

# Know Before You Go



## Sea of Cortez / Midriff Islands

November 2021

### WELCOME TO THE SEA OF CORTEZ AND MIDRIFF ISLANDS ABOARD QUINO EL GUARDIAN

We are very excited to have you travel with us. Our destinations are magical, and our reputation is world-class. Because of this, many of our guests come back year after year. Our entire staff is here to ensure that you have a fantastic experience. In this package, you will find information to help you prepare for your upcoming adventure. If you have any questions or special requests, please contact us. We look forward to seeing you!

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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## DIVING

The crew of Quino el Guardian is here to help you in any way possible to make your visit to the Sea of Cortez/Midriff Islands an unforgettable experience.

The Sea of Cortez is also called "The World's Aquarium" by Jacques Cousteau. Our Sea of Cortez season runs from July through September. Each trip runs from Saturday to Saturday. The boat departs from Puerto Peñasco, Mexico, at 7 pm. We travel for 12 hours and arrive by 7 am the next morning, ready for our first dive.



The Sea of Cortez is very diverse and has a vast array of nudibranchs, blennies, jawfish, rays and guitarfish, schools of fish, eels, octopus, sea horses, frogfish, Mexican horn sharks, and the list goes on and on. We also have a lot of whale activity on this trip. We consistently see pilot, fin, and sperm whales. On the last day of diving, we dive in the morning then snorkel with whale sharks at Bahía de Los Angeles. By 3 pm, we start motoring back to Puerto Peñasco. Divers enjoy 3 - 4 dives per day and 2-night dives.

## DIVING

The crew of Quino el Guardian is here to help you in any way possible to make your visit to the Sea of Cortez an unforgettable experience.

We provide 80 cubic ft. aluminum tanks that are both DIN & yoke compatible as well as weights.

The passengers will be divided into three groups. Each group will have its own divemaster to help guests and lead the dives. Dives will be made from two 18' Achilles inflatables, each with a driver vigilantly looking for bubbles. The inflatables have very sturdy divers. Upon surfacing, the inflatable will come to you. Divers will remove their BCD and the driver will lift it into the boat. Once at the ladder, divers remove their fins and climb in the boat. When the inflatable get back to the boat, the crew will put your gear away for you.

## ABOUT THE BOAT

Quino el Guardian is of the utmost seaworthiness and is approved by both the U.S. Coast Guard and the Mexican Coast Guard. It is equipped with state-of-the-art electronics and all safety equipment required.

Quino el Guardian is 90' long with a 23' beam.

The number of guests Quino el Guardian accommodates is 16.

There are four air-conditioned cabins that sleep four guests each. There are two bunks on each side, two upper bunks and two lower bunks. Each bunk has a privacy curtain. Each cabin is outfitted with four large drawers, one for each guest. There is also storage space under the bottom bunks and clothing/towel hooks in the main cabin area. Cabins are typically assigned by gender.

There is one cabin with 2 bunks that sleeps 2 with one upper and one lower bunk. This cabin is generally reserved for a couple.

Our guests enjoy comfortable mattresses and quality bed linens. Our steward cleans all rooms, bunks, and bathrooms during the first dives of the day. We provide bath towels and dive deck towels, and these are changed mid-trip.

Quino has four, air-conditioned bathrooms with a full-size shower in each bathroom on the dive deck. Each cabin is assigned to a bathroom so guests can leave their personal items and towels in the bathroom. Shampoo and soap dispensers are in each shower. There are two lavatories on the dive deck that are shared by all passengers.

The galley comfortably accommodates all 16 passengers. The galley also has a projector, and a large drop-down screen should your group want to do presentations.

The comfortable salon has sofas, a TV, and a computer table.

The dive deck is large and well organized with a spacious camera table. There is a dive platform for ease of boarding the inflatables. Quino has two 18' Achilles inflatables for the safety and ease of our divers with very sturdy ladders.

On the second deck, there is a large, shaded sundeck with lawn chairs for relaxing between dives.

All voltage aboard Quino el Guardian is 110 just like the USA.

## **ONLINE PASSENGER INFORMATION & LIABILITY RELEASE**

No later than 30 days prior to your trip, all passengers are to complete an online passenger registration and liability release form. This can now be done completely online and can be found at [HERE](#) or go to [www.MexicoLiveboards.com](http://www.MexicoLiveboards.com) and scroll to the bottom of the home page. The link is under *General Information*.

