

Baja: Exploring the Sea of Cortez

SNORKELING AND SEA KAYAKING ADVENTURES FROM ABOARD A HISTORIC WOODEN VESSEL



TRIP DATES

WHALE SHARK SWIM (9 DAYS)

Dec 13-21, 2023 9 days, La Paz to Loreto

Dec 23-31, 2023 9 days, Loreto to La Paz

Jan 5-13, 2024 9 days, La Paz to Loreto

GRAY WHALE WATCHING & WHALE SHARK SWIM (11 OR 12* DAYS)

Jan 13-24, 2024 12 days, Loreto to La Paz

Jan 24-Feb 3, 2024 11 days, La Paz to Loreto

Feb 3-14, 2024 12 days, Loreto to La Paz

Feb 14-24, 2024 11 days, La Paz to Loreto

Feb 24-Mar 6, 2024 12 days, Loreto to La Paz

Mar 6-16, 2024 11 days, La Paz to Loreto

Mar 16-27, 2024 12 days, Loreto to La Paz



Wilderness Travel

Baja: Exploring the Sea of Cortez

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Set in the brilliant turquoise waters of the Sea of Cortez, our adventure brings you up close to the wonders of Baja. With a classic 86-foot wooden ship as our base and kayaks on board, you'll explore between La Paz and Loreto, enjoying incredible experiences by land and sea. Sea kayak along the beaches of Isla Espíritu Santo, snorkel with playful sea lions, and track sperm whales and blue whales—the largest creatures to roam the earth—in the “Blue Triangle.” Anchoring each night in a secluded bay, you'll enjoy gorgeous sunsets, savor incredible gourmet meals fresh from the land and sea, and watch the magic of the starlit desert sky.

We offer two separate itineraries, each with a special added attraction. The 9-day itinerary is timed for December-January, at the end of the rainy season, when long-dormant plants flush bright green and migratory birds arrive to feast during this brief period of abundance. We'll swim and snorkel with whale sharks—the largest fish in the world!—and enjoy the serene Sea of Cortez. We'll snorkel through warm, clear waters along the steep rocky shores and over the shallow reefs that teem with life.

On the 11- and 12-day departures, you'll travel over the peninsula to Bahía Magdalena or Laguna San Ignacio for a 3-day adventure of up-close encounters among gray whales who come to these peaceful, warm-water lagoons each year to breed and give birth to their young. Imagine looking eye-to-eye with these magnificent creatures! These journeys are timed in January-March, when gray whale calves are curious and playful, often swimming right next to our boats. We'll also have the opportunity to spend a half-day swim and snorkel with whale sharks. No matter which itinerary you choose, you're in for the experience of a lifetime!

MAKE IT A PRIVATE TRIP!

You can charter any of our dates for your own private group, minimum 8. Call us for details!



Wilderness Travel

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Our Baja Journeys



WHALE SHARK SWIM (9 DAYS)

Day 1: Arrive in La Paz or Loreto

Days 2-8: Explore the Sea of Cortez aboard our Baja expedition vessel. Depending on departure, you will enjoy a half-day swim with whale sharks on Day 2 or Day 8.

Day 9: Depart from Loreto or La Paz

GRAY WHALE WATCHING & WHALE SHARK SWIM

LA PAZ TO LORETO (11 DAYS)

Day 1: Arrive in La Paz

Days 2-3: Whale watching at Bahía Magdalena (January and February departures) or Laguna San Ignacio (March and April departures).

Day 4: Enjoy a half-day swim with whale sharks

Days 5-10: Explore the Sea of Cortez aboard our Baja expedition vessel

Day 11: Depart from Loreto

LORETO TO LA PAZ (12 DAYS)

Day 1: Arrive in Loreto

Days 2-3: Whale watching at Bahía Magdalena (January and February departures) or Laguna San Ignacio (March and April departures).

Days 4-10: Explore the Sea of Cortez aboard our Baja expedition vessel

Day 11: Enjoy a half-day swim with whale sharks

Day 12: Depart from La Paz

Please Note: These adventures are not exclusive Wilderness Travel departures and it's possible you may be joined by other passengers. However, the small size of the vessel makes for an intimate and convivial journey among like-minded travelers.

