



WHALE WATCH®

KAIKŌURA • NEW ZEALAND



TOUR INFORMATION



Kia Ora and Welcome to Whale Watch Kaikōura. 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 Kaikōura

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

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

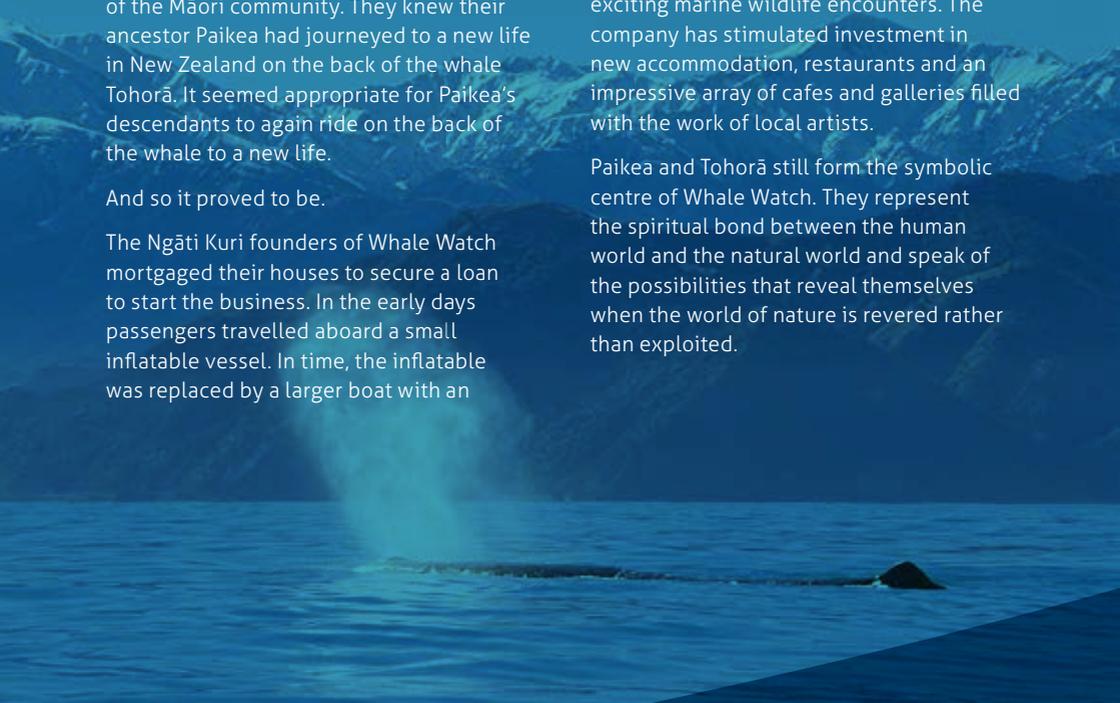
And so it proved to be.

The Ngāti 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 4 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, Kaikōura 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 Tohorā 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.

REFRESHMENTS

We do not offer food or refreshments onboard any of our vessels however please feel free to bring a light snack or cold drink along with you. There are water fountains onboard each vessel.

SEA SICKNESS REMEDIES

If you normally suffer from motion sickness we recommend you take precautions prior to departure from our office. Our Whale Watch Gift Store sell medicated & herbal forms of sea sickness remedies such as:

Sea Legs Tablets – Sea Legs can be taken up to 1 hour before travelling or taken for relief at the onset of motion sickness.

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

Our office

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

ALSO LOCATED AT THE WHALEWAY STATION

Whale Watch Gift Store – The Gift Store sells a wide range of souvenirs, crafts, gifts, books and clothing unique to Whale Watch and your experience with us. We also have an online store: shop.whalewatch.co.nz



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 – 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 your check-in for your tour and is not the departure time.

You will receive a Boarding Pass and Booking Receipt. Use your Boarding Pass to board the Whale Watch bus and vessel.

The check-in process takes around 35 minutes.

WHALE WATCH COACH TRANSFER TO THE HARBOUR

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

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.

Please note you start & finish your journey at the Whale Watch Office.





