



## TRIP OVERVIEW

Explore an island paradise with open turquoise waters, incredible marine life and warm sunsets over the bay on this unique and unforgettable swimming holiday in Baja, Mexico. With water temperatures of around 26°C, this late-season getaway provides the perfect opportunity to discover the unspoilt beauty of one of Mexico's natural wonders.

From the white sand beaches and dramatic cliff faces to the countless hidden bays that we'll explore throughout the week, this is a swimming adventure like no other. The area is part of the UNESCO-protected Biosphere Reserve and offers the opportunity to discover this pristine natural environment.

Based on the uninhabited island of Espiritu Santo, our base camp is located right on the beach, just a few steps from the inviting waters we'll spend our days exploring. The camp is completely 'off the grid' and includes glamping-style tents with camp beds and solar heated showers. It also offers kayaks and stand-up paddle boards which can be borrowed for your own use between our scheduled swims.

Our food for the week is prepared by our very own chef and cocktails are available for all guests to enjoy as we watch the sun go down at the end of each unforgettable day.

---

## WHO IS THIS TRIP FOR?

This trip is designed for swimmers who are looking for a remote escape from everyday life and experience a combination of coastal swims, crossings and circumnavigations. Guests should be comfortable being 'off the grid' throughout the duration of the trip, with no access to wifi or mobile reception on the island. Swimmers should also have a basic understanding of open water swimming and be capable of completing the average daily swim distance of around 6km (split over a minimum of two swims) prior to the start of the trip.

---

## LOCATION SUMMARIES

### Isla Espiritu Santo

This uninhabited protected island area is an important eco-tourism destination. It was declared part of a Biosphere Reserve by the UNESCO in 1995 and is the only known habitat of the black jackrabbit. The surrounding reefs are home to parrotfish, angelfish, trumpetfish, and rainbow wrasse, while many other species pass nearby including rays, turtles, dolphins, and even whales. Bird species include magnificent frigate birds, brown pelicans, great blue herons, snowy egrets, turkey vultures, and hummingbirds.

### Isla Partida

Ensenada Grande beach on Isla Partida is one of Mexico's most beautiful beaches and is consistently rated as one of the top beaches on TripAdvisor. Sea kayaking is a popular activity in this area and if you're lucky, you may catch sight of the large sea lion colony that resides on Isla Lobos off the northern tip of the island.



## TRIP SCHEDULE

<b>Start Point</b>	Hotel Catedral, La Paz <a href="http://www.hotelcatedral.mx">www.hotelcatedral.mx</a>
<b>Start Time</b>	17:00 on Day 1
<b>Finish Point</b>	La Paz
<b>Finish Time</b>	15:00 on Day 7

Please note that the below daily itineraries are an example of the swims that may take place during the course of your trip, however, actual swim locations and distances will vary according to local weather and sea conditions. Your SwimTrek guides and local boat pilot will determine the most suitable swim locations each day and will communicate the plan with all guests as soon as possible.

### Day 1

After arriving in La Paz and checking in to the Hotel Catedral, you will have the chance to take a walk around this colourful and vibrant city before meeting up with your guides and fellow guests for a welcome drink and safety briefing at 17:00. After your welcome meeting, you'll have a chance to pick up any extras that you might need for the week ahead before an optional group dinner.

### Day 2

After meeting in the hotel lobby early in the morning, we set off on a two-hour boat ride which brings us to our base camp at Ensenada del Candelero (Candelabra Cove) on Espiritu Santo Island. Once there, we have a chance to get set up for the week, including a brief camp orientation, followed by a short acclimatisation swim and lunch. After lunch, you have some free time to explore the camp, kayak or have a siesta before a swim along the shoreline to neighbouring Ensenada el Mezteno.

At the end of the first day on Isla Espiritu Santo, we enjoy a beautiful sunset over the Sea of Cortez while our very own chef prepares our first delicious dinner on the island.

### Day 3

We start the morning with a swim in the beautiful Bahia San Gabriel (former home of the pearl beds made famous by John Steinbeck in "The Pearl") where we swim directly past a breeding ground of magnificent frigate birds.

After lunch, we head to Las Calaveritas for our second swim of the day which takes us all the way back to base camp. Once we arrive, the rest of the afternoon is yours to enjoy before settling in for an evening cocktail as the sun dips below the horizon once again.

### Day 4

We start off the day with a hike from Ensenada el Embudo to a dramatic vantage point which offers a gorgeous view of Isla Partida. The walk takes approximately 30 minutes each way. Our first swim of the day will begin at El Erizoso Punto, where we'll swim from point to point to point, ending at Ensenada del Raza.

Back at base camp we enjoy a wonderful lunch before setting off for our afternoon crossing from Isla Espiritu Santo to the sister island of Isla Partida. On our way back to camp, there may be time for some snorkelling off El Cardoncito.



## Day 5

This morning we circumnavigate Isla Ballena. The incredible water quality here is clear enough to spot the many beautiful types of fish that play in the underwater rocks and nooks.

