

# Belize Ocean Wildlife Expedition



# Welcome Letter

Welcome to the SEE Turtles Belize Ocean Wildlife Expedition! On this unique volunteer vacation, you will spend three days in the Mesoamerican Reef with researchers helping to study sea turtles, manatees, dolphins, and more. By joining this trip, you will be directly supporting conservation and research of ocean wildlife.

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 and this has been our most popular tour. With the help of travelers like you, we have generated more than \$1 million for turtle conservation and local communities and have helped to save more than 1 million baby turtles at important nesting beaches. For these efforts, we received the prestigious Changemakers Award from the World Travel & Tourism Council in 2019.

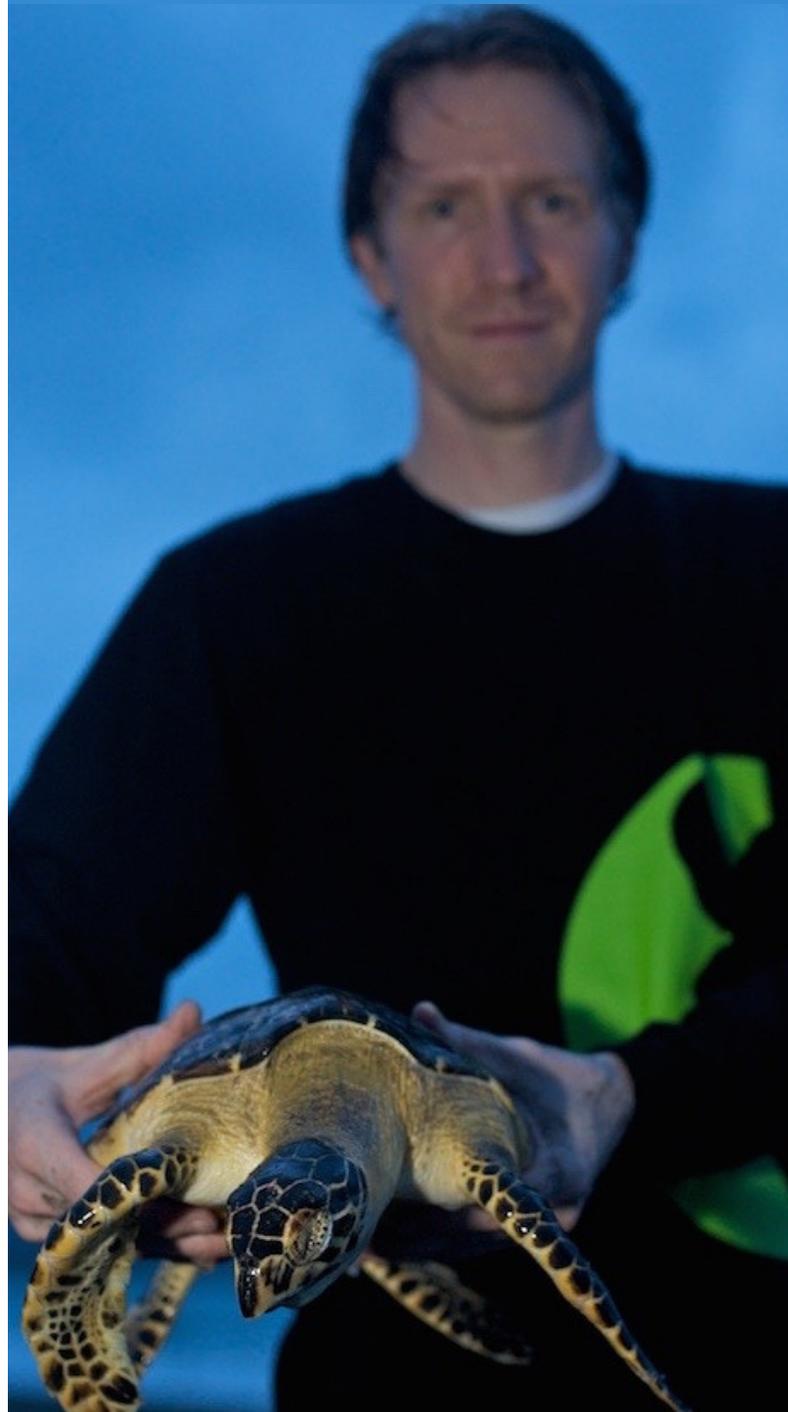
Please join us on this action-packed volunteer trip. We will meet and interact with the dedicated people working to protect their natural resources and learn much about the biology and threats facing Belize's wildlife, all while enjoying one of the most beautiful parts of the country, St. George's Caye and the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef.

