

Baja Adventure Cruise

“Among the Great Whales”

Visit the breeding grounds of 17,000 Grey Whales! Explore spectacular Magdalena Bay and the legendary Sea of Cortez by zodiac, kayak and on foot with expert naturalists. Whales, dolphins, sea lions, deserted beaches and hidden coves in Baja’s magical desert wilderness.

No charter flight LA to La Paz for 2011

Seeing whales in their natural habitat is one of the great delights of this expedition. The 39 species that it's possible to see in Baja include California gray whales that come to mate and give birth in Baja's waters each winter plus fins, blues, orcas, humpbacks and several species of dolphins. During our days in the breeding lagoons of Bahia Magdalena, we venture among them in Zodiac landing craft. This gives us a water-level perspective that is a rare privilege in the natural world.

Our expedition cruise offers naturalist guided walks on uninhabited desert islands, swimming, snorkeling, and kayaking adventures in the Sea of Cortez. Besides whales and dolphins, sea lions, birds like blue-footed boobies and frigate birds, huge cardon cacti, mangroves and massive windswept sand dunes are among the many wonders that await you in magical Baja.

Day 1. La Paz/ San Carlos

Arrive in La Paz where we transfer across the Baja Peninsula to San Carlos and board your ship the *Sea Bird* or *Sea Lion*, see below for a complete description. (D only)

Days 2-4. Bahia Magdalena

Bahia Magdalena is one of the main breeding and calving areas for the California gray whale. Each winter 17,000 gray whales make the longest migration of any mammal — 10,000 miles from their Arctic feeding grounds to these sheltered Mexican waters to breed and raise their calves. During our days in this otherworldly place, we'll have the opportunity to not only observe these enormous yet gentle animals from the ship, but also at water level from our Zodiacs. Because of our experience and knowledge of Baja's waters, we have enjoyed consistent success in achieving "friendly encounters" with gray mother and calf pairs. While we would never presume to predict Nature's behavior, it is highly likely that you will have the privilege of a "touching" up-close encounter.

Our whale watching takes place in Bahia Magdalena on the Pacific coast of Baja, a vast wilderness of sculpted sand dunes, mangrove channels and protected waters. On

its western side lies Isla Magdalena a narrow 60-mile long island comprised of enormous dunes.

Dense mangrove swamps are another enticing environment. We take our kayaks and Zodiacs through the winding canals to discover the riches within - bird watching can be excellent - magnificent frigate birds, pelicans, cormorants, terns and great blue herons, ibis, whimbrels and willets are among the species we might see. On mud flats we often see migrating species at rest and our naturalists make sure we won't miss any of these world travelers. It's not unusual to see 40 species of birds in 1 day along these fertile shorelines where they refuel for their journeys ahead. (B,L,D)

Day 5. Los Cabos & Gorda Banks

Today, we cruise past the spectacular Friars Rocks at Land's End. For those who wish, we arrange a visit to the historic town center of San Jose del Cabo.

The afternoon is spent at the Gorda Banks sea mount, a gathering place for whales and dolphins. Humpback whales are often sighted here at this time of the year. Their variety of behaviors is of great interest as we watch them tail lobbing, flipper slapping and breaching. While the sight of a whale is always filled with wonder, you won't have to wonder too long since our marine biologists are always available to inform and enlighten with their knowledge and experience. Not only do they know where best to look for wildlife, their passion and respect for the area is infectious. (B,L,D)

Day 6. Islas Los Islotes & Espiritu Santo

With deeply indented shorelines and dramatically eroded cliffs, Islas Los Islotes and Espiritu Santo are two of the most beautiful islands in the Sea of Cortez, lying near the entrance to Bahia de La Paz. Although considered two islands, they are more like one - separated by a narrow channel. We enjoy them to the fullest with a leisurely afternoon of swimming and snorkeling. Once you put on your mask and flippers and start breathing through your snorkel (we not only provide the equipment, but as much guidance as you need to

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succeed) you experience a thrill not soon forgotten: swimming with the curious and friendly sea lions.

