



WHALE WATCH®
KAIKOURA • NEW ZEALAND



TOUR INFORMATION

Kia Ora and Welcome to Whale Watch Kaikoura. This information pack is to assist you with your Whale Watch tour today. If you have any further questions or require any assistance please ask any of our Whale Watch staff.

About Whale Watch Kaikoura

Whale Watch is a multiple award winning New Zealand nature-based tourism company owned and operated by the indigenous Kati Kuri people of Kaikoura, a Maori sub-tribe of the South Island's larger Ngai Tahu Tribe.

Whale Watch was formed in 1987 at a time when Maori were casualties of Kaikoura's declining economy. At this time of difficulty, Kati Kuri leaders like Bill Solomon believed the local Sperm Whales held the answer to the unemployment problems of the Maori community. They knew their ancestor Paikea had journeyed to a new life in New Zealand on the back of the whale Tohora. It seemed appropriate for Paikea's descendants to again ride on the back of the whale to a new life.

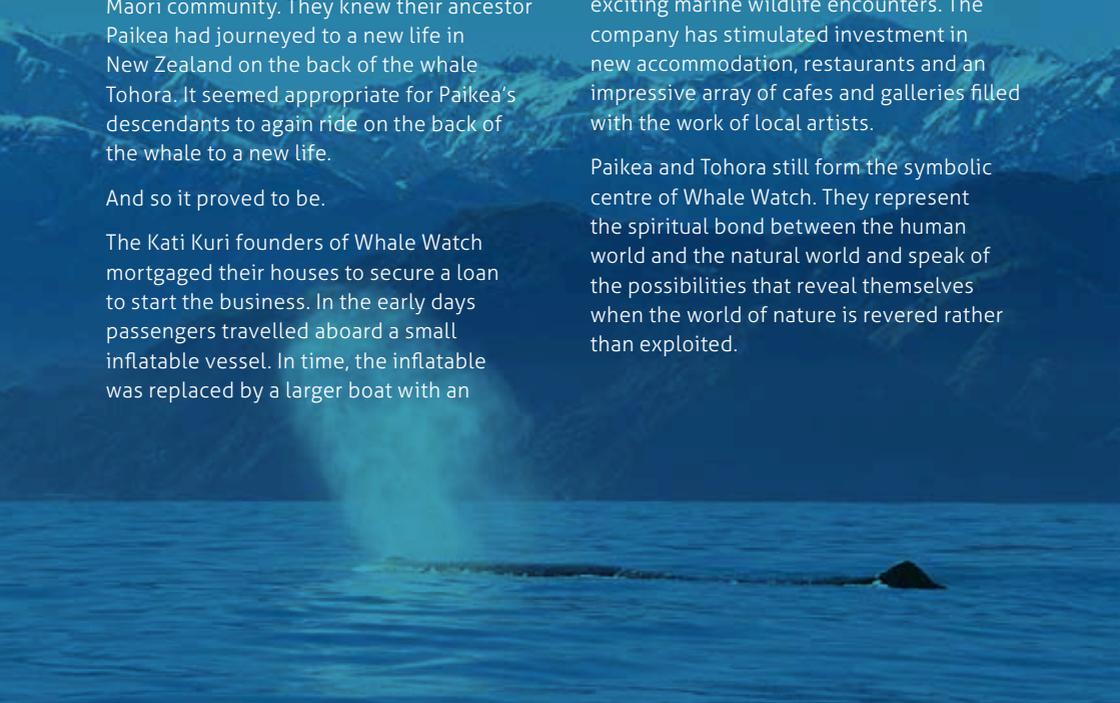
And so it proved to be.

The Kati Kuri founders of Whale Watch mortgaged their houses to secure a loan to start the business. In the early days passengers travelled aboard a small inflatable vessel. In time, the inflatable was replaced by a larger boat with an

upper viewing deck the Uruao until today the Whale Watch fleet numbers 5 modern catamarans each specially designed for whale watching. The expansion of the Whale Watch fleet required the building of an entire marina in South Bay. It is from here that all whale watching tours now depart.

Due to the phenomenal success of Whale Watch, Kaikoura is now one of New Zealand's leading tourism destinations' offering a diverse range of exciting marine wildlife encounters. The company has stimulated investment in new accommodation, restaurants and an impressive array of cafes and galleries filled with the work of local artists.

Paikea and Tohora still form the symbolic centre of Whale Watch. They represent the spiritual bond between the human world and the natural world and speak of the possibilities that reveal themselves when the world of nature is revered rather than exploited.



