



## Sea Kayaking, Snorkeling, Hiking Sea of Cortez, Baja Peninsula (Mexico)

March 15-20, 2010

*"Highlights of my Baja trip were the magnificent scenery—vistas of mountain and sea; improving my sea kayaking skills; pleasant, cooperative, thoughtful co-travelers; and the moonlight on the water. How wonderful to relax, knowing that great guides are concentrating on the details! A wonderful mix of activities and relaxation time in a truly amazing environment."*  
Jackie G., Baja 2005

The Sea of Cortez is home to twelve species of whales, including the Blue Whale, as well as pods of Bottlenose and Common dolphins, California sea lions, elephant seals, and more than fifty species of birds. Ancient volcanic mountains far on the opposite shore are the backdrop for every sunrise from our private sustainable retreat. Clean white sand, clear water, and brilliant sunlight and blue sky create the turquoise waters that are perfect for sea kayaking.

Our base camp is a remote, eco-friendly "retreat village" that we will have to ourselves right on the coast, inaccessible by anything except boats. It has beautiful beachside bungalows/yurts (two beds in each, complete with solar shower and composting toilet), ample areas to hike and explore, single and double kayaks, snorkeling, fishing (last year's catch included sea bass and lincod), a sea lion rookery close to camp (this is where we snorkel), and much more.

The "village" is based on sustainability—composting toilets, solar showers, and minimum impact ethics. However, it does not skimp on "green" luxuries, like coffee or tea delivered to your yurt in the morning, margaritas in the evening, and delicious food cooked by wonderful local women.

To access the retreat, we'll be flown from San Diego to Bahia De Los Angeles (a 2 and a half hour flight, with a stop in the middle to re-fuel). Then we'll take a boat ride for about an hour through the Midriff Islands, stopping at bird rookeries or to watch dolphins or dig clams on our way to the retreat.

Chris Heeter, founder of The Wild Institute is your guide for this trip. Her co-guide is Leslie Palotas, a gifted kayak instructor and spirited and fun companion. Days will be spent sea kayaking, snorkeling, relaxing in a hammock on the beach, hiking, exploring, and being motored out to various destinations where we are likely to see whales and other Baja wonders. We'll return to our "village" for fantastic meals in the open air main yurt.



## The details...

**What to bring:** When you register, you'll receive a detailed packing list, so you'll be sure to have what you need. You bring simply your personal gear. Wetsuits and snorkeling gear are all provided, as well as fishing equipment, kayaking gear, linens for the bed, etc.

**Is this trip right for me:** This trip is perfect for women looking for choices on an outdoor vacation. All outings are optional, you can sea kayak every day, or choose between activities, relaxing or reading when not on an excursion. The comfortable beds make this trip accessible to all kinds of travelers. No experience necessary, just a longing for Baja's magical beauty.

**How in shape do I need to be:** Though many women use their trip as motivation to get in better shape before they go, no experience or particular level of fitness is necessary for this trip. All outings are optional. Winds can occasionally come up, causing more challenging sea kayaking from time to time.

**Weather:** Daytime temperatures range from the upper 60's to the upper 80's, getting cooler at night. We choose the middle of March for it's warm days and "swimmable" water temperatures.

**Meals:** Food matters on vacation! Meals are prepared by local Mexican women, with plenty of fresh food and occasionally the "catch of the day." A cantina bar is also available in the evening (included in the price of the trip). The fish we catch or clams we dig easily fit into menu plans.

**What does my trip fee cover:** Your trip fee is \$1995 (plus 12% Mexican tax), which is all-inclusive from San Diego. It covers a private plane and boat that takes us to our retreat village, fantastic meals, snorkeling, kayaking, fishing equipment, the cantina bar, lodging in the beachside bungalows (yurts), guides with decades of experience, and everything other than your travel to and from San Diego.

**Group size:** Minimum of 10, maximum of 14

**Schedule:** Arrive in San Diego by Sunday evening, March 14. There is a Holiday Inn near the airport that offers free shuttle service from the main airport to their hotel, and then to Brown Airfield (about 15 miles south) where we'll meet early Monday morning, March 15. We'll fly and boat to our retreat village the morning of March 15, and then be on Baja time—relaxing, choosing your activities, listening to the sounds of the ocean, and getting to know a little part of this rich peninsula. We'll be flown back to San Diego on Saturday, March 20 in time for an evening meal together.

**Transportation:** Whether you are flying or driving to San Diego, plan on arriving Sunday evening (March 14). Plan your return flight for anytime on Sunday, March 21.



**Payment information:** *Your deposit is not refundable. If you must cancel, please do so in writing. If you cancel 90 days prior to the trip or more, the balance of your trip fee is refundable; 70 to 89 days, the balance of your trip fee is transferable to any other Wild Institute trip through the end of the following year; 0-69 days, the trip fee is not refundable or transferable. We absolutely recommend that you purchase travel insurance so that you can recover your losses should you need to cancel or be evacuated from the trip. We recommend either Travel Insured, 800-243-3174, or CSA Travel Protect, 800-348-9505. The Wild Institute reserves the right to alter trip plans due to severe weather, water conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances.*

**How do I sign up:** A non-refundable deposit of \$400 holds your spot, and payment in full is due by December 20, 2009. With your deposit, please send name, address, phone, and e-mail address.