

# THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

## & AMAZON RAIN FOREST



## with Minnesota Public Radio

February 20 – March 2, 2027



**You're invited!** Join MPR News meteorologist, Mandy Thalhuber – on an unforgettable journey to the legendary Galápagos Islands and Amazon Rain Forest of Ecuador. While based on the island of Santa Cruz explore the many nearby islands of North Seymour, Santa Fe and Plaza Islands. Visit the Charles Darwin Research Station and encounter remarkable species unknown anywhere else on earth. Certified naturalists will enlighten and expand your understanding of the amazing creatures and unparalleled diversity of the Amazon Rain Forest. Come commune with the iguanas

and snorkel with sea lions on this amazing adventure with MPR! Space is very limited and this trip will sell-out...so don't wait, reserve your spot today for this trip of a lifetime!

### TRIP AT A GLANCE

3 Nights Quito

2 Nights Casa del Suizo – Amazon Rainforest

5 Nights Galápagos Islands



**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.

P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA

Tel: 206.842.9775

[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)



*Discover Quito's historic center*

## JOURNEY HIGHLIGHTS

Explore the Galápagos Islands with naturalists ♦ Charles Darwin Research Station ♦ Unequaled diversity of wildlife ♦ Snorkeling with marine life ♦ Opportunities for short hikes on the Galápagos Islands ♦ Historic walking tour of the old colonial town of Quito, a World Heritage Site ♦ Knowledgeable, experienced local guides ♦ Intimate dining experiences ♦ A full day excursion to local markets and hot springs ♦ Travel with like-minded listeners

## IT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ With MPR News meteorologist, Mandy Thalhuber
- ✓ Full-time bilingual tour guide and naturalist
- ✓ Airport and hotel transfers in Ecuador with professional guides and drivers
- ✓ Six days of island hopping and exploration in the Galápagos Islands
- ✓ Three days in the Amazon Rainforest
- ✓ Domestic flights to/from the Galápagos Islands
- ✓ Accommodations in hand-selected 4-star hotels and lodges
- ✓ All breakfasts plus 17 additional multi-course meals
- ✓ Galápagos National Park Maps
- ✓ Pre-tour suggested reading list
- ✓ Alumni appreciation discounts applied toward future expeditions
- ✓ A small, fun group of soon-to-be public radio friends!

## NOT INCLUDED:

Roundtrip air from the USA, \$200 Galapagos Park Fees and any items not mentioned in your MPR Custom Galapagos Itinerary.



**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.  
P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA  
Tel: 206.842.9775  
[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)



“The most important factor in survival is neither intelligence nor strength but adaptability.”

Charles Darwin

## TRIP FACTS AND PRICING



11 Days/ 10 Nights (not including air travel)

\$7,995 per person double occupancy

\$3,250 single supplement

Trip begins in Quito on February 20, 2027

Trip ends in Quito on March 2, 2027

### SAVE UP TO \$250!

- ✓ Pay your final balance by check and save \$150
- ✓ Earthbound travel alumni save \$100



**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.

P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA

Tel: 206.842.9775

[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)



## **YOUR ADVENTURE BEGINS ...**

**Meal Key:** B = Breakfast / L = Lunch / D = Dinner

### **DAY 1: Saturday, February 20 - Depart for Quito, Ecuador**

Your exciting expedition to Ecuador begins today as you board your flight. After a late evening arrival in Quito, meet your local tour director at the airport and transfer to your deluxe hotel in central Quito. *Overnight in Quito*

### **DAY 2: Sunday, February 21 - Discover Quito and the Botanic Gardens**

On a guided mid-morning tour of Quito, you'll learn about its colonial past, history and culture. Visit the old town and see the Church of San Francisco, the first religious building constructed in South America by the Spaniards. See the facade of La Compania, the city's most ornate church. Admire the spectacular views of the Valley of Tumbaco. And on a clear day, you can see the impressive volcanoes surrounding the city. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. Afterwards continue your visit to the local botanical gardens to observe a diversity of plants from different altitudes and ecosystems. *Overnight in Quito (B, L)*