What you need to bring

WARM CLOTHING

All Whale Watch vessels are fully enclosed – however you are outside when viewing Marine Life and therefore you need to take warm clothing with you.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Please make sure you have enough batteries and memory in your camera for your tour. Batteries and memory cards can be purchased in retail.

REFRESHMENTS

We do not offer food or refreshments onboard any of our vessels however please feel free to bring a light snack or cold drinks along with you which can be purchased from Flukes Cafe. A water fountain is available onboard.

SEA SICKNESS REMEDIES

If you normally suffer from motion sickness we recommend you take precautions prior to departure from our office. Unfortunately we are unable to sell the medicated forms – these are available from any pharmacy. Our Whale Watch Retail shop can sell non-medicated forms of motion sickness remedies such as:

Acustraps - Wristbands that work with gentle pressure on acupuncture points in wrists are available for Hire.

@Ease Tablets - @Ease is a natural formulation which may provide up to 12 hours of assistance with Motion Sickness and is available for purchase.

Stronger motion sickness tablets can be purchased from the Kaikoura Pharmacy located in the town centre a 10 min walk each way from the Whaleway Station.

Our office

Our reservations office is located at the Whaleway Station, Kaikoura. This is your check-in point.

ALSO LOCATED AT THE WHALEWAY STATION

Flukes Café – Unbelievable beach front location with freshly made coffee and tea, selection of cold drinks, breakfast and lunch blackboard menu including all day food cabinet on offer daily.

Whale Watch Retail Shop – The retail shop sells a wide range of souvenirs, crafts, gifts, books and clothing unique to Whale Watch and your experience with us.

T.V / Video Room - Our T.V / Video room continuously plays DVDs based on Marine Wildlife. Unfortunately there are no captions available for these DVDs and they are only in English.



Check in

All tours rely on favourable sea and weather conditions. The captain for each tour will let us know if tours are sailing 10 minutes prior to the check-in time. There is a display board behind the Reservations Counter and in the Café – this will display the tour status for each tour.

Once your tour is confirmed and the status board shows 'now checking in' our Reservations Staff can start issuing your tickets.

If your tour is cancelled due to adverse sea/weather conditions please advise our Staff should you want to re-schedule to another tour.

Please note that your TOUR TIME is the time that you check-in for your tour and is not the departure time.

Payment can be made by cash, EFTPOS, NZD Travellers Cheques and all major credit cards except Diners. You will receive a Boarding Pass and Booking Receipt. Use your Boarding Pass to board the Coach and Vessel. Please retain the Booking Receipt in case there is a cancellation or refund.

The check-in process usually takes 30 minutes.

You will be given a safety briefing before departure. There is a DVD to view complete with captions but only in English.

WHALE WATCH COACH TRANSFER TO HARBOUR

After you check-in and have completed your safety briefing our Whale Watch Coach will take you to the South Bay Harbour – this is where your tour vessel departs from.

The coach departure point is outside Flukes Café.

The trip to South Bay takes approximately 8-10 minutes. You will be met by a Whale Watch Sea Crew Staff member and boarded onto your vessel.



Whale Watch ticketing terms and conditions

Before purchasing a Whale Watch Sea Trip Ticket you must read the following:

WEATHER/CANCELLATIONS

We reserve the right to cancel or change a tour or to replace any vessels at any time in the interests of passenger safety. Weather and sea conditions can change quickly and this may alter the status of your tour at any time. Rough sea conditions mean the vessel captain may increase child age limits or place restrictions on passengers with medical/mobility problems or passengers who are pregnant.

HEALTH/SAFETY

If you have any mobility/medical problems or are pregnant and think you could be affected by adverse sea and weather conditions you must inform us at check-in on the travel date.

INSTRUCTION

To ensure maximum safety and enjoyment of the trip by yourself and other passengers, you must follow all reasonable instructions given by our staff before; during and after the tour and you agree that you will ensure that any children in your care do the same. You are responsible for the safety and protection of your own personal possessions at all times.

GUARANTEE

There is no guarantee that whales will be seen on your tour but the chances are very high. In the event that your tour does not sight a whale, we guarantee to REFUND 80% of your tour cost.

Summary of fare conditions

TOUR CANCELLATION

In the event that your tour is cancelled due to adverse sea or weather conditions a full refund will be given.

Please note:

No charge applies to any booking changes made.

No refunds will be given in the event of your failure to notify us of your cancellation before the check-in time.

