mile walking in Quito Historic Center; PM 1-2 hours/1 mile cloud-forest nature walk

DAY 03

Explore the Cloud Forest at Kapari

When the lowland rainforests rise to the mountains, a new ecosystem called the cloud forest dominates the Andean slopes. This misty temperate world is the realm of the epiphytes: orchids, bromeliads and ferns cover the trees with a green mantle, providing food and refuge for an incredible diversity of life forms. It is also a world of incredibly attractive birds, which will delight both the eye of the expert and the casual birdwatcher. Discover the beauty of the forest at your own pace, choosing as many activities as you wish. Set out on a nature hike across several spectacular viewpoints of the valley and the Rio Blanco, observing the endemic flora and fauna. Arrive back at the lodge for lunch. In the afternoon, opt to stay at the lodge and relax, visiting the bird garden, enjoying a spa treatment, or taking a dip in the heated pool or Jacuzzi. Alternately, set out on a 2.5-hour guided afternoon walk along the Roadrunner Path through the middle of the forest, in search of the rare Banded Ground-Cuckoo Roadrunner, one of the emblematic species of Kapari, as well as toucans, trogons, trepatroncos, and anthills. After dinner at the lodge, join an optional night walk to look for frogs, snakes, owls, and other nocturnal critters.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

ACTIVITY: Cloud forest walks



Walk the Trails at Kapari & Taste Gourmet Specialties in Quito

Rise early for a short hike to strategically chosen sites where more than 40 species of birds and some mammals can be observed. One hiding place was developed especially for photographers and bird lovers, where it's common to sight as many as 35 species of birds in one hour: hummingbirds, toucans, tanagers, seedlings, trepatroncos, motmot, among others, as well as some species of mammals such as the mate head, agouti, and squirrels. Return to the lodge for a full breakfast, then drive to the Milpe Reserve for a short hike along this pristine forest's excellent trail system. Continue the drive back towards Quito, stopping for lunch and birdwatching amid orchids, bromeliads, and heliconias at the elegant wooden Sachatamia Lodge. Arrive to Quito in the late afternoon and check back in to Illa Experience Hotel. Gather for an evening briefing about the upcoming Galápagos portion of the adventure, followed by a special tasting dinner at a local restaurant.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 2.5-hour private van transfer

ACTIVITY: AM 1-2 hours/1 mile cloud-forest nature walk



Fly to the Galápagos Islands & See Giant Tortoises in the Wild

Rise for breakfast and an early transfer flight from Quito to Baltra Island in the Galápagos. After meeting your naturalist guide, take a short transfer from Baltra to Santa Cruz Island. Here a private vehicle awaits to take you to the lush highlands of Santa Cruz for a special opportunity to see giant tortoises in their wild and natural habitat. The Galápagos Islands are named after these magnificent, ancient creatures and the experience with them is magical. Next, transfer to Puerto Ayora for a stroll along the main street to the harbor, where you will board your private luxury catamaran. Enjoy a welcome dinner onboard.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 2-hour flight transfer and 1-hour private vehicle transfer

ACTIVITY: 1.5 hours easy walk (1 mile)



DAY 06

Explore Moreno Point & Elizabeth Bay on Isabela Island

In the morning, disembark at Moreno Point, which is located near Elizabeth Bay on the west coast of Isabela Island. The plethora of birds seen during the panga ride along the striking rocky shores, and while walking along the path through lava rocks leading to tide pools and mangroves, create a birdwatcher's delight, including flamingoes, penguins, cormorants, Galápagos mockingbirds, and Darwin finches. Snorkel amid sea turtles and many species of fish. Look carefully in the long seaweed and you might find a sea horse!

