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# A Legacy Club Journey: Baja California

## DATES

March 12-19, 2023

## PRICE

Double Occupancy: \$5,550

Single Occupancy: \$6,675

## DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

The seas surrounding the Baja California Peninsula are among the richest on Earth. Its fisheries, including shrimp, squid, tuna and sardines, constitute 75% of the country's annual catch, contributing \$900 million dollars to Mexico's economy each year. These resources are the engine of the region's growth and key source of income, food and livelihoods for nearly 10 million people. By working with our conservation partners, the government and local communities to sustain their resources for present and future generations, we are creating solutions that work not only in this part of Mexico but can later be replicated in the rest of the country and other parts of the world.

Your journey begins in Loreto, Baja California Sur. The seas surrounding Baja California are places of tremendous natural wealth. They provide habitat for more than a quarter of the world's marine mammals, including blue, gray, fin, humpback and pilot whales. Loreto Bay ranks among the highest in the region in biological and ecological value. The five-island chain within the Loreto Marine Park is home to 29 marine mammal species, the most in all of Mexico, 15

species of whale, 17 species of marine birds and five species of turtles, including the endangered black sea turtle that feeds in the seagrass beds of Loreto Bay.

Continue onto Magdalena Bay, one of the richest and largest intact coastal wetlands along the Pacific coast. Located in a transition zone where the two most important currents of the Eastern Pacific meet – the cooler California Current from the north and the warmer Equatorial Counter Current from the south – the area undergoes water temperature fluctuations, which contribute to its incredible biodiversity and productivity. Magdalena Bay is a vital calving area for the migratory gray whale and is its southernmost refuge during the months of January through April.

End your trip with a two-night camping adventure to Isla Espiritu Santo Marine Park; there is nothing like having nature right at your doorstep!



## SWIM WITH WHALE SHARKS

While traveling through La Paz Bay, we will have the opportunity to snorkel alongside whale sharks, the largest mammals in the world!

## SLEEP OVERNIGHT ON A REMOTE ISLAND

Sleep under the stars in your comfortable camp located in Isla Espiritu Santo Marine Park.

## LOOK FOR GREY WHALES

Visit Magdalena Bay and board skiff boats for a two-hour gray whale observation tour.

## KAYAK AND SNORKEL

Your journey offers many opportunities to kayak and snorkel in some of the most biologically diverse areas in the world.

Your trip supports the local communities you're traveling in and The Nature Conservancy's efforts locally and globally. This trip has been planned specifically by The Nature Conservancy's team of scientific experts and travel liaisons to immerse you in the work the Conservancy is doing on the ground that has global consequences.

## TNC TRAVEL VALUES

### ACCESS:

Travel with renowned Conservancy experts and local partners for an exclusive, behind-the-scenes experience. You won't just see amazing places, you'll witness how you are helping save them.

### IMPACT:

See how your commitment to our planet and your passion for conservation are making a difference. You will see the wild places and the communities you are impacting.

### KNOWLEDGE:

Learn how we are applying the latest cutting-edge science to affect global change and drive conservation.

### INSPIRATION:

Immerse yourself in local cultures and awe-inspiring landscapes to foster your own connection to our world.

### GLOBALLY MINDED:

Elevate your understanding of our work by seeing first-hand how TNC and our partners act locally and how we turn local results in to global impact by scaling solutions that work.

### TRAVELER EXPECTATIONS & CODE OF CONDUCT:

Please read [TNC's Traveler Expectations](#), our guide for ensuring that we treat each other with respect, fairness and integrity beyond reproach during travel in accordance with [TNC's Code of Conduct](#). Following the Code is an expectation and responsibility for everyone in the larger TNC community, including our staff, partners, vendors and supporters. To that end, when registering for a TNC trip, you are agreeing to uphold the Code.





# THE CONSERVATION LANDSCAPE

## **LORETO NATIONAL MARINE PARK**

As tourism flourished in the area in the 1990s, locals became concerned about the strain on natural resources and began the necessary work to protect the waters and islands of Loreto Bay. The Loreto National Marine Park was created in 1996 and it has been a TNC priority site since. Home to dolphins, sea turtles, blue-footed boobies, parrot fish, cacti, marine fossils, volcanic ash, and more, the Marine Park is a spectacular place to explore both on foot and in the water.

## **MAGDALENA BAY**

After migrating nearly 5,000 miles from the coast of Alaska, the California gray whale settles in Magdalena Bay during the winter for breeding season. The calm, protected Bay water is the ideal place for gray whales to birth and raise their calves. Of the three breeding lagoons in Baja, Magdalena Bay is the only location that is not protected; whales are threatened by fishing gear, vessels, coastal development, and pollution. As part of TNC's Baja Marine Initiative, staff are working with local and government partners to develop a plan to protect key areas of Magdalena Bay and contribute to the long-term survival of the gray whale.

## **ISLA ESPIRITU SANTO**

Located off the coast of La Paz, Isla Espiritu Santo is a UNESCO-protected Biosphere Reserve. The island is rich in flora and fauna and teeming with diverse wildlife such as bats, seabirds, and the endangered black-tailed jackrabbit. From the white sand beaches, one can see seasonal whales, turtles, and manta rays swim in the crystal blue waters. Some of the most biologically diverse waters in the south of the Gulf of Mexico, it is important to manage and protect the area from threats of over tourism and fishing.

