

ACTIVITIES

THE DOLPHIN CENTRE

AT GOZO-AZUL

Experience the thrill of the ocean

Fulfill your dreams of learning about the wonders of the ocean with us and interact with the dolphins of Ponta and other marine mega fauna. We promote Responsible Marine Mammal Tourism - Conservation through Education. We offer Dolphin swims, Whale Viewing (July-October) snorkeling, boat rides, scuba diving, fishing and accommodation.

DOLPHIN SWIMS

Rates: Pre-booked Dolphin Swim (1 dolphin excursion)

First excursion *Adult R550 / 2500mzn per person *Under 12 R470 / 2100mzn per child

Please note this INCLUDES a R50 pp Reef Tax which is paid towards Maritime Conservation Fees.

Snorkeling Lesson pre dolphin swim with instructor - R150 / 700mzn per person

Dolphin Excursions range between 2 and 2,5 hours, with a pre-launch briefing on boat safety, marine life and responsible interactions. The Trip includes snorkeling over one of our shallow reefs, in-water swim facilitation with one of our dolphin guides, and seasonal humpback whale sightings. Dolphin in-water observations and interactions are not guaranteed as this is very dependent on the nature of the dolphins, and we do suggest booking more than one launch to have an opportunity to interact with our finned friends. Launches are run daily and subject to group size and sea conditions.

Group size is limited to a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12.

Booking in advance is essential. Snorkeling gear is included.

Please note being able to swim efficiently is a prerequisite to in- water dolphin interactions. If you cannot swim, sightings from the boat are often just as amazing, dolphins are air -breathers and spend a lot of time on the surface. So if you cannot swim you can view from the boat, no problem.

DOLPHIN TOURS

Rates: 3 dolphin excursions *Adult R1300 / 5850mzn per person *Under 12: R1000 / 4500mzn per child

Cater for those wanting more time on the water with our beautiful finned friends. These tours are simply three or four of our casual dolphin excursions set in a package.



WE ARE AN ENTHUSIASTIC, FRIENDLY AND OWNER RUN OPERATION. WE OFFER AN EXCLUSIVE BOAT CHARTER WITH AN EXPERIENCED SKIPPER AND QUALIFIED DOLPHIN/MARINE GUIDE.



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WHAT A LAUNCH INVOLVES:

Meet at our centre, located within the popular Gozo Azul Dive Centre at your given booking time. Snorkeling gear is handed out, indemnity form is signed. You are then given a pre launch briefing which includes boat procedure, what to expect and dolphin behavior information. We then take you down to the beach where the boat is waiting. We push the boat into the water, and navigate our way through the surf. We first travel South towards the border line of South Africa and Mozambique giving you the opportunity to see the Lighthouse and Kosi Bay in the Distance. We then start travelling North in search of dolphins. When we come across a pod of dolphins the dolphin team assess the pods behaviour. If the dolphins are not resting we will instruct you to gear up with your mask, snorkel and fins and be ready to enter the water. Once given the go ahead you will slip into the water and swim towards the dolphin guide, looking down at all times. Please try to not make a noise or splash and swim with your arms to your sides. When they are social they love to stick around and play. NO touching of the dolphins or any Marine life and NO diving down during the dolphin encounter. We have an 80% success rate in sightings from the boat, in-water interactions are completely up to the dolphins at that time. We also stop at a shallow reef outside Malongane Bay for a short reef snorkel and thereafter we head back to the launch site.

BOOKING POLICY:

All rates includes (R50 maritime reef tax) + hire of the snorkel gear.

All dolphin excursions are pre-booked with full payment as confirmation.

Please note last minute cancellations will not be refunded, and you are liable for the pre-booked amount of people. Make sure when making a booking that you allow for unfavourable sea conditions and give yourself an extra morning. So what we are saying is don't leave it to the last day of your holiday

If weather and sea conditions do not permit us to launch on the day you have booked we will either reschedule or refund.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What time do we launch?

Early morning is usually the best time to launch, as the wind tends to pick up throughout the day. We like to be on the ocean as early as possible to ensure you have the best possible experience.

Summer time from 05h00, Autumn from 06h00 & Winter from 07h00

What requirements do we need to swim with the dolphins or what experience is needed?

Most importantly you need to be able to swim and preferably have used snorkel gear before. If you have never snorkeled we recommend you book a snorkeling lesson with us. The snorkeling lesson will be done in the bay with the gear prior to going out on the boat.



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Do you cater for people with special needs?

Yes, we do. Please contact us for further details and to make necessary arrangements.

What is your policy regarding rough seas?

It is very difficult to spot dolphins when the sea is too choppy, it is also more difficult to snorkel/swim in choppy surface conditions. Big swell can also make it difficult, as the dolphins tend to travel inshore close the big waves where we cannot reach them. Safety and comfort of all on board the boat is our main priority and we won't take you out in conditions that are not suitable.

Can I swim with dolphins if I'm pregnant?

Yes, you can up until 6 months, weather conditions permitting. Also discuss the activity with your doctor.

What size are the groups that we go out with?

Minimum is 6 people and max is 13 per trip.

Will we be allowed to touch the dolphins?

No, these are wild dolphins and it forms part of the Dolphin Centre regulated code of conduct that NO TOUCHING is allowed. They come close enough to us there is no need to touch and you risk ruining the whole experience for everyone if you do attempt to touch.

What are the age limits of participants?

Minimum age is 5 years old, maximum age we have had people up to the age of 70 odd join us, but it really does depend on the ocean conditions on the day.

What can we expect to see on our trip?

All year round you will see our friendly pods of bottlenose dolphins. Humpback whales give us spectacular surface shows from July to October and Whale sharks & manta Rays glide along our backline in the summer months. We also occasionally spot the indo-pacific Humpback Dolphin & Spinner dolphins. We stop to snorkel on a shallow reef where we see various fish life species and have a good chance of seeing turtles.

What about sharks?

We rarely ever spot any sharks on our dolphin swims and it is unlikely that we will see one. If by any chance we do see sharks it would be small reef sharks which are not a worry at all. Don't let this be a deterrent to your desire to swim with dolphins.



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Can we feed the dolphins?

No, these are pods of wild dolphins that are perfectly capable of sourcing and catching their own food, so no feeding is permitted. We simply observe and interact with them as naturally as possible, whilst abiding by our dolphin code of conduct.

What equipment do you provide?

We provide masks, fins and snorkel. We do not provide wetsuits. If you wish to rent one from Gozo Azul Dive Centre this can be prearranged.

What should I bring along?

Sunblock, bottle of water and a towel. In winter we recommend a warm top or windbreaker. For those who really feel the cold you might want to bring along a scarf or a beanie. In summer you may want to wear a rash vest over costumes for sun protection.

What can I do to prevent seasickness?

If you know you are prone to getting seasick please bring along some motion sickness medication. The trick is to take on the night before your ocean experience and one the morning of the trip about an hour before departure. We also have some sea sick tablets available at our centre.

Can I bring a camera along on my swim?

We do offer underwater photography at the Dolphin Centre, but you are more than welcome to bring along your own camera (if you have one with a waterproof casing). Camera that don't have a waterproof casing are brought along at your own risk. Please ensure that you put your camera in a bag for safety. Our only request is that you make sure the flash is off for underwater footage of the dolphins.

Is there risk of Malaria in Ponta?

This area is considered very low risk and it is not necessary to take prophylactics. However, we do recommend you use mosquito repellent in the evenings as a precaution.

Do you provide accommodation?

Yes we do. Please see our website for details.



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