In the afternoon, explore Elizabeth Bay, a beautiful sheltered bay surrounded by large mangroves and barren lava fields. Take a panga cruise to explore many channels, pools and coves teeming with life. This is one of the best locations in the islands to see Galápagos penguins. Flightless cormorants also nest in the area and blue-footed boobies and pelicans often fish in these shallow and rich waters. Rays and sea turtles are also very abundant. Return to the boat for cocktail hour and dinner.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

ACTIVITY: AM 2-2.5 hours moderate hike (1.5 miles) plus snorkeling; PM panga cruise



Hike & Snorkel at Isabela's Urbina Bay and Discover Fernandina Island

After breakfast, make a wet landing to explore Urbina Bay - famous for having uplifted 15 feet along 2 miles of coastline exposing corals and invertebrates in its strata. Follow your guide on the trail to look for Galápagos land iguanas, Galápagos hawks, finches, and (mostly between January and June) giant tortoises. Snorkel from the beach to see sea turtles, cormorants, penguins and an abundance of colorful fish.

After lunch, anchor near Punta Espinosa on Fernandina Island - said to be the largest ecologically pristine island in the world and one of the highlights of the trip. As soon as you land in the volcanic landscape you will be amazed by hundreds of marine iguanas basking in the sun, as this is the largest colony of these unique reptiles. Sea lion pups often play in the tidal pools while flightless cormorants dry their miniaturized wings nearby. This is a great hunting ground for Galápagos hawks who often perch on the mangroves looking for lizards, baby iguanas, herons and doves. Snorkel amid sea turtles, and look out for marine iguanas feeding on the abundant seaweed underwater. You may even spot a cormorant underwater as it chases fish through the reef.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

ACTIVITY: AM 1.5-2 hours easy walk (1 mile) plus snorkeling; PM 2-2.5 hours moderate hike (1.5 miles) plus snorkeling



Isabela's Tagus Cove & Vicente Roca Point

In the morning, visit Tagus Cove, located to the west of Darwin Volcano on Isabela Island. While walking, inspect the inscriptions left by pirates in the 1800's. From here, you can see Darwin Lake, perched above sea level, but full of saltwater. It contains no fish, but it is very common to see a variety of bird species. After the walk, cruise by panga along the coast of Isabela to look for penguins, cormorants, marine iguanas and a very unique species: the Galápagos martin, a small endemic bird which is one of the most endangered species on the island. Snorkelers will have great chances of swimming with penguins, cormorants and sea turtles.

In the afternoon, set out for an unforgettable panga cruise along the dramatic cliffs of Punta Vicente Roca, the remnants of an ancient volcanic caldera. Ride ocean swells beneath the cliffs in search of nesting boobies and explore a huge marine cave. The area is also known to be a good location for whales and dolphins. Snorkel in the cove amid a spectacular variety of sealife including seahorses, sea turtles, and the strange but fascinating Mola-mola (sunfish).

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

ACTIVITY: AM 1.5-2 hours moderate hike (2 miles) plus panga cruise or kayaking, & snorkeling; PM panga cruise & snorkeling



Hike & Snorkel on Santiago Island

Wake for a wet landing on Santiago's soft, sandy Espumilla Beach. Walk the island's lagoon and beach, surrounded by large mangrove trees and a very interesting native dry forest, which is home to raptors and a great diversity of finches.

After lunch, make another wet landing, this time on the dark, sandy volcanic beach of Puerto Egas. The trail follows the rocky coastline, where tide pools are home to sponges, hermit crabs, and fish including the world's only four-eyed blenny. Sea lions bask on the rocks, along with marine iguanas and shore birds. At the end of the trail, visit the grottos for a chance to see a colony of Galápagos fur seals up close. Also snorkel from the beach and explore an area of rocky bottoms which is excellent for fish, turtles and reef sharks. Often, sea lions are also present and are happy to interact with divers.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

ACTIVITY: AM 2 hours easy walk (1.5 miles); PM 2-2.5 hours easy walk (1.5 miles) plus snorkeling



Depart from the Galápagos in Baltra & Return to Quito

Arrive this morning for a wet landing at Bachas Beach on the north side of Santa Cruz Island. Encounter sea lions on the beautiful, white-sand beach, look for flamingos and great blue herons in the lagoon, and spot hatchlings' footprints leading from the nest to the water's edge (sea turtles nest here from November to May). Then disembark the Alya and transfer to Baltra for your flight back to Quito. An MT Sobek representative will greet you at Quito airport and provide assistance to meet your connecting late-night flight home, or opt to stay on in Quito to join us for one of our extensions in Ecuador or Peru!

