



## ADVENTUREWOMEN®, INC.

FIRST AND STILL THE BEST! SINCE 1982

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# Baja Multi-Sport: Snorkel, Swim, Hike, Whalewatch, Kayak & Surf – 2017

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## Trip Summary

### Dates

February 1 - 7, 2017

### Cost

\$3,095 from San Jose del Cabo, Mexico  
(\$800 deposit)

### Rating

Easy to Moderate

### Activities

- Birding
- Boat Cruising
- Cooking Class
- Glamping
- Hiking
- Natural History
- Paddleboarding
- Photography
- Sea Kayaking
- Snorkeling
- Surfing
- Swimming
- Whale Watching
- Wildlife Viewing

In February 2017, we blow away winter worries and head south to the warmth of Mexico's Baja Peninsula for an active adventure vacation combining swimming, snorkeling, whale watching, sea kayaking, and more!

Baja is an extraordinary, easy-to-get-to winter getaway and a destination that is the perfect blend of sand, sea and sunshine. Our week combines gorgeous scenery and colorful culture, as we get up close to wildlife and nature, where the desert meets the sea on Mexico's Baja Peninsula.

Beginning in Todos Santos, we learn how to make tortillas in the morning (so we have them on hand for our cooking class this evening!), then hit the beautiful beach at Playa Los Cerritos for surfing, as our instructors teach us how to ride the waves on a surfboard! Then we'll spend two days "glamping" (glamorous camping) in safari-style tents with beds and mattresses, as we explore Espiritu Santo National Park in the Sea of Cortez, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the best destinations for viewing marine life in the world. We swim and snorkel with sea lions and whale sharks, kayak through dazzling turquoise waters to explore hidden lagoons and desert beaches, try stand up paddle boarding, hike and bird watch in what Jacques Cousteau has called the "Aquarium of the World."

Returning to La Paz, we have a great dinner on the Malecon and overnight in a hotel before transferring to Magdalena Bay for 2 days of close encounters from motorized skiffs with California gray whales, the "Gentle Giants of the Pacific!" Ranked as one of the most important coastal habitats for gray whales in Mexico, the Bay is prime calving ground from January to March for mothers with their calves. The largest animal to have ever exhibited friendliness towards humans, there is little to compare with the experience of closely observing a gray whale mother nurse her calf, or seeing juveniles leaping exuberantly out of the water. They frolic, breach, spyhop, and lobtail, while spouting heart-shaped clouds of mist into the cool midday air.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to escape from winter, to bond with nature in a treasure trove of marine vitality, and to experience all the best and most fun activities and adventures that are available in Baja, Mexico!

### Main Attractions

- Explore deserted beaches, hike, have surfing lessons, and go snorkeling and swimming with friendly sea lions and maybe whale sharks!
- Guided sea kayak excursions from Espiritu Santo Island to outlying islands, through sea arches, and along deserted cliffs and beaches.
- Whale watching for 2 days from guided skiffs in Magdalena Bay.
- Tortilla-making class plus a Mexican cooking class.
- Catered camping ("glamping") at a remote and beautiful safari-style beach camp.

### What's Included:

- All land transportation and airport transfers.
- All activities as listed in the itinerary.
- Double occupancy accommodations in hotels for 5 nights and luxury safari-style beachcamp glamping for 1 night.
- All meals as listed in the itinerary.
- On the island (Espiritu Santo), drinks, glass of wine/beer during happy hour.
- Services of a bilingual guide who will accompany us throughout the trip, plus local guides at our camps.
- Bottled water.
- One AdventureWomen Associate.

### What's Not Included:

- Round-trip airfare from your hometown to Cabo, Mexico.
- Drinks and alcoholic beverages with restaurant meals.
- Laundry, phone/fax/email and other items of a personal nature.
- Gratuities. Suggestions are:
  - for main guide: \$10 - \$15/person/day
  - island chef and staff: \$10 per person (flat rate)
  - Los Colibris chef and staff: \$10 per person (flat rate)
  - boat/skiff drivers for Espiritu Santo and Magdalena Bay: 200 pesos per group for each outing.

### Health Requirements and Health Insurance

This trip is rated **Easy to Moderate**. You must be in good physical condition, be able to hike/walk a few miles with ease, and have good upper body strength for sea kayaking. **You MUST have your own health insurance.**

## Passports and Visa

For U.S. citizens traveling to or from Mexico, all travelers must have a valid United States passport. The US Department of State recommends that your passport be valid for at least six months after your expected return. No visa is required for travel to Mexico from the United States.