Itinerary (Whale Shark Swim)

TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE— WHALE SHARK SWIM DEPARTURES

- Length:** 9 days
Arrive: San José del Cabo or Loreto, Mexico
Depart: San José del Cabo or Loreto, Mexico
Lodging: 7 nights aboard an 86-foot historic boat, 1 night hotel
Meals: All meals included
Activity: Sea Kayaking, Snorkeling, Walking, Whale Watching, Wildlife & Natural History
Trip Level: 1 2 3 4 5 6
Hiking, swimming, snorkeling, sea kayaking, and swimming and snorkeling with whale sharks

HIGHLIGHTS

- Swim and snorkel with whale sharks, the largest fish in the world
- Explore the Sea of Cortez on a classic wooden boat, discovering untouched islands and the “Blue Triangle”
- Sea kayak amid mangrove lagoons, remote bays, and along beautiful beaches
- Snorkel with sea lions, watch pods of dolphins, observe nesting frigatebirds, and hike island trails



DAY 1 ARRIVE

Depending on your departure date, you will either begin in La Paz or Loreto. Please see pages 12-13 for more information on arrival and departure details...D

La Paz to Loreto departures: upon arrival in Los Cabos Airport, your guide will meet you under awning number 5 outside after 11:30 am, and you will be escorted to the van that will transport you to La Paz. We hope to leave the airport at 2:00 pm for the 2.5-hour drive to La Paz. After you arrive at the boutique hotel in La Paz, you will have time for a stroll along the bay before we gather for dinner at a nearby restaurant.

Loreto to La Paz departures: upon arrival in Loreto aboard the Alaska/ Horizon flight from Los Angeles, a crew member will meet and escort you to the van for a short drive to the hotel in Loreto. After checking in, there is time to rest, or to explore the historic town square, which is lined with shops and cafés. We will meet in a small, outdoor restaurant near the main square for a group dinner.

DAYS 2-8

WHALE SHARK SWIM / HIKING AND SNORKELING ADVENTURES AS WE EXPLORE THE ISLES OF THE SEA OF CORTEZ

We are welcomed on board for a short orientation before heading out into the impossibly blue waters of the Sea of Cortez, with lunch served as we get underway. Often referred to as the “Vermillion Sea” and “the aquarium of the world,” the Sea of Cortez is a realm of scattered islands, large and small, each one designated a Mexican national park. In 1940, author John Steinbeck and his close friend, marine biologist Ed Ricketts, spent six weeks on a collecting expedition here, detailing their voyage and studies of aquatic life in *The Sea of Cortez: A Leisurely Journal of Travel and Research*, which Steinbeck later reworked into the classic *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*. Heading out into the azure waters, our first anchorage is at Isla Espíritu Santo, a wilderness of deserted white-sand beaches, secluded coves, rugged multi-colored cliffs, and thickly vegetated arroyos (dry canyons) spiked with a colorful array of cactus species. This is one of the most biologically diverse marine areas in the world, now under the protection of The Nature Conservancy. The incredible displays of wildlife include seabirds, friendly sea lions, and an underwater kaleidoscope of parrot fish, Cortez rainbow wrasse, and bright red starfish. We’ll get into our kayaks for wonderful paddles along the untouched shore, and have some time for swimming in the crystal clear waters.

Depending on departure, we’ll enjoy a half-day swim with whale sharks on Day 2 or Day 8. From early winter until late spring these gentle giants can be found feeding on plankton and microscopic plants in the rich waters of the Sea of Cortez. The morning feed is the prime time for encounters, and once we find them, we’ll observe them a bit, then slip into the water to swim and snorkel beside them. The chance to be among these immense creatures ranks as one of

Itinerary (Whale Shark Swim cont'd)

the most thrilling wildlife adventures in the world. Traveling in small groups, they swim just below the surface, and although they move slowly, it sometimes requires strong swimming to keep up with them. Along the way, we'll keep an eye out for other sea life, including whales, rays, and dolphins that share the waters with the whale sharks. Strict regulations are in place to protect these magnificent animals, including time limits within the viewing area.

The other days are meant for exploring and relaxing. In ancient times, Isla Espíritu Santo was home to a large population of prehistoric peoples who made their living from the sea. Traces of their ancient pathways are still visible on the island's hillsides, and our naturalist leads us on a hike following these routes, from the mangrove-fringed shore into the interior of the island to its desert heart. We navigate to Caleta Cardonal, a beautiful beach framed by the turquoise sea on Isla Partida, the island just north of Isla Espíritu Santo, and enjoy an exquisite anchorage with time for a paddle or swim before dinner and the dazzling stars once night has fallen.

