

Baja Wildlife Expedition

Mobula Rays, Orcas & Snorkeling the Sea of Cortez

May 8 to 15, 2028



Mobula Rays

SAFARI OVERVIEW

Witness one of the planet's greatest **marine wildlife spectacles** on this unforgettable **Sea of Cortez liveboard** expedition. Timed to coincide with the **annual mobula ray migration**, this immersive **Baja** adventure places you in the heart of massive schools of **mobula rays** as they leap, glide, and swirl through the sea and air in breathtaking numbers. Guided by an expert expedition team and supported by **aerial spotting**, you'll **snorkel** and **freedive** alongside mobula rays, **dolphins, sea lions, whale sharks**, and enormous **bait balls** that attract predators such as **striped marlin, tuna**, and even **orcas**. Potential seasonal encounters with **humpback, blue, and fin whales** add to the excitement in one of Mexico's most wildlife-rich marine ecosystems. After sunset, experience the magic of **night snorkeling** as feeding mobula rays gather beneath the lights in mesmerizing underwater displays. Between excursions, relax aboard your liveboard vessel and take in the dramatic **desert-meets-ocean landscapes** of **Baja California Sur**. Perfect for snorkelers, freedivers, and **wildlife photographers**, this Sea of Cortez expedition offers extraordinary encounters with some of the ocean's most iconic species in what Jacques Cousteau famously called "the world's aquarium."

WHY CHOOSE THIS EXPEDITION?

- **Peak Mobula Ray Migration Encounters:** Spend six unforgettable days snorkeling and freediving among massive schools of mobula rays in the wildlife-rich waters of the Sea of Cortez.
- **Aerial-supported Marine Wildlife Tracking:** Maximize opportunities to encounter mobulas, orcas, dolphins, whale sharks, and possibly other seasonal whale species.

- **Luxury Baja Liveaboard Experience:** Explore the Sea of Cortez aboard the elegant, *Gallant Lady*, featuring comfortable cabins, gourmet cuisine, and inviting sundecks.
- **Expert-led Wildlife and Photography Expedition:** Travel with an experienced expedition leader and crew passionate about marine conservation, wildlife behavior, snorkeling, and photography.

LEADER: Scott Davis, assisted by ship staff and crew.

DAYS: 8, including estimated travel time. 7 nights aboard the *Gallant Lady*.

GROUP SIZE: 11.

SHIP: The *Gallant Lady*. See the *Ship* section on page 3.

COST: \$5,780 to \$6,250 per person, double occupancy, depending on cabin type, not including airfare, singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 4.

| Date | Description | Accommodation | Meals |
|----------|---|----------------------------------|---------|
| May 8 | Arrival and Embarkation Day. Arrive in Los Cabos, Mexico. In the early evening, journey to La Paz where you will board the ship. | On board the <i>Gallant Lady</i> | D |
| May 9–13 | Snorkel in the Sea of Cortez. Spend five days in the water for maximum snorkeling time with mobula ray congregations, and, fingers crossed, orcas. | | B, L, D |
| May 14 | Final Encounters at Sea. Enjoy one final day in the water with the mobula rays and other wildlife, before sailing back to La Paz. | | B, L, D |
| May 15 | Disembarkation. After breakfast disembark and begin the drive back to Los Cabos for your flights home. | | B |

LEADER

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris carefully selects leaders who are experts in their field to ensure that your experience is the best it can be. One leader assisted by the ship's staff and crew will provide a range of expertise for your trip.



Scott Davis ~ Leader, Ecologist, Photographer

Scott is Cheesemans' Co-Owner and a [professional photographer](#) specializing in wildlife, nature, and travel. Originally trained as a wildlife and marine biologist, his research and photo assignments have taken him to the far corners of the globe. National Geographic, BBC, Animal Planet, and renowned magazines have used his photography. His patience for teaching and love of capturing the essence of his subjects make him one of our most popular tour leaders.

SHIP

The Gallant Lady

The 12-passenger 116-ft *Gallant Lady* combines the luxury of a yacht with the thoughtful design of a dive deck. She has a steel hull and superstructure, sea stabilizers, and is International Safety Management (ISM) certified. Equipped with one 32-ft, high-speed, aluminum-hulled “Zodiac style” inflatable boat, 6 passengers can be in the water at a time. Cabins feature windows and/or portholes, air conditioning, and private bathrooms with showers, and you can stay connected via Wi-Fi Internet.



The Gallant Lady

Imaginative and fresh cuisine is proudly served.

Soups are handmade, and bread, pastries, and desserts are baked on board. Food is plentiful with ample snacks and up to four meals per day with a choice of entrees.

After a full day of exploring, soak under the stars in the hot tub or relax in the main dining and entertainment center, which features comfy couches, tables, a well-stocked bar, and select evening video showings, presentations, and slide shows.