### **DAY 3: Monday, February 22 - East to the Amazon**

After breakfast, transfer by bus to La Punta Ahuano on the Napo River where you will board a canoe that will take you to your Amazon lodge. Enjoy the tranquility of the lodge and prepare to be amazed by both the wildlife and the Amazon culture. In the afternoon, visit Ahuano village for the opportunity to meet a local Quechua family and learn about their way of life before returning to the hotel. In the evening, dine together at the lodge. *Overnight in the Amazon Rainforest at Casa del Suizo (B, L, D)*



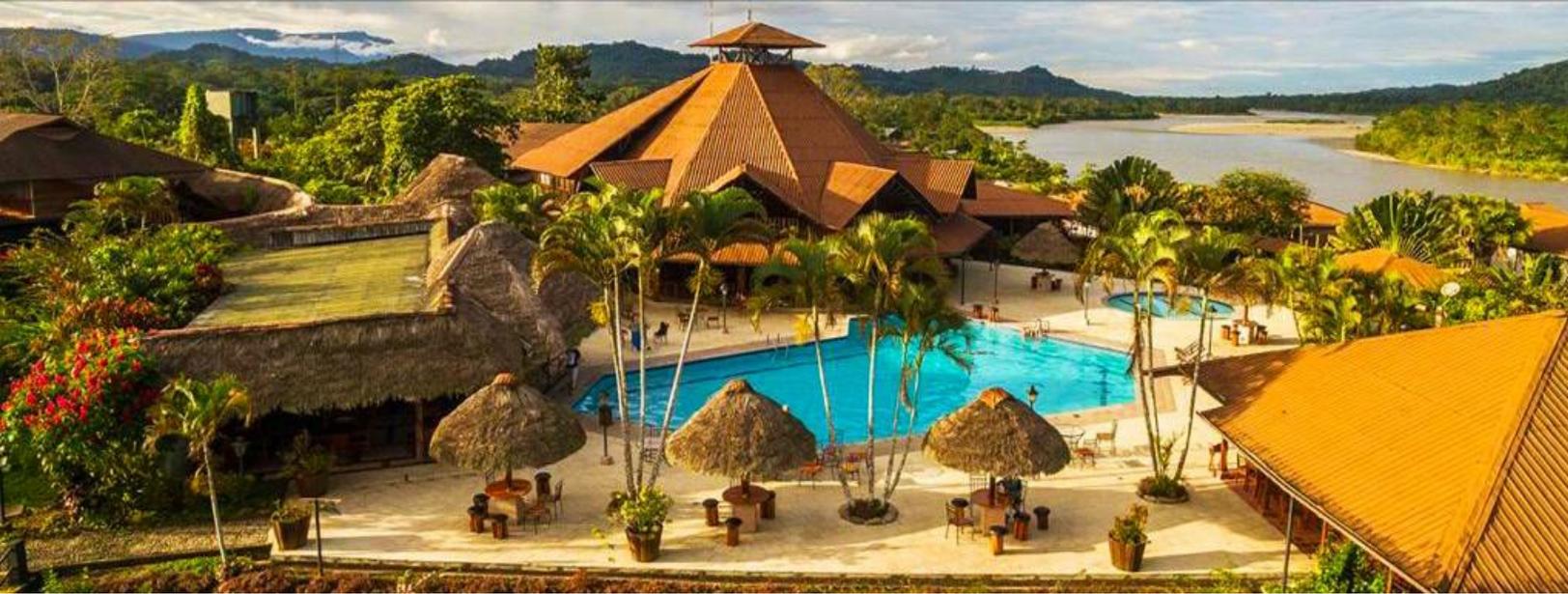
**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.

