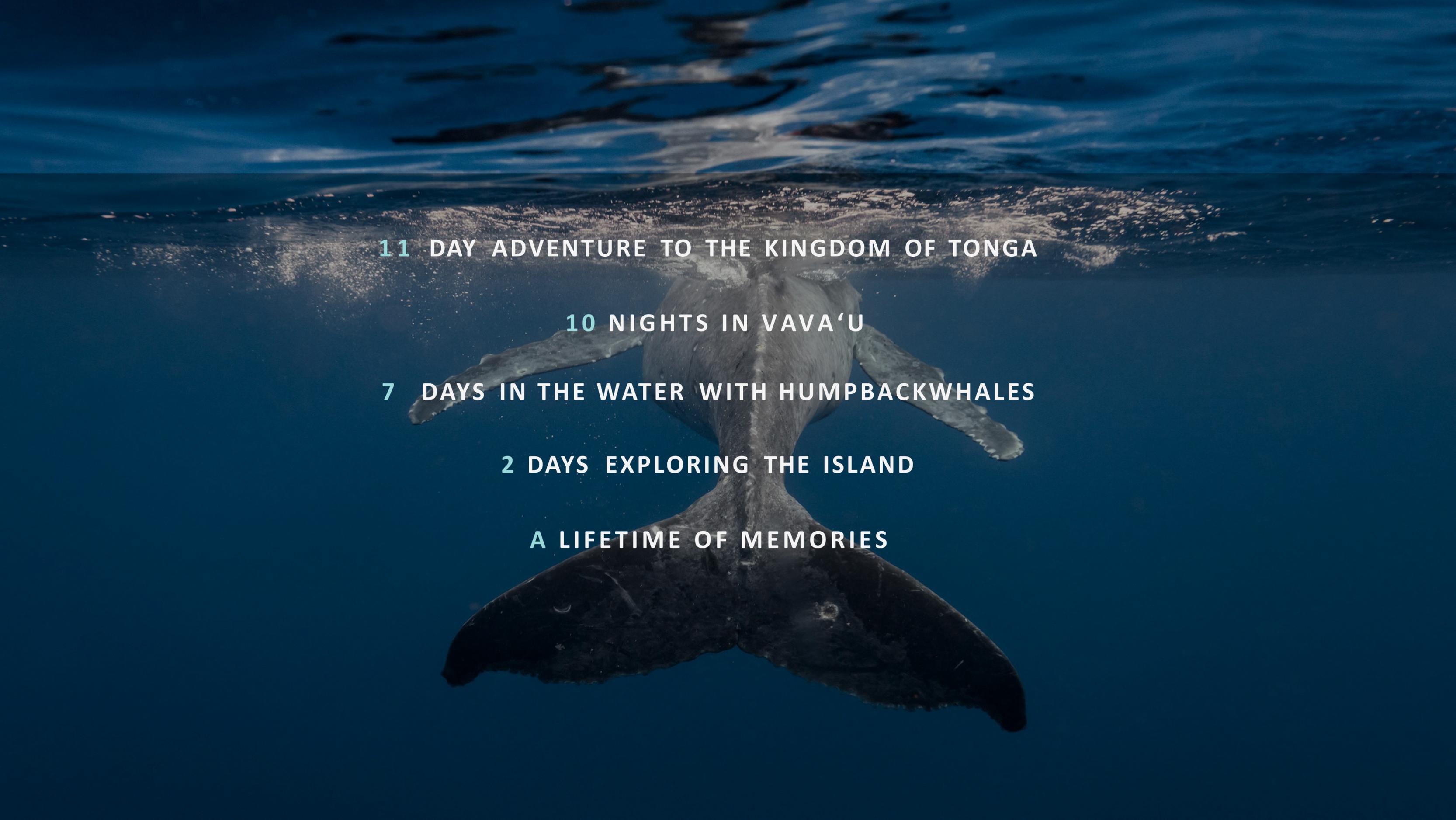




# HUMPBACK WHALES TONGA

30.September-10.October 2024 (Vava'u – Vava'u)

**CARLU DIVE**  
TRAVEL



**11 DAY ADVENTURE TO THE KINGDOM OF TONGA**

**10 NIGHTS IN VAVA'U**

**7 DAYS IN THE WATER WITH HUMPBACKWHALES**

**2 DAYS EXPLORING THE ISLAND**

**A LIFETIME OF MEMORIES**

# Introduction

The Kingdom of Tonga is a hidden gem in the South Pacific, a lush group of islands surround by thriving tropical reefs and clear blue water.

