



MEXICO

Multi Sport and Whale Adventure

PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



DO SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY...

ITINERARY

Baja Mexico • The Cradle of the Whales

11 DAYS • 10 NIGHTS

**La Paz- Espiritu Santo Island- La Paz Bay- Balandra Bay-
Lopez Mateos Cabo Pulmo- Santiago- Todos Santos**

This itinerary can be tailored to suit your exact requirements

HIGHLIGHTS

- Snorkel with sea lion pups and the world largest fish- the Whale Shark.
- Explore the spectacular Balandra Bay with beautiful beaches and a prolific mangrove forest.
- Escape in the Santiago area with hot springs and waterfalls within the canyon.
- Relax in Todos Santos as you have free time to explore the area and try body surfing on this beautiful Pacific Beaches

TOUR ESSENTIALS

Tour Style	Multi-sport Adventure
Tour Start	La Paz
Tour End	La Paz
Accommodation	Hotel, Beach Bungalow and Camping
Included Meals	10 Breakfasts, 7 Lunches, 4 Dinners
Difficulty Level	Medium
Group Size	Tailormade

THE MULTI-SPORT ADVENTURE



Baja California Sur is a world class destination and this “Baja Cape Discovery” promises many exceptional experiences packed into one unforgettable trip. Explore the contrasting scenery between the Sierra de la Laguna’s deep fresh water canyons and the magnificent marine encounters found in the Sea of Cortez. From colonial pueblos to ranchos, kayaking and snorkeling to hiking and plunging into fresh water pools, swimming with whale-sharks to mingling with sea-lions and encountering Gray whales; you’ll visit all the major highlights of this extraordinary region.

MULTISPORT AND WILDLIFE ADVENTURE *an overview*

Bordered by the United States to the north, Pacific Ocean to the south, Guatemala, Belize and the Caribbean Sea to the south east and the Gulf of Mexico to the east. Mexico is crossed north to south by two mountain ranges known as Sierra Madre Oriental and Sierra Madre Occidental, which are extension of the Rocky Mountains from northern North America. From east to west at the centre, the country is crossed by the Trans-Mexican volcanic belt, also known as, the Sierra Nevada. A fourth mountain range, the Sierra Madre del Sur, runs from Michoacan to Oaxaca. The Tropic of Cancer divides Mexico into temperate and tropical zones, both with constant temperatures. Home to a vast range of wildlife and geographic mountain regions, Mexico is the perfect destination for any adventure.

WHY PIONEER EXPEDITIONS?

We really are one of the few specialists that really “do” off the beaten track and unique adventures. We are driven by a passion for adventure travel and wildlife. We are continuously collaborating with our local partners and tour guides to ensure that you have the best experiences on your dream adventure – this focus is reflected in our uniquely wonderful itineraries. Our experts are on hand whether you are looking for a small group trip or a bespoke holiday. Even better, our small group tours have a maximum of 12 people, making it a much more personal experience.



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ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrive in La Paz

Upon arrival in La Paz you will be transferred by private taxi to Hotel Cathedral located next to the mission church in the centre of La Paz. At 5:00pm meet your guide for a pre-dinner stroll along the Malecon (sea-promenade) to help shrug off the jet-lag and enjoy one of our spectacular sunsets. We will dine in one of the local restaurants.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
D



Distance:
NA



Activity:
In transit

DAY 2: Swimming with Sea Lion Pups in Espiritu Santo

Our adventure continues with an exhilarating boat ride out to the "Jewel of The Cortez". Espiritu Santo Island was declared part of a Biosphere Reserve by the UNESCO in 1995 and is one of several islands that form the Gulf of California Islas' National Park. The archipelago of Espiritu Santo is made up of several smaller islands several of which are important nesting sites for the region's sea birds.

When viewed on Google maps one can't help but notice the long fjord like bays that are deeply recessed on the west coast providing picture perfect beaches to explore. "Los Islotes" situated off the north coast of the island forms the crowning glory where a magnificent permanent sea-lion colony resides. Here you can experience the amazing thrill of swimming with sea lion pups and snorkel amongst thousands of tropical fish. Lunch will be on one of the many gorgeous soft white sandy beaches. When the day comes to an end you will be returned back to Hotel Cathedral.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B & L