## How To Register

**First**, call (800-804-8686) or email (trips@adventurewomen.com) the AdventureWomen office to determine space availability. As a courtesy, we will hold your space for 5 days while you are completing the registration process, and making personal and travel arrangements.

**Next**, complete and sign the Trip Registration and International Passenger Information forms on our Web site by clicking "Sign Up for this Trip" on the trip page. We can also fax or email them to you. Include, with your forms, the required deposit that can be made by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or Discover), personal check, money order, or cashier's check. You can also give us your credit card number over the phone. Once we receive **your deposit and BOTH forms**, we will mail you a trip confirmation/information packet verifying your registration.

## Traveling to Cabo, Mexico: Arrival and Departure

Your flight to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico needs to arrive at the San Jose del Cabo Airport (SJD) by **3:30 pm on February 1, 2017**. We will be picked up at the airport and transferred to Todos Santos and **Los Colibris Casitas, Guaycura 88, La Poza, 23300 Todos Santos, Mexico (011-52) 612-14-50189 or 1-619-446-6827**.

**On February 7** you will be returned to the airport in the morning, **in time for departures AFTER 12 noon**.

If you want/need to arrive prior to February 1, suggestions for where to stay are Hotel Tropicana, Casa Natalia, and El Encanto Inn. You can be picked up from one of these hotels on February 1, or come back to the airport for pick up.

## Making Travel Arrangements to Cabo, Mexico

In order to facilitate group arrivals and departures, we ask that you work directly with our travel consultants at **Travel Café** to make your travel arrangements to San Jose del Cabo Airport (SJD), Cabo, Mexico. Either before or after booking your trip, please contact **Ciretta Green** at:

**1-800-247-3538 OR FAX 1-406-586-1959**  
**email: ciretta@travelcafeonline.com**  
**CANADIAN RESIDENTS, please call 406-587-1188**

When calling, please identify yourself as an AdventureWomen Traveler. If you leave a message on Ciretta's voice mail, she will return your call promptly. She will be happy to discuss your travel plans and help you decide when to purchase your ticket for the best rate. If you purchase your ticket through her, she can also help you with hotels and rental cars, should you want to come

early, stay longer, or share a rental car or hotel room with another participant. If you do not purchase your air ticket through Travel Café, you are responsible for making your own arrangements for hotels, rental cars, trip extensions, transfers, etc.

**NOTE:** The recent trend in travel is for travelers to finalize their plans much closer to departure time than was customary in the past. While we try to be as flexible as possible booking last minute registrants, we must often relinquish hotel space and air reservations up to 6 – 12 weeks prior to departure!

Please keep this in mind when making your travel plans.

### Liability Form and Final Payment

Part of what ADVENTUREWOMEN, INC. hopes to foster is the taking of more self-responsibility for our own lives, health, and safety. Please read the LIABILITY FORM carefully, return it with the remainder of your balance due by **NOVEMBER 2, 2016.**

### Cancellations and Refunds

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and 50% of the registration deposit is non-refundable.

For cancellations received 60-89 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-59 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations. A brochure will be sent to you in your registration packet.

### Switching Trips

Before your final balance due date, you may change your deposit to another trip within the same calendar year by paying a \$75 fee to switch. You may not switch your deposit to a trip in another calendar year.

### No Smoking Policy

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen vacations.

### Trip Itinerary

PLEASE NOTE: due to weather and any other unforeseen circumstances, the itinerary is subject to changed sequence and substitution of activities.

## DAY 1

**Wednesday, February 1, 2017**

**Arrive in Cabo, Mexico**

Welcome to Baja! Bordered by both the wild Pacific Ocean and the protected Sea of Cortez, this finger-like desert peninsula is a haven for exotic plants, birds and animals (both terrestrial and marine) and is home to friendly and welcoming people.

Your guide will greet you at the San Jose del Cabo airport (SJD) and transfer you to Los Colibris Casitas in Todos Santos. Tonight's Welcome Dinner and trip briefing is at Santo Vino, Chef Dany Lamote's "love letter to Baja."

At Santo Vino Bistro, Chef Dany Lamote has created an intimate dining space in the traditional style of a European bistro. He will transport you to the comfortable elegance of Baja food with his own creative, culinary twists. Fusing different cultures and knowledge into unique inspirational recipes, he lovingly takes traditional Mexican recipes and then personalizes and adapts them by mixing in his life experiences...and you, the diner, win! What better way to begin our week in Baja!

