



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Turks & Caicos Aggressor II

*Humpback Whale charters depart to/from Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic Snorkel
Charters Only*

Aggressor Fleet Reservations Office

WHERE IS THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC & SILVER BANK?

Guests will fly in and out of the Puerto Plata International Airport, Dominican Republic. Your destination is the Silver Bank, a territory of the Dominican Republic that is part of the Marine Mammals Sanctuary. The Dominican Republic, located in the Caribbean, forms part of Hispaniola, which is the second largest island in the Caribbean. The Silver Bank is located 70 miles north of the Dominican Republic and is a bank approximately 10 x 20 miles long with an average depth of 60-100 feet. It is here where Humpback Whales mate and give birth.

TURKS & CAICOS AGGRESSOR II INCLUDES:

All staterooms are air-conditioned and fitted with private toilets, showers and sinks. A full breakfast (cooked to order), buffet lunch and an elegant sit down chef prepared dinner are served. Mid morning and afternoon snacks are provided on the tenders. Beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) are complimentary while onboard. The yacht is equipped with hairdryers in each stateroom. Fresh towels are placed in each stateroom as needed. *Transfers to and from the airport and hotels are not included in the price of your charter.*

AGGRESSOR ADVENTURE TRAVEL

Our in-house travel agency, Aggressor Adventure Travel has a team of professional agents who specialize exclusively in planning airline travel, resort add on packages and custom tours before or after your cruise. Each agent has over 20 years experience and can help plan the perfect international itinerary for you.

GIS (GUEST INFORMATION SYSTEM)

The Reservations Center and the Turks & Caicos Aggressor II require each guest to complete a Cruise Application and Waiver prior to departure and boarding. The GIS (Guest Information System) allows guests to interactively complete all required paperwork that includes the application/waiver, special requests and travel information. If you haven't received a link to access the GIS, please contact an Aggressor Fleet agent. **Passengers who fail to complete the GIS prior to boarding will be denied boarding.** Many Aggressor destinations require passenger information for itinerary approval.

SINGLE TRAVELERS & SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

All rates are quoted on a share basis; therefore you will be roomed with another person of the same gender. If you would like a private room there is a 65% surcharge that will guarantee you a private room.

PASSPORTS & DOCUMENTATION

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond your period of stay, have adequate funds to support yourself, and a return airline ticket to travel to the Dominican Republic. It is the travelers' responsibility to ensure they have the proper documentation to travel into each country on his or her itinerary as well as for re-entry and return to their country. Please check with the appropriate consulate to ensure you have the proper documentation. Always check your passport and visa requirements. US citizens may go to the US Department of State website at www.travel.state.gov for more information. The website also has information for consulates by country to assist with requirements. There are special requirements for children leaving the US and many countries have adopted requirements for the protection of children. Since regulations vary by country, contact your consulate or embassy of your country for the requirement. ***The Reservation Office and Staff cannot assume responsibility for passengers not having correct documentation.***

WELCOME

As you prepare for your expedition aboard the Turks & Caicos Aggressor II, we extend a most hearty welcome. In the event you receive this document more than 30 days prior to traveling, please download the most recent "**Know Before You Go**". It is important to notify our office of last minute changes concerning your airline arrival and departure times or any changes in your address or telephone numbers. The Reservations Center and the Turks & Caicos Aggressor II are in constant

communication. In the event of an emergency, family and friends may contact you at the above numbers. There is an onboard satellite phone/e-mail available and prepaid cards can be purchased once onboard.

ARRIVAL (Saturday)

The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II offers snorkel whale charters departing from **Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic**. Your port of embarkation to the Silver Bank is Cofresi Beach, located 30 minutes from the Puerto Plata International Airport. Boarding is at 4:00 p.m. In Puerto Plata, the Aggressor docks at the “Ocean World Marina, www.oceanworldmarina.com . Dinner is served onboard Saturday evening. All guests must be onboard by 9:30 pm for departure from the dock to the Silver Bank.

Approximate cost of transfers per person each way:

From Puerto Plata Airport (POP), Hotels Dorada/ Costa Dorada / RIU Hotels Maimon to Ocean World Marina	US \$59	2 – 4-pax	US \$32 p/p
1 pax			
5 – 6-pax	US \$26 p/p	7 and up	US\$22 p/p
Santiago International Airport (STI) to Ocean World Marina	US \$82 p/p		
1 pax	US \$163	2- 4-pax	
5 and	US\$107p/p		
Santo Domingo Airport (SDQ) to Ocean World Marina	US \$144 p/p		
1 pax	US \$288	2 – 4-pax	
5 and up	US \$169 p/p		

Ocean World Marina is the only marina on the northern coast and features an adventure park, casino and many restaurants for you to dine at Friday evening. The northern coast is a resort area and many visitors extend their stay.