AGREEMENT

By purchasing a tour ticket you are saying that you understand and accept the above terms and conditions and also that you:

1. Agree that your successors, executors, administrators and next of kin are bound by the terms and conditions;
2. You agree not to commence any litigation or proceedings in any country in relation to the risks and perils of the tour and to indemnify us against any such claims;

3. You consent to receive medical treatment in the case of injury, accident or illness during the tour and to indemnify us against any claims in respect of this treatment;
4. Agree that any photographs, films, sound, video or other recordings taken of events or people by anyone during the tour will not be used in any promotional or advertising without our consent; however, we may use such images or recordings at our complete discretion with out any prior approval.

Please enjoy your trip and feel free to ask any of our staff should you require further information or clarification regarding the above terms and conditions.

Vessel Information

Designed specially for whale watching, our modern catamarans are equipped with engines that minimise underwater noise and toilets that never pollute the sea. The main passenger cabin is enclosed and large outside decks offer great viewing and photo opportunities. Spacious air-conditioned interiors are fitted with comfortable seating while large plasma screens display our award-winning marine wildlife animations. Passenger numbers for each tour are kept well below our vessel carrying capacity to ensure your tour experience remains a personal one.

To follow are our Whale Watch Vessel Policies and Procedures:

VESSEL SAFETY PROCEDURES

Crew are trained in all emergency procedures. In the unlikely event of an emergency please follow the instructions of your crew

All exits aboard the vessel are clearly sign posted

Please take the time to read the safety cards either in your seat pocket or located on the walls of the main cabin, these are in English only.

Life jacket fitting instructions can be found either on the safety card in your seat pocket or on the walls of the main cabin

VESSEL REQUIREMENTS

- No standing while the vessel is in motion
- No smoking at all times
- No leaning on gates
- Caregivers to monitor their children at all times
- Please inform your crew if you wish to use the toilets so the vessel can be slowed down for comfort purposes and so the crew are aware of where you are
- Please dispose of any rubbish in the bins that are provided onboard, please do not throw anything overboard

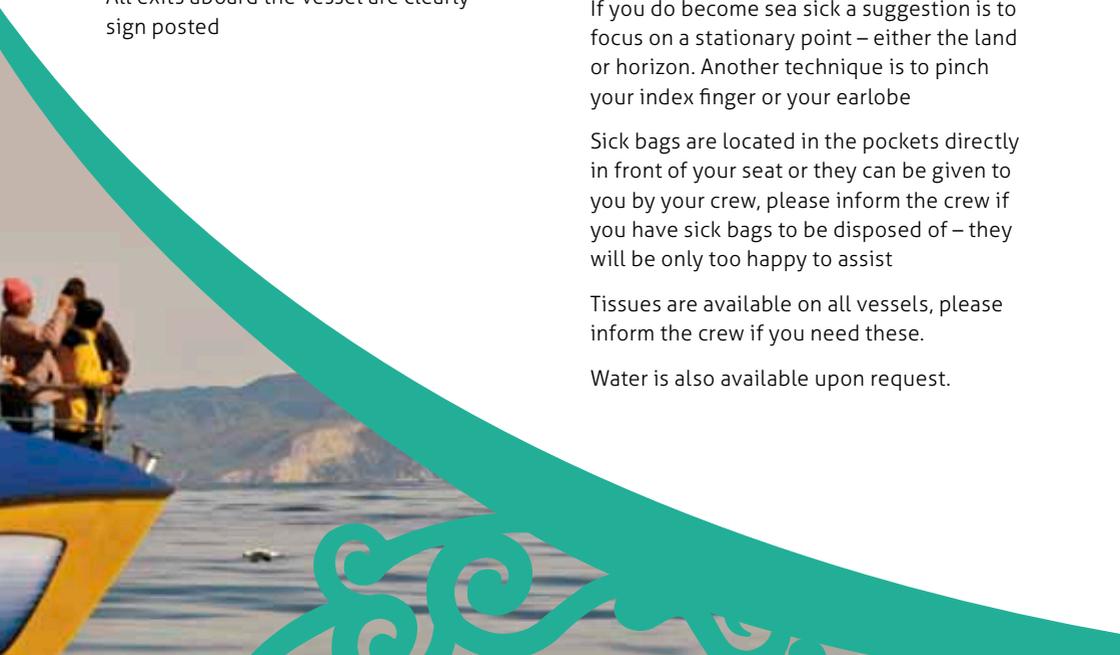
COPING WITH SEA SICKNESS

If you do become sea sick a suggestion is to focus on a stationary point – either the land or horizon. Another technique is to pinch your index finger or your earlobe

Sick bags are located in the pockets directly in front of your seat or they can be given to you by your crew, please inform the crew if you have sick bags to be disposed of – they will be only too happy to assist

Tissues are available on all vessels, please inform the crew if you need these.