DETAILED ITINERARY

May 8 ~ Fly to Los Cabos, Mexico

Your Sea of Cortez adventure begins the moment you land in Los Cabos. Transfer directly to the Sea Creatures Dive Shop, where you can browse and try on snorkel gear available for rental. From there, board your private bus for the scenic drive north to La Paz, gateway to one of the world's most biodiverse marine ecosystems. Step aboard the vessel, meet your expedition team, and settle in over a welcome dinner as you ease into the calm waters of the Sea of Cortez under the evening sky.



Sea of Cortez

May 9–13 ~ In-water wildlife immersion

Every Spring, the Sea of Cortez earns its title as the "Aquarium of the World"— and nowhere is that more vivid than during the mobula ray migration. From March through July, tens of thousands of these iconic rays converge in these warm, nutrient-rich waters to feed, mate, and launch themselves skyward in breathtaking aerial displays. You'll have five full days to swim among them at the peak of the season.

Begin your first full day at sea with the option to take a freediving lesson in a sheltered bay — a skill that transforms your encounters with mobulas, letting you descend quietly into their world rather than observing

from the surface. Kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding are also available for exploring the tranquil coves that rim the coastline.

For at least two of your five days, a spotter plane flies aerial support, scanning the surface from above and directing the ship and skiffs to the densest congregations of rays. This tactical advantage dramatically expands the range of potential encounters: mobula rays in the thousands, but also orcas on the hunt, whale sharks gliding through the blue, fin and blue whales surfacing in the distance, cownose rays sweeping the shallows, and large, acrobatic pods of common and bottlenose dolphins.



Mobula Rays
© Ralph Anderson

When the sun sets, the experience doesn't end. Each night, drop into the water beneath the ship's lights for a night snorkel unlike anything you've seen. Mobulas are drawn to the illuminated water column, where plankton blooms attract their prey. You'll find yourself surrounded by dozens of rays swirling and feeding just inches away in a mesmerizing underwater ballet.

May 14~ Final wildlife encounters and return to La Paz

Spend your last morning in the water — one final swim with the mobula rays and whatever other marine life the sea chooses to reveal. The Sea of Cortez rarely disappoints on a farewell day. As the afternoon unfolds, the ship sails back toward La Paz for a last evening together aboard, swapping stories and toasting an extraordinary week on the water.



Orca
© Ralph Anderson

May 15 ~ Disembark and fly home

Enjoy breakfast on the ship before disembarking and transferring back to San Jose Del Cabo Airport for your flights home. You'll be departing with memories of one of the ocean's most spectacular wildlife events.

COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

Costs and Cabin Options

| Type | Description (see <i>Deck Plan</i> on page Error! Bookmark not defined.) | Cost per Person |
|---|---|-----------------|
| Superior Suite (Rosario, Nautilus) | Main Deck. Double occupancy, with one quasi-king-sized bed or two full-sized beds, picture windows, air conditioning, dresser, and private bath. | \$5,780 |
| Superior Suite (Dofleini, Swell, Indie) | Lower Deck. Double occupancy, with one quasi-king-sized bed or two full-sized beds (Swell, Dofleini), two twin-sized beds (Indie), porthole windows, air conditioning, wardrobe or dresser, and private bath. | \$5,780 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|---------|
| Premium Suite (Emerald) | Lower Deck. Double occupancy, with one quasi-king-sized bed or two full-sized beds, porthole windows, air conditioning, dresser, and private bath. | \$6,250 |
|-------------------------|--|---------|

Costs are per person, depending on cabin type, double occupancy, not including airfare, singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will try to find a roommate for you, but if we cannot pair you with a roommate, we will not charge you a single supplement. If space is available, some cabins can be booked as a single by adding **90%** over the listed cabin cost.

We cannot guarantee a specific cabin number, but if changes occur, we will assign a cabin of equal or greater value.

Payment Schedule

| Payment | Due Date | Amount per Person |
|---------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Deposit | Due now to reserve your space | \$1,500 |
| Final | November 30, 2027 | Remaining Balance |

Payments are due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space.

Cancellations

Refunds are given depending on the time left before departure according to the following table. Through September 29, 2027, the cancellation fee of \$300 per person can be applied toward another trip if reserved within six months of the canceled trip's departure date. Cancellations are non-transferable.

| Dates | Forfeited Amount per Person |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| On or before September 29, 2027 | \$300 (see terms above) |
| September 30 to October 29, 2027 | 10% of trip cost |
| October 30 to November 29, 2027 | 40% of trip cost |
| On or after November 30, 2027 | 100% of trip cost |

Included

- Carbon offsets for the duration of this trip.
- All leaders, transport, park entry fees, landing fees, and permits for all activities, unless described as optional or listed in the *Not Included* section.
- Seven nights on board the *Gallant Lady*.
- Meals from dinner on May 8 through breakfast on May 15.
- Group transfer on May 8 from Sea Creatures Dive shop to the ship marina in La Paz.
- Group Transfer on May 15 from the ship marina in La Paz to the San Jose Del Cabo Airport.
- Port fee of \$35 per participant.
- Non-alcoholic beverages while onboard the *Gallant Lady*.
- Trip Planning Materials – information about entry requirements, flights, packing, gratuities, etc.