To make this process as easy as possible, gather all pertinent information such as dive certifications, medical and dive insurance information, etc. before you start. Read the instructions provided at the beginning of the form. Once you start, you will have a 4-hour window to complete the form otherwise you will need to restart the process. You can always update your travel information closer to the trip date.

The more information we have about you, the better we can accommodate your needs including dietary restrictions if any.

Once you complete this form, you can download and print your own copy for your records.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Valerie in Guest Services at [Documents@MexicoLiveaboards.com](mailto:Documents@MexicoLiveaboards.com).

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Quino el Guardian maintains daily contact with our US office via radio communications. We are ready for constant communication in the event of an emergency. Your family and friends are welcome to contact our office at (602)558-9580 in case of an emergency. Our office staff will immediately assist your family and friends in getting messages to you. We also have a satellite phone onboard for your use and emergency needs. The phone number is 011 881 6326 54109 and the rate for using the phone is \$2 per minute.

We do not have Wi-Fi on the boat.

## GETTING TO THE BOAT

Quino el Guardian is located at the Marina Fonatur in Puerto Peñasco, Mexico. Marina Fonatur is approximately a 4-hour drive from Phoenix, Arizona. Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport (airport code PHX) is the most convenient and closest airport to fly into to reach our port.

We facilitate transportation services to and from Phoenix and the marina for you through Head Out to Rocky Point. This shuttle service has 14 passenger vans that haul trailers for gear. The cost is \$150 per person, round-trip, payable directly to Head Out to Rocky Point. If you require this service, please do two things: 1) indicate this on your passenger documents, and 2) reserve and pay at [www.HeadOutToRockyPoint.com/scuba](http://www.HeadOutToRockyPoint.com/scuba). Head Out to Rocky Point accepts credit cards on their website, or you can pay by cash (USD only) on-site.

Passengers should arrive at Phoenix Sky Harbor airport no later than 11am on the trip departure date. If you choose the Head Out to Rocky Point shuttle service, the shuttle will pick up all passengers at 1 pm at Terminal 4, door #5 at the outer curb, northside arrivals.

The trip takes 4 ½ hours and it will cross the international border. Head Out to Rocky Point is very familiar with this process and are there to help. The driver will stop along the way, allowing people to use the restroom and purchase snacks, including alcoholic beverages.

At the border, all visitors must stop at immigration and purchase a Mexican Tourist Card (FMM). Some refer to it as a visa, but it is not officially a visa. The cost is approximately \$35 US in cash. Credit cards are not accepted, and immigration officials will not give change. It is good to bring \$3-\$5 extra just as the amount can fluctuate based on the exchange rate.

There is no public airport in Puerto Penasco. To travel to Puerto Penasco within Mexico, most guests fly into Hermosillo (airport code HMO). There are multiple buses per day that go from Hermosillo to Puerto Penasco. It is a 5-6 hour drive and it is recommended to book a bus ticket in advance.

## DRIVING TO PUERTO PENASCO

For guests driving to the boat, you must stop at immigration and purchase a Mexican Tourist Card (FMM). Some refer to it as a visa, but it is not officially a visa. Immigration is located to the right directly after crossing the border.

The cost is approximately \$35 US in cash. Credit cards are not accepted, and immigration officials will not give change. It is good to bring \$3-\$5 extra just as the amount can fluctuate based on the exchange rate.

**THE BOAT CANNOT LEAVE THE HARBOR UNLESS ALL PASSENGERS HAVE A FFM! NO EXCEPTIONS!**

There is secured parking available next to the marina at \$5 per day. When you arrive, a divemaster will show you where you can park.

## RETURN

The boat will return to the marina in the early morning, and passengers need to be ready to depart by 7am. Our steward will serve a continental breakfast. The shuttle will pick up passengers promptly upon disembarking. The trip takes 4 ½ hours and it will cross the international border approximately one hour after departure. Head Out to Rocky Point is very familiar with this process and are there to help. The driver will stop along the way, allowing people to use the restroom and purchase snacks.

Guests can book their departing flight from the Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport departing at 2pm or later.

## ITINERARY

*Below is our scheduled diving itinerary. Weather and sea conditions may require changes to this itinerary. If unique animal sighting opportunities arise, we may suggest alternative options to divers.*

Proof of diving certification and dive insurance is required. Without proof, you will not be able to dive.  
**NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Day 1 - Embark at 5 pm in Puerto Peñasco. Dinner at 7 pm. Depart approximately 7 pm

Day 2 - Wake up at Refugio Bay on Angel Island

Potential Dive sites: Angel Rock, La Vela, Lolo's Cove, Sunset Cruise with Sea Lions

Day 3 - Angel Island

Potential Dive sites: Andrea's Eagle, El Aquario, Las Vivoras, Las Vivoras, including a night dive

Day 4 - San Pedro Martir

Potential Dive sites: El Arroyo, Punta Martir (Sea Lions), Chayo's Cove

Day 5 - San Pedro Martir: Potential Dive sites: Ravijunco, Xareni's Pinnacle, Coronel, Morro, in the afternoon, we go looking for whales!

