

DISCOVER THE WORLD OF PANTERRA



Gray Whales



Blue Whales



## WHALES, CAVE PAINTINGS AND MISSIONS

February 29 – March 6, 2024 – 7 Days

Hotel-Based Land and Sea Adventure  
La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico

**México**  
LIVE IT TO BELIEVE IT

  
**PANTERRA**  
Adventure Travel

## Trip Overview

- ❖ Experience the **Pacific Gray whales**, measuring up to 49 ft/14 m, in their wintering grounds of Magdalena Bay. From December to March, they gather to mate and give birth, marking one of the longest migrations along the continental shelf with a 22,000 km round trip. These magnificent creatures leave their feeding grounds in the arctic waters of the Bering Sea to seek refuge in the warm and sheltered bays on the Pacific side of the Baja California Peninsula. You may even have the opportunity to interact with some friendly Gray whales. (water-based)
- ❖ Experience the **Northeastern Pacific Blue whales**, measuring up to 110 ft/33 m, in their wintering grounds in the National Park of Loreto Bay. Their peak season in the area is February and March when they arrive to feed, calve and mate. When they are not in the Sea of Cortez, These whales migrate in the deep waters off the continental shelf, from Chile to California. Along with the Blue whales, we often spot other whale species such as the Finback, as well as dolphins, sea lions, and a spectacular show of coastal birds. (water-based)
- ❖ The **missions** of Baja were established by the Franciscan order. The first Catholic missions were founded by the Spanish Jesuits. The missions were all established within one day's horseback ride from each other. We will visit the Misión San Francisco Javier de Viggé-Biaundó, built in 1699. On this excursion, we will also stop for an authentic ranch lunch and learn how to make goat cheese and tortillas. (land-based)
- ❖ The **cave paintings** in the Sierra de la Giganta mountains were created by indigenous civilizations in Baja Mexico. Carbon dating on these paintings indicates that they were up to 7,000 years ago. As we hike through the area of the cave paintings, learn about the local flora, fauna and natural history as well as the unique geology of the Sierra de la Giganta mountain range. (land-based)
- ❖ **Camp Ceseña** is located 1.5 hours north of La Paz set in a desert environment on 1000 hectares of the 100-year-old Ceseña Family Ranch. It offers glamping-style accommodations with guided activities from our experts in the field and ranges from desert hikes exploring flora, fauna, and geological areas of significance to visits to culturally rich historic sites and interactions. The camp staff are part of three generations of the Ceseña family and is a family-supported project in partnership with Panterra.
- ❖ Our adventures are led by marine naturalists and/or certified guides. With combined decades of experience, a Panterra expert will accompany each trip to share natural history insights and a rare behind-the-scenes context.

*Please note that there are no in-water activities available for this trip, as the water temperatures are quite cool ranging from 16 to 20 degrees Celsius (61 to 68 degrees Fahrenheit). Only on-the-water activities are available during this land-based trip, which will be conducted on a 30+ foot panga (skiff). However, should an activity be cancelled due to weather or sea conditions, we will explore our options to include an in-the-water activity.*



## Itinerary

Baja California is beautifully embraced by two bodies of water; the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Cortez. A striking natural beauty set in a dramatic backdrop of rugged mountains and desert islands with high cliffs dropping down to sandy beaches and crystal-clear turquoise waters. It is rich in natural history, unspoiled in beauty, and unrivalled in both marine and terrestrial wildlife. The Sea of Cortez and Baja California are worlds of a different time, place and rhythm. The adventure offers some of the most unique land & sea experiences one can have on a single trip.

### Day 1 (Feb. 29) - Arriving in La Paz

Arrive at the La Paz International Airport (LAP) or Cabo International Airport (SJD) and transfer to the 4.5-star hotel in La Paz, [Hotel Catedral](#) for our first night's stay.

*Drive Time:* 2.5 hours one-way      *Meals included:* Welcome to the Baja Dinner

**Day 2 – Missions and Rancheros** - After breakfast, we depart La Paz for Loreto. At the gateway to Loreto, we will visit the mission of San Javier followed by a cultural visit to a local ranch to learn how to make ranchero goat cheese and try our hand at making tortillas for our lunch. A full day experiencing the influential past, and an old Vaquero (cowboy) ranch. After leaving San Javier we check into the [Hotel Mision](#), in Loreto, for a 2-night stay.

*Drive Time:* 3 hours roundtrip      *Meals included:* Breakfast and lunch



**Day 3 – Cave Paintings** - Following breakfast, we embark on a time travel excursion to explore an arroyo that contains numerous cave paintings dating back over 7000 years to pre-Hispanic times. Our journey takes us along the picturesque coastline of Bahia Concepcion. During our exploration, our guide will provide insights into the origins of the cave paintings and the significance of the area we are exploring.

*Drive Time:* 3 hours roundtrip

*Meals included:* Breakfast and lunch



**Day 4 – Blue Whales** – Our day begins with a delicious breakfast, and after checking out of the hotel, our driver will kindly store our bags for us. Our adventure starts with a brisk walk to the marina, where we meet the boat at 8:00 am. We set sail immediately to witness the world's largest mammals feeding. Loreto is one of the rare places in the world where blue whales regularly gather during February and March. We may also encounter Fin and Humpback whales, pods of dolphins, California sea lions at their breeding colony, and an abundance of coastal birds, making the experience truly awe-inspiring. Once the whale watching is complete, we depart Loreto for Camp Ceseña where we will check in for a 2-night stay.