Not Included

- Carbon offsets for your flights to/from this trip.
- All airfare, airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees
- Passport and visa fees.
- Transfers from the San Jose Del Cabo Airport to the Sea Creatures Dive shop on arrival.
- Extra hotel nights.
- Gratuities.
- Wetsuit and snorkeling equipment (mask, snorkel, and snorkel fins). Rental gear is available for an additional cost.
- Mandatory [dive insurance](#) or [emergency evacuation insurance](#) that covers you for in-water activities.
- Optional [trip cancellation insurance](#).
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Traveler Form.

SIGN UP

Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Traveler Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

[Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris](#)

Email: info@cheesemans.com

WhatsApp: (408) 741-5330

Phone: (800) 527-5330 or (408) 741-5330

OTHER DETAILS

Climate

May air temperatures, on the Sea of Cortez, range from the mid-80s to 90s°F (26 to 32°C) during the day with island breezes, and can drop to 68 to 75°F (19 to 23°C) or lower at night, depending on wind conditions. Water temperatures average in the mid-70s°F (24°C).

Fitness Level

Minimal fitness is required to join this trip, but your fitness and snorkeling ability enrich the experience. Getting in the water is not required, and travelers can still have a wonderful experience watching the wildlife from the ship. At minimum, you need to comfortably and safely move around the ship and embark/disembark from the skiff. To get the most out of this trip, you should be comfortable in the water, snorkeling, and getting in and out of the water via a boat ladder. Please contact us if you don't have snorkeling experience but would like to join this trip, and plan to spend time swimming in a pool or similar before your trip to make sure you are comfortable in the water. Strong swimming ability and the ability to free dive (i.e., dive underwater without SCUBA tanks) are not required, but will also enrich your experience, especially to let the mobula rays swim around you. Please contact us if you have any health concerns that may make this trip challenging.

Motion Sickness

Don't let a fear of motion sickness keep you away! Even those who have experienced seasickness reported that the incredible wildlife and overall experience were well worth the temporary discomfort. If you are susceptible to seasickness or are concerned that you might be, please come prepared! The key to avoiding seasickness is to act before you experience nausea. Do your own research and consult your doctor before taking any medications. A good night of sleep, eating well, limiting alcohol, and using your favorite seasickness remedy is sufficient for most travelers. Find more information on our [Coping with Seasickness](#) webpage (this information is applicable to any form of motion sickness) and contact us if you have any questions.

Flights

Detailed logistical information is included in the Trip Planning Materials we will send you.

Please wait to book your flights until you receive confirmation from your Coordinator that the minimum number of participants has been met to operate the trip. If you choose to book flights before receiving this confirmation, we strongly recommend purchasing flight cancellation insurance to protect your investment.

Flights you book

- Arrive in Los Cabos, Mexico (SJD) by 12:00pm on May 8.
- Depart from Los Cabos, Mexico (SJD) after 2:00pm on May 15.

Terms and Conditions

Read our current [Terms and Conditions](#).

Conservation

Our company ethos has always regarded conservation as inseparable from responsible tourism. We struggle with the dilemma that traveling worldwide expends climate-changing carbon. However, we wholeheartedly believe that traveling with us will cultivate your passion for conserving our beautiful world while stimulating each destination's local economy. We encourage you to explore the various ways in which Cheesemans' operates within this context:

- **Cheesemans' Trips are Carbon Neutral.**
- **Offsetting your Travel to/from our Trip:** We ask you to pledge to offset the carbon emissions for your travel to and from our trips. You can purchase offsets with most airlines (Delta includes them automatically), use our handy [carbon calculator](#) and donate to Sustainable Travel International, or contribute to your favorite offsetting organization.
- **Local Conservation:** Check out our [Conservation](#) pages to learn how we support conservation efforts through meaningful partnerships and responsible tourism practices.

Together, we can continue to explore and cherish this planet while working toward its long-term protection. Thank you for being part of this important journey with us.

FAQS

Do I have to be SCUBA certified for this safari?

This is a snorkel-focused trip, so you do *not* need a SCUBA certification to enjoy lots of time in the water with the mobula rays. If you are certified and are curious about possible dive opportunities, please contact us.

Are wildlife encounters conducted responsibly?

Yes. The expedition operates in accordance with Mexican federal regulations, marine protected guidelines, and local permitting requirements. The snorkeling and wildlife encounters follow strict ethical wildlife-viewing guidelines designed to minimize disturbance to animals. Encounters are carefully managed by your expedition leader and skiff teams, with attention given to animal behavior, sea conditions, and local regulations. We never chase, corner, touch, or feed wildlife.