Distance:
Varies



Activity:
Snorkeling and Wildlife

DAY 3: Swimming with Whale-Sharks and a trip to the Whale Museum in La Paz



After breakfast we will embark on what is for many, the major highlight of the trip: swimming with the largest fish in the world!! Whale-sharks have made their home for most of the year in the shallow rich-feeding waters of the La Paz bay. You will venture out in our motor boat equipped with cameras and snorkel gear ready to experience the thrill of a life-time. Those that would rather not swim alongside a shark measuring up to 45 feet can take close up pictures of these amazing gentle giants. Returning to La Paz we will have time to freshen up before enjoying some local cuisine at a typical La Paz sea-side restaurant (there are always options for vegetarians). Then after lunch enjoy a stroll around the colonial

centre of La Paz with your guide pointing out notable buildings and a visit to the Whale museum conveniently located on the sea promenade. Delicious natural fruit flavoured ice-creams are an absolute must! Try a damiana, tres leches or chongo flavour for something new.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B & L



Distance:
Varies



Activity:
Snorkeling and Wildlife



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DAY 4: Mangrove Forest and Balandra Bay

Our sea-kayaking expedition explores a spectacular bay with more beautiful beaches, great snorkeling and a prolific mangrove forest. We will paddle into a sinuous sea river that takes us back into a quiet lagoon where the birdlife will likely reveal egrets, herons, ospreys and several smaller sea-birds that share the complex mangrove system. We'll learn the significance of the mangroves in Baja and their crucial role in the balance of the ecology. Our day will include a packed lunch on one of Balandra's beaches



Returning to La Paz we'll freshen up before taking a van ride across the Baja desert to the Pacific Lagoons where we will spend the evening at Hotel Mangrove Inn.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:
270km, approx. 3hours driving



Activity:
Kayaking and Wildlife

DAY 5: Grey Whale Watching OR Mexican Mountain-Biking Expedition

During Whale Season (January-March):



3 hours of whale-watching in the breeding grounds of the Grey whales. Another breath-taking experience and one in which you are likely to actually pet the baby whales as their inquisitiveness brings them within arm's-length of our motor skiff. Returning to the fishing village of Lopez Mateos we will enjoy a fresh seafood lunch before traveling back to La Paz and the Hotel Cathedral.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B & L



Distance:
Varies



Activity:
Wildlife

Outside of Whale Season:

Following a hearty breakfast we will meet our mountain bike guide and take a 30 minute drive south of La Paz into the low hills where a myriad of dirt roads and farm tracks through the Baja desert make the perfect playground for our Mexican mountain-biking Expedition. Views to the Sea of Cortez are stunning as is the great variety of Baja trees and cactus that provide a natural garden of weird and wonderful plant life. Besides the odd farm vehicle we are unlikely to see much in the way of traffic – perhaps a herd of goats or a stray cow will be our only obstructions. A support van means you can do as much or as little of the biking as you wish, but for the die-hards there is a gruelling 4 mile steep sand road to finish our 20 mile loop – most people hop in the comfort of the air-conditioned van at this point. Our ride is complimented with a superb pic-nic set out on a large granite slab that commands distant desert views over much of our ride. Return in the afternoon to Hotel cathedral.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B & L



Distance:
Approx. 1 hour drive



Activity:
Mountain-biking



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DAY 6: Discover Cabo Pulmo and the Pacific Oceans Coral Reef in Marine National Park

This morning the Pacific Ocean's most northern Coral Reef awaits us. We journey down the peninsula to the delightful seaside village of Cabo Pulmo. Take the plunge and discover why this area became a marine national park in 1995. In the afternoon we will take a walk along the stunning coastline to Iguana Beach where large white granite boulders and soft white sand create an image of sheer paradise. We will camp on the sunny Iguana beach which has basic bathroom facilities and palm fond shading.



Overnight:
Camp



Meals:
B, L & D



Distance:
170km, 3 hour drive



Activity:
Snorkeling

DAY 7: Explore and relax as we discover canyons, waterfall and hot springs in Santiago



Following a cooked breakfast we pack up and travel on down to the pretty agricultural village of Santiago where one can observe the rural life style of Baja Californians and where time seems to have stood still since the Mexican Revolution. Once off the highway we venture along the amazing labyrinth of sand roads that represent quintessential Baja off road terrain. Hike into a deep canyon where a 40ft waterfall completes this idyllic setting and a refreshing swim is simply irresistible. We'll enjoy a packed lunch while warming ourselves on a large granite boulder in the Baja sun and then transfer by van to our secret camp spot for the night: a stone's throw from a natural hot spring beneath a huge wild fig tree. A composting toilet provides a measure of comfort in this wild camping location.



Overnight:
Camp



Meals:
B, L & D



Distance:
60km, approx. 1 hour drive



Activity:
Sight seeing and hiking

DAY 8: Journey to Todos Santos with an afternoon with your guide or surfing

A visit to the enchanting puebla of Todos Santos. Enjoy a stroll around this village made famous by its Hotel California. A chance to souvenir shop in one of the many trinket stores and admire the excellent work of many local artists in the local galleries. In the afternoon we have the option of a coastal walk or a body surf on one of the Pacific beaches – please advise your guide ahead of time which you would prefer. Hotel in Todos Santos.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
155km, approx. 2 hours



Activity:
Guided tour or surfing



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DAY 9 & 10: Relax in Todos Santos

Days at leisure to relax on the beach near Todos Santos.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:



Distance:
N/A



Activity:
Leisure

DAY 11: Transfer to La Paz Airport/ Flight Home

You will be transferred back to the airport in time for your flight home.



