Welcome to the Baja Ocean Wildlife Expedition! On this once-in-a-lifetime vacation, you will meet an incredible variety of sea creatures including whale sharks, gray whales, sea lions, and black sea turtles (a sub-species of green turtles). By joining this trip, you will be directly supporting community-based conservation of these turtles by providing alternative income to poaching and generating funds to expand their efforts.

This trip is in partnership with Red Travel Mexico, a local ecotourism company working to protect sea turtles by offering alternatives to fishing and promoting research programs.

We started SEE Turtles in 2008 to encourage travelers to visit turtle conservation projects where their visit will make a difference in efforts to protect these endangered creatures. To date, we have generated more than $1 million in benefits for local communities and conservation efforts and saved more than 1 million endangered turtle hatchlings. For these efforts, we received the prestigious Changemakers Award from the World Travel & Tourism Council in 2019.

Please join me on this action-packed volunteer trip. We will meet and interact with the dedicated people working to protect their natural resources and learn much about the biology and threats facing Baja’s wildlife.

We hope to SEE you in Baja!

Brad Nahill
President & Co-Founder
brad@seeturtles.org

Photo at right: Neil Osborne
# Table of Contents

Trip Information 1

Detailed Itinerary 2

Research Information 4

Our Local Partner 5

Background Information 6

Accommodations 7

FAQ’s 9

Eco-Friendly Travel 11

Travel Insurance 12

Packing List 13

About SEE Turtles 14

Terms & Conditions 15

Photos at right: Elizabeth Moreno/ RED Travel Mexico
Baja California Sur, Mexico is an extraordinary place for ocean wildlife. Nutrient rich deep water currents provide perfect feeding grounds for sea turtles, the famous “friendly” gray whales, whale sharks, dolphins, sea lions, and more. Sea turtles and other animals are making a comeback in this region due to the hard work of scientists, fishermen, and local communities and this unique trip offers the opportunity to see all of them.

On this trip, you will join these conservationists to participate in research efforts of sea turtles and see some of these extraordinary animals closeup. This trip helps to fund turtle research and benefit local communities while providing an unforgettable hands-on experience. Profits from this trip will help to save at least 500 hatchlings at a turtle nesting beach per participant.

Date: March 7-14, 2020

Price: $2,695 pp. $300 discount available for the first 8 to register.

Includes: All in-country transportation, accommodations, most meals (as indicated in the itinerary), activities as listed, round trip airport pickup and shuttle from Los Cabos, camping in Magdalena Bay, guides, and a donation to turtle conservation.

Excludes: Airfare to Los Cabos, personal items, tips, and travel insurance.

Notes:
- $50 discount for paying by check.
- Maximum group size of 15, minimum of 8

Is This Trip Right For Me?
This is a trip for adventurers and wildlife enthusiasts. In Baja, you’ll be camping (3 nights), spending lots of time in boats, and eating new foods (some fresh from the ocean). There are no guarantees to see wildlife (though our chances are good most participants do see them) and activities are dependent on weather.

The schedule can be fluid and all activities may not start on time. There may be bugs around including mosquitoes. The camp includes a private outdoor bathroom and shower. Please see the Accommodations section for more information.

Photos at right: Elizabeth Moreno & RED Travel Mexico
MARCH 7th - ARRIVE TO LOS CABOS
Fly into Cabo San Lucas and meet your shuttle to La Paz (2 hour drive) (round trip shuttle service included), a great way to view the area’s desert landscape. Meet your guide for dinner after you arrive and have an orientation meeting to learn about the wildlife you will see and the research programs you’ll visit. Overnight at Hotel Catedral, a modern hotel in the city center (4 nights). (D)

MARCH 8th - WHALE SHARK RESEARCH & ESPIRITU SANTO ISLAND
Whale sharks are the true “gentle giants” of the oceans. The largest fish on the planet, these gentle beasts return yearly to feed on plankton in La Paz Bay. You’ll have several opportunities to snorkel with these incredible (but not aggressive) animals and learn more about these magnificent creatures and support their protection. Our partners helped to create new guidelines to make sure that the observation limits any stress on the animals.