ABOUT YOUR EXPEDITION

Many of the places where Humpback Whales congregate are too cold or turbid for rewarding encounters. The Silver Bank area is one of the few places in the world where humans can have soft-water encounters with Humpbacks. The Silver Banks’ warm clear water is an ideal location for viewing and photographing the whales.

The Silver Bank, a possession of the Dominican Republic, is located between the island of Grand Turk in Turks and Caicos and the Dominican Republic. The area is considered treacherous by mariners because of its numerous coral pinnacles which rise from depths of 60 and 100 feet to within a few feet of the surface. The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II is one of the few yachts permitted access to the Silver Bank during the Humpbacks mating and breeding season.

The Silver Bank is officially part of the “Sanctuary for the marine Mammals of the Dominican Republic”. This Sanctuary is one of the few places in the world where swimming with Humpback Whales is officially sanctioned, permitted and regulated. As a sanctuary, all activities within its bounds are subject to very specific regulations that apply to the activity of swimming with the whales. These regulations protect the whales from harassment and provide the best possible chance of a lasting and meaningful encounter. During your initial briefing the crew will review the sanctuary guidelines and rules. They are also charged by the sanctuary commission to ensure that all guests comply with the rules and regulations of the charter.

The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II moors in an area near the backbone reef of the Silver Bank where an old Greek freighter called the Polyxeni lies aground being rapidly reclaimed by the sea. This extensive reef provides some protection and a comfortable anchorage for the yacht. The tenders (with bimini tops) are launched several times daily and are solely used to bring you closer to the whales. Tender runs last one and a half to three hours depending on the proximity of whale activity and time of day.

Humpback whales find the area ideal for mating and giving birth. The banks offer safety and protection to females and their calves until the young are strong enough to make the trip back to the North Eastern U.S. coast.

During the trip you will enjoy two distinct types of encounters. One type will occur on the surface as you enjoy the spectacle put-on by rowdy males as they aggressively compete for the attention of the females by breaching, slamming into one another, lob tailing, spy hopping and fin and tail slapping. Needless to say, these activities can only be safely observed from a reasonable distance in the tenders.

The other type of encounter will involve entering the water wearing mask, fins and snorkel to observe less aggressive and often curious groups and individuals. Whales considered to be approachable in the water include mother, calf and escort male trios, solitary females and sleeping whales. Sometimes the whales are curious and cooperative and sometimes they disappear in a flash.

The Whale Commission does not allow scuba diving in the Whale Sanctuary. Marine mammals view bubbles (scuba) as a sign of aggression and the Whale Commission wants to avoid any chance that divers and whales meet.

It is extremely likely that your experience with the whales will exceed your wildest expectations.

- The more time you spend in the tenders, the greater chance you will have to reach the experience you are seeking.
- You must stay prepared to enter the water and follow all instructions the inflatable operator gives you.

APPROACHING THE WHALES

We take great care not to be excessively intrusive or disruptive toward the whales. The way the whales are approached makes a big difference in how close you can get. Swimming quickly, aggressively, and loudly will scare away even the most curious whale. Slow gentle movements work best. Remember you will be there during their breeding cycles. Humpback whales are giant, non-aggressive creatures. They are aware of our presence, however, if you get too close; remember that an accidental bump could injure you.

THE TENDERS

The yacht has two 17 ft. long by 7 ft. wide, aluminum V-hull boats with 18 “ pontoons that hold 11 people in each one. They are fitted with a dive ladder for easy exiting, and a full-length bimini top for sun protection.

ITINERARY

SAMPLE ITINERARY

SATURDAY: Boarding is at 4 p.m. with a 9:30 pm departure to Silver Bank.

SUNDAY: Arrival in Silver Bank is around 8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Sunday weather permitting. Brunch/late breakfast while crew prepares mooring and assembly of the tenders. The first tender runs begins at 2:00 p.m. (2 tenders running). Afternoon tenders runs to the yacht at approximately 5:00 p.m.

MONDAY - WEDNESDAY: First tender runs will commence immediately after breakfast. Whale runs are throughout the day. “Sundowner” cocktail parties on the sun deck every afternoon following whale runs. Nightly presentation and video will be after dinner.

THURSDAY: Two tenders runs will be offered prior to departure from the Silver Bank.

FRIDAY: The yacht returns to the Ocean World Marina in Puerto Plata late Friday afternoon. Friday night, dinner is not served onboard; however, the crew will recommend a restaurant in the marina.

SATURDAY: Check out is between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m.