As we cruise north, we explore along meandering shorelines, dropping anchor to explore unique island and peninsula sites on land and in the water. Our stops may include Los Islotes, where we can snorkel with resident California sea lions who tempt us into a game of underwater tag, and a Ricketts-Steinbeck collection site. We may also hike trails that host an endemic cactus, discover prehistoric shell middens, and find fossilized whale bones surprisingly far inland from the present-day shoreline. Each day is filled with a wonderful range of activities that allow us to experience this remote paradise: snorkeling above rock reefs teeming with fish, watching schools of mobula rays or hundreds of

LODGING—LA PAZ TO LORETO WHALE SHARK SWIM

(See pages 15 & 16 for descriptions)

Day 1 (1 night): Posada LunaSol
Days 2-8 (7 nights): Our Expedition Vessel

LODGING—LORETO TO LA PAZ WHALE SHARK SWIM

(See pages 15 & 16 for descriptions)

Day 1 (1 night): Posada del Cortes
Days 2-8 (7 nights): Our Expedition Vessel





dolphins leaping above the water's surface, walking the ridge lines and palm-lined arroyos of isolated islands, or paddling kayaks in quiet coves, an ideal way to view wildlife—we can often approach marine life closely. Along the way we cruise through the “Blue Triangle,” an area bounded by Danzante, Carmen, and Monserrate islands and an important area for wintering blue whales. We hope to see both blue and sperm whales, which congregate here to feed on the plankton and squid that thrive in the area's nutrient-rich waters. As our boat lies at anchor each night we may hear the breaths of sea turtles and watch the sea reflect the glittering stars. Our phenomenal chef is a master of sea-to-table cuisine, and the ingredients couldn't be fresher. Local farmers' markets supply the produce, and freshly-caught fish (or scallops, which you may have had a hand in gathering) are featured on the menu. Overnights aboard the ship... BLD each day

DAY 9

DEPART

After breakfast, you are transferred to the airport for homeward-bound flights...B

Itinerary (Gray Whale Watching)

DAY 1

ARRIVE

Depending on your departure date, you will either begin in La Paz or Loreto. Please see pages 12-13 for more information on arrival and departure details...D

La Paz to Loreto departures: upon arrival in Los Cabos Airport, your guide will meet you under awning number 5 outside after 11:30 am, and you will be escorted to the van that will transport you to La Paz. We hope to leave the airport at 2:00 pm for the 2.5-hour drive to La Paz. After you arrive at the boutique hotel in La Paz, you will have time for a stroll along the bay before we gather for dinner at a nearby restaurant.

Loreto to La Paz departures: upon arrival in Loreto aboard the Alaska/ Horizon flight from Los Angeles, a crew member will meet and escort you to the van for a short drive to the hotel in Loreto. After checking in, there is time to rest, or to explore the historic town square, which is lined with shops and cafés. We will meet in a small, outdoor restaurant near the main square for a group dinner.

DAYS 2-3

WHALE WATCHING AT BAHÍA MAGDALENA OR LAGUNA SAN IGNACIO

Our adventure begins as we head to Bahía Magdalena (January and February departures) or to our safari-style camp at Laguna San Ignacio (March departures). These are two of the three gray whale birthing and breeding lagoons along Baja's west coast. Each winter, gray whales arrive in these sheltered waters from their summer feeding grounds in the Bering Sea—a journey of some 5,000-7,000 miles, one of the longest mammal migrations on earth—and spend the winter courting, birthing, and rearing their young, and enjoying Baja's warm waters. Once hunted to the brink of extinction, the whales have made a remarkable recovery, now numbering around 20,000.

In the afternoon, we board our skiff (known as a panga here) and head out into the lagoon. Prepare yourself for one of the world's great wildlife experiences as the whales often approach our boats and seek interaction with us, sometimes even allowing us to touch them. These massive mammals measure up to 45 feet in length and it's quite a thrill to see a 40-ton whale eye to eye! Returning to our hotel (or safari-style camp), we have time to relax with a cold drink before gathering for dinner and a spectacular sunset. Afterwards, we can take a walk to gaze at the night sky and listen to the lulling sounds of the star-lit lagoon. The following day, we enjoy another exhilarating whale watching excursion in the morning, when the waters are usually still, then return to La Paz in the afternoon. Overnight at hotel or camp on Day 2 and at hotel in La Paz on Day 3...BLD each day

Driving Details: 3.5 hours each way (Magdalena Bay) or 5 hours each way (San Ignacio) Note: Due to the unpredictability of whale behaviors, we may make changes in which lagoons we visit.

TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE— GRAY WHALE WATCHING & WHALE SHARK SWIM DEPARTURES

Length:	11 or 12 days
Arrive:	San José del Cabo or Loreto, Mexico
Depart:	San José del Cabo or Loreto, Mexico
Lodging:	7-8 nights aboard an 86-foot historic boat, 2 nights hotels, 1 night hotel or camp for gray whale watching
Meals:	All meals included
Activity:	Sea Kayaking, Snorkeling, Walking, Whale Watching, Wildlife & Natural History
Trip Level:	1 2 3 4 5 6 Hiking, swimming, snorkeling, sea kayaking, and whale watching excursions by skiff

HIGHLIGHTS

- Up-close whale encounters in the breeding and birthing lagoons of Bahía Magdalena or San Ignacio
- Explore the Sea of Cortez on a classic wooden boat, discovering untouched islands and the "Blue Triangle"
- Sea kayak amid mangrove lagoons, remote bays, and along beautiful beaches
- Swim and snorkel with whale sharks, the largest fish in the world



LODGING—LA PAZ TO LORETO

(See pages 15 & 16 for descriptions)

Day 1 and Day 3 (2 nights): Posada LunaSol

Day 2 (1 night): Mangrove Inn Baja or San Ignacio Camp

Days 4-10 (7 nights): Our Expedition Vessel

LODGING—LORETO TO LA PAZ

(See pages 15 & 16 for descriptions)

Day 1 and Day 3 (2 nights): Posada del Cortes

Day 2 (1 night): Mangrove Inn Baja or San Ignacio Camp

Days 4-11 (8 nights): Our Expedition Vessel



DAYS 4-10 OR 4-11 (DEPENDING ON DEPARTURE)

WHALE SHARK SWIM / HIKING & SNORKELING ADVENTURES IN THE SEA OF CORTEZ

Welcome aboard the historic 86-foot wooden ship, listed with the US National Register of Historic Places. We are welcomed on board for a short orientation before heading out into the impossibly blue waters of the Sea of Cortez, with lunch served as we get underway. Often referred to as the “Vermillion Sea” and “the aquarium of the world,” the Sea of Cortez is a realm of scattered islands, large and small, each one designated a Mexican national park. In 1940, author John Steinbeck and his close friend, marine biologist Ed Ricketts, spent six weeks on a collecting expedition here, detailing their voyage and studies of aquatic life in *The Sea of Cortez: A Leisurely Journal of Travel and Research*, which Steinbeck later reworked into the classic *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*.

Depending on departure, you’ll enjoy a morning of swimming and snorkeling with whale sharks on Day 4 (La Paz to Loreto departure) or Day 11 (Loreto to La Paz departure). We’ll be outfitted with snorkeling equipment for our swim with the largest fish in the sea, the whale shark (and here in Baja, they are usually 20–30 feet in length!). From early winter until late spring these gentle giants can be found feeding on plankton and microscopic plants in the rich waters of the Sea of Cortez. We transfer to the panga landing where we board a small open launch that brings us into the whale shark viewing area. The morning feed is the prime time for encounters, and once we find them, we’ll observe them a bit, then slip into the water to swim and snorkel beside them. The chance to be among these immense creatures ranks as one of the most thrilling wildlife adventures in the world. Traveling in small groups, they swim just below the surface, and although they move slowly, it sometimes requires strong swimming to keep up with them.

Heading out into the azure waters, our first anchorage is at Isla Espíritu Santo, a wilderness of deserted white-sand beaches, secluded coves, rugged multi-colored cliffs, and thickly vegetated arroyos (dry canyons) spiked with a colorful array of cactus species. This is one of the most biologically diverse marine areas in the world, now under the protection of The Nature Conservancy. The incredible displays of wildlife include seabirds, friendly sea lions, and an underwater kaleidoscope of parrot fish, Cortez rainbow wrasse, and bright red starfish. We’ll get into our kayaks for wonderful paddles along the untouched shore, and have some time for swimming in the crystal clear waters. Tonight we enjoy the first of our exceptional meals, served in the wood-paneled salon or on the back deck. Our phenomenal chef is a master of sea-to-table cuisine, and the ingredients couldn’t be fresher. Local farmers’ markets supply the produce, and freshly-caught fish (or scallops, which you may have had a hand in gathering) are featured on the menu.

Itinerary (Gray Whale & Whale Shark cont'd)

In ancient times, Isla Espíritu Santo was home to a large population of prehistoric peoples who lived from the bounty of the sea. Traces of their ancient pathways are still visible on the island's hillsides, and our naturalist leads us on a hike following these routes, from the mangrove-fringed shore into the interior of the island to its desert heart. We navigate to Caleta Cardonal, a beautiful beach framed by the turquoise sea on Isla Partida, the island just north of Isla Espíritu Santo, and enjoy an exquisite anchorage with time for a paddle or swim before dinner and the dazzling stars once night has fallen.