Every year from July to October the whales complete their migration from the feeding grounds of Antarctica to the warmer tropical waters of Tonga where they give birth to their calves and perform courtship readying themselves for the next season.

This spectacle of epic proportions gives photographers the chance to observe Humpback whale behaviour in their natural environment. Tonga is one of the only places in the world where you can swim with humpback whales. The crystal clear waters of Tonga are the perfect place to see humpbackwhales nurturing mothers teaching their calves how to be whales.

This expedition will be carried out in a private group of 8 people. We will be accompanied by a certified whale guide.

Humpback whales are curious creatures and underwater encounters are often quite close and unique. For anyone passionate about whales, this is a must see event that can be life changing for many people.



# ITINERARY

## Day 1

Arrival at Vava'u Airport. Transfer to our lodge. **CHECK IN** and itinerary briefing.

## Day 2

Time to **RELAX** and recover from your long journey (remember: you were switching time zones).

You have **FREE TIME** to explore the island, visit some shops and enjoy the sunset in paradise.

## Day 3-10

**7 Expedition days** in search of **HUMPBACK WHALES**. Possibility to explore caves (snorkeling and freediving activity).

**1 day of rest (Sunday)** to carry out activities in Vava'u such as touring the island or having a **BBQ** on the beach.

## Day 11

Breakfast in the morning. **CHECK OUT 11am**. Transfer to Vava'u airport or hotel of your choice.

From here you decide what you want to do 😊

## DAY 1

Arrival at Lupepau International Airport (**VAV**) on the island of Vava'u. Free transfer to our accommodation located near the port of Neiafu. Check in and briefing of our trip itinerary.

## DAY 2-10

Getting to the Kingdom of Tonga is quite a journey. **Crossing multiple time zones** puts your internal clock out of sync. Therefore the first day is to relax because the next days are packed with action. During this relaxing day you have time to explore the island, visit local shops and enjoy the sunset in Paradise.

The other 7 days we will be searching for whales. Our group (8 pax) will split up into two groups (2x 4 pax). **Only one group at a time** is allowed to enter the water with the whales. We will take turns equally.

On Sunday all Tongans are resting and there are no boats leaving the port. Therefore we will use this day to explore more of the island and do a BBQ (weather depending) at the beach.

## DAY 11

Breakfast and check out in the morning. Free transfer to Lupepau International Airport (**VAV**) or a hotel of your choice.

# Whale Encounters

Humpback whales are best described as **gentle giants**. There are no reports of the whales in Tonga being aggressive toward swimmers. However, with some whales being up to 40 tons, they are not creatures that you want to get too close to in case of accidental contact. For this reason, you will never swim too close to whales in Tonga, just enough **to observe** these majestic mammals in their element.

There are **laws** in Tonga as to how close boats can approach whales and how long they can stay with whales. **Only licensed operators** can approach whales as close as 10m to drop swimmers in the water but should sit 50m away from the swimmers and the whale during the swimming session. However, some operators in recent years have been reported to flout restrictions, such as the time spent with the whales, which has shown to have a negative impact on whale mothers and their calves according to a study published by the Auckland University of Technology. By carefully selecting our whale operator, we choosed an eco-friendly tour that operates with the **whales' wellbeing in mind**. We have been doing trips with them in previous years.

The Whale Encounters are held under the modality **“Calm entry into the water“**. It is a relaxed, non-aggressive and low-impact activity. Swimmers float silently and calmly on the surface in close proximity to humpback whales, allowing their natural curiosity to bring us much closer. Because they are **wild animals**, there is no way to predict the outcome of each encounter, but the use of this non-aggressive technique has resulted in interactions lasting from minutes to hours each day. Participants **must be able to swim and snorkel**.



**MORE INFO**

# Frequent Questions

## 1. What is recommended to bring?

We suggest bringing your own mask, snorkel and fins, since it is always more comfortable to snorkel with your own equipment than rental. List of basic items to bring:

-Sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, neoprene suit for greater buoyancy and windy days, camera, shorts, sandals, towel or poncho, rain jacket.

## 2. How long are the interactions with humpback whales?

The interactions can last a minute or an hour, depending on how comfortable the whales are.

## 3. How much time is spent in the water each day?

The time we spend in the water depends on the whales, the weather and the location. There are a large number of snorkeling points to be able to interact with the whales. Daily departures usually last about 6 hours.