Day 6 - Salsipuedes & Animas

Potential Dive sites: Los Cuervos, El Caballo, In Animas, El Lavadero, El Lavadero including a night dive

Day 7 - Baja and Snorkeling with Whale Sharks in Bahia De Los Angeles

Potential Dive sites: El Pescador, Baja Ca., start heading back to Puerto Penasco in the afternoon

Day 8 - Disembark at 7 am

## SUGGESTED GEAR & CLOTHING

Besides your standard dive gear, every diver is required to have the following: dive computer, safety sausage (SMB), and a whistle.

Every diver is required to have a dive computer, safety sausage (SMB) and a whistle.

One of the most popular questions we receive is about water temperature!

The Sea of Cortez is a very seasonal sea, which means it changes rapidly based on the seasons. Our trips begin in early July where the temperatures are approximately 73-78 degrees Fahrenheit. It increases by about 2 degrees Fahrenheit every week and tops off at about 85 degrees mid-August and remains there until about mid-September.

After mid-September, the temperatures drop an average of 2 degrees Fahrenheit every week.

We absolutely recommend exposure protection (wetsuits/light drysuits) on our trips. Many guests have found that a 3mm wetsuit along with a hooded vest works best. Gloves and dive lights are permitted and suggested, especially for night diving.

The dress is casual. Do not forget your hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen.

## RENTAL DIVE EQUIPMENT

We have a limited number of regulators, BCDs, dive computers and HP steel 100cft/12L steel tanks available for rental at \$50 each, per trip. Please let us know as early as possible prior to your trip if you want to rent equipment so we have it onboard for you. We do not rent exposure suits, hood, fins, masks, safety sausages (SMB's), whistles or lights. As we have a limited number of these items available to rent, they are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Please contact Valerie in Guest Services to reserve your equipment at Documents@MexicoLiveaboards.com.



## ENTERTAINMENT

Feel free to bring your own books, CD's, and DVDs. We have a collection of these onboard and the crew especially appreciates new entertainment.

## SPECIAL OCCASIONS

If you are celebrating any special occasion while onboard such as a birthday, engagement, anniversary, or honeymoon, please let us know on your passenger document so we can be prepared to celebrate with you!

## WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- 🌀 All taxes & port fees
- 🌀 All meals, snacks, and beverages including canned soft drinks
- 🌀 Complimentary local beer and wine
- 🌀 Tanks, weights, and weight belts

Guests are welcome to bring along their own beverages (including alcoholic beverages) if there is something special they would like.

## WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE OF THE TRIP

- 🌀 National Park Fee - \$28 per person
- 🌀 Nitrox Fee - \$120 per person
- 🌀 Transfers to and from the boat
- 🌀 Dinner in La Paz (if you chose to do so as you are welcome to dine on the boat)
- 🌀 Crew Gratuity (10%-15% of the trip price is customary)
- 🌀 Fuel Surcharge\* if applicable

Fees and gratuity can be paid in advance or on the boat. Cash (USD, Pesos and Euros) and MasterCard/Visa are accepted.

\*Fuel Surcharge: Quino el Guardian has the right to implement a fuel surcharge on all trips in the event the cost of fuel surpasses 20 Pesos per liter. Should this occur, all guests will be notified before boarding.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Proof of diving certification and dive insurance is required. Without proof, you will not be able to dive.  
NO EXCEPTIONS!

Quino el Guardian reserves the right to assign all cabins.

All guests are required to have dive insurance. Dive insurance can be purchased at [www.DiversAlertNetwork.org](http://www.DiversAlertNetwork.org). If you have private health insurance coverage for dive accidents, provide **only** the page that states coverage for a scuba diving accident, evacuation, and the declaration page showing you are the owner of the policy and policy number.

We recommend you purchase trip insurance.

You will be at sea and though it can often be calm, please be prepared in case we are faced with rough seas. There are several over-the-counter remedies that can help you. In case you have a propensity to motion sickness or are concerned that you might develop symptoms, please prepare yourself with preventive measures before departure.