After lunch, it's time to swim along the dramatic bluffs in Ensenada el Cardoncito. Along the way, you'll swim over an abandoned pearl farm and end at a gorgeous sandy beach. As always, our day finishes with another delicious local dinner and a chance to relax and soak in the atmosphere of the island paradise.

## Day 6

This morning we swim in the long bay of Ensenada el Cardonal, a bowl shaped cove of rocky red outcrops. We then make our way to Los Islotes, home to a colony of friendly and curious sea lions. After having the chance to swim and snorkel with these amazing creatures, we'll make our way back to base camp for lunch.

We then head to the beautiful Ensenada Grande for our final afternoon swim. Our last night in camp includes a special final dinner and the chance to enjoy one more evening of watching the sunset and counting the shooting stars.

## Day 7

After a great week of swimming, we've got time for a last morning swim in the bay in front of our campsite. Following our swim and a quick lunch, we head back to La Paz where we'll savour the final moments of this incredible getaway.

## TRIP INFORMATION

### Equipment Checklist

In addition to your daily non-swimming clothes, we also recommend that you bring the following items:

✓	ITEM	✓	ITEM
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Costume (x 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tight Fitting Rash Vest ( <i>to combat sea lice</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Goggles (x 2)*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Daypack
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sun Hat and Sunglasses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walking Shoes/Sandals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Waterproof Sun Cream (Factor 30+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Biodegradable</b> Shampoo
<input type="checkbox"/>	Towel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Waterproof Jacket
<input type="checkbox"/>	Head Torch (incl. spare batteries)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insect Repellent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sweater/Fleece ( <i>for the cooler evenings</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aqua Shoes/Sandals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Trousers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dry Bag**

\*Try to bring one clear lens and one tinted lens for different light conditions.

\*\*To protect your personal belongings during the crossing between La Paz and Espiritu Santo.

Please note that SwimTrek will supply swim hats and provide water and electrolyte drinks in shared water bottles on your safety boat. If you prefer to use your own drink bottle, please feel free to bring one along. If you would like to use a wetsuit, rash vest or fins during your swims, please ensure that you also bring these with you.



## Swimming Distances

SWIM	DISTANCE	SWIM	DISTANCE
Ensenada El Mezteno	3km	Bahia San Gabriel	4km
Las Calaveritas	2km	El Erizoso Punto – Ensenada Del Raza	4km
Isla Espiritu Santo – Isla Partida	2km	Isla Ballena	3km
Ensenada El Cardoncito	2km	Ensenada El Cardonal	3½km
Ensenada Grande	2km		

## Swimming Conditions

Swimming in the sea is a fantastic experience, however you should be aware that certain marine life such as sea lice, jellyfish, sea urchins and coral could be present during the swims. In all cases we will work on reducing your contact with these creatures, however if you suffer from anaphylaxis, please consult the office prior to booking.

## Walking Distances

There are no roads on the island. Most walks take place on unsealed surfaces and care should be taken in these areas. The main walk on Day 4 of the trip takes approximately 30 minutes and includes a gradual uphill trajectory.

## Temperatures

MONTH	WATER TEMPERATURE*	DAYTIME AIR TEMPERATURE*	EVENING AIR TEMPERATURE*
October	27-30°C / 81-86°F	28-31°C / 82-88°F	21-25°C / 70-77°F
November	25-28°C / 77-82°F	26-28°C / 79-82°F	18-20°C / 64-68°F
December	22-26°C / 72-79°F	23-26°C / 73-79°F	17-19°C / 63-66°F

\*Please note that these temperatures are indicative and should be used as a guide only.

## Weather Caveat

For safety reasons, we rely on decent weather conditions when carrying out our swims. As a consequence, open water swimming holidays require a certain degree of on-trip flexibility which can result in changes to the planned itinerary. These changes often add a touch of uniqueness to your trip and will be communicated to you by your SwimTrek guides as quickly as possible.

## Group Size

This trip has a maximum group size of 15. The group will be split into a maximum of three groups, based on speed, with each group being accompanied by their own safety vessel/escort.

Boat support on this trip includes one main boat and support boats to be piloted by your SwimTrek guides and a local boat pilot. Please note that this boat support is subject to change without notice and cannot be guaranteed.



## GETTING THERE

To reach Hotel Catedral in La Paz you can fly into La Paz International Airport and take a local taxi to the hotel. Alternatively, you can also fly into Los Cabos International Airport, which is approximately a 3-hour transfer away.

Whilst we have outlined various travel options below, these are subject to change and should be used as a guide only. We suggest that you use [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net) to search for flight options for this trip. Whichever route you choose to take, we recommend confirming your flights and other travel arrangements as early as possible in order to avoid price rises and availability issues.

### **Flights to La Paz International Airport (LAP)**

To search for available flights into La Paz International Airport (*also known as, 'Manuel Márquez de León International Airport'*), please visit [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net).

### **Taxi from La Paz International Airport to Hotel Catedral**

The easiest way to get to the hotel is via taxi directly from the airport. The journey takes approximately 25 minutes and costs between \$20-25. Please note that the taxis in La Paz are **not** metered, so we recommend that you agree on a fare with your driver before your journey.