## 4. Can you snorkel around the islands?

We also try to snorkel every day in the coral reefs and amazing caves that surround the islands.

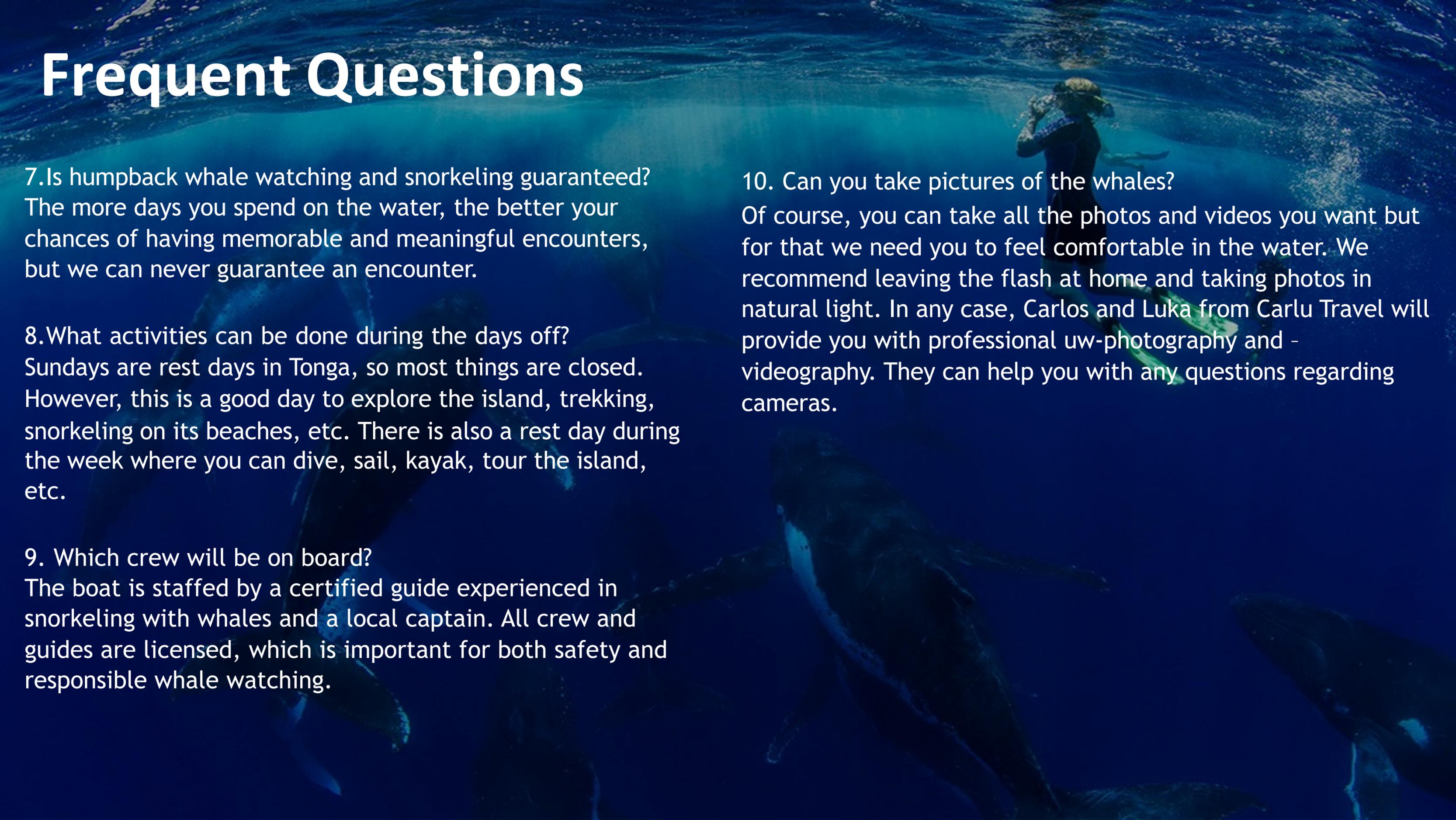
## 5. Do you need a diving certificate to swim with the whales?

No, basically you just snorkel with the whales. There are specific rules that prohibit diving with the whales. Whales stay near the shallow water or on the surface of the water, so there is no need to dive.

## 6. What are the fitness requirements?

There are no age requirements, but participants must be able to swim a hundred meters or so comfortably and be safe swimming in the open sea. However, we normally stay around the islands in calm water, generally avoiding rough water.