Afterwards you will head out to the beautiful island of Espiritu Santo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. First you will have the opportunity to snorkel with sea lions, who are incredibly graceful in the water. Afterwards, head to the island for a picnic lunch and a hike through the desert landscape to learn how the ocean and land interact in this land of contrasts. Dinner is on your own. (B, L)

MARCH 9th - LA PAZ TO MAGDALENA BAY
Today you will head across the peninsula to start your exploration of this beautiful region. The guide will pick up the group at the hotel after breakfast to head across the peninsula to the Pacific (about a 3 hour drive). Arrive to beautiful Magdalena Bay and head by boat to our partner RED Travel Mexico’s stunning tent camp, where you will camp for the next three nights. This camp is the base of operations for the turtle research efforts and is staffed by fishermen who formerly caught turtles but now work to protect them. Expect fantastic meals and great service in a beautiful location.

If weather allows, you can look for gray whales on the way to the camp. Once settled in, there will be a camp orientation, followed by happy hour and a delicious dinner after sunset. (B, L, D)

MARCH 10th - GREEN TURTLE RESEARCH
Today is turtle day! After breakfast, the group will head out by boat for the turtle research to study the black turtle, a sub-species of green turtles. You will be accompanied by researchers from Grupo Tortuguero, a network of residents around the region that study and protect several species of sea turtles.

The efforts of this network have helped bring the black turtle back from near extinction by working with local communities, fishermen, and others to
to reduce poaching and entanglement in fishing gear. Under their supervision and guidance, the turtles are caught in nets and brought ashore to study. Participants help measure their length and width, weigh them, and collect other data. Once complete, the turtle is released back into the water.

We will bring a picnic lunch and some shade and spend most of the day with the fishermen and the turtles. Afterwards, feel free to head out in a kayak to explore the Bay and look for dolphins or seabirds. After dinner, your guide will lead a star gazing lesson or make a campfire; you won’t often find a better place! (B, L, D)

MARCH 11th - FRIENDLY GRAY WHALES
Magdalena Bay is also a great habitat for gray whales, where they come to mate and calve. Baja’s gray whales are unique in their “friendly” behavior; they will sometimes approach boats to be touched and the mothers are known to push the young calves closer, which can make for an incredible interaction between two species.

We will take small boats known as pangas that will take us out into the channel and spend most of the day on the water watching these majestic mammals. We will have a picnic lunch on an island and head back late afternoon to relax at the camp. (B, L, D)

MARCH 12th - MAGDALENA BAY
We complete today our exploration of the greater Magdalena Bay complex and its vast, rolling sand dunes and mangrove canals teeming with birdlife. Climb up a dune for a great view of the area and to play in the sand, you may even spot a dolphin in the distance. We may also see more whales or dolphins as we explore. We head back to La Paz early afternoon and will have some downtime before dinner to shop or explore the town. Dinner is on your own to explore the town’s great offerings. (B, L)

MARCH 13th - Sierra Exploration
Head up into the Sierra de la Laguna Biosphere Reserve, a scenic 1.5 hour drive from La Paz. Here we will meet a family living on a working rancho. We will have the chance to learn how to make artisanal cheese, handmade tortillas, and take a guided nature walk through the lush surroundings. Our hosts will explain to us the conservation programs they operate in conjunction with the national parks commission and RED Travel México, including reforestation and bat monitoring. We will return to La Paz before sunset, stopping along the way in the historic mining town of El Triunfo.

MARCH 14th - DEPART
Head to the airport for your flight home or to explore other parts of this incredible region. (B)
Most people visit sea turtle nesting beaches to see sea turtles. This trip is different in that you are visiting an “in-water” research project, which means the turtles are caught in the water as opposed to waiting for them to come ashore. The turtles that live in Baja’s Magdalena Bay don’t nest here, so the only way to learn about them is to catch them with nets to study and release.

The research here is managed by the Grupo Tortuguero, an award-winning network of scientists, fishermen, and local residents from across the region. Their work has been critical in the impressive comeback of the black turtle, which was down to a local population of less than 1,000 adult females and is now estimated to be more than 10,000 adult females.

The researchers set out nets in the areas where the turtles hang out. Once a turtle is found, the research staff will bring them up into the boat and then onto shore to do the research (it’s much easier that way). You will have the opportunity to help bring the turtles ashore and assist researchers to collect data such as length and width of the shell, its weight, its tag number, and its physical condition. If the turtle isn’t already tagged, researchers will apply either a metal tag to the flippers or inject a microchip into their shoulders. This information helps researchers to understand how many turtles there are, how their health is, and the importance of the area for sea turtle foraging.