We hope to SEE you in Belize!



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

Cover photos: Hal Brindley (right), and IOI (left)  
Right: Neil Osborne



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# Trip Information

The Belize Barrier Reef is an extraordinary ocean wildlife hotspot. Bottlenose dolphins, manatees, several species of sea turtles, and more than 500 species of fish and 100 species of coral populate these crystal blue waters. Despite this diversity, these species face a variety of threats including boat strikes, climate change, and entanglement in fishing gear. The island of St. George's Caye, home of our partner EcoMar's research station, is a great base to explore from and has a unique spot in the rich history of Belize.

Join us for this unique wildlife trip to Belize. Spend 5 nights at the EcoMar field station on St. George's Caye, a small island near Belize City. You'll have opportunities to observe bottlenose dolphins, sea turtles, manatees, Queen conchs, and more. You'll also explore coral reefs and marine protected areas including the beautiful Hol Chan Marine Reserve. A 2 night optional extension offers the opportunity to explore the incredible Mayan ruins of Tikal in nearby Guatemala, as well as tubing through caves and rainforest hiking.

## Is This Trip Right For Me?

Belize is a safe and beautiful country and tourism is its top industry. This trip is based at a simple but comfortable research station on St. George's Caye, a small island about a 30 min. boat ride from Belize City. We will spend a lot of time in boats and swimming in the water, so those who get seasick may have issues (though most of the time the water is very calm). Previous snorkeling experience is helpful though not required but participants should be able to swim and feel comfortable in the water. Be prepared for tropical heat and possible bad weather, which can affect which activities are available each day. Meals are simple and home cooked (vegetarian options available). Most rooms have private bath with cold water showers and fans. Electricity is available from 5:30 pm until 8:30 am.

## Conservation Impact Pricing:

SEE Turtles is the first and only operator to provide transparent pricing that shows the economic impact of each trip on turtle and wildlife conservation and benefits to local communities.

- **Turtle Conservation:** \$760 of the trip price supports turtle and wildlife conservation programs of our local partner.
- **Local Communities:** \$630 of the price supports communities around turtle hotspots.
- **Travel Costs:** \$905 of the price pays for accommodations, activities, food, insurance, and other costs.

[Register Here](#)

**Date:** Aug 6-11, 2023

**Price:** \$2,295 pp.

**Ext price:** \$550 pp

## Discounts & Notes:

- **\$100 off for kids under 18 years.**
- **Maximum group size of 12, minimum of 8.**
- **Minimum recommended age is 8 years old, under 18 needs to be accompanied by an adult.**

## Includes:

In-country transport, airport pick-up, meals, lodging, activities, guides, and a donation to turtle conservation.

## Excludes:

Airfare to Belize City, personal items, tips, and travel insurance.

## Worry-Free Cancellation Policy

Book with us and you'll have peace of mind about your booking. If we cancel a trip, we'll refund 100% of the money paid or put it towards a future trip, your choice. If you cancel, all cancellation fees are usable for future trips with no penalty. Check out our terms and conditions for full details.

# Detailed Itinerary

## Day 1: Arrive to Belize

The group will be picked up at the airport in the early afternoon and transferred to the EcoMar dive shop, where you can rent your snorkeling gear. Once ready, the group will board a boat to head to the EcoMar Research Station on St. George's Caye, located about 10 miles from Belize City near the Belize Barrier Reef (30 min boat ride). After you arrive, there will be an orientation to the facility and research and then head out by boat to a shallow area nearby to test out snorkeling gear. If time allows in the afternoon, participants can swim or kayak near the station.

