Ecuador: Discover the Galápagos and the Northern Andes

Led by Karen and Joel Schulman

April 5-17, 2026 (or April 9-17 if Cruise only)



©Karen Schulman

Highlights:

- Begin your tour with Karen and Joel in one of their favorite locations – the **Ecuadorian Highlands and Cloud Forest**. You will be immersed in an amazing part of the country with four full days of photography including landscapes, birdlife and the lovely local people.
- Return each day to your group's private villa after photographing in the **Cloud Forest**, along the **Eco-route of the hummingbird**.
- Enjoy a 7-night/8 day cruise program on a **first class,** 16-passenger Motor Catamaran Yacht - in the **Galápagos Islands.**
- The ANAHI provides spacious cabins (no bunk beds). This size yacht provides the most in-depth and personal way to experience the islands.
- Maximum of **14 participants** to optimize your photographic experience, on land and sea.
- Price **includes Quito/Galápagos Islands Airfare, Galápagos National Park Fee, and tourist card.**
- Services of professional tour leaders and photographers **Joel and Karen Schulman**. There will be **photography talks and reviews** on land and sea as time permits.

For more information or to register contact
Strabo Photo Tour Collection:
607-423-2525 www.phototc.com

STRABO TOURS
PHOTO TOUR COLLECTION

Overview



Strabo has the perfect place to start your tour of **Ecuador**. Your home away from home is the lovely **Villa Doris** country guest house, located in the **Nono Cloud Forest**. The village of Nono is a small parish, located 40-minutes north of Quito. Our stay here allows our small group of photographers to have the best of Ecuadorian hospitality, amazing biodiversity, gastronomic experiences, and daily excursions, all while contributing to the sustainable development of the surrounding community.

You will be **photographing along the Eco Route of the Hummingbird** and the Ecuadorian highlands, on the Northern slope of the **Pichincha Volcano**. Photograph the landscapes offered by the clouds playing with the forest. You will mingle with the locals, visit and photograph at a lovely rose farm as well. Day trips will also take you to photograph at beautiful **Pahuma Orchid Reserve, and the incredible San Tadeo Reserve**.



After four full days on the mainland there will be a group flight to your private **Catamaran Yacht**, the ideal boat to explore the **Galápagos Islands**. With only 14 participants, you will have personalized service, safety and comfort during your trip. The majority of your spacious cabins have two twin beds (NO cabins have bunk beds), private bathroom, air conditioning, and first-class amenities (each cabin is approximately 150 sq.ft). The professionally trained crew will care for you from the first to the last day of your trip on board. Relax during your vacation and connect closely with nature. Enjoy the jacuzzi with ocean view, delight your palate with local recipes and have a cocktail at the bar while you are transported through the beautiful islands at sunset. Snorkeling equipmant and kayaks are available for your use as well.



Traveling in the Galápagos Islands is much more than a cruise; it is an unforgettable experience with a small and intimate group, where you will discover the fascinating flora, fauna, history, and geography of the enchanted islands.

***If you are unable to attend the mainland portion of the program, see Cruise Cost Only pricing under General Information.**

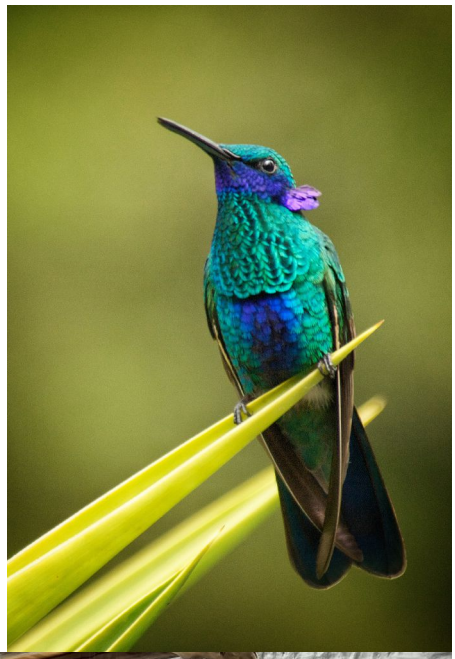


Photo Leaders:

Karen and Joel have been working in the photographic field for over 40 years and are both accomplished professional photographers. Karen is a skilled and sensitive photographic artist and educator and during our tour will share ideas and knowledge to help you create great travel photographs, whether you are using a DSLR or an iPhone! Joel is an expert in the digital imaging world and has done photographic printing for some of the most notable names in fine art photography. He will share his knowledge of both the technical and creative aspects of the photographic medium.