Please note that seeing a turtle is never guaranteed but this project has a high percentage rate of catching turtles on these outings.
Our Conservation Partner

RED Travel Mexico

RED is a hybrid social enterprise that combines a for-profit tour operator that offers world class “Conservation Adventures,” with a non-profit organization that provides training, small business incubation and technical assistance in rural communities throughout northwest Mexico.

Since its inception in 2009, RED has evolved into a recognized leader in the field of sustainable tourism, winning ATTA’s young operator scholarship award for its innovative model combining socio-economic development with conservation through sustainable tourism. Learn more about RED on their website.

Accomplishments:
• Trained 185 individuals in tenets of sustainability and small business management;
• Directly involved 600 tourists in conservation activities – specifically sea turtle monitoring, financing 55 sea turtle monitorings, equipment, exploration of new research sites, and all operational costs for the project;
• Assisted communities in channeling US$50,000 of government funding into rural development projects;
• 650 person days generated of non-extractive employment;
• 2,200 hours invested by community members and travelers in conservation and community development projects;
• Raised over US$82,000 from travelers for conservation and community development projects; and
• Generated over US$120,000 in community salaries generated in non-extractive employment through sustainable tourism.

Photo: RED Travel Mexico
Background Information

Green Sea Turtles
The green turtle is the second largest after the leatherback. They can weigh up to 500 lbs (225 kg) and reach four feet (1.2 m) in length. The adult is an herbivore, dining on sea grasses, seaweeds, algae and other forms of marine plant life. Their beak is sharp and finely serrated, perfectly adapted for grazing in seagrass beds and scraping algae off of hard surfaces.

This species can be found in the sub-tropics and tropics worldwide. The green turtles you find in the Pacific are also known as black turtles due to their darker shells. Most scientists believe that black turtles are a sub-species of green turtles but some believe they are a different species. Learn more about green turtles.

Gray Whales
The gray whale is one of the most well known whales not only for their predictable movements and seasonal whereabouts, but also for their reputation of being “friendly” to boats and humans, making them popular with whale watchers. The gray whale is a baleen whale, having approximately 300 baleen plates which hang from their upper jaw. The baleen plates which are made of keratin, allow them to filter food from surrounding waters.

They are unique among large whales in that they feed on the bottom in shallow coastal waters. The bays and inlets of Baja California Sur are the only place in the world that the friendly behavior of these gray whales can be observed. While not all of the whales are friendly, some will approach boats and rise out of the water to be touched by people (which is completely legal though precautions to protect the whales are taken). In some cases, mothers will nudge their calves towards the boats to say hello as well.

Whale Sharks
Whale sharks are the largest fish on the planet. These gentle giants are filter-feeders and are harmless to humans. The enormous whale shark, which can reach lengths of 40 feet or more, feeds on the tiniest of ocean organisms, plankton. Whale sharks are striking in their appearance not only for their size but also for their unique pattern of spots and bars covering its gray body. They belong to the group called Chondryichtyes, which includes sharks, rays, and skates. These fish have skeletons made entirely of cartilage in comparison to other fishes that have skeletons made of bone.

Magdalena Bay
This area comprises the largest wetland ecosystem on the west coast of the Baja California Peninsula and is considered one of the most important in North America. The bay provides a vital calving area for the Pacific Gray Whale, and feeding grounds for several species of endangered marine turtles. The area contains mangrove forests, barrier beaches and sand dune islands, contributing to the incredible scenery, and diverse biological makeup of the zone. The bay harbors the continent’s northernmost breeding colony of magnificent frigate, the southernmost breeding site for threatened bald eagles, a large nesting colony of the endangered California brown pelican, and one of the largest California sea lion colonies on the Pacific coast of the peninsula.

Photos at right: Hal Brindley, Pro Peninsula, & RED Travel Mexico
Camping along the remote shorelines of Magdalena Bay may not involve 300-thread-count sheets, marble floors, or even plumbing. But it is highly luxurious by backcountry standards, and it is a spectacular experience for anyone enthusiastic about the outdoors.

