

BRAND NEW ITINERARY!

Join us on an exciting NEW trip in 2024 to Baja California, Mexico!

10-24 March & 22 March-5 April

If you want to see whales and dolphins, Baja California is the best place to go. This wonderful new 14-day adventure has been carefully designed to get some of the best whale watching on the planet. We spend a few days in an exclusive luxury camp on the shores of San Ignacio Lagoon (home to the world-famous 'friendly' grey whales), sail down the Pacific coast of Baja and then explore the magical Sea of Cortez aboard the Spirit of Adventure. There is quite simply no other marine safari like it!



About our trip

Baja California is the best place in the world for whale and dolphin watching, and Mark, as a world-renowned whale expert, is the perfect guide to take you. We hope to see as many as 10-15 different cetacean species during the trip (with life-changing close encounters with grey, blue, fin, sei, Bryde's, humpback and sperm whales and some of the other largest animals on the planet) as well as a host of other wildlife, from whale sharks to Guadalupe fur seals.

Click on
the grey
whale to
see a
short film
of our
highlights!



Highlights

- Our own special charter flight along the wild Pacific coast of Baja. We land on a sandy airstrip on the shore of remote and magical San Ignacio Lagoon – world famous for the incredibly friendly and inquisitive grey whales that breed here every winter.
- Three nights in an exclusive camp, in luxury tents with en suite facilities, enjoying the glorious desert wilderness on the edge of the lagoon. Local experts take us out each day in their pangas (small boats) to meet the grey whales. There is nothing quite as thrilling as a whale choosing to swim over to be scratched and tickled, while it rolls around playfully and looks you in the eye. There are typically more than a hundred grey whales in the lagoon at this time of year, so they are hard to miss. At night we enjoy the vast desert skies with the evocative sounds of coyotes calling around the camp and whales breathing close by.
- Then we board the wonderful *Spirit of Adventure*, which we have been chartering every year since the late 1990s. Anchored in the heart of the lagoon, the *Spirit* will give us a further two days with the grey whales (making a total of four-and-a-half days with them altogether – though it's never enough!). The *Spirit* will be our home for the next eight nights.
- We leave San Ignacio and head south along the Baja peninsula, stopping off at a blue whale feeding ground and watching a variety of other cetaceans and marine wildlife along the way.
- Off the southern tip of Baja we spend a day with acrobatic humpback whales, at the height of their breeding season, and we drop a hydrophone into the water to listen to a live concert of male humpbacks singing their long, soulful songs.
- Then we enter the island-studded Sea of Cortez and cruise its sub-tropical waters in search of whales and other wildlife. We'll be snorkelling with whale sharks and California sea lions and doing nature walks on remote islands. It's one of those places where almost anything can happen.
- The price includes scheduled flights between Mexico City and San Jose del Cabo, chartered flights to San Ignacio Lagoon, three nights in the luxury tented camp, eight nights on the *Spirit of Adventure* and much more (see 'What's included' for more information).



Wildlife we hope to see

Whales. Grey whale, blue whale, fin whale, sei whale, Bryde's whale, humpback whale, sperm whale, dwarf sperm whale and enormous herds of dolphins (bottlenose, common, Risso's and Pacific white-sided). We sometimes see minke whales, killer whales, short-finned pilot whales, pygmy beaked whales, Cuvier's beaked whales and Dall's porpoises as well.

Other wildlife. California sea lion, Guadalupe fur seal, Xantus's hummingbird, Laysan albatross, black-footed albatross, blue-footed booby, brown booby, masked booby, magnificent frigatebird, red-billed tropicbird, osprey, whale shark, leaping Munk's pygmy devil rays, and much more.

Dates in 2024

10-24 March; 22 March - 5 April

Itinerary (*exact day-to-day itinerary may change according to weather and whale sightings*):

Day 1: Fly from the UK to Mexico City and transfer to a comfortable hotel for the night.

Day 2: Fly to San José del Cabo and transfer to a comfortable hotel for the night.

Day 3: Fly on our chartered plane to San Ignacio lagoon. The afternoon will be spent with the well-known 'friendlies' – grey whales that repeatedly approach and nudge our small boats, encouraging us to tickle them. Overnight in our exclusive luxury camp with private facilities.

Days 4-5: We spend two full days going out to see the friendly grey whales three times a day, returning to the camp each night.

Days 6-7: We have a morning out with the grey whales and then board the *Spirit of Adventure*, which has arrived to pick us up (and is our home for the next eight nights). We then get the best of both worlds, enjoying a different perspective of the lagoon (it will be the only boat anchored there) and watching the grey whales (still in the local experts' pangas) for two more days.



Days 8-13: Our adventure continues south down the Pacific coast and into the Sea of Cortez. As well as whale watching, we enjoy nature walks and, conditions permitting, snorkelling with whale sharks, California sea lions, and colourful sub-tropical fish.

Day 14: Our expedition ends early in the morning at Cabo San Lucas, on the southern tip of Baja California. Depending on the timings of our flights, we spend a couple of hours there before transferring by coach to San José del Cabo airport, and flying home via Mexico City.

[Day 15: Arrive back in the UK.]



Price

£9,495 per person to include domestic flights from Mexico City to San José del Cabo and a private charter flight to San Ignacio, but not international flights from London to Mexico City.

£10,495 per person to include international flights from London to Mexico City, domestic flights from Mexico City to San José del Cabo and a private charter flight to San Ignacio.