**Welcome Dinner**

Overnight at **Los Colibris Casitas** in Todos Santos

[www.loscolibris.com](http://www.loscolibris.com)

Los Colibris—The Hummingbirds—is located in Todos Santos, just a ten-minute walk from the area's beautiful beaches. The property features two big casas (houses) and two casitas (little houses). Each building is configured and decorated in a unique way. The accommodations all include a kitchen or kitchenette with appliances, a dining area, a balcony, porch or patio, ceiling fans, and lovely views of the Pacific Ocean and lagoon.

## DAY 2

**Thursday, February 2**

**Tortilla Making Class / Surfing / Punta Lobos / Cooking Class**

Todos Santos is an undiscovered gem, back-dropped by the Sierra de Laguna Mountains and rimmed with gorgeous beaches and lush gardens. It's an official Pueblo Magico, one of Mexico's 50 off-the-beaten-path towns known for their "magical ambiance."

We'll start off our first day with a terrific Mexican breakfast prepared by Los Colibris Chef Iker Algorri, then move straight into our tortilla-making class to ensure that we have plenty of tortillas on hand for our cooking class tonight.

It's then time to hit the waves at beautiful Playa Los Cerritos, one of the best surf breaks in Baja, where our veteran instructors guarantee that you'll ride the waves – at least for a moment! A spectacular crescent of sand, Los Cerritos is one of the best surf breaks in Baja. And with a smooth, sandy bottom and small waves breaking close to shore, it is the perfect place to introduce beginners to the joy of surfing. Haven't you always wanted to try this??!!

After a delicious picnic lunch on the beach, and once everyone has had a chance to shower off, we'll head to Playa Punta Lobos to greet the local fishermen as they come in with the daily catch. There, Chef Iker will instruct the group on the local fish and how he makes his buying decisions,

and of course purchase the fish for the cooking class to follow. Then it's back to Iker's Colibris Café at Los Colibris Casitas to learn how to make the perfect margarita and Punta Lobos Fish Stew. A perfect Baja day!

**Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

Overnight at **Los Colibris Casitas** in Todos Santos

**DAY 3**

**Friday, February 3**

**Isla Espiritu Santo and the Sea of Cortez Adventure**

Espiritu Santo National Park in the Sea of Cortez is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and is one of the best marine life viewing destinations in the world. Whales, dolphins, whale sharks, sea turtles, manta rays and plenty of beautiful tropical fish call the surrounding waters home, while a terrific range of bird species including Blue-footed Boobies, Reddish Egrets, Great Blue Herons and Yellow-footed Gulls frequent the island's skies and shores. The island itself is stunning, with magnificent towering cliffs, spectacular sandy bays, amazing lava rock formations, and rock art left by the now-extinct Guaycura and Pericu Indians. There's even an endemic ring-tailed cat, the *babisuri*. It's a remarkable place to explore.

We'll spend the next two days kayaking, snorkeling, whale watching, hiking, swimming with whale sharks (if they are here), stand up paddle boarding, bird watching, and exploring hidden lagoons and desert beaches. And swimming with sea lions is magical, with unforgettable nose-to-nose encounters. Grab some snorkel gear provided and jump in with them.

The Sea of Cortez is home to 39% of the world's total number of marine mammal species, a third of the world's marine cetacean species, and 891 fish species. Jacques Cousteau once called it the "Aquarium of the World" and "the Galapagos of North America." It really IS a treasure trove of marine vitality!

You will LOVE our base camp on one of the island's most beautiful beaches! It features walk-in safari-style tents with twin beds, mattresses, pillows, sheets and lamps. The accommodations are so comfortable and beautiful, that you won't want to leave. This is GLAMPING (glamorous camping) at its best! There is a kitchen tent where our on-site chef makes wonderful meals for you every day, and there is a separate tent for the sun showers. There's even little cabañas for the compost toilets.

**Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

Overnight **Glamping on the Beach!**

**DAY 4**

**Saturday, February 4**

**Isla Espiritu Santo and the Sea of Cortez Adventure**

Today we continue our exploration and fantastic activities on Espiritu Santo Island.

Late Saturday afternoon we'll return to shore and La Paz, a laid-back little city that is draped along a beachfront boulevard, the Malecon. Old colonial buildings, small markets and relaxing cafes make it perhaps the most "Mexican" city on the Baja.