Water is also available upon request.





Tour outline

Your Whale Watch Sea Crew consists of up to four members:

- Captain
- Health & Safety Officer
- Watch Keeper
- Narrator

The main focus of your tour is to locate and view the Giant Sperm whale. We average between 1 to 2 whale sightings per tour due to the length of time the whales can stay submerged. In Kaikoura, the Sperm whale's dive time ranges between 40 – 60 minutes. The Sperm whales primarily viewed off our coastline are all males. The whales form loose pods, keeping several miles between each other, so viewing any more than 1 to 2 whales per trip is a real bonus. Around 80% of the world's whale and dolphin species migrate past our coastline so at any given time there is the opportunity for other species of marine mammals to be sighted such as Blue, Fin, Sei, Humpback, Minke, Pilot, Orca and Southern Right Whales, Common Dolphins, Bottlenose Dolphins, Southern Right Whale Dolphins, Elephant Seals and Leopard Seals.

On-Water duration:

The time spent on the water is approximately:

2
hours
20
minutes

Depending on the amount of time available after viewing the Sperm whales, the skipper of the vessel may decide to move in along the coastline and see what other types of marine life can be encountered. This could include Dusky and Hector Dolphins and the New Zealand Fur Seal. Kaikoura is also home to around 75% of the world's pelagic sea bird species which include Wandering and Royal Albatross, Mollymawk Albatross, Petrels, Shearwaters, Prions, Fulmars, Gannets, Terns and Herons.



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The Giant Sperm Whale

BUOYANCY

Due to the large quantities of oil in their bodies, whales are naturally buoyant in water. It is thought that by regulating the temperature of spermaceti oil in their heads, the Sperm whale can alter its buoyancy. As the whale is exposed to cold air on the surface, the oil cools down forming a solid wax. The wax is denser than water and helps the whale descend beneath the surface.

By pumping blood into the capillaries around the spermaceti melon, the wax is melted back into a buoyant oil, assisting the whale ascend to the surface.

HOW BIG ARE THEY?

The Giant Sperm whale is the largest of the Odontocete (toothed) whales and the fourth largest of all the Great Whales.

Male Sperm whales grow to a length of 15 - 20 metres and can weigh anywhere between 40 – 60 tonnes

Female Sperm whales are roughly 30-40% smaller than the males, growing to around 12 metres.

TEETH

The Sperm whale has 20-30 pairs of conical shaped teeth on their bottom jaw. The top jaw has sockets that the bottom teeth slide into when the mouth is closed.

The Sperm whale doesn't use teeth for chewing, but similar to the action of a crocodile, their jaw snaps shut and food is swallowed whole.

Each tooth of the Sperm whale can weigh up to 1 kilogram and can be 20 centimetres in length.

LIFE CYCLE

Male Sperm whales spend the first 8 - 12 years of their life with the family pod in tropical waters.

The females of the pod assist the calves for around 2 years until they are confident swimmers.

When the males reach puberty, at around the age of 10, they leave the family pod forming bachelor pods and move to feeding grounds such as off the Kaikoura coast.

Male Sperm whales do not mate until they are fully grown, so until this happens, the whales rarely leave the feeding grounds.

Sperm whales can live for over 70 years.

WHERE CAN THEY BE FOUND?

Sperm whales are found in all the world's oceans, usually in submarine canyons of waters deeper than 400 metres

Sperm whales can be viewed off the Kaikoura coastline all year round

The Kaikoura Canyon is a feeding ground for male Sperm whales

Male Sperm whales have around 30 – 40 centimetres of blubber (fat) surrounding their vital organs. The blubber acts like a wetsuit, insulating the whales from the cold water. The temperature of the water is far too cold for the females as their layer of blubber isn't as thick.

Female Sperm whales usually inhabit the warmer waters near the tropics

WHAT DO THEY EAT?

Sperm whales feed on large pelagic fish such as Hapuka (Groper), Ling, Tuna, Black Shark, King Fish but their preferred diet is squid.

The Sperm whale feeds on many different species of squid, including the elusive Giant Squid.

Despite frequent attempts by numerous scientists here in Kaikoura, the Giant Squid has only been viewed alive in its natural habitat off the coast of Japan.