The waters around St. George's Caye provides important habitat for endangered green, loggerhead, and hawksbill sea turtles, bottlenose dolphins, and Antillean manatees, among other species. As a participant on this program, you will work side-by-side with researchers to observe and record sea turtle, dolphin, and manatee behavior. The Research Station has rooms with bunk beds (2-4 people per room) with a mix of shared and private bathrooms. Each room has fans but there is no air conditioning or hot water. Dinner is served buffet-style and vegetarians are easily accommodated. (D)

## Days 2 - 4: Ocean Wildlife Surveys & Snorkeling

Start your exploration of the Belize Barrier Reef after breakfast. Each day will be out on or in the water, looking for wildlife and snorkeling in coral reefs. Over the next 2 days, the group will do two to three activities per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon with some down time around meals and late afternoon. In some cases, the group will split up and rotate activities. Which activities are done each day will be decided on site based on the weather, ocean conditions, and group preferences. There are also several kayaks that can be borrowed to paddle during down time. The evenings will include talks on ocean wildlife and the rich history of St. George's Caye. (B, L, D)

## Sea Turtle Surveys

EcoMar has been conducting in-water snorkel surveys to assess sea turtle abundance and diversity at Gallow's Point since 2009. With help from skilled local fishermen, sea turtles are captured by hand and then measured, sampled, and tagged to help scientists track their movements and understand population dynamics. Traditional fisherman have become important conservation assistants since they spend their days on the seas and have the skills required to swim quickly and dive deep to capture the turtles.

\* Note: This itinerary is designed to be flexible, based on weather, group needs and other factors. The specific days may be changed based on ocean and weather conditions but we will make every effort to include all listed activities during the trip.



## **Manatee Surveys**

The Antillean manatee is an endangered sub-species of the West Indian Manatee; less than 2,500 mature individuals of this subspecies are thought to remain. Belize is home to the largest population of Antillean manatees in the world. We will observe them from the boat at the mouth of the Belize River and elsewhere, recording their sounds and images by drone and photographs. With our support, new speed limit signs have been installed to help reduce collisions between boats and these marine mammals.

## **Dolphin Surveys**

Researchers have been studying bottlenose dolphins in this area since the early 90's. aimed at documenting their abundance, distribution, and behavioral ecology in Belize. The research will focus on dolphin behavior in the context of specific habitats. You will accompany the researcher to known dolphin "hotspots" within the atoll to look for small groups as they feed and travel through the area.

## **Conch Surveys**

Queen conch is a popular seafood in Belize. EcoMar is studying conch populations to make sure that the fishery isn't depleting the population. Participants swim transects in shallow water, looking for conch and measuring them when found and recording data.

## **Day 5: Hol Chan Marine Reserve**

Spend a day visiting the famous Hol Chan Marine Reserve, located off the southern tip of Ambergris Caye. Due to its protected status, what was once a depleted fishing area has now been allowed to regenerate, providing a fantastic snorkeling experience for visitors and an important refuge for marine life along the northern section of the Barrier Reef. More than 160 species of fish have been identified in the reserve, along with nearly 40 species of corals, 5 sponges, 8 algae, 2 seagrasses, 3 marine mammals, and 3 species of sea turtle. (B, L, D)

## **Day 6: Depart or Extension**

After breakfast at the station, you will take a boat back to Belize City. Head to the airport in plenty of time for your return flight home or join our extension. (B)

## **Optional Extension**

You will be picked up at the EcoMar dive shop and transferred inland by private van to the Nooch Chen cave (about 1 hour drive). Start with an easy 45 minute guided jungle walk, learning about rainforest plants and animals along the way. Swim in the cool clear water and hop on the tube for a fun ride through two beautiful caves, checking out beautiful stalactites and jungle views along the way. You'll have a picnic lunch at the cave and then head by bus to the Crystal Paradise Resort near the town of San Ignacio. (L, D)

## **Day 7: Tikal National Park**

After an early breakfast, the group will head across the nearby border with Guatemala to visit the extraordinary Tikal National Park, one of the most prominent Mayan sites in the world (1.5 - 2 hour drive). Spend all day walking through the park with a local guide, learning about the Mayan culture and seeing the impressive thousand year old structures. You will have a picnic lunch and return to the resort in the late afternoon. (B, L, D)

## **Day 8: To Airport**

After breakfast, depart in time to head to the Belize Airport for your flight home (2 hour drive).