We spend tonight at the Seven Crown La Paz, and have dinner at a terrific local joint on the Malecon, El Bismarkcito – a La Paz institution. Listed as one of the Top 3 Restaurants in La Paz, it grew from a small taco stand to one of the most notorious restaurants in La Paz. Located right on the Malecon, it specializes in Mexican seafood dishes (and they only buy sustainable locally-caught fish).

### **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

Overnight at **Seven Crown La Paz Centro Hotel**

<http://www.sevencrownhotels.com/english/our-hotels/seven-crown-la-paz-centro/>

The Seven Crown La Paz Centro Hotel is located in downtown La Paz, Baja California Sur, just two blocks from the Malecon. The hotel features 50 guest rooms and suites, a swimming pool, wireless internet, and exceptional service.

## **DAY 5**

**Sunday, February 5**

### **Magdalena Bay (Bahia Magdalena)**

On Sunday morning we'll drive the 4 hours from La Paz to Magdalena Bay, the largest wetlands ecosystem on the west coast of Baja and one of the most important in North America. The World Wildlife Fund ranks it as one of the most important coastal habitats in Mexico. Magdalena Bay also has mangrove forests, barrier beaches and sand dune islands, all of which contribute to the incredible scenery and biological diversity of the area. The Bay is also the prime calving ground for the gray whale, and January to March it is possible to see – and often pet - a large number of whales, including mothers and calves.

On our way to Mag Bay we stop for lunch at one of the delicious local restaurants, then head out onto the water for 3 hours of interacting with whales. Highly experienced local staff will ferry us through the waters of Magdalena Bay to whale watch from motorized skiffs, perfect conveyances from which to have a "whale's eye view" of the Great Grays!

The Gray whale is the largest animal to have ever exhibited friendliness towards humans. There is little to compare with the experience of closely observing a mother nurse her calf, or seeing juveniles leaping exuberantly out of the water. They frolic, breach, spyhop, and lobtail, while spouting heart-shaped clouds of mist into the cool midday air. The young calves are especially curious, following and sometimes even nuzzling up to the whale-watching skiffs. Sometimes they catch a ride on their mother's backs!

Each year California Gray whales migrate an astonishing 12,000 miles, round trip, from their summer feeding grounds in the Bering Sea, to their winter home in the warm Pacific lagoons of Mexico's Baja Peninsula. In the quiet Baja waters, they give birth to their one-ton calves who must then grow and learn the skills necessary for survival before making the return journey to the Arctic the following Spring. This gray whale migration is beyond compare in the mammalian world!

After communing with the whales, we'll have dinner and spend the night either in San Carlos or Lopez Mateos at a simple hotel on the waterfront.

### **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

Overnight at a waterfront hotel (to be determined)

## DAY 6

### **Monday, February 6 Magdalena Bay (Bahia Magdalena)**

This morning we'll head back out onto the water for another 3 hours of whale watching, then return to Todos Santos and Los Colibris Casitas, where we enjoy a final Baja sunset from our patios and balconies, and end our spectacular week with a Farewell Dinner at the fabulous Restaurante La Casita Tapas and Wine Bar. One reviewer said "...each dish exceeds in every way what taste buds expect of well concentrated and carefully prepared dishes. 'Succulent' as a description doesn't do the food justice. Think 'excellent' and you'll be close."

#### **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

Overnight at **Los Colibris Casitas** in Todos Santos

## DAY 7

### **Tuesday, February 7 Say adios but not good-bye!**

After breakfast you will be transferred to airport, where flights should not be booked earlier than 12:00 noon.

#### **Breakfast**

## Weather

Baja has two seasons: a dry season and a green season. Verano, the dry season, runs from December to April and invierno, the rainy or "green" season runs from May to November. It can, however, rain in the dry season and be dry in the rainy season, so you best be prepared for precipitation regardless of seasons. As far as temperatures, expect highs in the high 70s and 80s, and lows in the high 50s or 60s.

## Money

On this trip, U.S. cash is accepted nearly everywhere. You should have enough money in U.S. dollars, smaller bills (fives, tens, twenties, and some ones) to leave for tips. Credit cards are accepted in downtown Todos Santos and La Paz.

## What to Bring

In general, dress on this Baja vacation is very casual. The temperatures and weather on the Baja Peninsula in Mexico can be quite warm, OR can also be quite cool during the mornings and evenings, especially if it is windy. Dressing in layers while whale watching by skiff on Magdalena Bay and sea kayaking is recommended.

