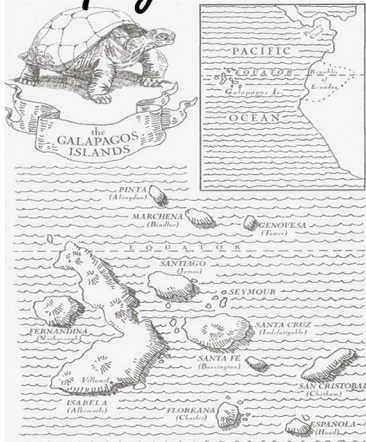


What are the Galapagos Islands?



Map of main Galapagos Islands

Brief Galapagos History

When the *Bishop of Panama* is accidentally blown off course heading to Peru in 1535, he discovers the islands. Formed 4-5 million years ago, the Galapagos are a volcanic archipelago in the Pacific Ocean off the West Coast of South America. The first crude maps are drawn in 1684 by buccaneer **Ambrose Crowley** for British royalty and his fellow pirates. The first colonists are soliders that bring domestic animals; cows, pigs, donkeys and goats. The famous *Voyage of the Beagle* in 1835 under captain Robert FitzRoy brings young naturalist **Charles Darwin's** to make observations on the geology and biology. Darwin's studies puts Galapagos on the map with the controversial "*The Origin of Species*."

FUN FACT: No one wanted Galapagos, so Ecuador annexed it Feb. 12, 1832.

Shrink a Head



this is a real 150 year old shrunken head

Headhunting in Ecuador

You never know when learning to shrink a head will come in handy and that's what you learn at **Museo Inti Nan Equator Museum**. Intended to terrorize enemies, you start with a human head won in battle. Pull out the skull and boil until it shrivels. Stitch the mouth shut, trim the hair and eyelashes, then add a feather for flair. Hang it on a string and wear around your neck as a badge of courage. This is one of many fascinating attractions at the museum. Visit the hut where men wrap their penises with sticks. Hob nob with other International travelers at **El Crator Restaurant** for lunch. Need reservations: info@elcrator.com

EXIT THROUGH THE GIFT SHOP:

Don't forget to pick up handmade gifts at the museum gift shop. Good selection at great prices. No shrunken heads.

Santa Fe Land Iguanas



Santa Fe Land Iguana

Paradise for Reptiles

Reptiles freak me out, so the idea of wandering an island of scaly creatures with dorsal spines frightens me. To my surprise, my first sighting of the famous **Santa Fe Land Iguanas** is exciting. They hide under the brush, peek out and pose. Their brownish yellowish color blends in perfectly with their surroundings. Some are huge and can weigh up to 25 lbs. Land iguanas dine on prickly pear cactus, insects and they love yellow flowers. They live 50-60 years and can survive long periods without food or water. Only this species lives on Santa Fe. Other land iguanas look slightly different and inhabit several other islands.

FUN FACT: Darwin called Galapagos a “paradise for reptiles” because the islands are full of these prehistoric creatures.

Visit with Diego

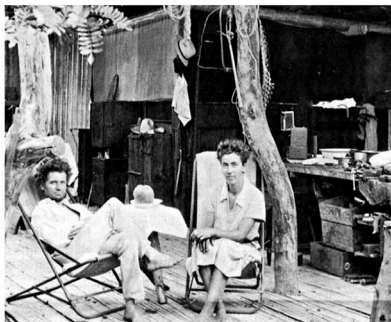


Oldest living tortoise Diego at 130 years old

Espanola Tortoises

Lonesome George was the most famous tortoise in the world and “the rarest creature on earth.” He lived from 1920 to June 24, 2012 and was the last known of his species from **Pinta Island**. When George died of old age, **Diego** became the second most famous tortoise. Born on Espanola Island in the 1930s, Diego was one of 13 Tortoises sent to the San Diego Zoo. CUT TO: the 1960s when 2 males and 12 females were brought to the Darwin Center to save them from extinction, the males had no clue how to mate. Since Diego was the only Espanola Tortoise still alive he was returned to Galapagos to show the others how to get their groove back. Horny Diego had sex with all the females and fathered 1,700 children. He lives at the Darwin Center, but eventually will be put back on his island.

I Curse You With My Dying Breath



Dr. Ritter & Dora on Floreana

Sex, Murder & Mystery

The islands have bizarre animals and even more bizarre human stories. Galapagos never had an aboriginal population, no cultural heritage or customary foods. The history is quite recent with 20-25,000 inhabitants. Before WWII, an eccentric group of Germans arrived on Floreana and their stories are the subject of books and movies. In 1929, Berlin dentist **Friedrich Ritter** and his lover **Dore Strauch** (both married to other people) settled on desolate Floreana. Their fame of dropping out of society attracted the **Wittmer Family**. Shortly after, **Baroness Von Wagner** with two boy-toy lovers in tow, arrived to build a hotel for rich Europeans. Within 3 months only Dora and the Wittmers were still alive. Poisoned by Dora, Dr. Ritter whispered on his death bed, *"I curse you with my dying breath."*

Rock Your Adventure Gear



Rocking my adventure gear with giant tortoises

Go Brown. . .

When you are in adventure mode, everything you wear comes in earth tones like beige and khaki. My dad is in heaven because his favorite color is brown. Everyone on the trip looks the same so to spice up your travel photos toss in a turquoise or tangerine top to add a dash of color. Own your “adventure vibe!”

MUST-HAVES: As a city gal I have no “adventure gear” so I had to suit up at the adventure store. Must-haves include a strap for sunglasses so you don’t lose them, floppy hat with adjustable chin strap (the wind blows a lot), zip off slacks because you never know if you need long or short pants, strong bug spray and tons of sunblock. Footwear includes waterproof sandals, waterproof hiking boots and walking shoes. Bring a practical swimsuit, this is not the beach club in Monaco.

Ready for my Close-Up



My favorite portrait at Machu Picchu

Pose for Iconic Photo

You get one chance to bring home the classic souvenir photo of yourself in any historic location. Make it a good one. Before the trip I remind my nephews I am counting on them to take my iconic Machu Picchu pix and I don't care if they take 100 shots to get it right. As it turns out, my favorite image is taken accidentally by our guide with my phone.

SAFETY TIP: Stay on the trail and never go out of bounds. Two days after we left a German traveler handed his camera phone to a stranger to take his picture and stepped out of bounds falling to his death.

ANITA'S PHOTO TIP:

Rely on your guide for ALL iconic views. Position yourself with Huayna Picchu in the background. **Note to self: take off sunglasses, I forgot to do this in every shot.*

Portrait of Peru



Posing in authentic costumes in Cusco

Pose with Natives

As the last day of our trip winds down in Cusco I see a group of native Peruvians outside the hotel waving from across the street. They are posing with a baby goat and little girl. A burst of color and pattern and texture. As a seasoned traveler, I know they charge for pictures. At first I resist. Then I don't care and run outside with a handful of dollar bills to capture a final memory of Peru. As I walk around town doing last minute shopping, I see other groups in different costumes available for photos; some have a baby donkey or baby llama. My only regret is that I should have taken more photos.

WHERE TO VISIT:

Monasterio is a glam old monastery

WHERE TO GO:

Hip lunch at *Incanto* (multiple locations)