One of the best way to observe the impressive geological past of these islands is by kayak. Easily seen just a few yards from the shore are tons of compacted volcanic ash covered with solidified lava floods. Brown pelicans, gulls, wandering tattlers, great blue herons and boobies are all part of the landscape. The islands also offer excellent possibilities for long walks or lazy beachcombing. We finish the day with a relaxing beach barbecue complete with campfire and a star-spangled sky. (B,L,D)

Day 7. Exploring the Sea of Cortez

Today is a day with the luxury of no specific plan. We may spend the morning whale watching in the waters around Isla Danzante, an area that has proven to be one of the best for finding blue whales, bottlenose and common dolphins. The Sea of Cortez is incredibly rich in

Tour Details

Trip Type: Adventure Cruise

Trip Length: 8 days / 7 nights

2013 Departures:

January 19-26*, January 26-February 2

February 2-9*, February 9-16, February 16-23*, February 23-March 2

March: 2-9*, March 9-16, March 16-23*

* Some departures travel in reverse as follows:

Day 1 – La Paz

Day 2 – Exploring the Sea of Cortez

Day 3 – Islas Los Islotes and Espiritu Santo

Day 4 – Los Cabos and Gorda Banks

Days 5 to 7 – Bahia Magdalena

Day 8 – San Carlos/ La Paz

2013 Prices:

- **Cabin Category 1 - \$5550** (\$8330 single). Located between the dining room and lounge, feature 2 lower single beds, a writing desk and large window.
- **Cabin Category 2 - \$6410** (\$9610 single). Upper Deck #200-212, 215. Include 2 lower single beds, outside access and a window.
- **Cabin Category 3 - \$7190** (single not available). Upper Deck #214, 216, 217, 219. All have a seating unit with table, outside access and 2 large windows. Upper Deck cabins include 2 lower single beds convertible to a double bed and a pull-out single bed for a third person. Bridge Deck cabins include 2 lower single beds only.

Special Discounts! Call for the details 1-800-488-8483

Traveling with children? We believe sharing an expedition with your kids or grandkids is a life-enhancing experience. So we offer a \$500 per child discount for kids under 18. (Excludes extensions and airfare)

Price Includes: Services as described in the itinerary above, ship board accommodations, meals (dinner Day 1 through breakfast Day 8), transfers (group flights only), park fees, professional guides, sea kayaking equipment and instruction and port charges.

Price Excludes: Airfare (if not specified otherwise), transfers (except with group flights), travel insurance, personal expenses (phone, fax, laundry, onboard purchases, etc.), optional activities, alcohol, crew gratuities (as deemed appropriate) and services not specified in the itinerary above.

nutrients, making it home to a huge variety of fish, many of them tropical. Below the surface, swim king angelfish, surgeonfish, butterfly fish, damselfish and the beautifully colored parrotfish. When diving or snorkeling in the clear waters of our anchorage, observe them flitting along the reef as they come and go in waves of brilliant color.

During the day there is time to explore one of the many lovely, uninhabited islands such as Isla San Jose or Isla Santa Catalina, famous for the 12-foot wavy barrel cactus and other desert plants that grow along the canyon. Stay alert for the great diversity of bird life — ladder-backed woodpeckers, Costa's hummingbirds, Gila woodpeckers and verdin. (B,L,D)

Day 8. La Paz

We disembark in La Paz after breakfast and transfer to La Paz airport for flights home. (B only)

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Trip Rating: Easy

Activities: Cruising, hiking, kayaking, zodiac excursions, swimming, snorkeling, shore visits

Gateway City: La Paz, Mexico

Meeting Time & Place: At gate for charter flight from Los Angeles Day 1. Met on arrival at La Paz airport for transfer to San Carlos and embarkation. Guests arriving on their own should be at the La Paz airport in time for the transfer to San Carlos. Additional information will be provided prior to departure.

Trip Conclusion: Day 8 after breakfast in La Paz with transfer to airport for charter flight to Los Angeles. Guests traveling on their own will need to arrange their own airport transfers.

Itinerary & Rate Changes: All dates and rates are subject to change. The itinerary above describes the cruise's general activities and route. However, the actual itinerary will often vary. Changes in weather, wildlife movements, regulations, unplanned opportunities and other considerations can all affect our routes and activities.

Our Ship

Our expedition ship the *National Geographic Sea Bird* can reach places no larger cruise ship could ever go - our nimble size means freedom to explore. Our expedition staff and crew like nothing better than to surprise and delight you by directing the ship toward breaching whales, bow-riding dolphins or into an alluring cove.

