

SEA OF CORTES “THE AQUARIUM OF THE WORLD”

Los Cabos – Cabo Pulmo - La Paz – Espíritu Santos Island - Todos Santos
9 Days - One overnight camping

Baja California Sur is a natural and cultural paradise from land to sea. With excursions to La Paz, San Jose del Cabo, Cabo Pulmo and Todos Santos discover the unique essence of this region. Explore the Sea of Cortes, defined as one of the most biologically diverse marine areas in the world, and visit its UNESCO protected islands. Kayak, swim and snorkel in coves and bays of emerald crystalline waters searching for schools of dolphins, sea lions, whale sharks, perhaps breaching whales and mobula rays. Relocate turtles on an endless beach, learn about the rich desert vegetation that covers the land, and meet the locals.

ITINERARY

DAY 1. San Jose del Cabo

WELCOME TO BAJA

Independent arrivals

5:00 pm Gather by the poolside under the shade of tropical vegetation in the cozy garden of the hotel. Get to know fellow participants and meet your Group Leader. A welcome dinner takes place in the hotel’s beautiful, well known hacienda style restaurant. San José del Cabo is a rather quaint town of narrow streets, a large plaza, and Spanish style buildings. The cozy colonial hotel is off a restaurant and boutiques street, steps away from the main square and its restored mission church.

An evening stroll in the plaza is always a treat.

Meals Dinner at hotel, San José del Cabo

Hotel Tropicana Inn, San Jose del Cabo

www.tropicainn.com.mx Small Mexican Hacienda style rooms giving an authentic Mexican atmosphere in the heart of the historical center of town. Although the hotel is simple (3 floors with no elevator) it is cozy and well liked.

DAY 2. San Jose del Cabo - Cabo Pulmo

LAND END ARCH / STUNNING BAY / PALAPA VILLAGE

The historic town of San Jose del Cabo is connected to the busy resort city of Cabo San Lucas via the Los Cabos Corridor, a stretch of beautiful beaches dotted with conspicuous hotels. After breakfast, drive along the corridor to Cabo San Lucas where it is customary to take a short boat excursion to reach the famous arch which marks the spot where “land ends and heaven begins”. Lunch in a restaurant on the beach, then depart for Cabo Pulmo. The drive crosses the Tropic of Cancer, a monument marks the spot. Established in 1995, the Cabo Pulmo National Marine Park has been referred to as “the most successful reserve in the world”; snorkeling, kayaking and scuba diving can be fantastic. Begin to explore the scenic rocky environment that encloses the marine park - spot birds and marine life. Sea lions, turtles, dolphins and tropical fish are among the permanent residents while mobula rays and

breaching humpback whales may be sighted only in the winter months. The small isolated village of Cabo Pulmo of palm-thatched bungalows has no paved roads, no electricity (power plant goes out at 10 pm), and limited infrastructure for tourism - a step in the past. Settle in the bungalows, then visit the Marine Park Visitor Center to learn about the coral reef ecosystem. Transfer to the nearby bay of Los Frailes inhabited by a fishing camp. High granite cliffs and a remote tongue of white sand surmounted by sharp foothills depict the scenery, an ideal spot for admiring the sunsets, especially during mobile season. These small black and white manta rays perform acrobatic jumps, sometimes in huge numbers, the sight can be overwhelming. (from March to May) Return to Cabo Pulmo for dinner under a palapa of a local restaurant. In the darkness of the night, observing the sky can be a memorable experience.

Meals Breakfast at hotel, SJC. Lunch in Cabo San Lucas. Dinner in Cabo Pulmo

Hotel Bungalows, Cabo Pulmo

<https://www.cabopulmo.com> Although each bungalow is different and dispersed, each hosts a simple open floor plan modern in style but rustic in nature.

Driving time 3 hrs.

DAY 3. Cabo Pulmo

CORAL REEF SNORKELING / PINK SAND BEACH

Ideal snorkeling conditions are generally in the mornings. Board a *panga* boat for a snorkeling adventure along Cabo Pulmo's coral reef inhabited by over 200 species of fish. Stop at several sites, jump in the water and delight on the reef teeming with life. Snorkel face to face with giant sea lions in one of the rare sites where females, whom they are extremely jealous, are not present. After lunch, drive to Los Arbolitos, a beach of boulders and corals, of pink sand beach bathed by turquoise waters. Snorkel from the beach to explore the coral garden and multicolored fish as if in an aquarium. The bay is backed by a wall of wind-formed formations referred to as sand castles. Dinner is in a local Cabo Pulmo restaurant.

Meals Breakfast, lunch and dinner in Cabo Pulmo.

