

A Shared Experience: Multigenerational Family Trip to Galápagos Islands

When the matriarch of a well-respected family approaches you to plan an unforgettable adventure for 13 family members to one of the most fascinating parts of the world, your adrenaline starts flowing. Discovering that this woman wants to gift this experience to her family so that they can witness what she saw more than five years ago? Well, it is then that the tears start flowing. And the team at Luxe Travel Consultants begins planning.

The Situation: Joyce Wood, 71, visited the Galápagos Islands in 2010 and has kept the experience with her ever since. She approached Luxe Travel Consultants with one goal: to let her kids and grandkids experience what she had seen in this preserved part of the world. This meant snorkeling, wildlife hikes, guided tours, sight-seeing on volcanically-active islands, lagoons, ecosystem explorations, and discovery time at the Charles Darwin Research Station and a tortoise reserve. Dates were confirmed and everyone was surveyed for interests and capabilities.

The Challenges and Solutions:

- **Multiple Age Groups:** With travelers ranging in age from 7 to 71, the multigenerational aspect of this trip posed a familiar challenge. Luxe Travel Consultants had to make sure that everyone had activity options and felt included throughout the adventure. By discussing capabilities and interests with the travelers on the front-end, Luxe Travel was able to plan a trip that everyone loved.

“This trip provided our family with shared memories...and this brings us closer together,” observed Amy Inman, 45, Joyce’s daughter-in-law.

- **Recreating a Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience:** When a very well-traveled client approaches you and says, *“The Galápagos Islands are one of the few places on earth where non-domesticated animals are not afraid of humans; this is powerful to see and I want to share that with my family,”* you know that one of the primary challenges is going to be creating the experience that the client wants to share—and getting it exactly right. Through multiple conversations, Luxe Travel was able to glean what Joyce most enjoyed from her first trip, including snorkeling and experiential learning opportunities. Armed with this information and the travelers’ interests and capabilities, Luxe Travel Consultants began the detailed planning process.

The Trip: From Baltra Island in the Galápagos archipelago to discussions with a child coordinator who is also a certified Galápagos naturalist guide; from experiencing the Opuntia cacti forest to Santa Fe Island and its turquoise lagoon; from snorkeling off Punta Pitt, Cerro Brujo, and Champion Islet to discovering a mangrove ecosystem and exploring the Charles Darwin Research Station, the trip was full of educational and athletic pursuits. According to Amy, *“The entire trip was supremely planned. The wildlife was wonderful and much different than anything I’ve experienced in any other part of the world.”* She added, *“The guides were fun and knowledgeable; this was an unforgettable multigenerational vacation.”*

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The Results: Joyce, Amy, and the other travelers enjoyed getting to spend concentrated time with one another as much as they enjoyed the carefully planned itinerary.

Kirsten Cash, Joyce's 19-year-old granddaughter, said *"You find things out about your cousins and family members that you would have never discovered in another setting."*

Amy agrees that the time spent together was the most valuable souvenir: *"I got to spend time in conversation with my nieces and nephews that I don't get to see very often,"* she said. *"Those conversations—the ones during which you discuss what you are looking forward to and what you are thinking about pursuing—don't happen unless you are experiencing something powerful together."*

Kirsten cherished this family vacation and felt so grateful that her grandmother did this for them. *"I loved all of the activities, and I learned so much,"* she said. *"I feel like I had this experience and these important conversations with my family members at a really pivotal point in my life—the summer before I started college."*

Joyce said that she is still hearing appreciative remarks from those who went on the trip—and that the time spent together was as valued as the once-in-a-lifetime adventures. *"Everyone seemed to have a really transformative time,"* she said. *"As I looked around during the activities, I could see that they were experiencing the same wonder I felt when I first traveled to these islands. And that was my goal—to give them the gift of this amazing experience."*