Cruising north, we meander along shorelines, dropping anchor to explore unique island and peninsula sites on land and in the water. Our stops may include Los Islotes, where we can snorkel with resident California sea lions who tempt us into a game of underwater tag, and a Ricketts-Steinbeck collection site. We may also hike trails that host an endemic cactus, discover prehistoric shell middens, and find fossilized whale bones far inland from the present-day shoreline. Each day is filled with a wonderful range of activities: snorkeling above rock reefs teeming with fish, watching schools of mobula rays or hundreds of dolphins leaping above the water's surface, walking the ridge lines and palm-lined arroyos of isolated islands, or paddling kayaks in quiet coves, an ideal way to view wildlife—we can often approach marine life closely. Along the way we cruise through the “Blue Triangle,” an area bounded by Danzante, Carmen, and Monserrate islands and an important area for wintering blue whales. We hope to see both blue and sperm whales, which congregate here to feed on the plankton and squid that thrive in the area's nutrient-rich waters. As our boat lies at anchor each night, we may hear the breaths of sea turtles and watch the sea reflect the glittering stars. Overnights aboard the ship...BLD each day



DAY 11 OR 12 (DEPENDING ON DEPARTURE)

DEPART

After breakfast, you are transferred to the airport for homeward-bound flights...B



Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

TRIP COST

Prices are valid through Spring 2024

Fall 2023-Spring 2024: 9-day itineraries

Categories	Price
Cabins with Private Bath (price per person)	\$7000
Single Cabin	\$10,500
Boat Charter	\$56,000

Fall 2023-Spring 2024: 11- or 12- day itineraries; Jan 13; Jan 24, 2024

Categories	Price
Cabins with Private Bath (price per person)	\$7750
Single Cabin	\$11,625
Boat Charter	\$62,000

Fall 2023-Spring 2024: 11- or 12-day itineraries Feb 3 - Mar 16, 2024

Categories	Price
Cabins with Private Bath (price per person)	\$8250
Single Cabin	\$12,375
Boat Charter	\$62,000

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Trip Naturalist and Captain
- Accommodations aboard an 86-foot historic wooden vessel and hotels as indicated
- All meals included
- Beer and wine
- Kayaks, paddles, radios, PFDs (life jackets), and boat safety gear
- All ground transportation

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

Airfare to/from points of embarkation and disembarkation of the boat, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, travel insurance, optional gratuities to leaders or staff, additional hotel nights made necessary by airline schedule changes or other factors, expenses such as immunizations (if any), and other expenses of a personal nature.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: 20% of trip cost
100 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Minimum fee: 50% of deposit
91-150 days prior to departure: 100% of deposit
90 days or less: 100% of trip cost

*Please note that this differs from our regular catalog departures.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Mexico. There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

Depending on your routing, it may be necessary to depart from your hometown one day prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule so we can reserve your airport transfers. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

The Crew

Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible.



CARLOS GAJON BERMÚDEZ, NATURALIST

Carlos is a La Paz native whose grasp of the region's people, history, and ecosystems is encyclopedic. Though he majored in international business, his passion is the sea, and he grew up fishing and exploring the coast of Baja with his father and grandfather. An avid surfer, Carlos picked up sea kayaking rapidly and is a certified ACA sea kayak instructor and wilderness first responder. Carlos learned a great deal about Baja wildlife in the years exploring with his family as well as training in naturalist guiding with various organizations. He served as a volunteer in Loreto National Park, and has guided for 18 years on the Sea of Cortez. He is also a fine wildlife photographer and Scuba diver.



BILL BAILEY, CAPTAIN

Bill Bailey acquired his passion for boats at the impressionable age of 12, when he worked at a shop with a master boat builder on a five-year project. After growing up as a surfer in Southern California he moved to the Pacific Northwest where he worked as a commercial fisher in Washington and Alaska, used boats to transport materials and crews to construction sites on remote islands, and cruised extensively with his family. Over the last forty years, he has spent more than four thousand days at sea and has covered over seventy thousand sea miles. Along the way, he learned the arcane intricacies of his boats' antique engines and custom engineered systems. His love for the sea, for classic wooden vessels, as well as for their crews and the guests who sail with him are readily apparent.



TRACIE TRIOLO, CHEF

Tracie developed a passion for food, music, and the outdoors while working in her family's restaurant in Boulder, Colorado, and spending her spare time playing music, skiing, backpacking, and refining her backcountry cooking skills. She received her culinary arts degree through the New School for Social Research from the New York Restaurant School in Manhattan. She worked in many upscale restaurants, as chef Garde Manger for Fairmont Hotels and as a restaurant chef for the Grand Hyatt in San Francisco before discovering the life of living and cooking on our beautiful classic yacht in Baja (in summer she's a chef on charter boats up in Alaska and the San Juan Islands). Tracie is a perfectionist and virtuoso—she is renowned for her “sea-to-table” creations and her exceptional culinary skills are a major highlight of the trip for many! She is also an accomplished musician, playing piccolo and flute with local symphony orchestras and baritone saxophone in jazz bands.