P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA

Tel: 206.842.9775

[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)



*La Casa del Suizo Lodge, Amazon Rainforest*

**DAY 4: Tuesday, February 23 - A Full Day in a Private Nature Reserve**

This morning, after a canoe ride you can hike in the Misicocha Private Nature Reserve for approximately two hours while viewing the beautiful flora and fauna up-close. The Amazon Rainforest is the world's largest ecosystem, so be sure to keep an eye out for the innumerable species of tropical plants and insects. Enjoy the views as you cross suspended bridges and fly through the rain forest on a short zip line basket ride. At the end of the hike, take a rafting trip on a traditional balsa log raft. The balance of the day is at leisure. You may choose one of the *optional* tours, including such as the Rescue Center or Canopy Adventure Park. Tonight, savor dinner with the group at the lodge. *Overnight in the Amazon Rainforest at Casa del Suizo (B, L, D)*

**DAY 5: Wednesday, February 24 - The Andes Cloud Forest and Natural Hot Springs**

This morning, board a canoe for the return trip to La Punta Ahuano and enjoy a scenic drive through small villages, stopping for lunch in Tena. After lunch, continue to the hot springs at Papallacta, tucked away in the Andes Mountains. After relaxing at Papallacta hot springs, we continue on to the Wyndham Quito airport hotel for an overnight and dinner. *Overnight near Quito airport (B, L, D)*

**DAY 6: Thursday, February 25 - Fly West to the Galapagos Islands**

After an early breakfast, transfer to the airport for the flight to the Galápagos Islands where you will spend the next five days island hopping with your naturalist. Upon arrival in Baltra, you'll board the ferry for a short transfer to Santa Cruz Island and then continue by motor coach to Puerto Ayora. Passing through the highlands of Santa Cruz, you'll see the enormous change in vegetation from dry areas full of cacti to rainforest and fern zones. This afternoon visit the Charles Darwin Research Station to learn about island conservation and the huge efforts to preserve this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Enjoy an independent lunch at a local restaurant. This evening we'll have a "welcome to the islands" dinner at a local restaurant. *Overnight in Puerto Ayora (B, D)*



**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.

P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA

Tel: 206.842.9775

[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)



Snorkel, swim & Experience the best of the Galapagos



### **DAYS 7, 8 & 9: February 26, 27 & 28 - Explore the Galapagos Islands**

Over the course of the next four days you'll enjoy full-day boat excursions to many of the nearby islands. Each of these islands has its own unique beauty to offer. North Seymour is a flat island and home to magnificent frigate birds like the Blue-Footed-Boobies. South Plaza Island is home to a large colony of sea lions and offers excellent examples of the typical flora like towering cacti "trees" which form the

principal diet for land iguanas and cactus finch. Bartholomew Island is a tiny island which boasts one of the most spectacular views of the archipelago from Pinnacle Rock. Climb to the 375-foot peak to enjoy this stunning view. Santa Fe is one of the oldest islands of the Galápagos and in its tranquil bay, one can find green sea turtles and spotted eagle rays while sea lions bask in sun on the beach. *Overnight in Puerto Ayora (B, L, D)*

### **DAY 10: Monday, March 1 - Relax on Santa Cruz Island**

Today explore Tortuga Bay and a local beach near the town of Santa Cruz. Here you can just enjoy the beach and have a relaxing time. There is also the option to rent a kayak here. Later this morning, transfer by a local boat to the pier where a bus will be waiting to take us to the highlands of Santa Cruz. Along the way there is lunch at a local ranch, a visit to a lava tunnel, and visit to see the famous giant tortoises in their natural environment. Return to the hotel in time for a farewell dinner. *Overnight in Puerto Ayora (B, L, D)*



**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.

P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA

Tel: 206.842.9775

[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)



**DAY 11: Tuesday, March 2 - Fly from Galapagos to Quito**

This morning is at your leisure. Later, transfer to the airport for your flight to Quito.

Upon arrival in Quito, you'll be met and transferred to a nearby 4-star hotel. Relax, rest, and enjoy dinner at the hotel before returning to the airport for your international flight home. Most flights to the US, depart very late in the evening and you'll arrive home on March 3. (B, D)

*\*Note:* Please book your return flight for the evening of March 2 (11:00 PM or later). If you are unable to find a suitable flight that night or in the early hours of March 3, your hotel room will remain available until 1:00 PM on March 3 for your convenience.