Guest Tents (Las Carpas):
When you arrive, the roomy two-person tents are already set up, your bed is made, and on your pillow are two welcome gifts: a personalized card and a small trinket. Each guest gets a twin-sized, slightly firm but delightfully thick mattress with clean sheets, blankets, and a soft pillow on a sturdy cot. Between the mattresses is a broad aisle, and a small wood slatted nightstand, perfect for stashing an alarm clock (battery or solar-powered) and headlamp, and anything else you want handy during the night. The tents have zippered vents to provide air circulation during the heat of the day and a rain fly to keep out the wind and dew at night (the desert can get chilly after sundown). A bamboo mat serves as the “front porch,” a convenient place to remove and stash shoes. A small brush is provided for each tent to manage the sand that will get tracked inside.

Kitchen and Dining Area (La Cocina):
There are two large kitchen tents – out of which come healthy, delicious meals with local flair. The large, long dining tent is next door, and contains three wooden tables, plenty of plastic deck chairs, a cooler with purified water, and a bookshelf featuring tomes on plant, bird and animal identification, Spanish language, and other useful topics. The walls of the dining tent can be tied back to catch a breeze during the day, or closed to block the wind at night. To protect fragile desert vegetation, walkways are lined with white stakes, stuck in the soft desert sand every few feet. Interspersed with the stakes are solar-powered lamps, which provide enough illumination at night that one doesn’t need a headlamp or flashlight to walk through camp.
Composting Toilet (El Baño):
There are two outhouses, situated a distance from the kitchen and the tents. Camp Toilet (Los Baños): Enclosed by three walls and a roof, the composting toilet faces away from the tents into the vast, uninhabited space that surrounds the camp. A flag alerts people when the bathroom is in use for privacy. This arrangement is clean and practical, and the baños themselves are tidy and sanitary.

There is no plumbing at a camp in the middle of the desert, so once you are done, you sprinkle a handful of woodchips into the toilet. The woodchips help the composting process, masks smells that may attract animals, and keeps the baños smelling fresh. There is also a bucket full of clean, fresh toilet paper rolls next to the toilet. All used paper is then deposited into a sealable bucket next to the toilet (the paper does not easily biodegrade and has to be disposed of separately).

Camp Sinks (Los Lavados):
There are two, one near the baños and one by the doorway to the kitchen. Stepping on a pedal under the sink causes water to squirt out the delicately arched faucet and splash into the bronze-colored bowl. This sink even has large clamshells lining the bottom. Biodegradable soap is provided in a bottle next to the sink. The used water drains through plastic tubing and into the nearby brush. A small towel hangs alongside the sink, and there is a small counter.

Shower (La Ducha):
We have a large tent set aside for showers. Warm water awaits in metal containers for rinsing and a wood floor keeps your feet away from the sand while showering.
Wildlife Issues

Am I guaranteed to see a sea turtle, whale, or whale shark?
There is never a guarantee to see wild animals on our trips. However, the turtle research team catches turtles most of the times they set the nets. In this part of the country, the turtles forage in the bay and there aren't distinguishable seasons when it is more or less likely to see a sea turtle. The gray whales come here in large numbers, so you are very likely to spot them. They are not always friendly and approach the boat however; their behavior is not very predictable (but never dangerous). Roughly half of trips are able to have contact with a whale.

How does this trip benefit turtle conservation?
SEE Turtles runs sea turtle trips as a way to help save these incredible animals. To participate in the work, we pay a fee to the local partner which helps to cover the costs of the conservation and research efforts, so the research is funded by the tour. This trip also supports local communities in growing tourism as an alternative to fishing, which can affect sea turtles. Finally, every tour saves at least 200 hatchlings through a donation to the local conservation organization through our Billion Baby Turtles initiative.

Will I get to do every volunteer job on the trip?
As we can’t guarantee that you will see a sea turtle, we also can’t guarantee you’ll get to do every job in the volunteer program. We hope to give every participant the opportunity to do each job but it depends on the number of participants, the number of turtles or whale sharks encountered, and the individual circumstances with each animal (sometimes more complicated situations require the researchers to do specific jobs).

Generally the tagging is done only by research staff. If there is one specific job you really want to do, let your guide know and he will do his best to accommodate your request. Check out the page Sea Turtle Research Information for details about the tasks involved in turtle research.
Logistical/Travel Issues

How much money should I bring?
We suggest bringing at least US $75 for tips. Otherwise, cards can be used in La Paz for meals or shopping and money can be withdrawn from ATM's.

Is an ATM available?
While in La Paz, you will be at to pay for meals and hotels with cards at most places and ATM's are available. Once you head out to Magdalena Bay, there won't be any opportunities to spend money (other than the tips, see below).