Here are our best tips for what to pack for your Baja Multi-sport trip!!

- Soft-sided suitcase or duffel bag (easier to transport on boats than a hard-sided suitcase).

- A small day pack or soft shoulder bag (to use as a carry-on bag) for carrying camera, film, hat, etc., on our excursions.
- 2 pairs fast drying shorts.
- Rain gear (jacket and pants).
- One set of light-weight clothes (long-sleeved shirt and pants).
- Sweater or jacket/sweat pants (if nights get cool).
- Swimsuit(s).
- 3 T-shirts.
- One pair comfortable tennis shoes or shoes you can hike in.
- One pair sport water sandals.
- Sun hat.
- “Town” clothes for our time in La Paz. You can leave these clothes in a small tote bag at the hotel while we are at beach camp.
- Insect repellent.
- Sunglasses with securing strap.
- Sunscreen and lip balm with sun screen.
- Small travel alarm clock.
- 4-6 clothes pins for hanging up wet clothes.
- Various sizes of Ziploc bags for wet/dirty clothing.
- Water bottle with a securing device. We recommend the 24 oz. Nalgene Everyday OTG Tritan Bottle. Made of Eastman Tritan™ copolyester, the bottle is completely BPA-free. It's important to have your own water bottle so that you can fill it each day from the water we are supplied with.
- Toiletries and biodegradable soap and shampoo (Ivory soap is biodegradable; Kirk's Cold Water Castile is sudsy in cold water.)
- Lightweight beach towel and wash cloth.
- 3-4 cotton bandanas, an enduring AdventureWomen tradition that has withstood the test of time!
- Earplugs. We recommend Mack's Pillow Soft White Moldable Silicone Snore Proof Earplugs, which you can buy at most drugstores, or [www.earplugstore.com](http://www.earplugstore.com). Good to 22 Decibels!
- Underwear and pajamas.
- Flashlight and/or small head lamp (for reading in bed) and extra batteries. A good flashlight is essential for getting to and from the toilets and your tent in the dark.
- Small binoculars, diary, sketchbooks, paperback book.
- Field guides.

#### Personal First Aid Kit

- Foot powder for moisture absorption; cloth, not plastic Band-aids; about 10 individually wrapped alcohol pads; and a small tube of Neosporin or other antibiotic cream.
- Aspirin/ibuprofen, etc.
- Cold-symptom relief tablets, antihistamine, cough drops.
- Tweezers.
- Ace bandage.
- Antibiotics (Cipro, or another systemic antibiotic).
- Prescription medicines in their original bottles.
- Acidophilus enzyme (available in capsules in health-food stores). This often helps your digestive system get in shape for “new” flora.

- Immodium, Lomotil, or similar anti-diarrhea medicine.
- Pepto-Bismol tablets and/or liquid (in leak-proof bottle).
- Emergen-C. Good for higher altitudes, and some people swear they get fewer colds on airplanes if they take this during flights.

### Camera Equipment

This is an experience you definitely want to record on film! Bring your camera and more memory cards than you think you need. Also bring plenty of Ziploc bags to protect your camera(s). If you have particularly expensive camera equipment, we recommend purchasing a waterproof camera box (i.e., Pelican waterproof box), available at camera or dive shops. If you are an amateur photographer, shooting with a simple snapshot camera is just fine. Some of the waterproof throw-away cameras take excellent pictures!

### Last Minute Reminders

- Make photocopies of your airline tickets and the first two pages of your passport, and put them in different locations (suitcase, carry-on bag, etc.).
- Bring 2-3 extra passport size photos to use in emergencies.
- Your valuables should be insured for the duration of the trip, but better yet, leave them at home.
- Remove extra credit cards, driver's license, and personal items from wallet or purse.
- Make sure passport and airline tickets are valid and in the correct name.
- Check with airline to reconfirm reservations and departure time (most airlines want to hear directly from the client for confirmations).
- Please leave all valuable jewelry at home!!!

### About Adventure Travel Today - Please Read Carefully!

At AdventureWomen, we would like to ensure that all participants understand that our excursions are *adventure travel vacations*, and not "tours." We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one *actively participates*, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to experience an *active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends*. Most of all, we want our trips to be fun!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a *good-natured realist* and have a *sense of humor!* *Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist*, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. *Being on time is important*, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well being of both individuals and the group!

*Thank you* for choosing to travel with AdventureWomen! *If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call, write or email us.*

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