### **Flights to Los Cabos International Airport (SJD)**

To search for available flights into Los Cabos International Airport (*also known as, 'Aeropuerto San José del Cabo'*), please visit [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net).

### **Private Transfer from Los Cabos International Airport to Hotel Catedral**

Once you arrive into Los Cabos, the easiest way to travel to your hotel in La Paz is via private transfer. The takes approximately 2-3 hours each way and prices vary depending on the number of people in your group. For more information please visit: [www.bajaonly.com/baja/transfer-rates](http://www.bajaonly.com/baja/transfer-rates) or phone +1-800-352-4990.

### **Shuttle Bus Transfer from Los Cabos International Airport**

From Los Cabos International Airport, you can catch an air-conditioned shuttle directly to La Paz. All shuttles leave from Terminal 1 and tickets can be bought at the Eco Baja Tours ticket counter. The journey takes approximately 3-4 hours and costs around 545 Mexican Pesos (approx. US\$30). Shuttles depart every hour between 12:30 and 17:30. For bookings and timetable information, please visit [www.ecobajatours.com](http://www.ecobajatours.com) and select 'San Jose Del Cabo Aeropuerto' as your departure and 'La Paz Malecon' as your arrival. Once you arrive in La Paz, it is a short 5-minute walk to Hotel Catedral.



## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Accommodation

The first night's stay of the trip will be at the Hotel Catedral in La Paz. For the rest of the trip, we will stay at Base Camp on Espiritu Santo Island. Here you can 'glamp' in style, with large cabin-style tents with a separate communal dining tent. Our accommodation is based on twin-share tent, however there are a limited number of single supplement tents which can be reserved during the booking process, subject to availability.

Base Camp is clean and comfortable and consists of dry toilets and shared solar-powered showers. Swimmers often choose to wash in the sea using biodegradable soap or shampoo and then rinse off in the freshwater shower.

If you would like to extend your stay in La Paz and need to book additional nights' accommodation before or after your trip, please visit the website of [Hotel Catedral](#) or call +52 612 6901000.

### Off The Grid

Isla Espiritu Santo is entirely off the grid, with no wifi or mobile reception. In the event that you need to contact the outside world, camp staff are able to radio back to our partner Baja Expeditions. If someone needs to contact you in the event of an emergency, they should phone 1 800 843 6967 from the United States or Canada or 0052 612 125 4900 from elsewhere.

Please also note that when we travel to the remote island, the water on the journey can splash onto the boat, so a dry bag is recommended to keep your possessions dry. There are also no ferries to the island, so your departure from Isla Espiritu Santo must be with the rest of the group on Day 7.

### Meals

All meals are included on Espiritu Santo island after your arrival there on the morning of Day 2. Camp food is prepared on site by our very own chef and meals typically consist of wraps, salads and freshly caught fish.

Before dinner each night, cocktails are served while watching the sunset and you will be offered a beer or a glass of wine with each dinner. Any additional alcohol that you might want with you should be purchased in La Paz and taken to the camp. Drinks can be stored in a cool box at the campsite.

Please note that dinner is not included on Day 1 of your trip, however, breakfast will be provided at Hotel Catedral on Day 2 prior to your journey to the island.

### Extra Expenses

You should bring extra money with you to cover dinner on Day 1, souvenirs and your time in La Paz. The local currency is the Mexican Peso. You will also need to bring enough cash to cover the required conservation fee of USD\$25. This will be collected by your SwimTrek guide on the first night of your trip.

Finally, please note that tipping is very much part of Mexican culture. With this in mind, we suggest a tip of US\$50-100 for your local crew, depending on the level of service you have received. All gratuities are pooled and distributed evenly between the Mexican guide and camp crew.



## **Passports and Visas**

Mexico is part of North America. Non-residents of Mexico require a full passport to enter the country, which should be valid for six months beyond the expected length of stay. Citizens of all E.U. member states, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand will not require a visa but will be required to fill out an immigration form to enter Mexico as a tourist for a time period of less than 180 days. Please note that visa regulations are subject to change and we advise that you check your own visa requirements prior to travel.

## **Health Information and Recommended Vaccinations**

For comprehensive health information for people travelling to Mexico, including all recommended and required vaccinations, please visit [www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries](http://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries). Please note that this information is subject to change and you should re-check this site regularly prior to your trip.

UK health authorities have classified Mexico as having a moderate risk of Zika virus transmission. For further information, please visit [www.gov.uk/guidance/zika-virus-country-specific-risk](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/zika-virus-country-specific-risk) and follow the advice on the [www.travelhealthpro.org.uk](http://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk). It is also recommended that you discuss your travel plans with your healthcare provider, particularly if you're pregnant or planning to become pregnant.

## **Travel Plugs & Electricity**

Please note that there are very limited charging facilities at Base Camp on the island. These operate off a solar panel and small inverter which charge at 100V using a standard North American plug. Please note that charging can be intermittent and slow and may not be available at all times. You will, however, be able to charge electrical devices in La Paz prior to departing for the island.

For a useful source of information on the different electrical outlets, electrical plugs, and electric sockets, please visit [www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plug-voltage-by-country/](http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plug-voltage-by-country/).