

Cartography travelled 435 nautical miles aboard Silver Origin for a **7-day expedition cruise in the Galápagos Islands**.

Situated in the Pacific Ocean some 1,000 km from the South American continent and located at the confluence of three ocean currents, the Galápagos are a “melting pot” of marine species.

These 19 islands and the surrounding Marine Reserve (133,000 km²) have been called a unique “iving museum and showcase of evolution”.

97% of the total emerged surface was declared a National Park in 1959. Around 30,000 people live on the islands, and approximately 200,000 tourists visit the islands each year.

Ongoing seismic and volcanic activity reflects the processes that formed the islands. These processes, together with the extreme isolation of the islands, led to the development of unusual animal life that inspired Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution by natural selection following his visit in 1835.

Cartography flew from Italy to Quito, the capital of Ecuador, and then from Quito to San Cristóbal Island (via Guayaquil) to embark on a SILVERSEA EXPEDITION in the Galápagos Islands.

Cruise itinerary:

San Cristóbal – Sail away around Leon Dormido
Genovesa Island – Darwin Bay & Prince Philip’s Step
Seymour Norte & Sullivan Bay, Santiago Island
Punta Mangle – Punta Moreno, Isabela Island
Santa Cruz Island – Montemar & Santa Fé Island
Española Island Gardner Bay & Punta Suarez
Morning at sea – Cerro Brujo, San Cristóbal Island
Pto. Baquerizo Moreno – Galapaguera, San Cristóbal

Activities: Zodiac tours, deep water snorkelling, kayaking adventures, nature walks and hikes led by naturalist experts and certified guides, lectures, marine wildlife observation, beach time.

Wildlife highlights: Frigatebirds, Great Frigatebirds, Brown Pelicans, Blue-footed and Red-footed Boobies, Nazca Boobies, Galápagos Sea Lions, Galápagos Fur Seals, Darwin Finches, Galápagos Land Iguanas, Marine Iguanas, Swallow-tailed Gulls, Flightless Cormorans, Giant Tortoises, Galápagos Mockingbirds, Santa Fé Land Iguanas, Waved Albatross, Galápagos Hawks, Red-billed Tropicbirds, Short-eared Owl, Yellow-crowned Night Herons.

The 100-guest ultra-luxury cruise SILVER ORIGIN welcomes travellers year-round to the unique Galápagos Archipelago. Silver Origin incorporates environmentally low-impact features, for instance, the ship’s dynamic positioning system is used when positioned over delicate seabed ecosystems to prevent the anchor from causing damage. The Silversea Fund for the Galápagos – a dedicated fund that supports educational projects to safeguard the well-being of the Galapagos Islands for future generations – strengthens the balance between humans and nature.

silversea.com/destinations/galapagos-islands-cruise

Pre-cruise 3-night stay in Quito.

Founded in the 16th century on the ruins of an Inca city, Quito sits 2,850 metres above sea level and has the best-preserved, least-altered historical district in Latin America. The monasteries of San Francisco and Santo Domingo, and the Church and Jesuit College of La Compañía, with their rich interiors, are pure examples of the “Baroque school of Quito”, which is a fusion of Spanish, Italian, Moorish, Flemish and indigenous art.

Stay at CARLOTA, a member of Design Hotels. The hotel rises majestically amid a UNESCO-listed setting in the heart of a historic district of Quito. A boutique hotel in a renovated historical house, built at the turn of the century circa 1905, Carlota maintains high environmental standards to warranty the lowest impact on the surrounding environment and ecosystems. designhotels.com/hotels/ecuador/quito

Visit:

Pre-Columbian Art Museum House of Praise
(N1-41 Calle Cuenca, Centro Histórico)

La Casa del Alabado is one of the oldest buildings in the historic centre and one of the most notable examples of the Colonial period in Quito. The museum’s collection comprises about 5,000 pieces and artefacts with ceremonial or utilitarian purposes created in ceramic, stone, shell, metal, textile, and wood.

alabado.org

Church of the Society of Jesus

(along García Moreno and Sucre, Centro Histórico)

The finest church in Quito, considered one of the best examples of Spanish Baroque architecture in South America. The large central nave is decorated almost completely with gold leaf, gilded plaster and wooden carvings.

Mercado Central

(Av Pichincha, San Blas)

Vegetables, fruit, fish and poultry stalls, food courts and prepared typical meals.

TelefériQo

(Fulgencio Araujo, La Comuna)

The cabins ascend from the Motriz platform at 3,117 metres above sea level, to Cruz Loma at 3,947, which makes it one of the highest cable cars in South America. During the ascent the vegetation changes drastically, from the Andean forest to Andean wasteland. teleferico.com.ec

Eat:

Urko, Cocina local

(Mallorca 449 Y, La Floresta)

A journey around the four regions of Ecuador and a celebration of the extreme biodiversity of the country by chef Daniel Maldonado. urko.rest

Cafetería Modelo

(calle Sucre y García Moreno, Centro Histórico)

Since 1950, the best café in town, not to be missed.