Hotel Bungalows, Cabo Pulmo

DAY 4. Cabo Pulmo - La Paz

CORAL REEF SNORKELING CONTINUED / MINING / PEACEFUL CITY / SUNSET DINNER

Continue to explore Cabo Pulmo's coral reef in the early morning; again board the pangas for another snorkeling adventure. After lunch depart for La Paz. On the way, a stop is made in El Triunfo. Silver and gold were discovered in the southern B.C.S. mountains in the mid-1800s attracting miners and adventurers from many countries. The recently restored ex-mining town of El Triunfo was once the largest city in B.C.S with more than 10,000 inhabitants. The mines shut down in 1926 and most people left. See remnants of the mining heydays, including the 35-meter-high (over 100 ft) smokestack designed by Gustav Eiffel. In addition, the town was a cultural center, where pianos and other instruments were brought from all over the world, now collected in a museum. Continue to La Paz, the capital and most important city of Baja California Sur. Its tree-lined streets and calm clear beaches inspire tranquility. Settle in the hotel located on the elegant Costa Baja Marina. Tonight's dinner is a La Paz tradition: fresh shrimp served in a beach palapa (thatched-roof) restaurant while delighting on a famed La Paz sunset; a glass of Baja California wine opens the meal with a toast.

Meals Breakfast and lunch in Cabo Pulmo. Dinner at a beach Palapa in La Paz

Hotel Hyatt Place, La Paz

<http://lapaz.place.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html> New modern hotel located on the exclusive Costa Baja Marina, facing the La Paz Bay, 15 minutes from downtown. The hotel offers spacious modern rooms with the latest amenities.

Driving time 3 hrs.

DAY 5. La Paz

WHALE SHARKS / IDYLLIC BAY / KAYAK

Depart by boat for a morning excursion to search for the whale shark! The docile plankton-feeding whale sharks have become regular winter visitors along the shores of La Paz. Visit their feeding grounds to spot these beautiful creatures, the largest fish in the sea. Jump in the water to snorkel alongside of them. Try keeping up their pace! Return to the hotel for lunch. Pearl white beaches accessed solely on foot or by sea and a healthy mangrove enclose stunning Balandra Bay. Get acquainted with the surroundings on a short scenic hike that offers magnificent panoramic views. The bay is famous for its seven shades of blue, sight them from atop! Then explore the bay by kayak, wiggle through the mangroves and reach the moon-shaped beaches that line its shores, choose one to rest on. If desired, kayak to the mushroom-shaped rock, a symbol of the city of La Paz, located at the mouth of the bay. Drive into town in the late afternoon and join the local people for a stroll along the malecón (boardwalk) at sunset, a local ritual. For dinner, experience a traditional taco meal, roll your own tacos with the beef right off the grill! Together with tortilla soup, quesadillas, stuffed potatoes, enjoy a Mexican meal with a Baja touch.

Meals Breakfast and lunch at hotel in La Paz. Taco dinner in town La Paz
Hotel Hyatt Place, La Paz

DAY 6. La Paz - Isla Espiritu Santo

A UNESCO PROTECTED ISLAND / SEA LIFE

Described by Cousteau as “the aquarium of the world”, the Sea of Cortes is unmatched and unique in the diversity of underwater life. Within the Sea of Cortes Marine Park Reserve, the protected island of Espiritu Santo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a paradise to discover. Take a boat to the island and spend two days in tranquil isolation exploring crystal clear waters, fascinating geology, pristine beaches, and hidden coves. While on the boat, look for a breaching whale, a jumping ray, or a pod of dolphins. Together with your Group Leader and expert local instructors, kayak in hidden coves and along black, white and reddish cliffs, snorkel among playful sea lions and tropical fish, spot birds including the blue-footed boobie, take a short hike on scenic trails to see endemic desert vegetation, relax on the beach located in a beautiful cove lined with dentelled reddish cliffs. Hot meals are served at the camp. At night, sit by the camp along the shore with fellow participants to enjoy the stillness of the night.

Hotel Camping on Espiritu Santos Island.
Meals Breakfast at the hotel. Lunch and dinner on the island.

DAY 7. Isla Espiritu Santo – La Paz

CONTINUE IN PARADISE

Continue to explore the island. Morning kayaking to explore a different inlet of the island. Free time to snorkel, paddle board or relax. Return to La Paz in the afternoon. Dinner is in a pleasant restaurant on the romantic Costa Baja Marina, walking distance from the hotel.

