



BAJA, MEXICO

GRAY WHALES & DESERT TRAILS with MARIN NATURE ADVENTURES

February 17-23, 2019

HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 whale watches
- Close encounters with Gray Whales
- Easy hikes in the desert and on the beach
- Bird watching and fresh air
- Explore Loreto & San Ignacio pueblos
- Learn about the natural history of Baja

ABOUT YOUR NATURALIST LEADERS



Sharon and Kevin have been leading Hiking & Natural History tours for 12 years. They love sharing wildlife encounters and the wonders of nature with old and new friends. Sharon is the hiking instructor for College of Marin and a science teacher at Marin Country Day School. Kevin is a marine biologist with over 500 days on the Pacific Ocean observing fisheries, whales and seabirds.

www.MarinNature.com

This 7-day trip offers the perfect balance of whale-watching, adventure, natural history and culture. Working with local naturalists, Kevin & Sharon will introduce you to the behaviors and majesty of Gray Whales and lead you through the desert landscape of the Baja Peninsula.

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

FEBRUARY 17 - LORETO

Upon arrival at Loreto International Airport, shuttle service is provided to the hotel. The charming town of Loreto was the first Spanish colonial settlement in Baja, established in 1697. The city was centered around the historic mission church, which is still standing today. The hacienda-style hotel is located on the waterfront. Attend a welcome dinner and trip orientation at the hotel, followed by an optional evening stroll. *Overnight at Hotel Oasis. (D)*

FEBRUARY 18 - LORETO

The island-studded portion of the Sea of Cortez faces Loreto and is protected by the Loreto Bay National Marine Park. Take a boat ride encircling the dramatic Coronado Island, which offers views of azure waters, interesting geology, a colony of sea lions and chances to see Humpback, Fin or Blue Whales. Return to Loreto for lunch and an afternoon to relax or explore Loreto on foot. Dine with Sharon at a local restaurant or venture off for your own experience. *Overnight at Hotel Oasis. (BL)*



FEBRUARY 19 - GUERRERO NEGRO

Take notice of the desert landscapes of southern Baja as you leave the Sea of Cortez and head towards the Pacific Ocean; Sharon and Kevin will teach about desert ecology throughout today's journey. Drive alongside crystal blue waters of Bahía de Concepción, and stop en route for a walk on the beach to explore the mangroves rich with varieties of birds. After a leisurely lunch in the town of Mulege, take in impressive views of Volcán Tres Virgenes, one of the tallest peaks on the peninsula. Stop for a short hike and bird watching in the highlands, among prickly desert vegetation, before arriving in the town of Guerrero Negro. *Overnight at Halfway Inn. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 20 - SAN IGNACIO

Spend the day whale watching in Laguna Ojo de Liebre (Scammon's Lagoon) and at the El Vizacaíno Biosphere Reserve, the largest wildlife refuge in Mexico. This lagoon is one of three lagoons in Baja where Gray Whales breed and give birth after their migration down the Pacific Coast from Alaska. Sharon & Kevin will talk on the fascinating natural history of these migratory whales and interpret their behaviors while you enjoy morning and afternoon whale watching excursions. After a full day at the lagoon backtrack to the town of San Ignacio. *Overnight at Hotel La Huerta. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 21- SAN IGNACIO

Early start today, with a drive across an open stretch of desert and a salty mudflat to reach

San Ignacio Lagoon. Aboard sturdy pangas (skiffs) operated by Mexican fisherman, seek out close encounters with graceful Gray Whales. There should be excellent opportunities for photographing the whales. After lunch at the lagoon, go bird watching in the El Vizcaíno Biosphere Reserve and then return to San Ignacio town. San Ignacio is a true oasis nestled in the middle of the Baja Californian desert. *Overnight at Hotel La Huerta. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 22 - LORETO

Following breakfast, free time to stroll through town or visit the historic Mission Church and plaza. After lunch, embark on the return bus ride across the desert to Loreto, stopping along the way for a break to stretch your legs. Farewell dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Hotel Oasis. (BLD)*

FEBRUARY 23 - FAREWELL!

Early risers will experience the spectacular sunrise over the Sea of Cortez before breakfast. Catch your return flight from the Loreto Airport or consider extending your personal stay for a weekend of total relaxation. *(B)*



LAND COST

\$2,900

Includes all meals, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, full-time guide for duration of program, gratuities for: guide, driver and boat operators; bottled water on the bus, and departure tax.

Does not include additional gratuities, alcoholic beverages, items of a personal nature, or international airfare.

THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on double occupancy; for a single room throughout the trip add \$450. A \$400 deposit and enrollment form are required to secure your space. This deposit will be refundable, excluding a \$300 cancellation fee, until October 15, 2018 at which time final payments are due. Cancellations received after this date are not refundable. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.





FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL

Visit holbrook.travel/bajamna19
or contact Sharon Barnett at (415) 460-5385 or Sharon@MarinNature.com

PHOTOS BY

David Wimpfheimer
www.CALnaturalist.com