



Baja Pre-departure Information

Planning For Your Trip

We are so excited to have you join us in Baja this season! Please read this pre-departure information carefully. Taking care of flights, travel documents, and planning for your trip well in advance will make it that much more enjoyable.

Travel Documents

Proof of citizenship is required to enter Mexico. You will need a **valid passport**. If you are a citizen of any country other than the U.S. or Canada, please check with a local consulate or tourist office for the necessary requirements. A free tourist card will be issued to you on the flight to Loreto. Half of this tourist card will be collected by immigration officials upon your arrival. The other half must be presented when you leave the country. Do not lose this document and keep it with your passport.

Note: It's a great idea to have a photocopy of the picture and signature pages of your passport as a back-up. Keep this copy in a part of your luggage that is separate from where you are keeping your passport. Another option is to take a picture of it with your cell phone.

Food, Water and Other Beverages

Over the years we've developed a creative menu to please our guests, and our food has received rave reviews! We also carry plenty of snacks for breaks while paddling. Our snack selection typically consists of fruit and nut mixes, trail mixes and "energy bars" such as cliff bars. **If you are a vegetarian or have other dietary considerations, please let us know in advance so we can talk about your needs and plan accordingly. There is a place to list this on the online questionnaire you'll be submitting to us.**

We do our best to accommodate various dietary restrictions within the context of the foods available locally here in Mexico. Clients typically are very pleased with the menu! We can provide a vegetarian option with each meal, but be aware that the local cuisine leans heavily towards fish, and other non-vegetarian main courses. If you list a vegetarian preference please let us know if you are flexible and can eat some fish and or meat. Please call us if you have any special/severe dietary restrictions, and/or bring any special dietary snacks that may ensure your specific needs are met satisfactorily.

Drinking water for the Loreto area (as in most of Baja) comes from a very pure desert aquifer. Nonetheless, while you are in town, we recommend drinking purified bottled water. During the kayak trip we will carry water purchased from a water purification plant in our support boat and you will have plenty to drink!

Sea Trek provides a variety of beverages while on the kayaking/paddleboarding portion of the trip. This includes sodas, mineral water and juices. We also provide a selection of herbal, black, and green tea as well as strong, hot coffee. We do our best to bring a selection of teas and sweeteners (sugar and honey), but if you have a favorite tea or sweetener, please feel free to bring it along.

We also bring a limited amount of local beer (enough for a beer or two per person per evening and enough Tequila for the group for one evening).

You are welcome to bring additional alcoholic beverages which we can carry on our boat. Many alcoholic beverages can be purchased in Loreto, however, the local wine selection is limited at best.

Money and Additional Costs

There is no need to buy pesos before your arrival, as most merchants will accept U.S. dollars. Change will be given to you in pesos, however, so it's best to have small bills for easy exchange and to avoid leaving with excess pesos.

Note: Most guests choose to use U.S. currency but do be aware that exchange rates may vary by establishment. If you are planning on making a significant number of purchases, and want the best exchange rate, you may choose to purchase pesos prior to arriving in Loreto.

If you need more cash during your stay, there is an ATM machine available centrally located at the bank near Café Ole. Some places do accept traveler's checks and visa/MasterCard for payments but not all, so it is recommended to bring enough cash to comfortably cover the following:

- Several meals while in town.
- Incidentals such as special souvenirs you might find, presents, items you may have forgotten.
- Cocktails or appetizers while exploring town.
- Expenses you may encounter if arriving early or staying after the trip.
- Tips for guides and other services.

Note: **Meditation Trip clients** coming to Loreto early will need to plan their own transportation out to the Tripui Hotel, in Puerto Escondido, in time for an afternoon group meeting on Day One of the trip. Taxis are a convenient and reasonably priced option.

Speaking of Tips ... Tipping!

Many guests ask us for recommendations on tipping so here are some guidelines: If you would like to express your appreciation to your guides through a gratuity, please know that such recognition will be enthusiastically received. The industry standard for a guided trip is approximately 10-15 percent of the trip cost, and can vary depending upon the level of service you feel you received. If you wish to tip your guides, having cash (not credit cards) available is helpful. All tips will be collected by your trip leader and equally disbursed amongst your guides at the end of your trip.