*Drive Time:* 3.5 hours (after excursion)

*Meals included:* Breakfast, lunch and dinner



*Disclaimer: All activities and excursions are carefully planned based on ideal weather and sea conditions. Excursions are usually 6 – 8 hours. Rarely is an activity or excursion not possible. Should this occur Panterra reserves the right to substitute an activity/excursion not necessarily outlined in this brochure but found on our [Recommended Add-ons](#), website page under Day Trips. Panterra is not responsible for circumstances beyond its control.*



**Day 5 – Desert Experience** – Experience comfortable glamping-style lodgings at Camp Ceseña and enjoy expert-led activities, including guided desert hikes that explore the flora, fauna, and geological landmarks of the area, as well as cultural and historical sites with interactive elements. Meet with knowledgeable scientists and gain insight into their ongoing desert research projects.

*Drive Time:* 5.5 hours one-way      *Meals included:* Breakfast, lunch and dinner



**Day 6 – Gray Whales** – After breakfast, we depart to the Pacific side, Magdalena Bay, a UNESCO World Heritage site recognized for its rich biodiversity. Anticipate 3 - 4 hours of gray whale and bird watching followed by a fresh seafood lunch. We then return to La Paz checking into the Hotel Catedral for our last night stay. Enjoy the late afternoon and early evening exploring La Paz. La Paz offers 2 museums (modern art and anthropological) and a beautiful seawalk (Malecon) designed for strolling the many restaurants and shops. All within walking distance of the hotel.

*Drive Time:* 5.5 hours one-way      *Meals included:* Breakfast and lunch



**Day 7 – (Mar. 6)** – After breakfast, hotel check-out and transfer to the La Paz or Cabo International Airport for your return flight home.

*Drive Time:* 2.5 hours to the Cabo International Airport and 20 minutes to the La Paz International Airport      *Meals included:* Breakfast

## What to Expect

This trip has an activity rating of novice to moderate level; travellers should be comfortable walking or standing for short periods, moderate hiking for 1 – 2 hours and prepared for multiple hours of activity on some days. This is a combined educational, cultural and wildlife-viewing trip. Hikes range from 1 – 1.5 hours (1 to 1.5 miles) on uneven terrain at low elevations in warm and humid conditions. Travellers have the option of foregoing any excursion and staying at the hotel.

## Accommodations



**Hotel Catedral** – 4.5-star rating - is a new concept of lodging that adapts to the needs of today's traveller. The hotel is situated in the historic center of the city, surrounded by several points of interest. It is located next to the oldest church in La Paz, the Cathedral of Our Lady of La Paz. With its sophisticated architecture in a contemporary modernist style. The hotel concentrates on each of the details to offer its guests a service of excellence and quality, both in the rooms and in its haute cuisine restaurant. More than a lodging, it is an invitation to an elegant, comfortable and relaxing stay.

**Hotel La Misión** – 5-star rating - a stunning new elegant resort with a contemporary European-Mexican Hacienda style. Reflective of the Old Mission flavour of Baja Mexico, La Misión Loreto offers a luxurious oceanfront experience for those who seek the finest hotel accommodations in Loreto, Mexico.



**Camp Ceseña** – Located 1.5 hours north of La Paz set in a desert environment on 1000 hectares of the 100-year-old Ceseña Family Ranch. Your stay offers glamping-style accommodations with guided and non-guided activities. The camp is run by the Ceseña Family in partnership with Panterra.

## Transportation



We have arranged all transportation needs during your stay in Mexico as specified in your trip itinerary. All of our transporters are certified and registered with the Mexican Board of Tourism. When spending time on your own, or if you choose to arrive early or stay later, we will happily recommend convenient transportation options.

## What's Included

- ❖ Transfers upon arrival and departure
- ❖ All ground transportation provided on excursions
- ❖ Accommodations as indicated on page 6
- ❖ Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- ❖ Daily activities and excursions as indicated in the itinerary

## What's Not Included

- ❖ Airfare and Trip cancellation or any other travel insurance
- ❖ 3 evening dinners
- ❖ Alcohol beverages
- ❖ Gratuities
- ❖ Items of a personal nature

## Pricing

**USD 2295 per person**

Prices are per person based on double occupancy. Group size is 10 guests. Single supplement add \$350.00 USD. For groups of 4 or more 10% discount applies. Please contact our office for private group or travel agency bookings. All prices are quoted in US dollars.

*A portion of the proceeds from each guest goes towards supporting our wildlife conservation and research projects.*

May we suggest the following add-on:

### [GRAY WHALES, WILDLIFE AND CULTURAL EXPEDITION](#)

Mar. 9 - 16, 2024 | 8 day hotel, land and cruise package

Book your back to back trips and receive 10% off both.

*Where we make the impossible adventure possible!*



Panterra Adventure Travel / Panterra Geo Expediciones  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada and La Paz, BCS, Mexico  
Phone: Canada (778) 351 1377 / Mexico 011 52 (612) 205 6879  
Email: [info@panterra.com](mailto:info@panterra.com) Website: [www.panterra.com](http://www.panterra.com)