*- Itinerary Subject to Change -*

**QUESTIONS AND RESERVATIONS**

[info@earthboundexpeditions.com](mailto:info@earthboundexpeditions.com)

**206.842.9775**

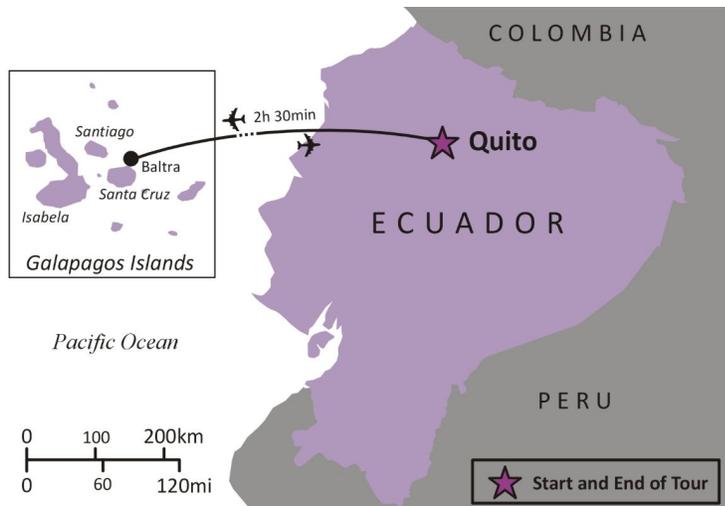


**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.  
P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA  
Tel: 206.842.9775  
[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)

## DESCRIPTIONS FOR THE ISLAND HOPPING

*This list is intended as a sampling of the islands that will be visited while in the Galapagos archipelago. The exact itinerary will depend on weather conditions and National Park permits.*



### BARTOLOMÉ ISLAND

Bartolomé is one of the "younger" islands in the Galápagos archipelago. This island, and Sullivan Bay on Santiago Island, are named after naturalist and lifelong friend of Charles Darwin, Sir Bartolome James Sullivan, who was a lieutenant aboard HMS Beagle. With a total land area of just .5 square miles, this island offers some of the most beautiful landscapes in the archipelago. The island consists of an extinct

volcano and a variety of red, orange, green, and glistening black volcanic formations. Bartolomé has a volcanic cone that is easy to climb and provides great views of the other islands. Bartolomé is famous for its Pinnacle Rock, which is the distinctive characteristic of this island, and the most representative landmark of the Galápagos.

It has two visitor sites. At the first one, one may swim and snorkel around Pinnacle Rock; the underwater world there is really impressive. Snorkelers are in the water with the penguins, marine turtles, white-tipped reef sharks, and other tropical fish. The bay is also an excellent place to go swimming. The twin bays are separated by a narrow isthmus. Galápagos penguins are frequently seen and a small cave behind Pinnacle Rock houses a breeding colony. Seasonally, Bartolomé is the mating and nesting site for the green turtles. The herons use the gentler beaches.

### NORTH SEYMOUR

The endemic plant of this island is the lignum vitae tree, an icon of the site. In the summertime they look like dead trees, but after the winter rains, they become green overnight giving the island a very special appearance. Other plant species abundant in the area are the Opuntia cactus, Croton, Castile and Sesuvium. Sometimes you can watch green iguanas taking shade under bushes. These animals were introduced in Seymour to test whether they can survive another landscape as they are found usually in Baltra. Frigates can be observed along the walking trail along with other species such as lava gulls, sea lions, brown terns, pelicans, tropical birds.



**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.

P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA

Tel: 206.842.9775

[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)

## ISLA SANTA FE

Santa Fe Island, also called Barrington Island after Admiral Samuel Barrington, is a small island of 9 mi<sup>2</sup> which lies in the center of the Galápagos archipelago. Geologically it is one of the oldest, since volcanic rocks of about 4 million years old have been found here. The vegetation of the island is characterized by brush, palo santo trees and stands of a large variety of the prickly pear cactus *opuntia echios*.

The visitor sites are Barrington Bay on the northeastern side. There is great snorkeling with white tip sharks, sea turtles, rays, and colorful fish. Large numbers of sea lions are found in the bay.