How much should I tip?
Tipping of course is always up to the traveler but a rule of thumb for the camp staff is $ 

Can I call home or check my email while in Baja?
Calling home from Mexico can be expensive and challenging. For email, you can find internet cafes in La Paz and your hotel has wifi and computers (though don't expect a great signal). The turtle research camp does not have internet access (or electricity for that matter). If you plan to bring a cell phone, please check with your provider about coverage and cost; you may get cell service at the tent camp but it will likely be digital roaming and could be very expensive.

How should I handle medications I need to bring?
If you plan to bring personal medicine, please consider the following:
• Carry just the necessary quantity, which is the quantity normally used by a person having your health problem.
• Bring a prescription or a written statement from your doctor, specifying that the medicine is being used under his/her control and that you need it for your physical health.
• Have the medicines labeled or properly identified.

Do I need any vaccinations before going?
Since we are not doctors, we cannot give you advice on vaccinations. We recommend speaking with your doctor or visiting a travel clinic. You can also check the CDC website for Mexico for the most up-to-date information.

What is the weather like in Baja California Sur?
In February and March, you can expect warm weather during the day (mid 70's to low 80's) and cooling off at night (mid to high 50's), so bring warm clothes for the evening and during boat rides. It rarely rains in March though it is possible, so be prepared just in case.
SEE Turtles strives to reduce the environmental impact of our trips wherever possible. Sometimes we need help from you, the traveler, so here are some ways that we (and you) can help.

Tortoiseshell Jewelry
Did you know that tortoiseshell is actually hawksbill sea turtle shell? This is a major threat to hawksbills, which are critically endangered. Souvenirs made from their shells include bracelets, earrings, guitar picks, and combs. Below is a photo to help recognize these items and we encourage our travelers not only to not purchase these items but also to refuse to purchase from vendors that offer them and to alert your guide when you see these items for sale. Learn more at TooRareToWear.org.

Reducing Plastic Use
Another major threat to sea turtles is plastic in the ocean, which can be confused for jellyfish. SEE Turtles is a member of “Travelers Against Plastic,” an organization that reduces plastic waste created on vacation. We encourage travelers to bring reusable water bottles to refill; you can go through as many as 15-20 bottles on one trip per person. Another suggestion is to ask for no straws with your drinks. Souvenirs can be stored in day packs instead of disposable plastic bags.

Reef-Friendly Sunscreen
Did you know that sunscreen can damage coral reefs? The ingredient “oxybenzone” has been found to cause harm in even very small quantities and an estimated 4,000 - 6,000 tons per year. Look for sunscreen without this ingredient (zinc oxide or titanium oxide are both safe), or wear a shirt while swimming to reduce the need for sunscreen.

Reducing Carbon Emissions
Travel by its nature is very carbon-intensive. Some ways you can reduce your emissions include leaving electronic devices at home, using fans instead of AC, by turning of AC, fans, and lights when not at hotels or cabins, and by using public transportation when possible. For sites with limited electricity, you can purchase a solar powered charger to recharge small electronics. You can also purchase carbon offsets. One we recommend is “Seagrass Grow” a program with our former organization The Ocean Foundation. The offsets are used to restore important seagrass beds, which are important habitat for green sea turtles.

HOW TO IDENTIFY & AVOID HAWKSBILL TURTLE SHELL

Endangered hawksbill turtles are hunted for their shells to make souvenirs. Help save this turtle by avoiding vendors selling turtleshell products.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMITATION PLASTIC</th>
<th>TURTLE SHELL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uniform pattern with markings</td>
<td>Brown, oranges, amber, yellow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| COCONUT | PATTERN
| Brown on top, beige underneath | Assymetric and irregular shapes |
| HORN | SURFACE
| Heavy with black/white coloring | Color pattern visible throughout |
Travel Insurance...

That Saves Baby Turtles!

SEE Turtles partners with World Nomads to offer world-class travel insurance for your next trip. World Nomads is a socially responsible travel insurance company that has a great record of customer service. When you use World Nomads insurance, they will donate 10% of the cost of the policy to help save baby sea turtles through our Billion Baby Turtles program. Through their Footprints Network, they have helped to save more than 20,000 baby turtles in Cuba, El Salvador, and elsewhere!