Hotel Hyatt Place, La Paz
Meals Breakfast and lunch on the island. Dinner at a restaurant on the Marina

DAY 8. La Paz – Todos Santos

CRASHING SURF / CULINARY EVENT / TURTLE PROTECTION PROGRAM

Depart La Paz crossing the peninsula at its narrowest point to reach the Pacific Ocean and the colonial village of Todos Santos. Recently declared a “Magical Town” (an acknowledgement given by Mexican Tourism Board to a series of towns that offer a magical experience because of its natural, historical, or cultural element), Todos Santos is situated in a fertile oasis, the site of a prosperous sugar mill industry that flourished in the mid 1900’s. Currently, the town is home to many artists and the ex-haciendas house boutique hotels, restaurants and galleries. Visit the town with your Group Leader. In a tropical

garden setting with a view of the palm oasis and the Pacific Ocean participate in a culinary event: a cooking class imparted by a celebrated chef learning the basics of Mexican cooking, then enjoy lunch. Continue with a scenic walk through a palm grove to a Pacific Ocean beach with dramatic rocky outcroppings and crashing surf. Visit Tortugueros Las Playitas, a sea turtle protection center to learn about the important population recovery program of Leatherback, Olive Ridley and Black turtles. Starting mid-October, the newly-laid eggs are relocated to an Incubation Greenhouse where they eventually hatch and the baby turtles are released. Participate in the activities. Egg-relocation takes place October through December while turtle releasing is January to March-April. The farewell dinner is at a "mezcaleria" where a mezcal-maker from Oaxaca explains the process of producing the well-known beverage together with tasting and comparing it with Tequila. The accompanying dinner consists of a Oaxacan specialty of the day.

Meals Breakfast at hotel La Paz. Cooking Class lunch and Mezcalera dinner in Todos Santos Hotel Casa Tota, Todos Santos

<http://hotelcasatota.com/> Boutique hotel situated in town. The hotel is adapted in a historical Todos Santos home and general store.

Driving time 1 ½ hrs.

DAY 9. Todos Santos – Los Cabos Airport - Return

THE FINISTERRA / HOME SWEET HOME

Continue the last stretch of the Transpeninsular Highway along the road that skirts the Pacific Ocean toward Cabo San Lucas, ending the adventure at the Los Cabos Airport.

Independent Departures.

Meals Breakfast at hotel in Todos Santos

Driving time 1 hr.

INCLUDED SERVICES

- Comfortable land transportation in a Sprinter
- Eight nights accommodations (one is camping on Espiritu Santos Island)
- All meals. Snacks and drinking water
- All visits and excursions included in the itinerary
- Group Leader at all times and specialized guides during events
- One courtesy in single accommodation
- Donation to Birch Aquarium and to Tortugueros (Turtle Protection Program)
- Taxes and tips of included services

NOT INCLUDED

Round trip flights to Los Cabos. Transfer Los Cabos airport to hotel on Day 1. Tips to guide, driver, and special excursion staff.

DATE November 3 – 11, 2019
October 31 – November 8, 2020

PRICE \$2,760.00 Per person in double occupancy Minimum 10 participants +1 courtesy
\$490.00 Single supplement
Maximum 12 participants

PROBABLE SIGHTINGS

MARINE LIFE General Tropical fish, sea lions, schools of jacks, turtles, whale sharks, sharks (Toro, Lemon, Tiger), humpback whales, dolphins, starfish
 November Relocating sea turtles eggs
 March Mobula rays, turtle release

BIRDS pelicans, cormorants, frigate birds, egrets, herons, sandpipers, brown- and blue-footed boobies

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

The program is active and on the go. Participants must be in good physical condition and be good swimmers. Kayaking and snorkeling is generally in calm waters, however swells may occur. Must be able to board pangas (outboard motor boats) from the beach and endure boat rides of 1 ½ hours at a time.

VALID PASSPORT MANDATORY

Passport must not expire within six months of travel date and must have one blank page.

FLIGHTS

San José del Cabo International Airport - SJD- offers a wide choice of daily flights from and to San Diego with Alaska Airlines, Southwest, Delta, United, American
Taxis and shuttles provide the best options for the short transfer from the SJD airport to the Tropicana Hotel in San José del Cabo.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND ENROLLMENT

Please contact Andiamo

rosa@andiamo-travel.com

Tel +1 619 632 4571; +52 646 178 8909

A confirmation pack with details is sent upon enrollment

CANCELLATION TERMS

- A 50% fee will be held for cancellations after Monday, September 16, 2019
- A 75% fee will be held for cancellations after Monday, October 14, 2019
- No refunds for cancellations made on the day of the trip.
- Should Andiamo cancel the trip, a total refund is provided without any other liability
- All cancellations must be in writing.

PLEASE NOTE

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information featured on this itinerary. Itineraries are based on our best information at this time. Circumstances beyond our control may require us to adjust itineraries or other details. We regret any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding.

Please be aware that the program is "active outdoor" subject to weather conditions. In case of unfavorable weather, the provider will do his/her best to make the necessary changes, re-schedule, or substitute any activity as needed.