## ITINERARY

**DAY 1 — Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup> | Welcome to Mexico!**  
Upon arrival in the charming historic town of Loreto, you will be transferred to Posada de Las Flores located in downtown. After settling in, join the group for a welcome reception and trip overview at the hotel's restaurant where you will be joined by Mariana Walther, TNC's Gulf of California Coordinator. In the evening, enjoy a cocktail reception and dinner on-site at your hotel.

### OVERNIGHT AT POSADA DE LAS FLORES LORETO

**DAY 2 — Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup> |** After breakfast at the hotel, depart to the Loreto marina to board a skiff boat for a four-hour tour of the Loreto Marine Park, where you will have the option to hike, swim and snorkel in and around Coronado Island. After lunch, spend the rest of the afternoon resting or exploring in and around town, before a brief presentation in the early evening and dinner as a group.

### OVERNIGHT AT POSADA DE LAS FLORES LORETO

**DAY 3 — Tuesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> |** After breakfast at the hotel, spend the morning on a visit to the San Javier Mission, which is a 45-minute drive from Loreto. This Mission was established in 1758 and is so well preserved it is still used as a church today. After exploring the Mission and the surrounding small town, return to Loreto. Enjoy lunch in town followed by free time to explore at leisure. Dinner will be at a local favorite this evening.

### OVERNIGHT AT POSADA DE LAS FLORES LORETO

**DAY 4 — Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> |** After a quick breakfast at the hotel, depart early to Puerto Lopez Mateos in Magdalena Bay (a 1.5-hour drive). Upon arrival, board skiff boats for a two-hour gray whale observation tour. After seeing these impressive marine mammals and their calves, enjoy a lobster lunch at a nearby restaurant. After lunch, drive 3 hours to La Paz. Once there, check in to your hotel, CostaBaja Resort & Spa. In the evening, walk along the waterside and marina to dine at Azul Marino.

### OVERNIGHT AT COSTABAJA RESORT & SPA

## LODGING



### Posada de Las Flores Loreto

Carefully decorated in Colonial-Mexican décor, this beautiful hotel is situated in the center of Loreto next to the main square.



### CostaBaja Resort & Spa

Located in La Paz, this boutique resort faces the majestic Sea of Cortez and is the perfect place to start your adventure to Espiritu Santo Island.



### Glamping on Isla Espiritu

Camp under the stars at Camp Cecil; you'll stay in large tents that feature comfortable mattresses, linens, and sun showers during your stay. Here, snorkeling, kayaking, paddleboarding, and birding are literally at your front door.



## ITINERARY CONT.

**DAY 5 — Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>** | After storing your luggage at CostaBaja and enjoying breakfast at the hotel, grab your overnight (dry) bag and depart on an excursion to the Isla Espiritu Santo Marine Park, one of the most biologically diverse areas in the world. The 90-minute trip by boat to the island is an adventure in itself. While traveling through La Paz Bay, we will have the opportunity to snorkel alongside whale sharks, the largest species of fish in the world! Upon arrival at the island, settle into your canvas-sided tents and then rejoin the group for a picnic lunch on the beach. Spend the day relaxing on a secluded beach, taking a hike on the island's terrain, snorkeling, swimming, kayaking or paddleboarding on the bay. In the evening, enjoy cocktail hour on the beach followed by dinner at the camp and stargazing.

### OVERNIGHT AT ISLA ESPIRITU SANTO

**DAY 6 — Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>** | Enjoy the sound of the crashing waves during breakfast at camp before boarding a boat destined for Los Islotes, to the north of the island. Once there, snorkel with the residential sea lion colony and enjoy a picnic lunch before returning to camp. The rest of the afternoon is yours to enjoy at leisure.

### OVERNIGHT AT ISLA ESPIRITU SANTO

**DAY 7 — Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>** | Spend your final hours at camp eating breakfast, kayaking, or hiking, before packing up and returning to CostaBaja for our final night. Spend the afternoon at the resort at your leisure: walk along the beach, swim in the pool, or relax. Enjoy a farewell dinner at Las Tres Virgenes and celebrate the week with your fellow travelers.

### OVERNIGHT AT COSTABAJA RESORT & SPA

**DAY 8 — Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup>** | Enjoy breakfast at the hotel, or along the way to the airport, if departing early. Private airport transfers will be arranged today based on your flight schedule out of La Paz international Airport (LAP) or Los Cabos International Airport (SJD).



#### Espiritu Santo

Located in the Gulf of California's Sea of Cortez, this 23,383-acre island ecosystem is home to a variety of endemic plant species, colonies of sea lions, and surrounding coral reefs.



#### PRICE DETAIL

Double Occupancy: \$5,550

Single Occupancy: \$6,675

Price is based on a minimum of 14. Trip size not to exceed 14 travelers.

Price **includes** all lodging, transportation once in Baja, airport transfers from Loreto (LTO) and La Paz (LAP), activities, tips, meals, TNC expert staff and local guides. Price does **not include** your outbound flight to Loreto (LTO) or your return flight from La Paz (LAP), or your chosen nearby airport.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This itinerary is representative of your trip, and like all natural history excursions, activities are subject to modification based on weather and unforeseen events. We will do our best to keep you informed on any necessary changes.