## PLAZA ISLANDS

Just east of Santa Cruz Island, the Plaza Islands are distinct for their native populations of flora and fauna, but only South Plaza Island has a landing site. As you cross the jet-black lava rock, you will see one of the largest populations of land iguanas in the Galápagos Islands and one of the most unique. It's here where male marine iguanas have bred with female land iguanas to create the only hybrid land/marine iguanas in the archipelago. The remaining land iguanas, though smaller in size than other island populations, feature vibrant yellows and reds and enjoy the local delicacies of *Opuntia* cacti and the indigenous *Sesuvium*. Visitors will also see several big groups of sea lions, including one significant bachelor colony.



## QUESTIONS AND RESERVATIONS

[info@earthboundexpeditions.com](mailto:info@earthboundexpeditions.com)

206.842.9775



**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.  
P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA  
Tel: 206.842.9775  
[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)

# Know Before You Go!

**Reservations and Deposits:** A \$1,000 per person deposit is needed to confirm your space on this journey. You can make a credit card deposit online or by phone. Deposits are refundable, minus a \$250 per person cancellation fee, for 60 days from the processing date or 90 days prior to departure, whichever comes first. Deposits made 90 days prior to a trip departing are not refundable. Final payment is also non-refundable, which is why we strongly urge guests to purchase travel insurance.

**Not Included:** International airline tickets, alcoholic beverages, room service and gratuities for hotel staff, travel insurance, meals not listed in brochure, \$200 per person Galapagos National Park entrance fee and any activities or items not listed in your itinerary.

**Physical Requirements:** It is the responsibility of each guest to be aware of their physical abilities or limitations and to be in sufficient good health to undertake the trip. [Click here](#) to read “Is an Earthbound trip right for you?” or call the Earthbound office for more details.

## **Active Days on Shore and at Sea:**

This journey includes transportation by boat (in the islands) and motorized canoe (in the Amazon). Walking tours/hikes in may last 2-3 hours and could include gentle walks of up to two miles, often on uneven or cobblestone surfaces. Now is the time to prepare by ensuring you're comfortable being on your feet for extended periods. You're always welcome to relax at a café or opt out of any activity. Additionally, there may be times when you need to handle your own luggage so pack light and make sure your bags are easy to carry. A little preparation will go a long way in making your Ecuador adventure comfortable and enjoyable!

**Travel Insurance:** Earthbound Expeditions strongly encourages the purchase of travel insurance coverage. We include information on trip insurance in your deposit information.

**Events and Hosted Journeys:** If a planned event is cancelled for any reason, another event will be included in its place. This is not cause for refund. Events are subject to change. Also, if a host or special guest is unable to attend as planned, Earthbound Expeditions will do its utmost to find another host who has similar interests, talents, and expertise. The inability of a host to participate in a tour is not grounds for a full or partial refund.

**Terms & Conditions:** [Click here](#) to read the full terms and conditions.



**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.  
P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA  
Tel: 206.842.9775  
[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)

# Meet Your Host!



**Mandy Thalhuber** is a meteorologist at MPR News. Before joining MPR News, she worked at Weatherology as a broadcast meteorologist for more than 10 years. Her passion for weather began at the age of 5 when she would spend hours outside, eagerly watching the changing conditions and even delivering weather reports to her parents. Mandy graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in meteorology from St. Cloud State University. She married her high school sweetheart, and together they have two wonderful boys. She loves living in Minnesota because of its ever-changing weather.

---

## About Earthbound Expeditions

Founded in 1997 by Matthew and Danna Brumley, Earthbound Expeditions lovingly creates tailor-made journeys that inspire curiosity and discovery. Led by expert local guides, travelers explore history, art, food, gardens, and culture in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Each trip encourages deep learning and engagement, turning every destination into a classroom of wonder. Guests return not just with memories, but with insights, appreciation, and a renewed sense of curiosity for the world.



## QUESTIONS AND RESERVATIONS

[info@earthboundexpeditions.com](mailto:info@earthboundexpeditions.com)

206.842.9775



**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.  
P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA  
Tel: 206.842.9775  
[www.EarthboundExpeditions.com](http://www.EarthboundExpeditions.com)