World Nomads covers a wide range of activities and helps with trip cancellation, lost baggage, medical bills, theft, and more. No matter whether you travel with us, another operator, or on your own, this insurance will have you covered and have a real impact on conservation efforts. Click here to get a fast free quote for a policy for your next trip.

Photo: Hal Brindley
Recommended Packing List

Please note: Baja is a desert climate that can get quite chilly at night and out on the water when the boats are moving. **Do not pack for a tropical vacation**, bring warm clothes and jackets. * Indicates Required Items

**Clothes:**
- Shorts & long pants
- T-shirts
- Gloves or mittens & warm hat
- Sleepwear
- Polarized sunglasses*
- Water-friendly sandals or shoes*
- Long-sleeve cotton shirts
- Warm jacket, fleece, or sweatshirt
- Socks, underwear
- Tennis or walking shoes
- Hat (with a tie for the wind)
- Windbreaker or rain jacket

**Miscellaneous Gear:**
- Camera, batteries, battery charger, underwater camera
- Dry-bag for camera and gear
- Day pack
- Bath towel and wash cloth
- Dirty clothes bag
- Small first aid kit with personal prescriptions
- Binoculars (some will be supplied)

**Toiletries & Health:**
(Please try to bring biodegradable products)
- Toothbrush, toothpaste
- Soap, shampoo, brush, comb
- Waterproof, reef-friendly sun screen (SPF 30 or higher)
- Bug repellent
- Skin lotions/ lip balm/ aloe
- Antibiotic cream & band aids
- Snacks for between meals
- Medicine for upset stomachs/ diarrhoea
- Electrolyte packets (vitamin C packets)
- Headache medicine
- Personal medicines

**Supplies:**
- Flashlight & extra batteries
- Money / Passport
- Reusable water bottle
- Plastic bag for wet clothes
SEE Turtles was launched in 2008 as the world's first effort to protect these species through ecotourism. Since then, we have expanded to include educational programs and our Billion Baby Turtles and Too Rare To Wear projects. To date, we have brought more than 1,300 people to visit turtle projects, generated more than $1 million for turtle conservation and local communities, saved more than 1 million turtle hatchlings at more than 20 beaches around the world, and reached more than 10,000 students with our educational programs. We received the 2019 Changemakers Award from the World Travel & Tourism Council for our work to protect wildlife through travel. SEE Turtles is an independent 501c3 organization based in Oregon.

www.SEEturtles.org
brad@SEEturtles.org
(800) 215-0378, M-F, 9-5 PST
Payment Policies:
Full payment of the total price of the expedition is due no later than 60 days (2 months) before departure. Travelers can choose to do monthly payments (the balance of the trip cost after deposit, divided evenly between the remaining months before the final payment is due) or pay 50% of the balance at 120 days before the trip with the remaining balance due 60 days before the trip. Monthly payment plans are unavailable within 4 months of trip departure. We reserve the right to cancel a reservation if payment is not made on time. In such cases, all payments are non-refundable.

Late Bookings: A late fee of $50 may apply to bookings received within 30 days of trip date.

Cancellation Policy:
If you cancel your space, it must be in writing and is effective the day we receive it in our office. Your cancellation will entitle you to a refund of any deposit or payment made to us, less a cancellation fee, according to the following schedule:

- 180 days or more prior to departure: $100.00
- 120 to 179 days prior to departure: $300.00
- 60 to 119 days prior to departure: 50% of expedition fee
- 59 days or less prior to departure: 100% of expedition fee

* Some costs are occasionally recoverable from the supplier

Transfers:
Depending on availability, you may transfer from one trip to another four months prior to departure at no charge. If you transfer less than four months prior to departure, you may be subject to the cancellation fees. Registration fees paid may be transferred to another traveler up until 2 months before departure with prior notice provided. In some cases, transfers may be made less than 2 months before departure.

Cancelled Trips:
We reserve the right to cancel any trip prior to scheduled departure due to not meeting our minimum number required or logistical problems (vessel breakdown, strikes, etc.). You may transfer to another expedition or we will refund all payments made to SEE Turtles in full. In no event, however, shall our liability exceed the obligation to refund the amount you paid to us. Trip cancellation due to too few registrations normally occurs at a minimum of two months prior to departure. Refunds will not be given for individual hotel rooms, meals, sightseeing trips, or expedition arrangements for any reason. Expedition costs are quoted as a package; credits are not given for services not used.