“The extent of the meal presentation and preparation mastery went well beyond our expectations. How Tracie is able to do what she does in that floating galley is a credit to her organization skills, creativity, and experience. We were confounded by her ability to change things up and demonstrate all aspects of her cooking mastery.”—*Wayne H., Tucson, AZ*

Arrival & Departure

AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to La Paz or Loreto and return. Air service into La Paz or Loreto is available on various airlines:

Alaska Airlines

www.alaskaair.com

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

It is necessary to depart from your hometown a day prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must exactly match the name on the government-issued photo ID you plan to use while traveling.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

Wilderness Travel does not make the extra hotel night reservations in Baja.

EXTRA HOTEL NIGHTS

If you have booked extra services before or after the trip, an Extra Services Confirmation will be sent with your Final Documents.

For extra hotel nights in San Jose del Cabo, we suggest the following:

Encanto Inn & Suites: This hotel is about 20-25 minutes from the airport in the quaint town of San Jose del Cabo. You can walk around the town. This is not the Cabo San Lucas area. The hotel has a shared shuttle to and from the airport, or you can take a taxi.

elencantoinn.com

For extra hotel nights in La Paz, we suggest the following:

Posada LunaSol

www.posadalunasol.com

For extra hotel nights in Loreto, we suggest the following:

Posada Del Cortes

www.posadadelcortes.com

WHALE SHARK, LA PAZ TO LORETO (9 DAYS)

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

San José del Cabo, Mexico

Suggested Airport: Los Cabos Int'l Airport (SJD)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, by 1:30 pm

A complimentary transfer is provided from the Los Cabos Airport to the hotel in La Paz for all trip members arriving on Day 1. Your Trip Leader will meet you outside the customs area. It is a 2.5-hour drive to La Paz.

DEPARTURE

Loreto, Mexico

Suggested Airport: Loreto Int'l Airport (LTO)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 9, after 2:00 pm

A morning drive brings you to the Loreto Airport. If you're departing on a different day, you are responsible for arranging your own transfer.

WHALE SHARK, LORETO TO LA PAZ (9 DAYS)

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Loreto, Mexico

Suggested Airport: Loreto Int'l Airport (LTO)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, by 1:30 pm

A complimentary transfer is provided from the Loreto Airport to the Loreto hotel for trip members arriving on Day 1. Your Trip Leader will meet you outside the customs area.

DEPARTURE

San José del Cabo, Mexico

Suggested Airport: Los Cabos Int'l Airport (SJD)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 9, after 1:00 pm.

A 2.5-hour drive brings you to the Los Cabos Airport, arriving by 1:00 pm. If you're departing on a different day, you are responsible for arranging your own transfer.

GRAY WHALE & WHALE SHARK, LA PAZ TO LORETO (11 DAYS)

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

San José del Cabo, Mexico

Suggested Airport: Los Cabos Int'l Airport (SJD)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, by 1:30 pm

A complimentary transfer is provided from the Los Cabos Airport to the hotel in La Paz for all trip members arriving on Day 1. Your Trip Leader will meet you outside the customs area. It is a 2.5-hour drive to La Paz.

DEPARTURE

Loreto, Mexico

Suggested Airport: Loreto Int'l Airport (LTO)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 11, after 2:00 pm

A morning drive brings you to the Loreto Airport. If you're departing on a different day, you are responsible for arranging your own transfer.

GRAY WHALE & WHALE SHARK, LORETO TO LA PAZ (12 DAYS)

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Loreto, Mexico

Suggested Airport: Loreto Int'l Airport (LTO)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, by 1:30 pm

A complimentary transfer is provided from the Loreto Airport to the Loreto hotel for trip members arriving on Day 1. Your Trip Leader will meet you outside the customs area.

DEPARTURE

San José del Cabo, Mexico

Suggested Airport: Los Cabos Int'l Airport (SJD)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 12, after 1:00 pm.

A 2.5-hour drive brings you to the Los Cabos Airport, arriving by 1:00 pm. If you're departing on a different day, you are responsible for arranging your own transfer.