Our air conditioned ship accommodates just 62 guests in 31 outside cabins. The atmosphere is often compared to a large private yacht. Our captains have decades of sailing experience in the regions we explore. They know when and where to navigate so that you feel the places we visit are all ours. Thanks to our sturdy fleet of zodiacs and kayaks, you can be off the ship and out exploring within a moment's notice. Launch your kayak from a picturesque beach, hike with our naturalists along a pristine beach or swim and snorkel among sea lions and clouds of colorful fish. Our ship's expedition equipment also includes bow camera, hydrophone, underwater video camera and video microscope. Snorkel gear and wet suits available at no extra charge.

* **Public Areas:** Our ship features a library, a lounge with full-service bar and facilities for films, slide shows and lectures, an Observation Deck and partially covered Sun Deck with chairs and tables. Our "Open Bridge" policy provides guests and opportunity to meet our officers and captain and learn about navigation. There is also an Internet kiosk, onboard video chronicler and ship doctor.

* **Meals:** Served in single seatings with unassigned tables for an informal atmosphere and easy mingling. Breakfast is a wide selection buffet and lunch is often served family style. Menu emphasizes local flair.

The Next Step...

References Don't take our word for it that The World Outdoors trips are the finest in the adventure travel industry. Ask our past guests. *Call about any of our trips and we'll be happy to refer you to someone who's been there with us.*

The Best Value in Active Travel Guarantee: *We commit to you that all of our trips are of the highest quality at the best value.* If you find a trip of equal quality that matches our itinerary and inclusions at a lower fare within 30 days of booking your trip with us, we will gladly refund the difference. A simple guarantee that assures you of the best trip at the best fare!

How do I join this trip? Call The World Outdoors at (800) 488-8483 and a Trip Consultant will reserve your space(s) or register online at www.TheWorldOutdoors.com. Your travel agent can also book your trip at no extra cost and provide other helpful assistance.

Special Requests: If you have any special dietary needs or any special request that will make your trip more enjoyable, please be sure to notify your Trip Consultant or travel agent upon booking.

Then Leave the Rest to Us... Before you go, we provide you with extensive pre-departure information, including your reservation payment receipt and confirmation, travel insurance application, suggestions for preparing for your trip, a packing list, information on pre- and post-trip arrangements, a guest questionnaire and a liability release agreement.

Travel Protection: To make your trip with The World Outdoors even more carefree, we strongly recommend the purchase of our travel insurance plan. Offering comprehensive coverage and peace of mind, our travel insurance plan is designed to protect you in case of lost or damaged luggage, a sudden illness or death in the family, emergency medical expenses and transportation costs, and flight delays. We'd be happy to arrange travel insurance coverage for you, so contact us at (800) 488-8483 with any questions.

How do I book airfare for this trip? Call our in-house travel agent, Sherry Marriner, at 800-488-8483 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time Monday through Friday or you can email her at sherrym@theworldoutdoors.com. Sherry is also available to assist you with pre- and post-lodging needs. If Sherry is unavailable and your needs are urgent, please call Frosch Travel, a local travel agency, at 800-538-7461 and ask for Georgia (ext 251) or email her at Georgia.Terry@frosch.com. Be sure to tell her you are traveling with The

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World Outdoors. Alternatively, you are welcome to book your airfare online, directly with the airline or through your personal travel agent.

General Information

Itinerary Changes: While the information presented here describes the cruise's planned itinerary and activities, these may change for safety reasons or to take advantage of weather, wildlife or unplanned discoveries. The ship captain and cruise director make the decisions on activities and itinerary.

What weather conditions can I expect? Winter and early spring is prime time in Baja. Days are almost always sunny, warm and dry. Expect low humidity with daytime highs in the 70s and 80s with nighttime lows 20 to 30 degrees cooler. And on the water expect a cooling breeze to be your constant companion.

How difficult is this trip? ... Really: The trip is designed for healthy adults who are comfortable being active outdoors. No previous experience is required. Guests can participate in activities as much or as little as they choose.

Emergency Contact Information: Our office in Boulder, Colorado is open Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time 1-800-488-8483. For emergencies outside of our normal business hours call Bill Marriner at 720-289-0460, Sherry Marriner at 303-915-9660, Darcie Carr at 303-595-8561 or Eric Wagner at 303-324-7795.

Carbon Offsetting: If you would like to offset the carbon emissions from your trip, please visit the following link: https://sustainabletravelinternational.org/documents/op_carboncalcs.html

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