The Giant Squid grows to an average length of 12 metres, but has been known to grow to lengths of over 18 metres.

ECHO LOCATION

As sound waves (clicks) pass through the spermaceti oil, the sound is enhanced and amplified. The Sperm whale is thought to be one of the world's loudest animal. It has been recorded at 230 decibels. It is thought that the Sperm whale can use its sonar not only to locate its prey but to stun or kill its prey.

INSIDE THE SPERM WHALES HEAD

- The Sperm whale has the largest brain of any living animal. Their brain is approximately the size of a basketball, approximately 7 times larger than a human brain
- Also inside the Sperm whale's head is the spermaceti melon, containing around 2.5 tonnes of oil
- Once thought to be sperm or semen, hence the name: Sperm whale
- Once highly sought after for production of candles, cosmetics, lubrication of sewing machines and industrial machinery. Famous for use in Rolls Royce engines and gearboxes and early Apollo space missions
- Possibly used by Sperm whales to assist in echo location and/or buoyancy.

DEEP DIVERS

The Sperm whales off our coastline dive for 40 – 60 minutes to depths of up to 1000+ metres.

The Sperm whale is the deepest diving mammal in the world, diving for over 2 hours and to over 3000 metres.



WHALE WATCH ON-BOARD VISUAL PRESENTATIONS

Throughout your tour there is an onboard visual presentation, "World of the Whales" – an experience that takes passengers "virtually" to the bottom of the Kaikoura undersea canyon. The presentation also provides information for a variety of marine life found in Kaikoura waters. Unfortunately there are no captions available and the presentations are in English.

Created from technology developed by Animation Research Ltd, World of the Whales is a world first for whale watching.

KAIKOURA CANYON

- 5 kilometres wide at widest point
- Over 1600 metres deep
- At the edge of the continental shelf is a near vertical cliff dropping over 1000 metres
- One of only a few places in the world where the edge of the continental shelf is so close to land

- The depth is over 800 metres 1km offshore from Goose Bay.
- At the mouth of the Kaikoura Canyon is the start of the Hikurangi Trough
- It stretches 1700 kilometres to the North Island where it heads offshore from the Mahia Peninsular near Gisborne.
- It is the largest submarine canyon in the southern hemisphere
- It forms part of a series of canyons which the whales use on their migrations between feeding and breeding grounds

THE KAIKOURA MARINE FOOD SOURCE – SUBTROPICAL CONVERGENCE

- Warm currents flowing down from the tropics collide with nutrient-rich cold currents flowing up from the Antarctic
- Nutrients flow into the canyon, mix around, then are forced to the surface, which is known as an up-welling
- Creates food chain: The microscopic plant Phytoplankton provides food for tiny organisms such as Zooplankton and krill, which in turn are eaten by squid and small fish, then by larger fish, birds, seals, dolphins, sharks and whales

DUSKY DOLPHIN

A small stocky and acrobatic species of dolphin seen regularly on Whale Watch tours, plentiful around the Kaikoura coast where they can be seen leaping from the sea in dramatic hunting and mating rituals. These dolphins can be seen in pods of 100 – 1000 individuals and can grow to 2m in length.

HECTORS DOLPHIN

The world's smallest and rarest marine dolphin with an unusual rounded dorsal fin and can only be found in coastal New Zealand waters. In Kaikoura it is often seen close to shore in small family pods of 4 to 8 individuals. Threatened by fishing nets and coastal pollution caused by phosphates in farm run-off the Hector Dolphin is classified as endangered. They can live for 20 years and grow to 1.5m in length.

New Zealand Fur seals can be observed from various points along the road that hugs the Kaikoura Coast. Hunted to near extinction last century for their skins, they have since become a protected species. Fur seals with pups can be seen up close at the seal rookery at Point Keen on the Kaikoura Peninsula - an easy walk or short drive from Kaikoura Township.



TOUR END

Upon completion of your tour our Whale Watch vessel will return to the South Bay Harbour where you will be met by the Whale Watch coach and transferred back to the Whaleway Station.

REFUNDS

Unfortunately not every tour is successful. The captain determines the refund reason and amount – this is dependant on the quality of your tour. The sea crew will advise you of the refund reason and amount. In this event please return to the Reservations Counter with your booking receipt to collect your refund.

On behalf of the team at Whale Watch Kaikoura we would like to thank you for participating in our tour. If you would like to make any comments please complete a Comment Card – these can be found at the Whaleway Station.

Your feedback is greatly appreciated.



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www.whalewatch.co.nz