



## **SOLMAR V in SOCORRO (sample itinerary, page 1 of 2)**

**DAY 1** - Safety briefing, crew introduction, necessary dive paperwork, cabin allocation and ship orientation will take place before departing the harbour. During the journey to our first dive site for a check dive, please take this opportunity to familiarize yourselves with the vessel and make yourself comfortable.

**DAY 2** - Arrival at San Benedicto at approx. 1-2pm (22-24hr crossing). Diving in the afternoon! The Revillagigedos Archipelago, more commonly called Socorro Islands is located in the eastern Pacific Ocean approximately 250 miles south of Cabo San Lucas, Mexico – at the tip of the Baja peninsula. These islands have been compared to the Galapagos Islands in Ecuador or Cocos Island in Costa Rica because of the big animal encounters they provide.

The Revillagigedos Islands consist of 4 islands – San Benedicto Island, Socorro Island, Roca Partida and Clarion. They are wild, remote and unpredictable and have been called the Mexican Galapagos. This area is famous for up close and personal encounters with the Giant Pacific manta ray, which can grow to 22 feet from wingtip to wingtip.

Solmar V has been interacting with these gentle giants since 1992 and as a result of having worked with several manta researchers over the years and they have extensive ID's on most of them and special relationships with many of them.

They do not chase or ride the mantas and allow all interaction with them to be initiated by the mantas themselves. The crew believes their continued willingness to interact with divers is due to the respect they have shown for them over the years.

San Benedicto is one of the best locations in the world to experience and photograph these gentle giants. The feeling of a wild animal this large deliberately interacting with you is something you will never forget.

There are lots of sharks in the Revillagigedos Islands - hammerhead schools, white tips, silver tips, silkies, threshers, galapagos and occasionally tigers. Solmar V has encountered up to 7 species of sharks on a single dive! There are several hammerhead cleaning stations the boat visits each trip, weather permitting.

Whale sharks are a special treat at the islands, they find us in November/December and late April/May/June. Pods of wild bottlenose dolphins are encountered on a regular basis and from January through March, in these islands you can spot humpback whales, that visit to breed and calve. Guests have observed several new-born humpbacks in the years they have been fortunate enough to visit these remote and pristine islands.

The scientists who visit the Revillagigedos Islands every year to study the migrating whale population say that after 22 years of encountering , the humpbacks now recognize the Solma V vessel as a friendly, non-threatening entity and so the opportunity for underwater encounters improves.



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Add to the mix extremely playful dolphins on almost all trips, large tuna (the world record yellowfin is from these waters), wahoo, thick schools of jacks and many other big critters along with endemic tropical species found nowhere else in the world.

Roca Partida is the smallest island of the four, this is a pinnacle which attracts large schools of Jacks and Tuna, the small crevices inhabit many smaller species and at around 13m (40ft) there are caves which inhabit multiple sharks. A real diverse ecosystem.

**DAY 3** – The day is normally spent diving around San Benedicto and considering weather possibilities for a crossing to Roca Partida. After sunset, the boat departs to Socorro Islands - crossing takes 4-5hrs. On occasions, if weather looks good, the boat might decide to try Roca before Socorro.

**DAY 4** - Arrival at Socorro Island early am, followed by a quick check at the Navy Base for clearance. Most of this day is spent diving around Socorro Island. If conditions are good here or it is humpback whale season, the boat might stay another day but will normally depart back to either San Benedicto or Roca Partida after sunset.

**DAY 5** - Arrive early am in San Benedicto or Roca Partida. Diving all day.

**DAY 6 – 7** - Next days are spent diving numerous sites around San Benedicto and/or Roca Partida, depending on whether and if they have been able to get to Roca Partida previously. Both islands are known for most of the large animal encounters on these trips!

**DAY 8** - Arrival in Cabo after a 22+ hour crossing, depending on weather conditions, which means the boat usually arrives after sunset. Their dock has a great location near town for those who want to get off and stretch their legs or visit the local night spots.

**DAY 9** - Unfortunately our trip has come to an end and we have to say goodbye, but we hope to see you again soon!