In addition, Karen and Joel will offer visual presentations and discussions highlighting the development of personal vision and awareness, and show how light, color, composition, gesture and 'the moment' contribute to the success of a photograph. **There will also be opportunities to have photo reviews of your images,** so everyone can share and learn from each other**.** Both Karen and Joel are passionate iPhoneographers and during your tour will offer optional creative **iPhoneography instruction**. Our goal is to make this tour enjoyable and fun for both serious and casual photographers!

From Karen: "I encourage each person to give themselves permission to make mistakes, permission to create. The more we learn to 'see' with our mind, heart and spirit, the more of an adventure life becomes." If you wish to review Joel's work or contact him: www.photographicsart.com, joel@photographicsart.com, Karen www.focusadventures.com, karen@focusadventures.com
Photo courtesy of Erik Pronske



Testimonials

What a fabulous balance of our presence as well as great instructional knowledge. Karen and Joel's attention to detail was beyond all expectations. Best Trip!!! Amazing countryside and meeting a 'new family'. Tapping into creative spriit, thinking outside the box. — T AND J KELLEWAY

Karen is terrific – always engaged, always available, great energy, great sense of humor. She has an amazing ability to get people through photo/camera gear crises when they occur. Makes things go smoothly even over the rough spots. She's diplomatic but not condescending, encouraging and enthusiastic. Altogether a terrific leader and instructor. — J. TILLINGER

What a fabulous trip! Karen and Joel, you went out of your way to welcome everyone, help with photography and make it enjoyable.We really did have a wonderful group! — C. HARRIS

Itinerary



Sunday April 5 Home – Quito - Nono
You will be transferred upon arrival to the lovely **town of Nono**. It is an oasis of peace and tranquility, along the **Eco-Route of the Hummingbird**. Surrounded by magnificent mountains, bathed by creeks and waterfalls, decorated with wildflowers, bromeliads and orchids, the village of Nono is the perfect destination for nature lovers, hikers, birders, photographers and those who enjoy meeting local people and learning about culture and history. The area is known as "Boca Mountain" where there are strong winds from the east, and the fog from the cloud forest produces moisture everywhere you look. Overnight Nono

Monday – Thursday April 6-9 Nono
There will be an additional four full days of photography, interacting with the smiling faces of this region. Time will be provided for photographing the beautiful gardens and landscape around your villa, as well as photography talks and reviews. Take a lovely hike with your local guide and photo leaders to capture waterfalls, cloud forest, and spectacular landscape images.



Depart your lovely villa for a tour and photography of some of the highlights **Colonial Quito** has to offer. You will spend time at **La Compañía de Jesus Church,** one of the best examples of religious art. Continue to the **La Basilica**, Quito's impressive cathedral. After lunch you will travel to the **Mitad del Mundo** (the Equator), 12 miles to the north of Ecuador's capital, where there is an interesting open-air museum called **The Solar Museum of Intiñan**. Here you'll be shown the different effects that being on the equator-line has on gravity and other natural forces. This museum also teaches visitors about indigenous Ecuadorian civilizations. This is worth a visit to learn and for photography.

The next day find yourself in the **Cloud Forest**. **El Pahuma** is an orchid reserve that lies in the heart of the **UNESCO Chocó-Andino Biosphere Reserve**. It is home to gushing cascades of water, hiking trails, 19 species of hummingbirds and a collection of wild orchids (200 species). **San Tadeo Birding** is a premier

destination located in the heart of Ecuador's bio-diverse **Mindo** region, renowned for its vibrant avian life. Photograph the stars of your time here, such as the Purple-throated Woodstar, Booted racket-tail, and White-necked Jacobin.



Rise early the next day to photograph and have breakfast at **Cayambe** famous for its salt biscuits with "leaf cheese" and "manjar," a delicacy which is a typical for Ecuadorians. The local restaurant overlooks the **San Pablo Lake**, where Taita Imbabura volcano welcomes you. Afterwards, you will enter **Otavalo City** to visit the Indian Market, one of the finest and most famous native markets in Latin America, and an ancient tradition and cultural exchange site among the Otavalo community. Then continue towards **Peguche** to meet local a weaver and her workshop. There is also an Andean musical instrument workshop to visit and photograph.