# Frequent Questions

A person in a wetsuit and snorkel gear is swimming in clear, deep blue water. In the background, a large humpback whale is visible, swimming towards the surface. The scene is captured from an underwater perspective, showing the water's clarity and the whale's size.

7. Is humpback whale watching and snorkeling guaranteed? The more days you spend on the water, the better your chances of having memorable and meaningful encounters, but we can never guarantee an encounter.

8. What activities can be done during the days off? Sundays are rest days in Tonga, so most things are closed. However, this is a good day to explore the island, trekking, snorkeling on its beaches, etc. There is also a rest day during the week where you can dive, sail, kayak, tour the island, etc.

9. Which crew will be on board? The boat is staffed by a certified guide experienced in snorkeling with whales and a local captain. All crew and guides are licensed, which is important for both safety and responsible whale watching.

10. Can you take pictures of the whales? Of course, you can take all the photos and videos you want but for that we need you to feel comfortable in the water. We recommend leaving the flash at home and taking photos in natural light. In any case, Carlos and Luka from Carlu Travel will provide you with professional uw-photography and -videography. They can help you with any questions regarding cameras.



## Currency

The national currency of Tonga is the pa'anga (TOP). But you can easily pay with Australian dollars (AUD). Visa and Mastercard are also widely accepted at the tourist area. If you are going to change money, we recommend that you do it at an official place upon arrival in Tonga.

## Visa

The vast majority of visitors can enter Tonga without applying for a visa prior to traveling. At the airport they will get a 30 day visa for free.

But visitors from latin america need to apply for a visa at the embassy or consulate of their country prior to travelling!

# Airport

## Arriving and Departing Lupepau‘u Int’l Airport, (VAV)

There are two options to get to Vava‘u. The first one is flying from Los Angeles (LAX) with Fiji Airways with a stopover in Nadi, Fiji. The second option is to fly from Australia or New Zealand to the main island of Tonga (Tongatapu). You will have to spend one night on the island and the next day you can take a domestic flight to Vava'u with Real Tonga Airlines.

If you need advice, we are happy to help!

# Climate

	Min °C	Min °C	Rain (mm)
Jan	24	31	221
Feb	25	31	218
Mar	24	31	223
Apr	25	31	236
May	24	30	336
Jun	24	30	335
Jul	24	30	309
Aug	24	30	265
Sep	24	30	221
Oct	24	31	196
Nov	25	32	182
Dec	24	31	194

We recommend a 3 to 5 mm wetsuit because the water temperature is: 25 - 28 C (77 - 82F)

## Electricity

In Tonga the common voltage is 240 V. The frequency is 50 Hz. The plugs and sockets are type I. In the following images you can see the types of plugs and sockets. The need for an adapter or converter depends on the voltage, frequency and plugs in your homecountry.

We recommend that you always travel with an adapter in case you make a stopover in a country with other types of plugs.

If you need advice, we are happy to help!



## Clothing & Sundays

In Tonga, people dress up casual. There are no restrictions on its beaches.

A Sunday in Tonga is celebrated as a day of rest and worship; strict sabbatarianism is enshrined in the constitution. Commerce is not allowed on Sunday, except for essential services, after special approval by the police minister. Violators of the law risk a fine or imprisonment.

## Included

- Transport from airport to lodge - lodge to airport
- Coordinator from Carlu Travel
- 11 days & 10 nights in Vava'u
- Breakfast & Snacks during Whale Expedition on board
- 7 days in the sea searching for humpbackwhales
- Snorkel Equipment
- Certified Whale Guide
- Marine Park Fees
- Port Fees
- Fuel Fees
- Local Taxes
- Professional Pictures and Videos of the trip

## Not Included

- International/Domestic Flights
- Meals (Lunch/Dinner)
- Cancellation insurance
- Travel insurance
- Tips for the crew
- Soft drinks & Alcoholic drinks
- Anything not written in the included section

Price

3.700€

The Trip has a capacity for 8 guests. Reservations are confirmed in order that the bookings are received. To book your reservation, please email us at [info@carludiveandtravel.com](mailto:info@carludiveandtravel.com).

Please include the following details.

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Nationality
- Passport number
- Equipment requirements with sizes (please include height, weight and shoe size)

Once your booking is received, there are two payment options for your invoice.

1. Full payment at time of booking.
2. 1000 Euro deposit at time of booking. Additional 25% due six months prior to departure. Your balance must be paid in full later than 90 days prior to departure.

Reserve your spot!



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