# Background Information

## Loggerhead Sea Turtles

One of the larger species of sea turtles, the loggerhead turtle ranges from 200-400 pounds (90 - 180 kg) and up to 4 feet in length (1.2 meters). They occur throughout temperate and tropical regions of the Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic Oceans. They are named for their large head and strong crushing jaw which enables them to eat hard-shelled prey such as crabs, conchs, and whelks. Loggerheads are found in every ocean around the world. The largest concentration of nesting occurs on Masirah Island off the coast of Oman in the Middle East. In the Pacific, their main nesting grounds include Japan and Australia. In the Atlantic, the main concentration occurs in Florida. They are the most common species in the Mediterranean, nesting on beaches in Greece, Turkey, and Israel.



## Mesoamerican Barrier Reef

The world's second largest coastal coral reef system, the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef is more than 500 miles long, stretching from Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula to Honduras. The reef is home to dozens of marine protected areas, more than 60 species of coral, 350 species of mollusks, and 500 species of fish. Several species of sea turtles and dolphins and one of the world's largest population of manatees, with more than 1,000 living in the region. The Belize Barrier Reef is a series of coral reefs along the entire coast of the country, part of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef. Roughly 1/3 of the Mesoamerican reef can be found in Belize, nearly 200 miles long and covers 370 square miles. The reef is hugely important to the country, being the number one tourist attraction, the source of seafood for many fishermen, and as habitat for an huge diversity of marine life.



# Our Conservation Partner

## EcoMar

EcoMar coordinates marine conservation projects that focus on conserving the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System World Heritage Site, associated marine ecosystems and the diverse marine life that is so important to the people that live near the coast and those that come to visit and explore the marine realm that has made Belize famous. EcoMar encourages stakeholders to learn more about the marine ecosystems that support their livelihoods.

When resources users are more knowledgeable about the ecosystem processes they take ownership of the environment and become involved in protecting these valuable natural resources.

“Conservation through Education” is the underlying impetus for each of our projects which engage a diverse group of stakeholders including marine guides, fishermen, business owners, tourism associations, fishing associations, NGOs and educational institutions. Stakeholders that become volunteers help monitor conditions on the Belize Barrier Reef in a changing climate.

[Learn more about EcoMar on their website here.](#)



# Accommodations

## St. George's Caye Research Station

Historical St. George's Caye is less than 10 miles from Belize City and one mile from the Belize Barrier Reef, making it an ideal location for getting to and from the mainland and reef ecosystems. EcoMar's St. George's Caye Research Station offers comfortable accommodations for groups and offers bunk rooms or rooms with double beds, depending on your group size and specific requests. Rooms are currently located in two buildings, the White House and the Garber Lab and includes linens and towels. In the White House, there are 3 bedrooms upstairs with two baths.

Each room has a dresser with four drawers. Most rooms also have nightstands. All rooms have multiple fans. There is no hot water or air conditioning. Electricity is provided by generators and is available from 5:30 pm to 8:30 am.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Turtle Issues

### **Am I guaranteed to see a sea turtle, dolphin, and manatee?**

We can't guarantee that you'll see a sea turtle, manatee, or dolphin (they are wild animals after all) but we are going to look for them in spots where they are frequently found and studied. You are likely to see sea turtles in the water while snorkeling but catching them to study can be challenging. Dolphins and manatees are common in the area but finding them in the large areas of ocean at times can be difficult. Most groups have seen all three but it is not guaranteed.

### **How does this trip benefit turtle conservation?**

SEE Turtles runs sea turtle trips as a way to help save these incredible animals. As part of the trip cost, we pay fees to our local partners to help support their conservation programs and we support local businesses and communities to show that tourism can be more valuable than eating sea turtles or their eggs. For this trip, of the total cost, \$600 of the trip price goes to sea turtle and wildlife conservation and research, including EcoMar's research and a contribution to our Billion Baby Turtles and Too Rare To Wear programs. \$460 of the price stays in the local community, helping residents and businesses. The balance of the trip (\$935) covers transportation, activities, insurance, and other costs.



## Logistical/Travel Questions

### **Can I bring my kids to Belize?**

Yes! Though if only one parent is traveling with a child, be sure to bring a notarized authorization letter from the other parent, Belize is very strict about this requirement and won't let you board a plane without it.

