



*Enriching Lives Through Distinctive Journeys*

For Immediate Release

## Big Five creates luxurious experiences in Ecuador

Stuart, FL (May 8, 2013) – Contrary to some notions, luxury and sustainability are not mutually exclusive. You can have the best of both!

Big Five Tours & Expeditions has teamed up with two like-minded partners – Silversea Cruises and Hacienda Zuleta – to provide a true luxury experience in Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands. Like Big Five, both companies offer award-winning services presented in luxurious surroundings, all the while remaining committed to sustainable principles.

“This is a niche that has needed to be filled in the Galapagos for a long time,” said Ashish Sanghrajka, president of Big Five Tours and Expeditions, “Our goal with this partnership is continue to move away from the mass-market approach that has been predominant in the Galapagos for years. Discounting is ruining the experience of these fragile ecosystems and ultimately has the potential to destroy them.”

Big Five’s goal in Ecuador and the islands is to counter that trend by choosing to create truly luxury journeys such as *Luxury Ecuador with Silversea Silver Galapagos*, which also encompass communities who have until recently been left out of the tourism equation.

Silversea Silver Galapagos, for example, is the newest ship in the Silversea line, and the most luxurious. Once onboard, guests need only relax and enjoy. A butler will even do the unpacking. This all-inclusive experience offers guests all the creature comforts from nine different pillow types, to sumptuous gourmet cuisine, to complimentary beverages, wines and spirits served aboard a ship was specially designed for cruising the Galápagos Islands.

From the moment guests step inside the homestead of Hacienda Zuleta, they feel instantly at home. This working farm has been the guardian of 300 years of tradition. Today, the hacienda is also an award-winning boutique hotel that welcomes guests with warm touches such as antiques, family portraits and hand embroidered linens. Every night, the staff lights the fireplace in each room, and places hot water bottles to warm each bed while guests are at dinner.

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“We look for that attention to detail. This is exactly the combination of luxury elements we were searching for when we created this program,” added Sanghrajka. “Yes, the price is going to reflect this change, but so, too, will the experience.”

Beyond that, guests can learn about the local community. They explore the importance of textiles in preserving the heritage of the local Zuleta village, and meet members of the Zuleta women’s cooperative. These woman create and sell colorful, handmade embroidered articles; and by doing so, help keep the traditional art form alive as well as provide income for their families and support for the entire community.

The 13-day *Luxury Ecuador with Silversea Silver Galapagos* journey, part of the Magellan Collection, melds Ecuador’s lesser-visited areas in the north of the country with the seven-day luxury cruise, creating more intimate and authentic cultural and wildlife experiences that includes a wide range of outstanding activities from horseback riding in the Andes, to scuba diving in the fabled islands. The land cost of this luxurious adventure begins at \$7,450 per person, double occupancy.

### **Big Five Tours & Expeditions**

With more than 40 years experience in luxury adventure travel, Big Five Tours & Expeditions offers luxury guided travel to Africa, Asia, the Orient, South and Central America, and the South Pacific. For more information, contact Big Five, (800) 244 3483, or email: [info@bigfive.com](mailto:info@bigfive.com); in Canada, (888) 244 3483, [info@bigfivetours.ca](mailto:info@bigfivetours.ca).

*Luxury Ecuador with Silversea Silver Galapagos:* <http://www.bigfive.com/tour/ecuador-with-the-silverseas/>

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Press kit available

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