MEALS: Breakfast

TRANSPORTATION: 2.5-hour flight transfer

ACTIVITY: AM 1.5 hours easy walk (1 mile)



Where You'll Stay

These accommodations may be subject to change depending on your date of travel.

Illa Experience Hotel

Illa Experience is a deluxe new boutique hotel with just 10 rooms, housed in a restored colonial mansion in the historic San Marcos neighborhood of Quito's Old Town. The family owners take great care in providing an immersive experience to capture the traditions, flavors, and scents of a local, traditional home, as well as chances to meet local artisans who make the neighborhood such a special place. The elegant contemporary rooms overlook the Old Town or quiet internal patios and feature unique design details drawn from family traditions. An award-winning gourmet restaurant and rooftop bar celebrate local ingredients and recipes, and the spa features a Jacuzzi, sauna, and small fitness center, with massage treatments available. ?

Kapari Lodge & Spa

Located within a pristine ecological reserve just two hours from Quito and thirty minutes from Mindo, Kapari Lodge is surrounded by one of the last remnants of primeval forest in the world. This beautiful lodge is nestled atop a natural cliff in the Andean Chocó biosphere reserve, a biodiversity hotspot with hundreds of endemic species of birds, as well as amphibians, reptiles, and captivating flora. Immediately surrounding elevations range from 2400-3200 feet above sea level, so there's the opportunity to observe several ecosystems: cloud forest, montane and subtropical forest. The 12 comfortable suites have spacious private bathrooms, and an outdoor pool and Jacuzzi offer impressive panoramic views of the forest and the Rio Blanco.



Where You'll Stay

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Illa Experience Hotel

Illa Experience is a deluxe new boutique hotel with just 10 rooms, housed in a restored colonial mansion in the historic San Marcos neighborhood of Quito's Old Town. The family owners take great care in providing an immersive experience to capture the traditions, flavors, and scents of a local, traditional home, as well as chances to meet local artisans who make the neighborhood such a special place. The elegant contemporary rooms overlook the Old Town or quiet internal patios and feature unique design details drawn from family traditions. An award-winning gourmet restaurant and rooftop bar celebrate local ingredients and recipes, and the spa features a Jacuzzi, sauna, and small fitness center, with massage treatments available. ?

Alya

Indulge in exceptional style and comfort aboard [Alya](#), a 103-foot luxury catamaran built in 2016. Eight comfortable cabins each have a private balcony, flexible bed configuration (King or two twin beds), en-suite bathroom, spacious closets, air-conditioning, feather pillows and luxury cotton sheets, and mini-safe. An additional ninth cabin is available for single accommodations, and is the only cabin with no private balcony. There is an abundance of natural light throughout, and the lounge and deck areas are spacious and beautifully designed, with a Jacuzzi, movable sunroof, and both indoor and outdoor dining options! WiFi is available on board, and use of paddle boards and kayaks, as well as wetsuits, fins and masks for snorkeling are all included.

Departure Dates

Book early for a greater choice of available dates.

Once you book, your price is GUARANTEED!

February 29-March 9, 2024

May 23-June 1, 2024

December 5-14, 2024

What's Included

PRICE INCLUDES

- Expertise and services of our experienced adventure guides
- All accommodations as noted in the itinerary
- All breakfasts, almost all lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Snacks and water between meals
- Additional regional guides and experts on many trips
- Comprehensive Trip Planner with detailed pre-trip information
- Private guided tours at historic sites, museums, wineries and other select attractions as noted in the itinerary
- Special events and other select attractions as mentioned in the itinerary
- All gratuities at hotels and restaurants
- Equipment and experienced guides for activities as described in the itinerary
- Park and other entry fees (unless otherwise noted)
- Fares for trains, ferries and other modes of travel as listed in the itinerary
- Select transfers as mentioned in the itinerary
- Baggage transfers and portage

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International airfare, airport taxes, and excess baggage fees
- Alcoholic beverages (MT Sobek provides wine at select events)
- Gratuities for MT Sobek guides and guide-drivers
- Travel Protection Program
- Personal expenses



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