Tips for services, besides guide services, (such as for your van driver, your hotel maid, and meals) paid for by Sea Trek, are already covered by Sea Trek.

Drivers

If you are driving to Loreto you may store your vehicle at a campground where it will be secure during the kayak trip. Be sure to notify us of your driving plans in advance. We recommend AAA Baja maps. You will also need Mexican auto insurance.

Trip Payments

Your Baja trip is reserved with a non-refundable 20% deposit per person.

Balance of payment is due 60 days prior to your trip start date, after which it is non-refundable. Your balance will be **automatically charged** at this time to the credit card on file. If you prefer to pay by check, or need any payment accommodations, please be sure to inform us prior to this 60 day deadline. Trip deposits and balance of payments are non-refundable, Sea Trek recommends you consider **purchasing trip insurance** to protect against any unforeseen

circumstances that may arise, causing you to cancel your trip. We provide a link to a reliable trip insurance supplier below under "Insurance".

Insurance

We strongly recommend that you protect your vacation through the purchase of a short term **traveler's insurance policy**, covering baggage loss, and accident and trip cancellation. SEA TREK accepts no responsibility for lost, damaged or delayed property.

Trip cancellation insurance can reimburse you for any non-refundable air and land expenses should you have to cancel your space due to family illness. It can also cover any emergency evacuation expenses should you become ill during the trip. SEA TREK has an unblemished safety record. Although every effort is made to ensure a safe trip, you should realize that in the event of illness or injury, evacuation can be expensive. Please check your medical coverage and be sure it is adequate. There are many travel insurance companies to choose from. Our clients have had positive experiences and are happy with Travel Insured; www.travelinsured.com. NOTE: For best coverage purchase within 21 days of making your trip deposit with Paddling South.

Everyone is required to sign the Acknowledgment of Risk and Liability Release before the trip, acknowledging their awareness that some risks are associated with kayaking, paddleboarding and wilderness travel. This can be found in your confirmation email letter by clicking on the "view/manage" your reservation link.

Connectivity

Internet connectivity in town can be spotty. Wi-Fi connections can be fine but there is no guarantee. Even at the best hotels, or internet cafés, Wi-Fi connections can be extremely slow. We would recommend that you think of your vacation as a time to disconnect from the web / email etc. and enjoy the moment. It is a rare gift to be unplugged these days and just be present where we are. If you do have critical business that must be performed using an internet connection we recommend you try to transact it prior to your arrival.

Island-Time

Once we step "onto the water" we will be on "island time" and sunrise and sunset will become more important than the actual time on your watch. Our ability to communicate with the outside world will be limited, and cell service is effectively non-existent. Make those "all important calls" before you go, and relax and enjoy!

Charging Electronics

In town, you will be able to charge your devices with standard (US/Canadian) electrical outlets. On the trip we invite you to slip into "Baja time" and limit the usage of electronics. We also know that many of you use your phones as cameras, or use your camera heavily. If you are going to want to recharge your electronics on the trip, please bring a battery or solar based travel charger sufficient to re-charge your electronics for the number of days you will not be in town.

Medical and Health

Please completely fill out the Medical/health section on the online questionnaire. It is vital that trip members with any medical problems or disabilities make them known to us.

Most of our guides have C.P.R. and advanced first aid training. We have a well-equipped first aid kit for emergencies and common problems. However, if you have any prescription medications, or specific over-the-counter medications you may require, please remember to bring them with you. The conditions are those found on any long wilderness trip: inaccessibility to civilization and vulnerability to the elements. Immediate evacuation to the U.S. can be prolonged and difficult, so medical emergencies must be handled in the field. SEA TREK assumes no liability regarding provision

of health care. Please review your medical insurance, and the insurance options/additional coverage offered by travel insurance.

Minimum Physical Requirements

We have guests of all ages on our trips and we find that those guests in good physical condition, regardless of age, are in the best position to enjoy themselves. Our trips are not designed to be physically intense, but most people find that after a day of kayaking or Stand Up paddling, hiking, snorkeling and camping, they are pleasantly tired! Here are some guidelines for minimum physical requirements in order to enjoy your trip. If you feel comfortable with the following types of activities you are in a perfect position to enjoy your trip. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office and we can talk through them with you.