### **How much money should I bring?**

We recommend that each participant bring \$200 in cash for tipping and spending money.

### **How much should I tip?**

EcoMar and Crystal Paradise both have a large number of staff that work hard to serve the groups, including cooks, boat drivers, guides, and others. The recommended tip for the staff is US \$15 per day per person at EcoMar, which would come out to \$75 for the 5 days at the station, and \$10 per day at Crystal Paradise (\$20). Tips can be made in US dollars.

### **Are the electrical outlets the same as in the US?**

The voltage in Belize is the same as the states, no adapter is needed.

### **Is their electricity available all day?**

Electricity at the research station is provided by generator and is not available all day. The generators run from 5:30 pm until 8:30 am, so be sure to charge any electronic devices during that time.

### **Can I go to an ATM in Belize?**

Although there are ATMs in Belize, much of the time you will be in places where they are not available. You would be able to go to one in Belize City before we head to the research station. And in places where they do have ATMs, they don't always work. The bottom line, while you may be able to get cash from ATMs, don't count on it.

### **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 issue.
- 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 Belize for the most up-to-date information.

### **What is the weather like in Belize?**

Belize in early August is generally warm (ranging from the mid-80's to low 90's Fahrenheit (29-32 Celsius with occasional rainshowers in the afternoons.

# Testimonials

"This was an incredible opportunity to see so much of Belize. Staying on the small St. George's Key was rustic, but delightful. There was so much to see and do, it all went by way too fast. The turtle research was hands-on and helps build our understanding of these magnificent animals. We had plenty of time to snorkel the reefs in calm, warm water. We had informative lectures every night and were able to work side-by-side with a variety of researchers work on dolphins, manatees, turtles, and conch. I would highly recommend this trip as a great entrée to Belize. By all means, do take the optional extension inland for amazing birding, ruins, and jungle hikes."

-Gregg B.

"This was one of my all time favourite trips. Started by visiting Tikal in Guatemala and then cane tubing which was loads of fun. We then headed to St George's caye and it was stunning. We stayed in a converted wooden house which was very comfortable and had everything you needed. There were many storms in the evening and watching he thunderstorms in the dark was very therapeutic. The snorkelling and Work that the staff do has a great impact on the research of marine life and was so interesting. The snorkelling and dolphin/ manatee watching parts were amazing and so many different marine creatures were seen. The staff were so nice, the island was peaceful and steeped in history and my fellow travellers were real friends! Belize is a must see destination on those bucket lists!!!"

-Julia H.

I went on the SEE Turtles adventure to Belize in July 2017. It was a fantastic experience, with ALOT of contact with nature, animals and conducting actual conversation work. Everyday we were out on the boat, following dolphins, snorkeling with sea turtles, coral reefs, sting ray and many other marine animals. The staff were highly knowledgeable, and there were no end to the number of activities to do. If you are the type of person that can't sit still on vacation and enjoys exercise and nature experiences I can highly recommend this! Beyond this, it really feels like you are contributing to the protect of species and doing something 'productive' with your vacation while not losing the relaxation and fun.

"This trip was wonderful. We saw lots of sea life at the Hol Chan Marine Reserve observing turtles, sting rays, nurse sharks, and lots of fish. The divers for St. George Caye were very informative and wonderful people. Brad Nahill is a great organizer of the trip and very knowledgeable about the sea turtles and very experienced in his field. I also enjoyed going inner tubing into the caves and going to the Ruins in Guatemala. It was an exciting trip with lots of good people to experience it with. I recommend it highly."

-Beverly O.



# Conservation Travel

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 recognizing these items and we encourage our travelers not only to not purchase these items but also to refuse to purchase from stores that offer them and to alert your guide when you see these items for sale. Learn more at [SEEturtles.org/TooRareToWear](http://SEEturtles.org/TooRareToWear) and [download our SEE Shell App to identify these products here](#).

## 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 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. [Check out this great resource from our friends at Oceanic Society to learn more](#).

## 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 TURTLESHELL

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

IMITATION		TURTLESHELL	
	PLASTIC		COLOR
	COCONUT		PATTERN
	HORN		SURFACE

## Download our SEE Shell App



Apple



Android

# Conservation Impact Pricing

We believe in transparency and that travelers should know how much their trips are helping, so we now list the impact of every trip on our conservation partners and local communities. Your participation on these trips makes a big difference to the work on the ground and in the water.