Single supplements upon request.

Payment schedule

- Non-refundable deposit on booking per person: 20% of price.
- Final balance (and single supplement if applicable) 90 days prior to departure.

Price includes: return flights from Mexico City to San José del Cabo [SJD]; private charter flight from SJD to San Ignacio; 1 night's bed and breakfast in comfortable hotel in Mexico City; 1 night's bed and breakfast in comfortable hotel in San José del Cabo; 3 nights accommodation in luxury tent with en suite facilities; 8 nights accommodation on the exclusively chartered *Spirit of Adventure*; all meals and some drinks at camp

and *Spirit of Adventure*; excursions as described in the itinerary; pangas in San Ignacio Lagoon; Mexican tourist card; Mexican permits and fees; all transfers to hotels, camp and airports; guide services of Mark Carwardine/Rachel Ashton from San Ignacio Lagoon; information pack; evening talks/slideshows; final night slideshow of photos and films taken by Mark and Rachel during the trip, with link to download it once home.

Price does not include: international flights (if not part of your package); transfers if your flight times are different to the package; airport departure taxes; park fee of \$35; travel insurance; meals in Mexico City and San José del Cabo (except breakfasts); alcoholic drinks; canned sodas on the boat; crew gratuities aboard vessel; panga boatman tips in the lagoon; swimming with whale sharks (not included in price as whether we do it depends on conditions); extra nights in hotels; laundry and phone calls; personal items.

Number of passengers:

Maximum is 24 (the boat can take 28 passengers but we choose to limit the number), plus 2 leaders.

About the camp: we spend 3 nights at a luxury eco-camp. This is no ordinary camping - think of it as one of the world's best pop-up hotels! The tents are windproof, insulated and heated for maximum comfort, with ensuite bathrooms and hot and cold running water, and 24-hour power (and wi-fi). Enormous thought has gone into every detail, making it a wonderful place to relax at the end of a busy day with the grey whales, and while having a drink by the fire pit and marvelling at the spectacular night sky.

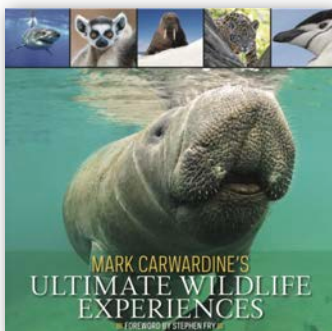
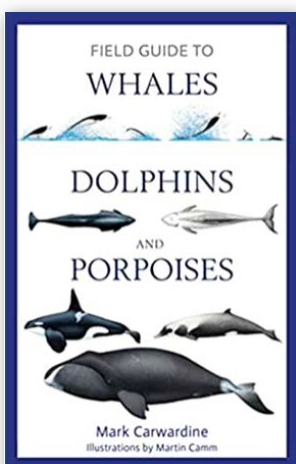


About the boat: the *Spirit of Adventure* (right) at 88 feet in length, is perfect for whale watching, with a highly experienced crew (and fantastic food). While the cabins are small and they have no en-suite facilities or portholes, it is a very clean and comfortable boat – and, of course, part of the holiday's charm is that it isn't a grand cruise ship!





Don't leave home
without Mark's
ground-breaking field
guide to the world's
cetaceans click [here](#)



Read Mark's chapter
about Baja California
in his Ultimate
Wildlife Experiences
book [here](#)

For more information

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WHAT PEOPLE SAY ...

Mark's incredible knowledge of and passion for wildlife and photography are addictive. We've gained a deeper appreciation of the wonders of our planet, while filling our bellies with laughter and building new friendships along the way. BW & DW (Baja California 2015, 2017 & 2022)

I recommend Mark and Rachel's Baja trip wholeheartedly and guarantee that it will change your perspective about this planet. From mother grey whales bringing their calves over to be scratched in their breeding lagoon, to blue whale blow on your face, to swimming with whale sharks, it is all the most extraordinary experience. DO (Baja California 2020)

Mark and Rachel's safari was wonderful! Grandstand views of so many marine mammals and other creatures, excellent organisation and a friendly atmosphere on board. And how such tasty meals were prepared in such a small kitchen I will never understand! AW (Baja California 2015)

Mark and Rachel's trips are very well organised and go the extra mile – you never leave disappointed. We would always recommend them above any others and are so grateful for the amazing experiences and friendships we have made along the way. MW (Baja California 2013, 2017, 2020 & 2022)

Mark always puts both the passengers and the wildlife at the front of his thinking, so that we have the most exciting and enthralling time, knowing that the wildlife is not being stressed or harassed. The whole holiday experience – from the first phone call to the airport goodbye – is exciting, friendly and fun. That's why I keep returning! CS (Baja California 2011, 2016, 2018 & 2022)

Baja must be the best wildlife experiences anywhere in the world with wonderful people, amazing food, and a fabulous crew. I have travelled with Mark for many years now and my life is so much richer as a result. He is also one of the world's very best wildlife photographers and has taught me so much. PB (Baja California, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019 & 2022)

I can't put any monetary value on the memories of travelling with Mark and Rachel in Baja. When the real world is grim, I can revisit those blue, humpback and ever-friendly grey whales, orcas, leaping Munk's mobula rays and dolphins in their thousands, glorious sunsets and seascapes ... and shall be able to do so for ever. LT (Baja California 2011, 2016, 2020 & 2022)

