



THE GRAY WHALES AND WONDERS OF

BAJA

FEBRUARY 8-16, 2011



HOLBROOK
TRAVEL

Join Virginia Aquarium and whale specialist Susan Barco and take part in one of the most unique natural wonders of the world; witness the end of the 5,000 mile migration of gray whales. The whale's journey begins in the Bering Sea and ends at the Baja Peninsula where the whales mate and deliver their calves. Interact and investigate with specialists from the Scripps Institute of Oceanography and the San Diego Birch Aquarium as they reveal the history and trace the migration and lifecycle of gray whales. Participate in three boating expeditions to meet these gentle gray giants. Also, while traveling through San Diego and Baja learn about the unique and varying terrains of these locations from salt-marsh wetlands to lush agricultural lands. Don't miss this opportunity to meet these unique mammals!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Gray whales up close and personal! Have three thrilling opportunities to encounter these gentle giants
- Interact and learn from local biologists and researchers in Baja who are studying these gray whales in their mating and calving habitat
- The arid peninsula of Baja California is home to over 600 endemic plants including the unique boojum tree, towering cardon cactus, and the contorted elephant tree

TRIP DETAILS

TRIP DATES

February 8-16, 2011

TRIP LENGTH

9 days

TRIP COST

\$1995 per person

Does not include flight from your city to San Diego



EDUCATIONAL CONNECTIONS:

- Biology
- Conservation
- Marine Science
- Natural History
- Adventure Learning



Cost is in doubles (single \$475 additional). Three dinners and gratuities not included. A \$350 per person deposit is due to hold your space. Final payment is due on November 5, 2010. Optional travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. Call 800-243-3174 for more information. Holbrook's agency number is 18549.



February 8

San Diego

Arrival in San Diego. A valid passport is mandatory for this program. **Overnight at San Diego Courtyard Marriott.**

February 9

San Diego

San Diego's enviable climate, scenic beauty, and high quality of life constantly attracts new residents and visitors alike. Board our bus for Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla for an introductory lecture on Gray Whales given by a marine biologist, followed by a guided visit to the aquarium. After a picnic lunch, take a brief tour of some of San Diego's most attractive landmarks. Enjoy dinner at the hotel. **Overnight at San Diego Courtyard Marriott. (BLD)**

February 10

San Quintin

Begin in the morning by driving south to cross the busiest border in the world. The scenic road to Ensenada offers breathtaking views. Stop for lunch and a brief city tour. Continue to San Vicente to visit a small community museum. The hotel in San Quintin fronts a wide open beach offering spectacular sunsets. Dinner will be on your own to experience the local flavor. **Overnight at Mission Santa Maria. (BL)**

February 11

Guerrero Negro

The day is dedicated to admire the wonders of the desert. The mountainous peninsula is covered by innumerable species of flora, many of which are endemic. A large part of the drive crosses Reserva Valle de Los Cirios (Boojum Tree Reserve) established mainly to protect the unique tree. At parallel 28, the state of Baja California Sur begins with the city of Guerrero Negro. Dinner will be on your own today to sample the local cuisine. **Overnight at Desert Inn, Guerrero Negro. (BL)**

February 12

San Ignacio

Begin the day visiting a natural reserve in an enormous salt marsh where birds migrate from Russia, Canada, and other latitudes. Drive through La Exportadora de Sal, one of the largest salt plants in the world and learn about its activities. Board pangas (small boats) for a memorable encounter with the Gray Whales in Scammon's Lagoon sanctuary. Continue south to San Ignacio, a charming town that developed around its imposing 18th century mission, still in use today, in the midst of a lush, tranquil oasis. **Overnight at Desert Inn, San Ignacio. (BLD)**

February 13

San Ignacio

Board special vehicles for the two hour drive on a graded road to reach the secluded San Ignacio Lagoon. Experience two adventuresome rides among whales, one before and the second after lunch. Migrating birds can be spotted along the shore. Back in San Ignacio, enjoy a relaxed evening. Dinner will be on your own tonight. **Overnight at Desert Inn, San Ignacio. (BL)**

February 14

Cataviña

The morning is free in San Ignacio to walk, visit the church and museum, and enjoy the relaxed life of the town around its tree filled Zocalo. Stops are made along the return drive to Cataviña to admire the large variety of dense desert vegetation. Located in the midst of the central desert, a combination of sun, sand, gigantic granite boulders, and amusing combinations of Boo Jums, Cardons and Elephant Trees make Cataviña a superb "desert garden." A nature walk includes a visit to a small cave with simple rock art. In isolated Cataviña, the nights reveal an enchanting desert sky. Dinner at the hotel consists of a variety of finger food. **Overnight at Desert Inn, Catavina. (BLD)**

February 15

San Diego

The return trip stops in a typical San Quintin restaurant for lunch and in Ensenada for shopping. Box dinner for the bus. Cross the border into San Diego and settle in the hotel. **Overnight at San Diego Courtyard Marriott. (BLD)**

February 16

Departure

Depart for the airport and your flights home. (B)

Participants on this program must be able to endure extended driving periods on dirt roads for up to two hours each way and board small fishing boats (pangas) with the possibility of encountering rough seas. Walks are usually short and on relatively flat terrain, however, often on uneven ground. There are optional short, but steep, hikes for those who want to participate. Program may incur unforeseen fuel surcharges.