We break up the impact into three categories:

- **Conservation:** For this trip, an estimated \$885 of the trip cost supports conservation efforts. This includes funds that go to local partners to protect nesting beaches and conduct in-water research, as well as support for our Billion Baby Turtles and Too Rare To Wear programs and general operations. We also list the amount of volunteer opportunities in each trip. Since our launch, we have generated more than US \$1 million for turtle conservation and our 1,000+ travelers have completed nearly 5,000 volunteer shifts for an additional \$50,000 in in-kind benefits.
- **Local Communities:** For this trip, an estimated \$510 of the trip cost is spent in local communities. We believe that money spent communities around turtle hotspots is as important as direct funding. When communities benefit from turtle watching, they are more likely to support protecting sea turtles and less likely to participate in activities like illegal egg harvesting. This category includes tour costs going towards staying in local accommodations, eating in local restaurants, and paying local staff (including local guides for tourist activities.) We have pumped more than US \$300,000 into coastal communities near sea turtle sites since our launch.
- **Travel Costs:** For this trip, an estimated \$500 goes towards travel costs. Every tour involves costs to get you to places to see the sea turtles, hiring a guide and driver to get you there safely, airport transfers, as well as profits and administrative costs of our local operators and partners.



# 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.

[Click For A Quote](#)



# Recommended Packing List

Pack in a duffel bag/suitcase/backpack that you can carry yourself and a day pack.

**\* Indicates required items.**

## Clothing

- Bathing suit and beach towel
- **Water shoes or sandals**
- **Sneakers for walks (extension)**
- 3-4 Pairs socks
- 3-4 Pairs shorts
- 5-6 T-shirts or short sleeve shirts
- Rain gear or poncho
- Sun hat for the beach
- Underwear, pajamas, or sleepwear
- Swim shirt for snorkeling

## Toiletries

- Comb/brush
- Biodegradable shampoo/soap
- **Sunscreen 30+ (waterproof and reef-friendly)**
- Insect repellent & after-bite stick
- Deodorant
- Toothpaste/toothbrush
- Washcloth & beach towel
- Hand Sanitizer (small bottle)
- Medication for sea sickness (if applicable)

## Other Stuff

- **Refillable bottle for water (clean water will be provided)\***
- Passport and a photocopy
- Money (recommend US \$200-\$250 clean bills for tips and souvenirs)
- Camera
- Binoculars
- Games, cards, things to do during down time
- Small flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- Large ziplock bags for wet clothes & shoes and for electronics (to keep dry and protect from humidity)
- Polarized sunglasses
- Prescription medications (bring in carry on baggage in original packaging)
- Snorkel and fins (these can be rented for an extra cost)



# About Us

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 our Billion Baby Turtles, Too Rare To Wear, Sea Turtle Inclusivity Fund, and Sea Turtles & Plastic programs. To date, we have brought more than 1,500 people to visit turtle projects around the world, generated more than US \$1 million for turtle conservation and local communities, saved more than 6 million turtle hatchlings at more than 50 nesting beaches, and reached more than 10,000 students with our educational programs. SEE Turtles is an independent 501c3 organization based in Portland, Oregon.



[www.SEEturtles.org](http://www.SEEturtles.org)  
[info@seeturtles.org](mailto:info@seeturtles.org)



Photo: Juan Ma Gonzalez

# Terms & Conditions

## 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.

## 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
- 120 to 179 days prior to departure: \$30
- 60 to 119 days prior to departure: 50% of expedition cost
- 59 days or less prior to departure: 100% of expedition cost

Cancellation fees can be used towards future SEE Turtles trips with no penalties or expiration except in the case of cancellations within 60 days prior to departure, when payments to local providers has already been completed. Any fees paid can be deducted from a future trip, based on available dates for cancellations made before 60 days prior to departure.

## 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, laundry, tips, 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.

**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.

**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 gender but some trips require a single supplement if single rooms are preferred or 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 release form by our local partners and/or tour operators.

**Suppliers of Services:** SEE Turtles is performing a nonprofit 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.