

# Sea of Cortez, Baja, Whale Sharks & Gray Whales

Aboard Historic Wooden Yacht from La Paz to Loreto, Baja



*An 11-day/10-night expedition among the scattered islands along the shore of the Baja peninsula. Snorkel with young sea lions, walk along desert island ridges and palm-lined arroyos. Cruising aboard this historic 1924 wooden yacht will be reminiscent of John Steinbeck and Ed Ricketts 1940 voyage aboard the “Western Flyer”, but with modern comforts!*



**DATES: 2019 –**

*Jan 29-Feb 08;*

*Feb 19-Mar 01 (Photography)*

**DURATION: 11 DAYS/10 NIGHTS**

**EMBARK: LA PAZ, BCS**

**DISEMBARK: LORETO, BCS**

**SHIP: WESTWARD**

**FROM: \$6,550**

## HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Sailing aboard a beautifully restored 1924 yacht, with original Atlas Diesel engine**
- **Swim with whale sharks!**
- **Kayak, hike, nature walks**
- **Blue Whales**
- **Snorkel with Sea Lions**
- **Dolphins**
- **Frigate Birds**
- **Sea Turtles**
- **Visit Loreto and La Paz, the capital of Baja California Sur**

## ITINERARY:

### Day 1 - Arrive La Paz, Baja

Please plan your arrival at the Los Cabos airport to be prior to 1:30 PM. One of our crew will meet you as you exit the arrivals door at the Los Cabos Airport, and you will be escorted to our van which will transport you to La Paz. We hope to leave the airport at 2:00 PM for the drive back to La Paz, so please plan your arrival time accordingly. Upon your arrival at our boutique hotel in La Paz there will be time for a stroll along the bay-side malecon before we gather for dinner at a nearby restaurant.



**You may also choose to visit the Copper Canyon** prior to the Sea of Cortes cruise, in which case you may fly from Los Mochis direct to La Paz. Ask us for details.

### Day 2 – Bahia Magdalena – Gray Whales

After breakfast at a small cafe, you will meet your van transportation to Bahia Magdalena, which is a gray whale birthing and breeding lagoon on Baja's west coast. Bring an overnight bag.

It is about three hours from Loreto to Bahia Magdalena. There will be stretching stops along the way. In Bahia Magdalena, the van will drop you off at the panga landing site. This is a lot of time in a van, but the payoff is extraordinary! Also, your route will be through some of the most scenic country in Baja.



For your visit in the lagoon, a video, or short lens is recommended, as the whales typically come to you. It is an extraordinary experience to make eye contact with a 30-ton animal that has seemingly approached your panga solely for the purpose of exchanging winks!

You will return to your overnight accommodations in a small beach-front hotel. Your meals will either be at the hotel, or in nearby restaurants, and a welcome night's rest after a day filled with fresh sea air (and perhaps whale breath!).

### Day 3 – Bahia Magdalena to La Paz

After breakfast, you will head back out into the lagoon for another visit to whale waters. Lunch will await you back on shore before packing up and boarding the van for the return trip to La Paz. Here, you will spend one more night in the hotel after gathering once again for a group dinner.

### Day 4 – La Paz – Board Westward

After breakfast at the hotel you will transfer to the harbor where, after boarding a "panga", you will make

the short cruise to the whale shark swimming area. This activity is closely regulated to protect these large, but delicate animals. Entering the whale swim area, you will don your snorkeling gear and, with our guide Carlos by your side, swim alongside the largest fish in the ocean!



Returning to the hotel after your encounter with the whale sharks, you will have a chance to shower and change before being met by members of our crew who will guide you for the short walk from your hotel to the marina where Westward will be moored. Following a short safety and systems orientation we will get underway for the three hour run to our anchorage for the night. Lunch will be served underway.

### **Days 5 through 10 - Cruising Sea of Cortes**

We will spend these six days cruising through the scattered islands between La Paz and Loreto. On the way we will kayak along rugged cliffs and into quiet mangrove-lined lagoons, snorkel in impossibly clear water, cataloging myriad fish that seem to fly beneath us, and gather to enjoy truly gourmet meals.