Your last full day you will learn that Ecuador is one of the highest producing countries of roses. Your photo leaders will introduce you to the **Rose Success Farm**, where you photograph the amazing colors, shapes and sizes that grow here. The Ecuador highlands provide ideal growing conditions, including the altitude, cool temperatures, and equatorial sunlight.

Enjoy lunch and photography at one of Ecuador's oldest haciendas. Located in the fertile plains of Cotopaxi, it is surrounded by imposing volcanoes. When you have photographed enough indoors, wander through the gardens, and photograph the imposing architecture of this grand hacienda. Overnight Nono (Meals 5th: light snack upon arrival; 6th Breakfast, Dinner; 7th Breakfast, Light Dinner; 8th Breakfast, Dinner; 9th Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Friday April 10 Quito–Baltra Flight schedule UIO 8:50A GPS 11:31A

You will be returned to the Quito airport for your group flight to the Galápagos and begin your exciting week of discovery on board a private motor catamaran yacht – the Anahi. The flight lands at Baltra, where you will be met and escorted to the boat. Take some time to get situated on board, while the crew takes care of formalities ashore.



Every evening after dinner the guides will brief you on the next day's activities, and when time allows, you will meet for a photo talk or review with Joel and Karen.

Your first visit is to Bachas Beach, which is made of decomposed coral, making it white and soft, while it is also one of the favorite nesting places of sea turtles. Nearby, you can also find a small lagoon where you will be able to observe flamingos, black-necked stilts, thrushes, and the remains of two old barges that were abandoned in the 1940's. You will then have an official welcome, followed by a delicious dinner. After dinner, your guide will give you information on the following day's activities. (**three meals per day included throughout the cruise)**



Saturday April 11 Genovesa

Darwin Bay is your anchorage area, within an ancient volcanic crater that has eroded into a fascinating geographical formation with a great diversity of seabirds that nest in the mangroves and cliffs of the area. These include red-footed boobies, Nazca boobies, swallow-tailed gulls, Galápagos petrels, seabirds, Darwin finches, mockingbirds, and Galápagos doves. Walk by the mangroves observing the fascinating life of these marine birds. This afternoon you will climb 25 meters of stairs at one of the best bird nesting sites on the islands, known as Prince Philip's Steps (locally known as "El Barranco"). You will have the opportunity to snorkel, kayak, or take a ride in a panga, and with luck catch a glimpse of the short-eared owl, a unique owl that hunts during the daytime.

Sunday April 12 South Plaza Island – Santa Fé Island
Plazas Islands have unusual vegetation of a succulent called Sesuvium, giving the landscape a unique tint of red or green depending on the season. It is also possible to observe land iguanas in the shade of the giant opuntia cacti. The main attractions of the Plaza Islands include land and marine iguanas, sea lions, and swallow-tailed gulls, as well as lizards, frigate birds, and pelicans that glide down the cliffs. After your walk you will return to the yacht for lunch and a well-deserved rest. Later in the day explore Santa Fe, a scenic island, where you can visit two different trails. One of them leads to a beautiful viewpoint on the top of a cliff, where you can find endemic land iguanas of the island. For those that don't want to climb, there is a small circular path close to the beach, where you will be able to observe a colony of sea lions. Then return to the yacht for dinner and a time of relaxation.



Monday April 13 San Cristóbal Island
Punta Pitt is considered as one of the most beautiful and impressive sites in the Galápagos, and a favorite nesting site for seabirds. In your morning visit you will see both species of frigate birds and boobies. While having lunch, the yacht will navigate towards Kicker Rock an impressive rock formation known locally as 'León Dormido' where you will circumnavigate around the huge rock to photograph from all angles.

Later you'll head towards Isla Lobos, an islet separated from San Cristóbal Island by a narrow stretch of calm waters. On the islet you will take a walk that will allow you to observe frigates, blue-footed boobies, masked boobies and a colony of sea lions. There will be another opportunity to snorkel here if you wish.