## UNFORESEEN EVENTS / TRIP INSURANCE / TRIP INTERRUPTION

Quino el Guardian Liveaboard is of the utmost seaworthiness and is approved by the US Coast Guard and Mexican Coast Guard. Quino el Guardian is equipped with state-of-the-art electronics and all required safety equipment.

Passenger safety is paramount and therefore the captain has the sole discretion to change, delay, return early or cancel the cruise if necessary. These reasons include but are not limited to bad weather, perils of the sea, acts of God, political incidents, or force majeure.

Trip insurance is suggested as it provides you with reimbursement for unused, non-refundable, pre-paid trip costs if you are prevented from taking your trip due to a covered reason. All trip insurance is not the same, so it is important to make sure that you purchase travel insurance that includes travel interruption.

Trip insurance can be purchased at [www.DiversAlertNetwork.com](http://www.DiversAlertNetwork.com).

## DEPOSITS & CANCELLATIONS / INDIVIDUALS

### DEPOSITS

- 🔗 25% deposit is due to hold the reservation
- 🔗 25% is due six months prior to the scheduled trip date
- 🔗 Remaining balance is due three months prior to scheduled trip date



## CANCELLATIONS

- ↪ There is no penalty for cancellations made 9 months or more prior to the scheduled trip date
- ↪ 25% of the full rate will be forfeited for cancellations made 91 days to 9 months prior to the scheduled trip date
- ↪ 50% of the full rate will be forfeited for cancellations made 61 to 90 days prior to the scheduled trip date
- ↪ No refunds for cancellations made 60 days prior or less to the scheduled trip date

## DEPOSITS & CANCELLATIONS / GROUPS

### DEPOSITS

- ↪ A \$5,000 non-refundable deposit is due to hold the reservation
- ↪ 25% of the trip price is due one year prior to the scheduled trip date (the \$5000 deposit can be used to make up the 25% deposit)
- ↪ 25% is due six months prior to the scheduled trip date
- ↪ The balance less your commission is due three months prior to the scheduled trip date

### CANCELLATIONS

- ↪ There is no penalty for cancellations made 12 months or more prior to the scheduled trip date however the \$5000 deposit is non-refundable
- ↪ 25% of the full rate will be forfeited for cancellations made 12 months to six months prior to the scheduled trip date
- ↪ 50% of the full rate will be forfeited for cancellations made six months to 91 days prior to the scheduled trip date
- ↪ No refunds for cancellations made 90 days or less prior to the scheduled trip date

## HOTELS NEAR PHOENIX SKY HARBOR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Most of the hotels provide a complimentary shuttle to and from the airport. If you are taking the Head Out to Rocky Point shuttle, you will need to go back to the airport to get the shuttle (terminal 4, door #5 at the outer curb, northside arrivals). Pick up is at 1pm. If you have a group of 10 staying at the same hotel, Head Out to Rocky Point will pick you up at your hotel. Please arrange this directly with Head Out To Rocky Point at [HeadOutToRockyPoint@gmail.com](mailto:HeadOutToRockyPoint@gmail.com).

RESIDENCE INN BY MARRIOTT  
PHOENIX AIRPORT  
801 North 44<sup>th</sup> Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85008  
(602)293-4439 Direct  
(602)273-9220 Hotel  
(602)273-7221 Fax  
[www.residenceinnphoenixairport.com](http://www.residenceinnphoenixairport.com)

LA QUINTA INN (Near the Airport)  
911 S. 48th Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85281  
(480)967-4465  
(800)738-8767  
[www.lq.com](http://www.lq.com)

QUALITY INN  
1550 S. 52<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Tempe, AZ 85281  
(480)967-3000  
(800)4-Choice

COMFORT SUITES  
1625 S. 52<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Tempe, AZ 85281  
(480)446-9500  
[www.choicehotels.com](http://www.choicehotels.com)

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS  
3401 E. University  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
(602)453-9900  
[www.hiephoenix.com](http://www.hiephoenix.com)

COAST HOTEL  
4300 E. Washington  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
(602)273-7778  
Res: (800)716-6199

BEST WESTERN AIRPORT INN  
2425 S. 24th Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
(602)273-7251  
(800)528-8199

DOUBLE TREE SUITES BY HILTON PHOENIX  
Near the Airport  
320 N. 44<sup>th</sup> Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85008  
(602)225-0500

CROWNE PLAZA PHOENIX AIRPORT  
4300 E. Washington St.  
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HILTON GARDEN INN PHOENIX AIRPORT NORTH  
3838 E. Van Buren St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85008  
(602)306-2323