- Paddle for 1 – 3 hours a day (with breaks).
- Enjoy a camping lifestyle which includes getting in and out of camp chairs and tents, squatting down for a wide variety of activities, walking up and down rocky slopes or sandy dunes to your tent, and possibly a bit of “rock hopping” through the intertidal.
- Getting in/out of your kayak or paddleboard, and help to carry your craft up the beach.

Information for clients going on our Sea Kayaking trips

Sea Trek has both single and double kayaks. Double kayaks are more efficient to paddle and very stable. Single kayaks require an additional level of skill and physical conditioning in order to keep up with the group. Please know that clients travelling in doubles, will have ample time to paddle single kayaks in the afternoons and on non-travel days weather permitting.

If your preference is a single kayak you must be a confident paddler with formal Sea Kayak training. Must be in excellent paddling condition sufficient to keep pace with two average paddlers in a double kayak. Exclusive use of a single is based on Program Manager or lead guide sign-off, and availability. Please call to request a single.

Information for clients going on our Stand Up paddle trips

We have several different models of Stand Up paddleboards on our trips. We try to match up beginners with our more stable boards. Regardless, since you’ll be paddling everyday an investment in a Stand Up Paddle Intro Class offers a foundation in establishing good technique. That and actual paddle time before your trip will ensure a more comfortable adventure.

Emergency Contact

Should you need to give family and friends an emergency contact number, please give them our office number: (415) 332-8494. As it may be difficult and expensive to contact you during the kayak trip, this should only be done in cases of emergency.

Limitation of Liability

SEA TREK (its Owners, Outfitters, Agents and Employees) gives notice that they act only in the capacity of agents for the participants in all matters relating to transportation and/or all other related travel services and assume no responsibility for injury, delay, irregularity, loss, or damage to person or property in connection with any service resulting directly or indirectly from any of the following causes: acts of God, detention, annoyance, weather, failure of any means of transportation to comply with schedules, quarantine, strikes, civil disturbance, theft, government regulations, discrepancies or change in transit or hotel service over which it has no control.

Flight Information – Tips For Getting To Loreto

(Please see the confirmation cover letter that we sent you for up-to-date additional information regarding flights.)

Here are some suggestions for making your flights to/from Loreto as smooth as possible:

- When do you need to arrive? **Day One:** The first day your tour starts. Anytime.
- When can we leave? Anytime the **last day** of your tour.
- Book early. The lowest fares and best seats sell out first.
- Please reconfirm your flights directly with the airline 72 hours prior to departure for Baja.
- We recommend you allow 2 hours on your return to LAX to clear customs and reach your connecting flight.
- We know that the challenges of scheduling and traveling can sometimes be demanding and exhausting; we encourage you to relax and enjoy the ride!

Arrival

Upon arrival at the Loreto International Airport after clearing customs, look for a **"Sea Trek"** sign held up by C & C GROUND SERVICE. The folks at **C & C** will bring you and your luggage to your hotel. This transfer is included in your Baja trip cost even if you arrive in Loreto prior to Day One of your Sea Trek trip. Transfer to the airport on the day your trip ends or your hotel if staying longer is also included. **If you depart at a later date, however, you are on your own for transportation to the airport.** (There is ample taxi service to the airport and your hotel may be able to help arrange for a taxi should you require one.)

SEA TREK guides will meet you at the restaurant patio at 6pm on Day One of your scheduled trip for an evening group meeting unless otherwise notified. At this meeting your guides will answer any questions and go over the upcoming itinerary which depends on the trip you are on.

Please note: If you are arriving in Loreto early, and wish to stay at the hotel Sea Trek uses for our trips it's best to book your extra night/s via Sea Trek. This way you can remain in the same room.

Loreto is on Mountain Standard Time, one hour later than California, and in addition, Loreto enters and leaves Daylight Savings Time on different days than does the United States, so make sure to check the local time upon arrival.

Missing Your Flight

If you miss your flight or are otherwise delayed, please contact our office immediately. You may have to leave a message on our voicemail (415) 332-8494, but the guides will be advised of your delay so they can arrange to have you met upon arrival and transported to meet the group. There will be an additional charge for this (approx. \$100).