Tuesday April 14 San Cristóbal
In the morning, your guide will take you to the top of San Cristóbal Island. From Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, you can visit the El Junco Lagoon. For hundreds of years, rainwater and condensation have caused an accumulation of water in the caldera of an extinct volcano, creating a paradise for frigate birds. Then visit the D. Rodriguez (Cerro Colorado) Tortoise Breeding Center. They have a pleasant walk along a path that allows you to be in close contact with the giant Galápagos tortoises, which can vary from the smallest to the oldest of giants. Finally, you will visit the beautiful place known as Puerto Chino where you'll find sea lions and eventually observe marine turtles and blue-footed boobies.

In the afternoon, visit The Interpretation Center of San Cristóbal, located on the outskirts of the small town of Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the capital city of the Galápagos province. The center will give you an overview to the islands, and their natural and human history. A short 30-minute walk starts from the interpretation center and takes you to the top of "Cerro Tijeretas" hill to enjoy a spectacular sight of the surrounding geographical formations of the Pacific Ocean including the famous Kicker Rock. The hill is often visited by frigate birds that nest there in certain seasons of the year. At night guests who want to disembark can go into the city for a walk and maybe have a drink at one of the local bars.



Wednesday April 15 Española
Punta Suárez: A destination of great interest due to the incredible abundance of birds and endemic species like the Española Mockingbird, which has a distinctively longer and curved beak than variations found on other islands, the Galápagos lava lizard, the marine iguana of the venustissimus subspecies, and more. Among the more interesting attractions of the island is the waved albatross, as the entire world population of this species comes to breed here between March and December. Punta Suárez is one of the most sought-after land visits of the Galápagos, where you can find hundreds of Nazca boobies, colonies of sea lions, large colonies of marine iguanas and different species of birds, which can be seen doing their mating dances.

This afternoon Bahía Gardner has a gorgeous white coral sand beach that is perfect for relaxing, and surrounding areas that are excellent for a swim. Here you can undoubtedly see Darwin's finches, mockingbirds and with luck various species of rays, sharks, fish, and sea turtles in the water.



Thursday April 16 Floreana
Your morning visit to Punta Cormorant stops by one of the largest flamingo lagoons of the archipelago, located between two volcanic hills that gives the area a special atmosphere. There are varieties of sea birds that can be seen in addition to flamingos; the most frequent ones being black-necked stilts, white-cheeked pintails, and other migratory birds. This is a unique area due to the high percentage of endemic plants. Here you can see a unique "Green Beach" (due to the high percentage of olivine crystals in the sand) and the "Flour Sand Beach" mainly composed of coral reefs, making these amongst the most interesting beaches of the islands. Then return to the yacht to begin your exploration of "Devil's Crown." This is a sunken volcanic crater where the interior is ideal for the formation of marvelous coral reefs, making it one of the most fascinating marine sites in the Galápagos.



The "Post Office" bay historically served as a letter exchange station from the 18th century until today, when the crew of a whaling ship utilized a wooden barrel as the exchange point. The idea is to bring letters or postcards to their destination by hand, creating a very special "postal service". This site was also the landing place for some of the first settlers on the islands. Then visit the Asilo de la Paz, one of the first occupied areas of the archipelago by the German Wittmer family. If you are lucky, you may be able to photograph a pod of sea dolphins during your trip, as well as manta rays and sea turtles. (All meals aboard your yacht)

Friday April 17 Santa Cruz – Baltra – Quito – Home
Flight GPS 12:11P UIO 4:51P
After breakfast, visit the famous Fausto Llerena Interpretation Center, where you can see different sizes and species of the Giant Galápagos Tortoises. If there is time, you can also visit a special wing of the area where you can see "Lonesome George" on display or stop by a small guest center of the Charles Darwin Research Station.

Then you will be transported to "Los Gemelos," an iconic natural sinkhole formation, before crossing to Baltra Island with a local ferry, and then take a bus to the Baltra Island Airport. Your trip finishes here, as your amazing cruise will have to come to an end, but you'll return home with many wonderful memories and photographs!

*You should be able to connect in Quito with your flight home. If not, you can stay at an airport hotel and your return flight would then be April 18. Contact Strabo Tours for hotel options with shuttle service.



General Information

Land and Cruise Cost: $10,895, maximum 14 participants, based on a minimum of 11 passengers. Cost is based on two people sharing a room. Small group surcharge of $400 per passenger if 8-10 participants.

Single room supplement cost: $Contact Strabo Tours for availability.
Single rooms are subject to availability. Strabo suggests sharing a room on the cruise and land portion of the program. With limited number of rooms a single person is responsble for paying the other half of the cabin. Strabo can match you or we highly recommend traveling with a partner or friend.