Our Expedition Vessel



We are delighted to invite you aboard this unique and historic 86-foot wooden vessel. A “gentleman’s yacht” designed specifically for exploration, she is ideal for discovering the wonders of Alaska and the Sea of Cortez. You’ll find a lovely wood-paneled salon aboard—a great space where we can unroll the charts and share the route you’ve explored that day and discuss the adventures that lie ahead. There is a spacious covered back deck, the ultimate spot for watching marine life (think whales, seals, and more!) as you relax with a glass of wine or a cup of hot chocolate. You won’t believe the meals that our on-board chef produces from the galley, including fresh-baked goods and wonderful fish from the bounty of the surrounding seas. There are four cabins, each with a double bunk below and a single bunk above, accommodating either couples or friends traveling together. Each of the cabins has its own private en suite bathroom with a sink, toilet, and shower.

With the vessel’s relatively small size, shallow draft, and yet powerful engine, we’ll be able to explore remote coves and islands by day, and at night we can enjoy beautiful secluded anchorages. As you may have guessed, we absolutely love this vessel for the incredible adventures it makes possible, but do keep in mind that she is a relatively small vessel, and set your expectations accordingly. The cabins are well designed but will be far smaller than what you would find on a massive cruise ship. We find her intimate size (just eight passengers!) absolutely perfect.

Launched in 1924 as the flagship of the Alaska Coast Hunting and Cruising Company, the vessel pioneered hunting, fishing, and adventure travel in remote regions of Washington, British Columbia, and Alaska for over 20 years (including serving such VIPs as Bing Crosby, Walt Disney, John Wayne, and Marjorie Merriweather Post). During World War II, she served as a patrol boat off the California coast, then post-war was converted to a private yacht and charter vessel. She has benefitted from continuous upgrades to her engine, systems, structure, and accommodations, including an extensive rebuild in 2005–2006 that created the four guest cabins she has today, and full below decks refit in 2015 that added private bathrooms to each cabin. She is listed with the US National Register of Historic Places. Since each double cabin also has both a double and a single bunk, it is possible for a family of three to book a cabin. We look forward to welcoming you aboard!

Accommodations

LA PAZ: POSADA LUNASOL

You'll feel right at home at this charming small hotel, with its exceptionally warm and friendly staff. Located within walking distance of the *malecon* (seaside promenade), it offers spotless air-conditioned guest rooms decorated with bright Mexican tilework, and a nice continental breakfast with yummy fresh local fruit. There is a small but refreshing swimming pool and a wonderful rooftop terrace, where you can sip a drink and watch a glowing sunset on the bay.

Day 1 (1 night), Whale Shark Swim, 9-Day La Paz to Loreto departures Days 1 and 3 (2 nights), Gray Whale Watching & Whale Shark Swim, 11-Day La Paz to Loreto departures



LOPÉZ MATEOS, BAHÍA MAGDALENA: MANGROVE INN BAJA

Sun, sand, sea, and excellent whale watching opportunities are enjoyed from this beachfront hotel. Each guest room has two double beds and private bathroom. A watchtower allows you to climb up for views of the bay and sightings of whales!

Day 2 (1 night), Gray Whale Watching & Whale Shark Swim, all departures in January–February



LORETO: POSADA DEL CORTES

This small boutique-style hotel (just eight rooms!) is tucked away on a quiet side street in the center of Loreto, and is an easy walk to the malecon or main square. Guest rooms are on the small side but have comfy beds, air-conditioning, and are nicely decorated with colonial touches. Be sure to take time to relax in the courtyard or on the rooftop garden terrace with its lovely views of the mountains.

Day 1 (1 night), Whale Shark Swim, 9-Day Loreto to La Paz departures Days 1 and 3 (2 nights), Gray Whale Watching & Whale Shark Swim, 12-Day Loreto to La Paz departures



LAGUNA SAN IGNACIO: SAN IGNACIO CAMP

Our camp at Laguna San Ignacio is set among the dunes facing the bay on the lee side of barrier islands—a great spot as we're often treated to the sight of whales and dolphins swimming past! We stay in roomy dome tents, each with two cots and sleeping pads. You can freshen up by bathing in the ocean with biodegradable soap and rinsing off under our freshwater solar shower. The toilet is a porta-potty system placed in a secluded spot a bit away from camp. Our camp crew prepares delicious meals served in a dining tent with tables and chairs. And because we can bring along plenty of ice, it's a welcome pleasure at the end of the day to enjoy an ice-cold Ballena (local beer; Spanish for “whale”) while watching a spectacular Baja sunset.