WHAT TO BRING:

- ü Mask, fins, snorkel, light wetsuit (3mm or some wear 5mm) or shorty, mesh snorkel bag. Full foot fins are a plus. Each piece of gear should be marked with waterproof paint or tape.

- ü Sweatshirt, sturdy windbreaker or all weather jackets, wide brim hat.
- ü Dry bag, attaché case size, O-ring sealed, dry box for land cameras and dry gear (Pelican or Underwater Kinetics cases work best).
- ü Thermos for early morning runs, binoculars, water bottle.
- ü Land still camera with zoom lens and underwater still camera.
- ü A video camera with housing. (Rain-X for your lens).
- ü Seasick medicine, sunscreen, lip balm.

We recommend you pack a mask, fins, swimsuit, change of clothes, medication and toiletries in your carryon bag. Having these few items with you can make an unexpected luggage delay more bearable. Don't forget to use your Aggressor luggage tags on your luggage handles. They will help the crew identify you and your bags once you arrive.

Drones are not allowed at the Silver Bank. This is a regulation of the Marine Sanctuary.

THE YACHT

The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II is a 120-foot yacht, designed and powered for comfort, safety and stability. She is diesel-powered, cruises at 10 knots and has 110-volt power on board. She sleeps up to 18 guests in privacy and comfort. Accommodations include 1 master stateroom for couples with a queen bed, 6 deluxe staterooms with a double and single berth and 2 twin staterooms with 2 single beds with a shared bathroom. All staterooms have a tv, media player and full bathroom. The two "twin" staterooms have two single beds and each share a full bathroom with an entrance through each stateroom.

She features a roomy, air conditioned salon and dining area, sun deck complete with a hot tub, lounge and deck chairs, Bluetooth stereo, shaded wet bar and grill, a complete photo center with a digital video and still photo editing computer with a scanner and email capabilities. The back deck includes individual equipment lockers, camera table and two hot, fresh water showers. The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II has a safe onboard to store valuables such as passports, cash, credit cards or anything else you would like to store. The yacht is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen items. We highly recommend caution and care be taken if you plan to travel onboard with electronic equipment. This equipment should always be stowed after use to avoid the risk of damage.

FOOD

The menu onboard is varied and plentiful, with a variety of American feasts, barbecues and local cuisine. If you have any special dietary requirements, please advise our US office as soon as possible so we can adequately prepare to meet your needs. You will wake up to fresh fruits, hot entrees, cereals and juices. Lunches are buffet-style, featuring hot soups, homemade breads, salads and sandwiches and/or entrees. Dinners are served each evening and include salads, vegetables, seafood, beef or chicken with a fresh homemade dessert. Once onboard, please speak to the chef about any special needs. Certain special dietary and beverage requests may not be available due to the remote nature of this location.

BEVERAGES

The Aggressor's selection includes fruit juices, soft drinks, iced water, iced tea, coffee, and a limited selection of local beer and wine, which are complimentary. Due to the high duty charged on liquor, we suggest you bring your special brand from the U.S. Drinking and snorkeling do not mix.

CLOTHING

Please plan to travel light, as on all live-aboard dive yachts, space is limited. We recommend that you pack your gear in soft luggage such as a duffel bag for easy stowage and to add to your comfort in your stateroom. Clothing should be lightweight, comfortable sportswear and swim suits are a must. A light sweater or jacket is ideal for evenings. Dress is always casual and informal. Additional items you may want to bring are sunscreen, sunglasses, a hat and walking shoes for you time on shore.

DIVE THE WORLD CLUB

If you are a member of the Dive the World Club, you will receive onboard discounts. Your membership is indicated on the Captain's rooming list.

INSURANCE

We strongly recommend each guest purchase comprehensive accident, medical, baggage and trip cancellation and interruption insurance when space is reserved. Trip insurance will protect you from financial disappointment if you are prevented from making your scheduled trip due to illness or family illness, or in the event that unforeseen circumstances prevent the airline or yacht from making its scheduled trip. In the event you cancel your trip prior, be familiar with Aggressor Fleet cancellation policies. More information can be found on Diveassure or Divers Alert Network insurance on our website.

FEES & TAXES (per person)

An arrival and departure tax to the Dominican Republic is collected when entering and leaving the country. Fees range from \$10 - \$20 per person. Each guest must pay a \$300 USD per person Whale Sanctuary Access fee and Port fee. This is paid onboard the yacht and at the end of the week and must be in CASH.

HEALTH

The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II has a comprehensive first aid kit onboard, including oxygen and an AED. You may want to bring motion sickness medication if you feel you will need it. We suggest you bring over-the-counter motion sickness medication or consult your doctor about prescription brands, such as the transdermal patch or Scopace tablets. Currents and winds may cause moderate movement of the yacht at times. We recommend a complete physical before your trip.

