

Santa Cruz Island, Galápagos, Ecuador

The beating heart of the Galápagos. In Puerto Ayora, marine iguanas share the sidewalk, sea lions nap on park benches, and the world's most famous tortoise research station is a short walk from the pier.

Tender (anchor in Academy Bay)

Typical call: 6–8 hrs

US Dollar (USD)

Spanish

Expedition ships only

🚢 MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date: _____

Arrive: _____

All aboard: _____

Excursion: _____

Notes: _____

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Tender — ships anchor in Academy Bay; pangas (Zodiacs) ferry passengers to the Muelle de Pasajeros

Best For: Endemic wildlife encounters, giant tortoise trekking, snorkeling volcanic crevices

Walk to center: 0 min — pier lands directly on Avenida Charles Darwin, the main waterfront strip

Don't Miss: Giant tortoises in the Highlands (El Chato) and the Fish Market pelican/sea lion circus

Getting around: **Taxi** \$1.50–\$2 in town; \$15–\$20 to highlands · **Rideshare** not available

TOP THINGS TO DO

- Galápagos Highlands & Giant Tortoises** — A 20-minute taxi ride into the misty highlands brings you face-to-face with free-roaming giant tortoises at El Chato or...
- Charles Darwin Research Station** — Walk 15 minutes from the pier to the world's most famous conservation station.
- Las Grietas Snorkel** — A volcanic crevice filled with crystal-clear brackish water — one of the most unusual snorkel spots in the world.
- Tortuga Bay Beach Day** — A 40-minute walk (or \$10 water taxi) through a cactus forest leads to one of the most beautiful beaches in South America.
- Puerto Ayora Waterfront Walk** — Avenida Charles Darwin runs from the pier through town.

BEST WALKS

- Pier to Darwin Research Station** 1.2 km · 15 min · Easy — Follow Avenida Charles Darwin northeast from the pier past the fish market and waterfront restaurants.
- Laguna de las Ninfas Boardwalk** 0.5 km loop · 20 min · Easy — A peaceful wooden boardwalk threading through mangrove forest around a brackish lagoon.
- Waterfront to Tortuga Bay Trailhead** 1.5 km · 20 min to trailhead · then 2.5 km to beach — Walk west along Avenida Charles Darwin through town to the Tortuga Bay ranger station.

WEATHER · DAYLIGHT · MONEY

CLIMATE (AVG °F · RAINY DAYS)

	Mon	High	Low	Rain
Apr		83°	76°	19d
Jun		78°	72°	18d
Aug		75°	69°	13d
Sep		75°	69°	12d
Oct		75°	69°	13d

DAYLIGHT & MONEY

Apr 5:58AM–6:03PM · Jun 5:59AM–6:04PM · Aug 6:03AM–6:08PM · Sep 5:53AM–5:59PM · Oct 5:43AM–5:50PM

US Dollar (USD)

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Bring small US bills. Ecuador is fully dollarized. Merchants struggle with \$50–\$100 bills; credit cards often carry a 10% surcharge.

Santa Cruz Island, Galápagos, Ecuador — Port Map

cruiseports.org

Red = walkable sights · Amber = excursions farther out · P = cruise terminal. Numbers match the order you'd typically visit.



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|--|---|---|--|
| 1 Charles Darwin Research Station | Research station for Galápagos conservation and scientific studies. | 2 Fausto Llerena breeding center | Giant tortoise breeding center, home to many tortoise species. |
| 3 La Ratona | Secluded beach for swimming and relaxing, near Puerto Ayora. | 4 El Mirador de Los Tuneles | Viewpoint offering panoramic views of lava tunnels and island. |
| 5 Tortuga Bay Beach | Beautiful white sand beach, home to marine iguanas and sharks. | P Cruise port / terminal | |