Weather and sea conditions play a huge part in how we select our routes and anchorages, but with thousands of miles of experience in and among these islands we will show our guests the very best of what is available during the duration of our time together.

In these waters we have seen blue, humpback, sperm and fin whales, orcas, common and bottle nose dolphins, pilot whales, and acres of leaping manta and mobula rays. We have had striped marlin swim right next to our boat, and taken so many sunrise and sunset pictures that we have struggled to choose our favorites.

### **Day 11 - Loreto – Disembark**

Raising our anchor after breakfast and perhaps a final kayak paddle, we will make the short transit from our night's anchorage to Puerto Escondido, about 15 miles south of Loreto.



*Loreto Cathedral*

Our van will meet us at 10:30 for the twenty minute drive to Loreto's International Airport. Our crew will accompany you to the airport for final goodbyes and to provide help if it is needed.

Or add a visit to the amazing **Copper Canyon**. You will fly from La Paz across the Sea of Cortes to Los Mochis, where you will overnight in a beautiful historic hacienda in El Fuerte. In the morning, board the El Chepe narrow gauge train to climb from sea level to 8,000 ft – one of the world's most scenic railways. Spend two nights at the beautiful Mirador Hotel, built on the rim of the canyon. End in Chihuahua for your flight home.

#### **2019 RATES – Per Person**

**Double - \$6,550      Single - \$9,825**

**Includes** all meals, beer, wine and standard liquor (You may bring your own preferred brands), taxes and fees, transportation, hotels, excursions, and transfers.

**Does NOT Include** - Flight to San Jose del Cabo, return from Loreto, trip insurance, and gratuities to crew.



## MV Westward

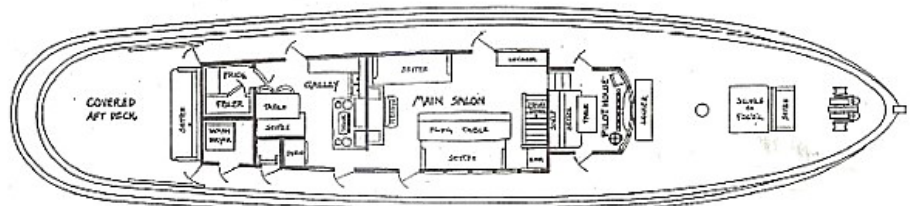
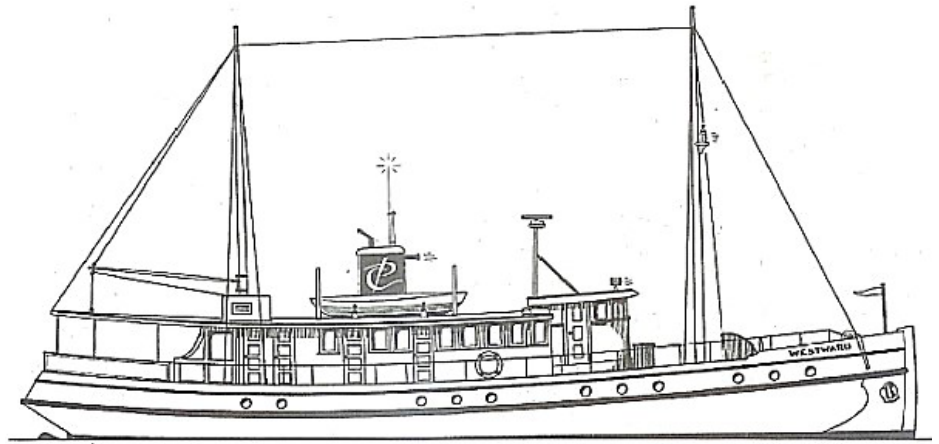
Built 1924 Vashon Island, WA

Length 86' Beam 18.5' Draft 9'

Powered by original Atlas Imperial Diesel Engine

Listed with the US National Register of Historic Places

Each of the four lower deck cabins on the *MV Westward* are outfitted with port lights, a double (4'6" w x 6'8" l) and a single (2'6" w x 6'6" l) bunk, a settee, sink, toilet and shower. There are standard 120 V outlets in the cabins.



**Reservations & Information**  
**1-855-EXPLOR1 (397-5671)**

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