



If whale watching is on your bucket list, then this is a must-go trip. We will be taking you to one of the World's foremost locations for whale watching, with some of the most densest populations of whales, dolphins and rays.

The whales we are likely to see during the week are: blue, fin, humpback, Bryde's, short fin pilot, but also you will enjoy common and bottle-nosed dolphins, orca, grey whales, dwarf sperm and sperm whales; California sea lions and a host of birds including blue footed and brown booby, red billed tropic birds, zillions of brown pelicans and magnificent frigate birds.

Hosted by the World renowned Michael Fishbach, we are able to access areas that normal tours are not permitted. The deserted islands onto which we are permitted to land for a picnic lunch offer the richest diversity of cactus on earth and there is also a rich diversity of tropical fish that you will see whilst snorkelling.

The Sea of Cortez, also known as The Gulf of California, is a body of calm water that separates the Baja California Peninsula from the Mexican mainland with a coastline of approximately 2,500 miles, and a surface area of about 62,000 sq miles. The Gulf is acknowledged as one of the most diverse seas on the planet.



## Your Host

Our trip will once again be hosted by by **Michael Fishbach**, leading Marine Biologist and one of the world's foremost experts on Blue whales. Michael has licenses which allow him into areas not permitted to the public and even licensed operators. This is also one of the very few places on the planet where it is possible to actually pet grey whales and their calves. There are three lagoons where the grey whales come to calf each year, where they nurse their calves for two to three months before they set off for the arctic. Can you imagine the feeling of getting in the water and being close enough to pet and stroke a whale?! We can also pet them from the boat.



Michael not only knows the local marine life better than anyone else, he also has fantastic knowledge of the area and rents beautiful houses for us to stay in. They are all situated close to each other and share a heated swimming pool. If you are amongst the eight to come with us you would have your own bedroom with en-suite bathroom and be part of the house party.



## **A typical day**

You would enjoy a simple, but satisfying breakfast and then we'd be out to sea often before seven, getting in amongst the wildlife. There would be an early lunch and rest probably on a deserted island beach with the opportunity for snorkelling. Then it would be back out to the whales in the afternoon, followed by a tasty home cooked dinner or a local restaurant. Michael gives informative, and always entertaining, presentation on each day, where footage shot can be reviewed on a big screen. Usually everyone is involved in a meeting before retiring to bed to decide on the next day's schedule after going over the weather report. Michael has been in these waters for the last twenty odd years and just knows how to get the best out of every day!



I feel so privileged to have secured a week and it is a shame that we can only accommodate eight guests which is why it has to be on a first-come first-served basis. I am already thinking of some little extras that we might want to add in. I have found a Mariachi band close by (you know very Mexican, sombreros and lots of trumpets) that I thought might like to entertain us during dinner one evening!

Part of my deal with Michael is that I am responsible for the wine and beer, so at least we know that won't run out!

## **Valentina**

I thought I would share with you the story of why we hold the trip around the Valentine holiday. On Valentine's Day 2011, Michael and his team were out exploring The Sea of Cortez when they happened upon a young humpback whale that had become tangled in a fishing net. It was a long and dramatic rescue, but the team finally managed to free the whale from what would likely have been the sad loss of another young whale to the fishing industry.

The whale swam quickly away from the boat and into the distance. Michael and his team were celebrating a job well done back on boat, when all of a sudden they saw the whale returning at speed. What happened next is one of the most beautiful sights Michael says he has ever laid his eyes on. The whale began jumping out of the water near to the boat, repeatedly breaching the water and creating huge plumes of spray when he returned to the sea. He continued to put on this magnificent display for his rescuers for what seemed forever, almost dancing for joy that he had been freed.

Michael and his team decided to name this young whale Valentina in honour to the day he had been freed. This is a special week for them and they always celebrate 'Valentina Day.' So

for those emotional reasons to, I am again delighted to have been offered the week of the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> February.

[You can hear more about the story in a video found here.](#)

### **Our Package includes:**

- *7 Nights in Loreto on the Sea of Cortez as part of a house party in private villas hosted by Heather and Michael Fishbach and myself.*
- *Transportation in a private vehicle to and from Loreto Airport, and where needed throughout the week*
- *All meals and all drinks - soft and alcoholic.*
- *Boat trips on six days out into the Sea of Cortez and her Islands.  
(weather permitting)*
- *A varied programme of activities including snorkelling, walking on the islands, evening illustrated talks, help with photography, time for swimming and relaxing at the villas*
- *Pre-departure information to give you some knowledge ahead of the various species of whales, about Baja California and this trip in particular.*

**The Price per person is from £5,550 (single supplement £750)**

**Dates: 10<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

Talk to us if you would like to extend the trip with time in Los Angeles, or in Mexico, with more wildlife, culture, or just time to relax in the sun away from the English winter.



