

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**\*Photos are available.**

## **Whale Watching Kicks off Adventure on the High Seas**

*Birch Aquarium and Flagship Cruises and events kick off their 20th season with a splash*

**La Jolla, Calif. (Dec. 5, 2019)**—Whale watching season is just around the corner and Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego and Flagship Cruises & Events have teamed up to offer guests big adventures looking for some of the largest creatures on the high seas.

Whale watching season begins December 14 and the twice-daily cruises continue through April 12. Led by expert naturalists from Birch Aquarium, guests will witness part of the longest marine mammal migrations in the world, when 20,000 semi-truck-sized Gray Whales pass San Diego on their 10,000-mile round-trip journey from the Bering Sea to Baja California’s tranquil lagoons.

These behemoths hug the San Diego coast on both legs of their journey, delighting guests with glimpses of their intimate lives. Lucky passengers will witness whales breaching, or hurling themselves out of the water, mating, and may even get a glimpse of newborn calves.

“We are very excited to be heading into our 20th season of whale watching with Flagship Cruises and Events,” said Delanie Media, Birch Aquarium’s whale watching education specialist. “Our whale watching program provides guests with the unique opportunity to connect with the ocean and experience these majestic animals in their natural environment. We are very grateful to have spent the last 20 years educating and inspiring guests to care for and continue learning about whales and their ocean world.”

Beyond Gray Whales, the 3.5 hour cruises include a San Diego Bay harbor tour — including highlights of San Diego’s military history — and possible glimpses of dolphins, seals, sea lions, sea birds, and more.

Flagship Cruises & Events’ *Marietta* is a family-friendly boat and offers 360-degree views from the upper sun deck, multiple restrooms, and free WiFi. The onboard snack bar features lunch items, snacks, drinks, and alcoholic beverages for purchase.

This year marks the 20th season of the whale watching partnership between Birch Aquarium and Flagship Cruises & Events. Tickets are available [online](#), by phone at 619-234-4111, or at the Flagship Cruises & Events Kiosk on the Embarcadero in Downtown San Diego. Advanced purchase is recommended, especially for weekend cruises.

Weekend cruise tickets are \$50 for adults and \$25 for children ages 4-12. Weekday tickets are \$45 for adults and \$22.50 for children. Children under 3 are free every day. Discounts for military, seniors, and

Birch Aquarium members are also available. Cruises depart at 9:30 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. from 990 Harbor Drive in Downtown San Diego.

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### **About Birch Aquarium at Scripps**

Birch Aquarium at Scripps is the public exploration center for Scripps Oceanography. Perched on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean, Birch Aquarium is home to nearly 6,000 animals — including unusual Leafy Seadragons, local Leopard Sharks, and a rescued Loggerhead Sea Turtle — and features the groundbreaking work of Scripps scientists, as well as conservation breeding programs and interactive exhibits. Birch Aquarium's mission is to connect understanding to protecting our ocean planet, which the aquarium achieves by providing engaging, hands-on learning opportunities for nearly 500,000 guests as well as more than 50,000 pre-K-12 students each year.

### **About Flagship Cruises & Events**

Flagship Cruises & Events is a local, family-owned and operated yacht charter, cruise and events company serving San Diego since 1915. We specialize in gourmet dinner cruises, harbor tours, patriot jet boat thrill rides, private charters, corporate events, weddings and many more special occasions. We also offer seasonal whale watching with our partner, Birch Aquarium, and year-round ferry and water taxi service to Coronado Island and along San Diego Bay. For more information, visit [www.flagshipsd.com](http://www.flagshipsd.com) or call 619.234.4111.

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