Trip Cost Includes:
Accommodations, airport transfers as specified in the trip itinerary, excursions, entrance fees, local guides, most permits, and meals, unless otherwise indicated in the itinerary. SEE Turtles reserves the right to make any changes in the itinerary or to substitute hotels, modes of transport, or guides, for those mentioned in the literature if circumstances require it.

Trip Cost Does Not Include:
The cost of international air to the tour starting point (unless otherwise indicated in the itinerary) airport taxes, passport and visa fees, immunizations, insurance of any kind, alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, laundry, gratuities, excess baggage, items of a personal nature, medical costs, costs of hospitalization, additional expenses arising from the delay or extension of a trip due to weather, political disputes, illness, failure of transportation, or other causes beyond our control.

Children on Trips:
Some SEE Turtles trips are suitable for children, depending on the child’s age and experience. Anyone under age 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Please call before sending a trip deposit for anyone under 18 years of age.
Unexpected Trip Costs: We reserve the right to raise the trip fee if there are cost increases beyond our control. These cases are extremely rare and would only occur where unforeseen cost increases from suppliers would result in a financial loss for the organization. In these cases, registered clients are given the option to transfer or cancel with no penalties.

Transfers: Depending on availability, you may transfer from one trip to another four months prior to departure at no charge. If you transfer less than four months prior to departure, you may be subject to the cancellation fees. Registration fees paid may be transferred to another traveler up until 2 months before departure with prior notice provided. In some cases, transfers may be made less than 2 months before departure.

Travel Protection Policy: We require all participants to obtain individual travel insurance to protect yourself and your equipment. Travel insurance may reimburse you for non-refundable air and expedition costs should you need to cancel or interrupt your trip. The carrier can be any insurance provider but we can provide recommendations. Proof of insurance is required before participating on the trip.

Accommodations: Land accommodations are based on double occupancy unless otherwise indicated in the trip description. We can try to match single travelers of the same sex but some trips require a single supplement if single rooms are preferred to there is no match available.

Single Travelers: If you are a single traveler wishing to share accommodations, we will try to match you with a roommate. If no roommate becomes available, you may be required to pay the Single Supplement Fee listed in the trip description if applicable. If you request a single, private room you must pay the Single Supplement Fee listed in the trip description regardless of sign-up date. Please note that single accommodations are not always available.

Budget Airfare Caution: We recommend against buying non-refundable airline tickets until your trip departure has been confirmed (usually a minimum of 90 days before departure). Budget air tickets often carry restrictions and you risk penalties in the event of itinerary or date changes or trip cancellation. Please await confirmation of the trip before purchasing non-refundable airfare.

Withdrawal: SEE Turtles reserves the right to require any participant to withdraw from an expedition at any time if the expedition director deems his/her acts or conduct to be detrimental to or incompatible with the interest, harmony, comfort, or welfare of the expedition. In such cases, no refunds will be given.

Medical Issues: Although SEE Turtles trips are not generally very physically demanding, you must be in general good health to participate. It is the passengers' responsibility to judge the appropriateness of their physical capabilities to these travel activities. Anyone with medical problems or restrictions must make them known to us well in advance of the trip and should have a personal supply of any special medications they may need. The trip leader has the right to disqualify any member from the group at any time if considered medically necessary; no refund will be made under such circumstances. SEE Turtles and its affiliates take no responsibility for special arrangements required by passengers physically unable to complete a trip and assume no liability regarding provision of medical care or medical evacuation.

Release Forms: On some trips you may need to sign an additional tour operator release form by our local partners and/or tour operators.

Suppliers of Services: SEE Turtles is performing a non-profit service by informing potential participants of worthwhile expeditions. However, SEE Turtles is acting independently and has no business association as partner or joint venture with any boat owner, resort, hotel, carrier, SCUBA operation, or other services. Any claims for inadequate performance or non-performance of services may be made against the supplier of those services but shall not be made against SEE Turtles.

SCUBA Diving: SEE Turtles does not offer SCUBA diving as part of any of our trips. Participants may participate in diving while on a trip but acknowledges that SEE Turtles has no responsibility for the actions, performance, or equipment of any SCUBA services offered by hotels or dive shops. We recommend that any travelers planning to dive while on a SEE Turtles trip research the safety record of the operators and obtain additional divers insurance.