



Tia Stephanie Tours

Gray Whale and Sea Turtle Research Adventure Mid January - Late March



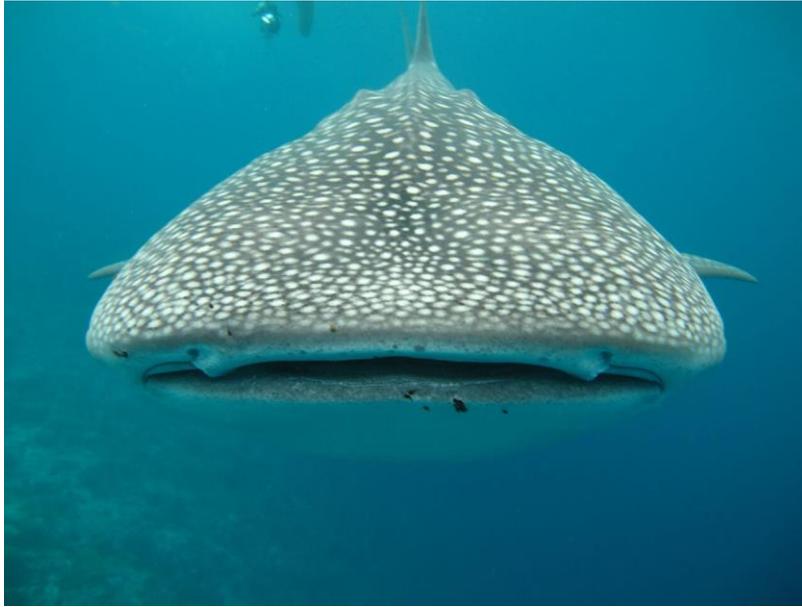
Experience the natural wonders of the Baja California peninsula, from the gray whales and endangered sea turtles in the majestic setting of in a sea turtle research camp in Magdalena Bay to the aquatic wonderland of Espíritu Santo Island. Magdalena Bay, jewel of the Pacific, just a few hours between Loreto and La Paz, is home to a staggering number of marine and aviary species, lush mangrove canals and towering sand dunes. Your local hosts will treat you to the finest in regional cuisine with gourmet flair, and your naturalist guide will ensure you leave expertly informed on all themes of flora, fauna and local conservation efforts. You'll get your feet wet on this participatory experience that lets you work alongside fishermen and conservationists in a project recognized as a model for community efforts to restore endangered sea turtle populations.

After returning to La Paz, you will depart to Espíritu Santo Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site where you will get the chance to swim amongst the resident sea lions and multitudes of tropical fish. Your naturalist guide will take you into the heart of the island for breathtaking scenery along interpretative nature trails. You will also have the chance to participate in a whale shark research project!

ITINERARY

Day 1 - Arrival to Cabo and transfer to La Paz

Your driver will be waiting for you at the airport to take you to La Paz, where you can explore in the afternoon before our welcome dinner. Get a good night's rest, as tomorrow the adventure begins! (D)



Day 2 - Whale shark research and Balandra beach

We will pick you up at your hotel early in the morning, and transport you to the water. After boarding the research vessel, the team will brief you on the research protocols. Throughout the day you will learn about the various science and research projects including photo-identification, population analysis, satellite tagging and genetic analysis. Heading out from La Paz we will hug the coastline, searching for whale sharks and stopping periodically to investigate. You'll have the chance to snorkel and we will take time out for a lunch break at Balandra beach, voted as Mexico's best beach according to USA Today. (B, L)

Day 3 – La Paz to Magdalena Bay

Depart from La Paz early in the morning en route to Magdalena Bay, jewel of the Pacific and home to a staggering number of migratory and marine birds, sea turtles, and marine mammals including the migratory gray whales. Breakfast will be provided en route at one of our favorite local ranchos. Settle into our secluded island camp and after happy hour, learn about the important sea turtle restoration project which will be the focus of tomorrow's activities. Get a good night's rest, tomorrow we search for turtles! (B, L, D)



Day 4 - Sea Turtle Monitoring

Wake up early and grab a cup of coffee and watch the fisher-conservationists prepare the nets used in the sea turtle monitoring, or stay in bed and catch a few extra z's. During breakfast we will learn about the monitoring protocol and how we can participate in the data collection. Every two hours you will have the chance to accompany the monitoring team in pangas to check the nets for turtles. Captured sea turtles will be transported to camp where we will help take measurements and other important data before releasing them back into the wild. Throughout the day you'll have the chance to ask all your questions about sea turtles. Hike up one of the towering sand dunes to watch the sunset. After dinner, take in the stars in a night sky that never disappoints. (B, L, D)



Day 5 – Gray whale observation

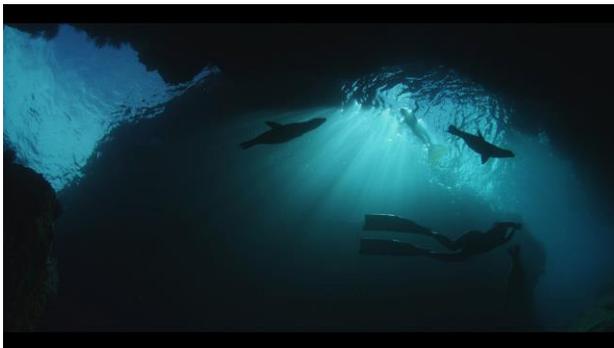
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Head down to the beach to finish measuring and weighing sea turtles before releasing them back into the wild, concluding the sea turtle monitoring portion of the trip. During breakfast, we will learn about the gray whales, their incredible migration, and the importance of Magdalena Bay for breeding and calving to these magnificent creatures. After a brief orientation, we will board the pangas and head out in search of gray whales. Friendly whales often approach the boats, and the mothers are known to push the young calves closer, which can make for an incredible interaction between two species. We will enjoy a picnic lunch on a secluded barrier island before heading back out to see whales. Back at camp, budding chefs can head to the kitchen for regional cuisine cooking class. The rest of the group can head to the beach to learn artisanal fishing techniques, or relax and get lost in a book. (B, L, D)

Day 6 - Back to La Paz

Today we will bid farewell to our hosts before heading out again to search for gray whales. On the way we'll have the chance to explore the mangroves. After a picnic lunch we will depart by van La Paz. (B, L)



Day 7 - Espiritu Santo Island Getaway

Visit Espiritu Santo Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and home to turquoise water, multitudes of fish species, and resident sea lions. Less than one hour from La Paz, this natural paradise will amaze you with breathtaking island scenery and rich marine life. Jump in the water to snorkel with the sea lions and observe tropical fish.

After a tasty lunch, our world-class nature guides will interpret the natural and cultural history of this unique place, and lead you through some of the astounding nature trails that take you into the heart of the island. (B, L)

Day 8 - Departure

After breakfast we will head to the airport for departures back home (B)

NOTE: This is a sample itinerary. Your guide may choose to modify the itinerary based on wind, tides and other considerations. Your safety and enjoyment are our utmost concern.