Nuema Restaurante

(Junín E1-44 y Juan Pío Montufar, Centro Histórico)

The culinary project of chefs Alejandro Chamorro and Pia Salazar expressing the biodiversity of Ecuador from a contemporary and avant-garde perspective. nuema.ec

La Purísima

(Espejo OE2 43 y Guayaquil dentro del Teatro Bolívar)

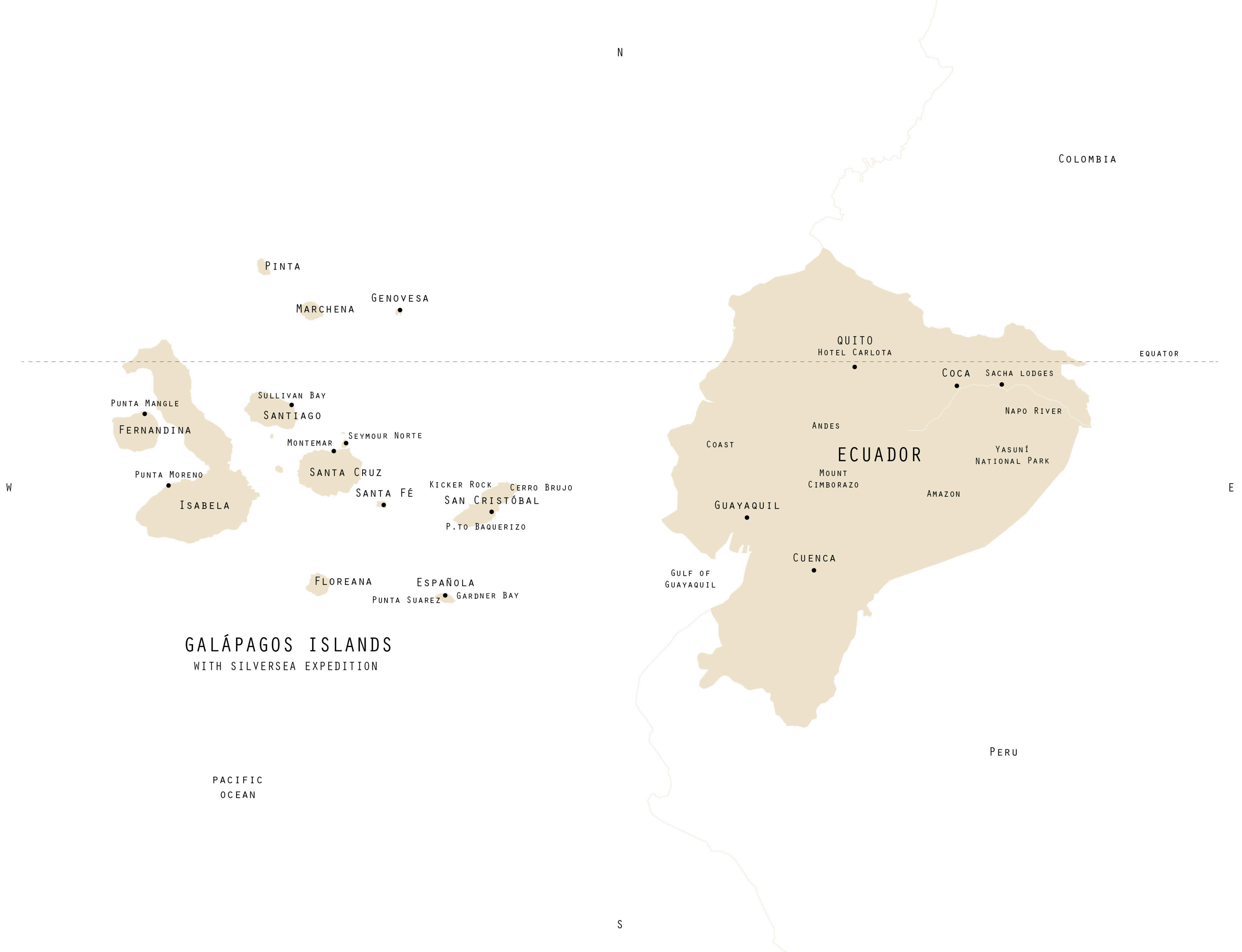
A tribute to Ecuadorian popular culture exploring recipes of our grandmothers and street dishes.

Cartography’s journey continued with a **four-day expedition programme in the Amazon**, with a direct flight from Mariscal Sucre International Airport Quito to El Coca Francisco de Orellana Airport.

The Yasuní National Park is located in the eastern centre of the Amazonian provinces of Orellana and Pastaza and is the largest protected area of continental Ecuador (one million hectares). The humid tropical forest of the Yasuní is considered one of the most biodiverse places on the planet so it has been scientifically qualified as a “Pleistocene refuge”.

Sleep at SACHA LODGE on the inland lake of Pilchecocha (Laguna El Pilche), a short hike and canoe ride from the Napo River (Río Napo). Sacha Lodge’s story begins in the 1970s when its Swiss founder Benny came to Ecuador in search of adventure and in 1985 opened his first tourist lodge on the Upper Napo. The lodge blends so seamlessly into its surroundings that to the resident wildlife it’s just another part of the forest. sachalodge.com

Activities: forest walks, night-time caiman-spotting, canopy walk, creek paddling in dug-out canoes, birdwatching, visit to the local Yasuní community.



GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS
WITH SILVERSEA EXPEDITION