Whale Watch Ticketing

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Please refer to our website for our updated Terms & Conditions
www.whalewatch.co.nz/information/terms-and-conditions



Contact Information

Freephone 0800 655 121

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Fax + 64 3 319 6545

E-Mail res@whalewatch.co.nz

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 TV 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.

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 toilet so that 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 on request.

WHALE WATCH VESSELS

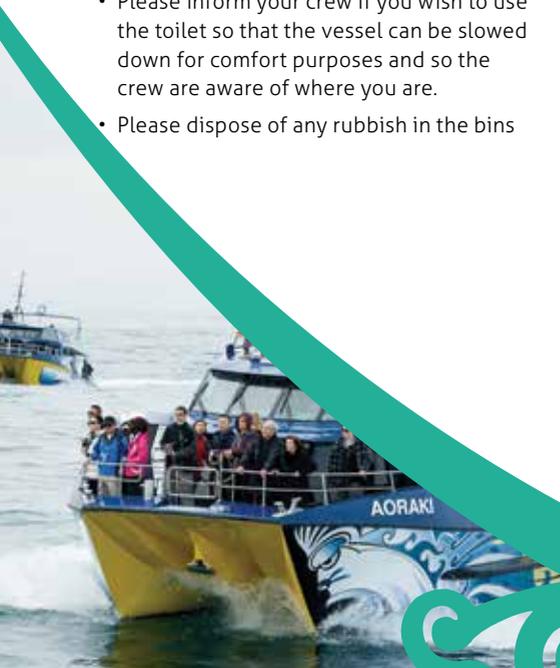
Whale Watch Kaikōura has two vessel types ranging between 24m to 18m in length.

Vessel: Te Ao Mārama

- Total Passenger Capacity: 116pax
- Captain's Cabin (upstairs): 12 seats
- Ocean Cabin (downstairs): 104 seats
- Length: 24m

Vessels: Wawahia & Tohora

- Total Passengers: 48pax each
- Length: 18m





Tour outline

Your Whale Watch Sea Crew consists of the following:

- Captain
- Health & Safety Officer(s)
- Watch Keeper
- Narrator

The main focus of your tour is to locate and view the Giant Sperm whale. We average between 1 to 2 Sperm whale sightings per tour due to the length of time the whales can stay submerged. In Kaikōura, 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.

Depending on the amount of time available after viewing the Sperm whales, the captain 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's Dolphins and the New Zealand Fur Seal. Kaikōura 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.

On-Water duration:

Just over 2 hours.



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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 Kaikōura 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 Kaikōura coastline all year round.
- The Kaikōura 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 Kaikōura, 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 one of the deepest diving mammals 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 Kaikōura undersea canyon. The presentation also provides information for a variety of marine life found in Kaikōura 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.

KAIKŌURA 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 Kaikōura 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 KAIKŌURA 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 Kaikōura 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 Kaikōura 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.

HUTTON'S SHEARWATER - TITI

Hutton's Shearwater breed only on the Seaward Kaikōura Mountains at an altitude of between 1200-1800 metres – a most unusual place for a seabird to rest. Given the unusual and inaccessible breeding grounds, their breeding sites were not found until 1965 by mountaineer Geoff Harrow. When these breeding colonies were discovered there were eight colonies, now only two remain.

In 2005 a third colony (Te Rae o Atiu) was established on the Kaikōura Peninsula, to ensure long-term survival. This was a joint project by Te Runanga o Kaikōura, Whale Watch and the Department of Conservation, with support from Forest & Bird and the local community.

For more information on these beautiful birds please visit www.huttonsshearwater.org.nz

NEW ZEALAND FUR SEALS

New Zealand Fur seals can be observed from various points along the road that hugs the Kaikōura 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 Kean on the Kaikōura Peninsula – an easy walk or short drive from Kaikōura 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 dependent on the quality of your tour. The sea crew will advise you if there is a refund associated with the tour. 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 Kaikōura we would like to thank you for participating in our tour.

We value your feedback and welcome any comments or suggestions you may have.



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