

Magdalena Bay - Sardine Run, Mexico

Mexico Master - 6 nights

- **Embarkation:** Hotel El Ganzo, San José del Cabo Marina at 10:30*
- **Disembarkation:** San José del Cabo Marina at 08:30*

PLEASE NOTE: Embarkation and disembarkation locations may be subject to change. Please check your booking details carefully

*Later embarkation and earlier disembarkation are not possible.

This itinerary involves a significant amount of cruising between San José del Cabo and Magdalena Bay. It is crucial that the vessel departs from port on time, and the time of arrival back in San José del Cabo is dependent on sea conditions.

Flights & Transfers

Flights and transfers are not included in the liveboard price.

IMPORTANT: *Guests are advised to arrive in San José del Cabo the day before embarkation.* Flight disruptions are common, and scheduled arrival times are not guaranteed; Therefore, travel insurance is mandatory.

- **Nearest Airport:** Los Cabos International Airport (SJD)

Los Cabos Airport is approximately 30 minutes drive from San José del Cabo Marina.

Mexico Master is not responsible for flight-related issues, but we will assist you wherever possible. However, *the liveboard departure time cannot be altered* to accommodate guests' late arrival. Guests arriving after Mexico Master has departed will be charged for any transfer arrangements that are required for them to join the liveboard.

Important Information

The Magdalena Bay Sardine Run is unlike a conventional diving liveboard itinerary. The programme focuses on open-water **snorkelling and freediving** encounters with giant bait balls and their predators in Pacific Ocean conditions. Guests wishing to participate in the activity must be comfortable in blue-water, open-ocean conditions with variable surge and swell.

There is **no scuba diving** during the daily sardine runs.

You will be spending 3-4 hours at a time on small boats entering and exiting the water wherever the bait ball action is happening.

Water Temperatures: 20°C to 23°C (68°F to 74°F). A 5mm wetsuit with a hooded vest and gloves is recommended for this itinerary.

Participation in this liveaboard itinerary is subject to acceptance of our Terms & Conditions as outlined here: www.masterliveaboards.com/terms-conditions.

Itinerary Details

Departing from San José del Cabo, Mexico Master cruises along the Pacific coastline of Baja California Sur to Magdalena Bay, covering a distance of approximately 285 kilometres. Formed by the barrier islands of Isla Magdalena and Isla Santa Margarita, the bay provides a calm anchorage from which daily excursions on pangas into the Pacific Ocean are coordinated to locate and work the sardine bait balls.

The following is an example of the itinerary outline. Weather, sea conditions, and wildlife activity will influence the final programme.

Safety and activity briefings are conducted in English, but can also be given in Spanish if required. If you or any of your group do not speak or fully understand English or Spanish, please let us know before you arrive.

Day 1: Embarkation at 10:30 a.m. from Hotel El Ganzo, San José del Cabo Marina, followed by introductions, safety briefings and lunch. Depart from port at 12:00 p.m. to commence cruising (approximately 20 hours) to Magdalena Bay.

The time of arrival at Magdalena Bay depends on sea and weather conditions, and will influence the scheduling of day 2 activities.

- **Day 2:** Half day - Sardine Run
- **Day 3:** Full day - Sardine Run
- **Day 4:** Full day - Sardine Run
- **Day 5:** Full day - Sardine Run
- **Day 6:** Half day - Sardine Run. Afternoon departure from Magdalena Bay to cruise back to San José del Cabo

Day 7: Breakfast on board followed by disembarkation at 08:30

On each day's Sardine Run, you will be snorkelling or freediving in blue water, alongside the bait balls. There is *no scuba diving on this itinerary*.

A Typical Sardine Run Day

Each Sardine Run day operates differently from a conventional dive itinerary. Early-morning sessions in pangas are used to locate bait-ball activity, sometimes with the assistance of a spotter aircraft. In-water time is opportunistic, based on where the wildlife happens to be

feeding. The following describes a typical day, but times are approximate, and guests should expect flexibility and variation depending on conditions:

- Early wake-up, breakfast and briefing
- 07:00 departure in pangas to locate bait ball activity
- Snorkelling and freediving sessions with the bait balls, cycling between the water and the panga as activity develops
- 12:30-13:00: Return to Mexico Master for hot lunch and rest
- 14:30 departure on pangas for continued bait ball activity until daylight starts to fade.
- 19:00 Dinner on board

Meal boxes are provided for each person, containing snacks and beverages for their time on the pangas.

Seasonal Notes

Mexico Master operates Magdalena Bay Sardine Run itineraries in October, which coincides with the bait ball season along the Pacific coast of Baja California Sur. The following highlights reflect what guests can typically expect during October departures. All wildlife sightings are subject to natural variation and cannot be guaranteed.

The Sardine Run is a natural phenomenon and cannot be predicted or guaranteed. Bait ball activity varies in size, frequency, and location from day to day. Your Cruise Director and local panga operators will do their best to maximise in-water time with wildlife, but guests should be prepared for the possibility of variable activity on any given day.

Sardine aggregations and striped marlin: October is peak season for bait ball formation and marlin activity. Schools can number in the millions, and marlin are typically present in significant numbers throughout the month.

Bryde's whales: Reliably encountered throughout October, often lunging through bait balls at the surface. One of the most dramatic wildlife interactions of the itinerary.

California sea lions: Resident colonies at southern Isla Santa Margarita are active and highly interactive. Sea lions frequently join the bait ball action in open water.

Silky sharks and bottlenose dolphins: Both species are regular presences in October, attracted by the same sardine aggregations.

Seabirds: Magnificent frigatebirds, brown pelicans, blue-footed boobies, and shearwaters are abundant overhead during bait ball activity, providing an additional dimension to the surface spectacle.

Sea turtles and mola mola: Both are sighted regularly in the waters around the outer islands during October.

Should you have any questions about this itinerary, please contact our reservations team, who will be pleased to assist and advise you: dive@masterliveboards.com