

GROUP 2 ITINERARY: 17-28 JULY 2021

WHALES IN PARADISE



Sat 17	Sun 18	Mon 19	Tues 20	Wed 21	Thu 22	Fri 23	Sat 24	Sun 25	Mon 26	Tues 27	Wed 28
Flight	Leisure day	Water	Water	Water	Leisure day	Water	Water	Leisure day	Water	Water	Flight

TOUR SUMMARY

As the humpbacks arrive in large numbers to breed and give birth, you will bear witness to some of nature's greatest events. The crystal clear waters of Vava'u are the perfect place for nurturing mothers teaching their calves how to be whales, and the islands are surrounded by groups of whales courting and competing for mates. Your day is filled with excitement, only stopping to explore the coral gardens and abundant marine life that inhabits Tonga.

We usually spend around 7 hours on the water looking for and snorkelling with the whales, then additional time afterwards for visiting some other scenic snorkel spots. From 14:30 onwards (depending on the day) we explore locations such as Swallows Cave, Mariners Cave and Japanese Gardens coral reef.

QUESTIONS?

Have a question about your trip? Check out the Frequently Asked Question section of our website here:

<http://swimmingwithgentlegiants.com/faqs/>



DAILY ITINERARY

MONDAY – WEDNESDAY	7:30	Pickup from your resort for a day of whale watching & snorkelling.
	Anytime	Lunch depends on the whales, but we'll stop somewhere for lunch on the boat
	14:30	Usually we wrap up time with the whales and head for a snorkel at a reef or cave
	15:30 - 16:30	Return to your accommodation for a warm shower before heading out for dinner in Neiafu
SUNDAYS & THURSDAY	Leisure Day	Spend the day exploring the islands, snorkelling, diving, hiking or just relaxing on a beach. There are plenty of activities to keep you entertained.
FRIDAY – SATURDAY & MONDAY – TUESDAY	7:30	Pickup from your resort for a day of whale watching & snorkelling.
	Anytime	Lunch depends on the whales, but we'll stop somewhere for lunch on the boat
	14:30	Usually we wrap up time with the whales and head for a snorkel at a reef or cave
	15:30 - 16:30	Return to your accommodation for a warm shower before heading out for dinner in Neiafu

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“TONGA TIME”

The schedule above is a guide and things change often when you are on an Island in Tonga. The locals are on what we call 'Tonga Time', so don't be disappointed if the skipper is late, or your meals are not served on time, or you don't get exactly what you ask for, just relax and enjoy this tropical paradise.

ACTIVITIES

We try to visit some of the most amazing snorkelling spots in Tonga as we search for the whales, including untouched coral reefs, caves and lagoons.

But if you haven't had enough after your days on the water there are always lots of other adventures:

- Scuba Diving
- Deep sea Fishing
- Sailing
- Land tours
- Kayaking
- Hiring a Car



CHECKLIST



- Make sure your **passport** has at least 6 months left on it before coming to Tonga otherwise you may be turned back. Also check if there are any Visa requirements for your country of origin.
- Send me your **international and local flight details**. If you haven't booked these yet, now is the time to check your flights and connections to Tonga and make sure you have confirmed your domestic flights to Vava'u.
- It is very important that you have **travel insurance** as Tonga is a place where many things change that can affect your travel arrangements. Travel insurance will cover you for loss of baggage and changes to flights outside your control as well as possible tour cancellations.
- Keep **electronic versions** of your documentation on your phone, laptop, devices or even online so you can access them if needed. But **print your tickets** for Tonga as a backup.
- If you are arriving earlier or staying later than the dates of your tour, have you booked your extra nights of **accommodation in Vava'u**? If so please let me know where you are staying and when you will be checking in and out. Otherwise I can help you find the right place for you.
- Do you need to book **accommodation on the main Island** (Tongatapu) while in transit to Vava'u? Also if you are on a flight that arrives at 2am in the morning and you have an early flight the next morning, I suggest you stay in the Foyer at the Scenic hotel. They charge you \$20 but it is a lot more comfortable than the airport. Let me know if you need assistance.
- We recommend a **wetsuit** for exposure protection during our days on the water. This will protect you from the sun as well as keep you warm during and in between swims. We can provide you with **wetsuit/mask/snorkel/fins** onboard if you don't have your own.
- Check your itinerary (above) so you know what we plan to do each day.

CHECKLIST



- Be aware that **Sunday's are a day of rest** in Tonga, so nothing is open. Some restaurants are open in the evenings.
- Send me your **dietary requirements** for lunches on the boat each day if you haven't already.
- Do you need advice about purchasing **cameras, lenses, equipment** etc (we can also provide a list of hire places e.g. www.camerahire.com.au)
- Are you looking to go **diving, deep sea fishing, kayaking** or partake in any other activities on your leisure days or before and after your tours?
- Download some **useful Apps** to help you on your travels: Air NZ, Sydney Airport, Google translate, Tripit, Google Maps, Maps.me
- If you plan to make phone calls from Tonga to home I suggest you purchase a **SIM card** in these places with data, as it works out a lot cheaper than using a roaming service from home. Note: internet speeds are very slow.
- Have you signed the **liability waiver** and sent this back to us?
- Bring **sea sick tablets** if you feel motion sickness.
- Bring a spray jacket or **wind proof jacket** on the boat with you, as it can get cold when you are in and out of the water a lot.
- Air temperature is about 25 - 28 degrees celcius and the water temperature is about 26 degrees celcius, so pack light clothes, bathing suits, shorts, T-shirts etc
- Check our **FAQ's** for any questions you may need answered:
<http://swimmingwithgentlegiants.com/faqs/>



At Swimming with Gentle Giants we think it is a privilege to snorkel with these amazing creatures and understand they are wild animals that deserve our respect. We are visitors in their environment and our encounters are often determined by the whales.