Overnight:
N/A



Meals:



Distance:
**Approx. 1 hour
drive to airport**



Activity:
Depart Mexico



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Included	Not Included
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All meals as described (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner) ■ Accommodation as described ■ Water ■ Alcoholic beverages on two camping evenings ■ All transfers ■ Camping equipment, kayaking and snorkeling gear and kayaks ■ Bi-Lingual guide(s) from days 1-8 ■ Entrance fees to National Parks and protection areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ International flights (These can be arranged through us, if needed) ➤ Meals other than mentioned ➤ Alcoholic beverages only included for two camping nights ➤ Gratuities (tip) ➤ Personal expenses

ACCOMMODATION *at a glance*

	Location	Accommodation	Example
Nights: 1, 2, 3 & 5, 6	La Paz	Hotel	<i>Hotel Catedral</i>
Night: 4	Isla Magdalena	Hotel/Beach Bungalow	<i>Mangrove Inn</i>
Nights: 7 & 8	Iguana Beach	Camp	<i>Iguana Beach</i>
Nights: 9, 10, 11	Todos Santo	Hotel	<i>T.B.C</i>
			<i>T.B.C</i>



WHAT OUR CLIENTS HAVE SAID...

Baja Mexico was simply amazing.

Beginning in the laid back town that is the beautiful La Paz as our base, myself and 11 friends spent the first few days swimming with whale sharks, and then snorkelling with sea lion pups - one climbed on my back and fell asleep, a magical experience

Following the next days' hilarious sea kayaking expedition through mangrove swamps, we then drove over to Magdalena Bay for the highlight of the trip, a days boat trip to see the grey whales. This had been a lifetime ambition for me, and every moment of the day was breathtaking. From seeing distant blowholes to then finding ourselves surrounded by mama whales and their inquisitive babies, the whole day was surreal and wonderful.

I spent my birthday checking out the wonderful town of Todos Santos, home to the Hotel California and numerous little shops all selling Mexican crafts and gifts, with lunch consisting of the best margaritas in Mexico! Then food on the beach in the afternoon - spotting humpbacks and their blowholes further out to sea.

We then spent a couple of days camping, one night on a beautiful deserted beach, and then to some beautiful hot springs in a canyon - nature at its finest.

From start to finish, the trip went perfectly. The guides were amazing - Mario and Lia had a lot on their plates trying to wrangle 12 women and get them everywhere on time, and they handled it outstandingly! They were considered friends by everyone immediately and will be missed.

So... a huge thank you and congratulations to Pioneer for giving me yet another wonderful, memorable adventure. I will never travel with anyone else!

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Activity Duration	
Season	This region is best explored between October to May
Best Time To Go	Whale season is between January and March; however there are alternatives to whale watching from October to December, and April to May.
Group Size	2- 14 pax
Responsibility	
Difficulty Level	Our grades have been designated based on our perception of the degree of physical activity you are likely to require to enjoy the adventure. These are only a guideline. This itinerary has a 'medium to difficult' level (there is between 5 – 7 hours of activities per day – however the pace is relatively slow). This means that you will need an average level of fitness.



THE PIONEER BOOKING PROCESS

Where do you go from here? Well, you can feel free to email us at info@pioneerexpeditions.com if you're interested in this trip, or any of our other expeditions from around the world. Visit our website www.pioneerexpeditions.com to unearth all of our other equally amazing trips and destinations.

1. Contact us -

We will be happy to answer any questions or enquiries you may have. From here we will begin to plan and put together your dream adventure holiday! Alternatively, on our website you will find our booking and enquiry forms; once filled in, we will be notified of your enquiry and will get back to you ASAP.

2. Leave everything to us -

Everything will be arranged and booked by us, but we will make sure to keep you updated every step of the way. In addition, we can arrange your international flights if needed, as we have access to competitive airfares. We can also arrange any additional tours or additional night's accommodation.

3. Wait for your adventure to begin -

Sit back and count down the days until your trip of a lifetime with Pioneer Expeditions. We'll handle all of the last minute preparations and provide you with everything you need. All practical information will be sent out to you, prior to your trip.

If you feel like altering this itinerary to suit your personal preferences, we can arrange all of that and more – just get in contact with us and let us know your requirements and wishes. From here, we can simply tailor-make your dream holiday.