Day 2 (1 night), Gray Whale Watching & Whale Shark Swim, all departures in March–April



Trip Details

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated Level 2, easy to moderate, according to our trip grading system. The expedition vessel serves as our mobile base camp. We explore remote beaches and islands by day, then enjoy the comfort of the ship in the evening for good food, fine company, and a comfortable bunk. With just a few hours of cruising each day, there is plenty of time for walking, wildlife watching, swimming, snorkeling, and sea kayaking, all in the company of an on-board naturalist who shares insights into the local botany and natural history. Because our Trip Leader is an accomplished diver, we can expand our opportunities for in-the-water snorkel explorations. The water is warm, but not tropically warm, so “shorty” wetsuits are recommended for those interested in snorkeling or swimming.

A Note on the Itinerary

Every trip aboard a small ship can—and should—be slightly different. This is our planned itinerary, but if conditions and wildlife, whether on land or sea, present us with special opportunities, we'll alter our course and head that way to experience it. On a typical day, we spend 2-4 hours conducting off-boat explorations; either a kayak paddle, a desert or beach walk, a skiff ride into a mangrove lagoon, a snorkel—or sometimes, all four! Our itineraries are leisurely—we don't rush past hundreds of miles of beautiful coves and inlets to stay on schedule, and we don't travel at night. A flexible attitude and an openness to the unexpected keep the adventure alive on these voyages.

Cuisine

Our meals are elegant, locally sourced, and artfully presented. Fresh ingredients come from local providers whenever possible, including organic farmers, and fish is bought directly from local fishermen.

Please Note: These adventures are not exclusive Wilderness Travel departures and it's possible you may be joined by other passengers. However, the small size of the vessel makes for an intimate and convivial journey among like-minded travelers.

WEATHER

Winter in Baja tends to be cooler, with more chance of wind and some chance of rain. Water temperatures are in the mid-60s, and daytime highs are from the 60s to 80s. The weather in Magdalena Bay on the Pacific Coast during whale-watching season does tend to be windy and chilly. Daytime highs may be in the 70s or 80s but with the wind, it may feel more like the 50s, so you will want to bring appropriate clothing.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Latin America Manager or email us at latinamerica@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.

Average Daily Max/Min °F												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
La Paz	74/52	77/52	81/54	87/57	92/60	96/65	98/73	97/75	95/74	91/68	83/60	76/55
Loreto	74/52	76/52	79/54	84/58	89/64	94/71	96/78	97/79	96/77	92/70	83/60	76/54
Rainfall - Inches												
La Paz	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.5	2.3	0.4	0.3	0.6
Loreto	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	1.5	2.2	0.7	0.3	0.6

Toucan Club Rewards & Discounts

We are very proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business, and have established the Wilderness Travel Toucan Club to reward you for your loyalty. For more information, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan.

Here's how it works:

YOUR FIRST TRIP

As a first-time traveler, you receive a lightweight Wilderness Travel T-shirt and set of durable WT Luggage Tags. On subsequent trips, we're happy to send you a new WT T-shirt and set of Luggage Tags by request.

YOUR SECOND TRIP

A top quality Wilderness Travel insulated stainless steel water bottle by CamelBak and a cozy Wilderness Travel fleece vest by Patagonia (\$130 value).

YOUR THIRD TRIP

A versatile Wilderness Travel R-1 pullover by Patagonia (\$140 value).

YOUR FOURTH TRIP

Discounts on the cost of your trip begin! You receive a 4% discount on the tour cost.

FIVE AND MORE TRIPS

You receive a 5% discount on the base trip cost. On your sixth trip, you receive a 6% discount, and so on up to your 10th trip. The maximum discount is 10%, with a ceiling of \$500.

Note: Due to special pricing considerations, Toucan Club discounts do not apply to our Private Journeys or Special Events. However, your participation on these trips does count toward your Toucan discount on future departures of Wilderness Travel's regular adventures.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Toucan Club travel discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount, unless otherwise specified. Discounts are deducted from the base trip cost and shown on the final invoice. The base trip cost is the main land/tier cost and does not include single supplement fees, extensions, internal airfare, or other additional charges. Bonus gifts (T-shirts, luggage tags, vests, water bottles, and pullovers) will be mailed approximately three weeks prior to trip departure. Terms and conditions of Toucan Club bonuses are subject to change or cancellation at the discretion of Wilderness Travel, Inc.



MEN'S T-SHIRT



WOMEN'S T-SHIRT



PATAGONIA SYNCHILLA FLEECE VEST
PLUS INSULATED CAMELBAK WATER BOTTLE



PATAGONIA R1 PULLOVER

Travel Notes

Travel Notes



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 2022, 11-time winner

Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Conde Nast Traveller*, 2022, 3 years in a row

Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*

Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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