*Can't be away that long? **Cruise only cost starts at $9,695** with one evening at Quito airport hotel. **Contact Strabo for details.**

The land and cruise cost includes:

- All tour accommodations & transportation in Ecuador for those traveling with the group, **including the Galapagos round trip flight, (Quito-Baltra) Galápagos Park fee and Ingala tourist card.**
- Meals (as specified in the itinerary with B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner).
- Services of an excellent bilingual guide.
- Services and Photographic Education by your Photo Leaders.
- Park entrance fees as shown in the itinerary.
- Extensive pre-departure information, services, and materials.

Not included: International air fare; airport departure tax; additional costs for transportation and accommodations for those not traveling with the group; meals not specified in the itinerary and beverages not included with meals; trip cancellation and interruption insurance; all personal expenses such as excess baggage fees, laundry, and phone calls; optional tips to the driver and guide.



Deposits, Cancellations AND Refunds

A deposit of $1500 *per person is required, due to accommodation bookings or transportation requirements. If applicable these will be noted on your invoice.* ***Payment in full is required by 150 days*** *before the departure date. Space is subject to cancellation by Strabo if payment is not received when due. If a passenger wishes to cancel, they must send notification in writing to Strabo International Tour, Co., P.O. Box 580, Dryden, NY 13053.*

At the time we receive a cancellation notification, the following per person charges apply:

• 151 days or more before departure: $750 minimum cancellation fee, plus Strabo' costs, as well as fees that are charged by the suppliers providing the services included in your tour, and/or the airlines providing the air transportation.

• 121-150 days before departure: 30% of tour rate is the minimum cancellation fee, plus Strabo' costs, as well as fees that are charged by the suppliers providing the services included in your tour, and/or the airlines providing the air transportation. Fees may range from 25% to 100% of tour costs.

• 91-120 days before departure: 60% of tour rate is the minimum cancellation fee, plus Strabo' costs, as well as fees that are charged by the suppliers providing the services included in your tour, and/or the airlines providing the air transportation. Fees may range from 25% to 100% of tour costs.

• 90 days or less before departure or any time after departure: NO REFUND.
Refunds for services that are voluntarily not used by you cannot be made.

Insurance

Each participant must be covered by medical insurance that is valid overseas.
We strongly urge you to evaluate your risk and to take out insurance on your trip. It is vital for you to realize that if you

experience a delay or find it necessary to cancel or cut short your trip for any reason, you will lose part or the entire amount you've invested in it (see the section "Deposits, Cancellations and Refunds" in the trip brochure).

Travel insurance helps to minimize the risk of monetary losses you would incur in the event of a delay of your departure due to weather, airline strike, missed connection, etc., your inability to travel for reasons such as illness, injury, unforeseen financial complications and other personal circumstances, or if you were required to cut your trip short for medical or any other reasons.

There are restrictions and limitations on any insurance program. For this reason, please carefully read the enclosed pamphlet, which outlines their program of trip cancellation, baggage, and medical insurance. Trained agents are available to answer your questions, don't hesitate to call the toll-free number in brochure. It is to your advantage to apply for insurance at the earliest possible time, so don't delay in deciding.

Fitness & Health



The trip will not be strenuous, but there will be walks each day, sometimes uphill in the heat, mud, & high altitude (7000 feet) on land portion of tour. Anyone who is reasonably fit should be able to participate in all scheduled walks, but if you have questions about how much activity is involved, please inquire further. At present, no inoculations are required for entry from the United States.

It is recommended to obtain sea sickness medication prior to your cruise if you have this tendancy. Food is generally safe to eat everywhere in the country. Water is not safe to drink throughout the country, be sure to drink only bottled water. Your local guide can offer guidance if you have concerns. Although malaria has been eradicated from areas we'll be visiting, you should consult your doctor about precautionary health measures. Full details will be sent upon enrollment.

Food & Accommodations

Ecuadorian food is not spicy. Menus are usually simple, but the food is always good and plentiful. Breakfast menus are much like those in North America. Rice, meat, beans, and vegetables are usually served at lunch and dinners. Delicious fruits and juices are in abundant supply. Accommodations are clean, comfortable, and pleasant, but not luxurious.