Aggressor Fleet yachts and their staff are unable to accept any medication brought onboard for safekeeping including those that require refrigeration. Should a guest have a medication requiring temperature control, they will need to travel with a travel cooling case or small storage cooler with several blue ice packets. The yachts will be happy to store and recharge the blue ice but are unable to accept possession of or responsibility for the proper care and storage of medication. This should be kept in the stateroom. There is NO smoking allowed inside the boat or on the dive deck. Smoking is only permitted on the rear of the sun deck.

ENTERTAINMENT

There is a variety of nightly entertainment, including presentations on whale behavior, movies, games and more. If you have a favorite movie, digital presentation or a video to share, we encourage you to bring it along. The crew especially loves new releases of movies, music, recent magazines and books. A small library of books for exchange is maintained onboard as well as fish identification books for reference.

CELEBRATING A SPECIAL OCCASION

Whether it's your anniversary, birthday, honeymoon, or wedding, please let us know so the crew can celebrate your occasion. Kindly advise the US office prior to traveling so the crew is notified in advance.

PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER'S/VIDEOGRAPHER'S FEES

Any person/group or company who a professional photographer or videographer and traveling to the Silver Bank to film, is required to submit an application to the Commission prior to traveling. The Commission will determine the cost of the permit that will be issued. These fees, which are levied by the Turks & Caicos and Dominican Republic Government, are subject to change without notice. They are not included in the charter rate and require advance notice.

SILVER BANK SNORKELING CONDITIONS

You will be snorkeling in water that averages 78° F. Most guests make as many as 2 "whale runs" each day, so some sort of protection is needed. A 3-5mm wetsuit or shorty and full-foot fins are suggested. Most snorkeling is done from the tenders. Some whale observations do occur from the mother ship.

The Whale Commission does not allow scuba units, rebreathers and drones in the Whale Sanctuary. Guests will board the tenders and when the whales are located, guests will slip into the water and snorkel with the whales face-to-face.

TOPSIDE PHOTOGRAPHY:

- 28-85mm and 200-400mm zoom lenses, a 4 gig and higher card are best.

- 300mm lens works for distance shots from the mother ship.
- Anything longer than 400mm will be hard to use due to movement of the boat and targets.

UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY:

A housed camera with a 10-24mm lens is a good choice for in-water encounters. It is hard to get closer than 10 feet to a whale; therefore, strobes will be of marginal use. Visibility ranges from 40 to 100 feet. Bring lots of media cards, especially if you have a motor drive on your topside camera.

CONSERVATION LAWS

Conservation laws do not permit wearing gloves, spear fishing or collecting.

RENTAL EQUIPMENT

A full line of Aqualung rental equipment is available including mask, fins and snorkels. If any of your equipment fails while onboard, the crew will loan you equipment free of charge.

PHOTO/VIDEO EQUIPMENT

The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II offers a complete digital photo facility including a PC for downloading photos. The Photo pro is available for free coaching with equipment rental. Photo equipment is available to rent separately or as a complete set up. The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II has a camera charging station and a large camera table available for your camera and video equipment. Guests should bring their own battery chargers.

UNDERWATER VIDEO/DVD

Our Video Professional can capture your adventure onboard the Turks & Caicos Aggressor II to share with family and friends. Video of the week/DVD (includes all guests and crew) are USD \$65 per person.

SHIPS BOUTIQUE & CREDIT CARDS

There is a mini-boutique onboard, which sells a selection of logo clothing including t-shirts, caps and miscellaneous items. One day during the week, the crew will have a 'boutique day'. The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II accepts cash, Visa, and MasterCard. Sorry, no personal checks, travelers checks or American Express. Many credit card companies are charging a conversion fee. If this happens to you, please contact your credit card company.

FRIDAY

Friday morning, the Captain will collect payment for purchases made throughout the week on the way back to port. Friday afternoon, the Turks & Caicos Aggressor II returns to the Ocean World Marina. This is your opportunity to stroll through the marina adventure park, sightsee or just relax. Another option is to explore the island, which the crew can help arrange. The crew hosts a sunset cocktail party Friday evening. The crew will assist you with your dinner reservations in the marina.

GRATUITIES

Crew gratuities are not included in the charter. We believe gratuities should be voluntary and based upon the quality of service the crew has provided. When settling your account on Friday, the Captain will have an envelope for gratuities that will be divided equally among the crew. Payment can be made by cash, traveler's checks or credit card.

CHECKOUT

Saturday morning after a continental breakfast, check out is at 8:00 am.

We wish you a wonderful vacation. Please don't hesitate to call or email us if you have any questions.