

Galapagos Safari Camp

Galapagos, Ecuador

On the islands that put Charles Darwin on the evolutionary trail, one thing didn't evolve – travellers' bedrooms. The Galapagos had boats to visit the blue-footed boobies, but the budget boobies you found to stay in on shore were enough to turn you green at the gills. So this place is a one-off: a dashing cockscomb of comfort and style atop a 400-metre ridge in the highlands of Santa Cruz, the Galapagos's second-biggest island.

The views are pure IMAX. It's built out of passion.

Michael and Stephanie Mesdag fell in love with each other, then with the ridge and finally the idea of the camp. So it's hair-brained and wonderful.

Nine voluminous tents have floors of cedar and basins of stone, and the front door of the glass-fronted main lodge was salvaged from an Indian temple. From Bali came a five-metre, solid teak table; it took 25 men to lift it – mad.

With hilly activities by day and a log fire at night, this is the perfect landlubbing bookend at the beginning or end of a cruise. In autumn, as the camp gets enveloped in mist, be careful not to trip over the meandering tortoises. **Website**

galapagossafaricamp.com. **UK reservations** The Ultimate Travel Company (tel: 020 7386 4646).

Rates Double, from £305, half board.

