

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO AGGRESSOR ADVENTURES

Turks & Caicos Aggressor II

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

Aggressor Adventures Reservations Office

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday: 8 am – 5 pm EDT Saturday/Saturday: 9 am – 5 pm EDT

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Emergency/Delay in Travel – After Hours 7 Days a Week +1-706-664-0111

M/V Turks & Caicos Aggressor II

Yacht Cell Number Fri/Sat Only: +1-809-324-2867

Updated 03/14/2024

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 Puerto Plata International Airport. Upon arrival at Puerto Plata airport, guests will need to complete a customs and immigration form.

Boarding is at 4:00 p.m. The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II docks at the “Ocean World Marina, www.oceanworldmarina.com. Upon arrival at the marina, guests will be transferred with their luggage by a golf cart to the yacht. Dinner is served onboard Saturday evening. All guests must be onboard by 9:30 pm for departure from the dock to the Silver Bank. The charter departure depends on the weather.

It is quite easy to take a taxi from the Puerto Plata airport to the yacht. *Transfers are not included in the price of the charter.* Ocean World Marina is the only marina on the northern coast and features an adventure park, casino, and many restaurants for you to dine on Friday evening. The northern coast is a resort area, and many visitors extend their stay.

FEES & TAXES (per person)

The Whale Sanctuary and Port Access Fee for the 2024 season is USD \$625. This fee is paid on board the yacht at the end of the week as part of the guest's overall onboard charges. Please note that USD \$200 of this fee must be paid in **CASH**. *The fees for future seasons will be announced shortly before the start of that specific season once they are confirmed by the Dominican Republic authorities.*

****Many countries that accept USD cash require the bills to be in exceptionally good condition. Any that have excessive wrinkles, tears, wear marks and are old-style bills are not normally accepted. ****

TELEPHONE/INTERNET SERVICE

Your cell phone/email will likely work when the yacht is at the dock in the Dominican Republic, depending on your service provider. Wi-Fi is available at the marina where the Turks & Caicos Aggressor II docks as well. There is no cell service available at the Silver Bank.

There is a computer station onboard connected to a satellite communications system. Voice calls can be made and received. Emails can be sent or received through the ship's SAT mail account. There is a cost for both voice communications and emails based on the amount of data (airtime) used. Note emails are limited to messages like long texts. No graphics or attachments can be utilized.

SAMPLE ITINERARY

SATURDAY: Boarding 4 p.m. with a 9:30 pm departure to Silver Bank. [00]

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

MONDAY - THURSDAY: First tender runs will commence after breakfast at 8:30 am. Whale runs are throughout the day. "Sundowner" cocktail parties are hosted on the sun deck every afternoon following whale runs. Nightly presentations and videos will be held after dinner.

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 – 8 am.

WHAT TO BRING:

- ✓ Mask, fins, snorkel, light wetsuit (1 mm, 3mm, or some wear 5mm – check the captain's report for last week's water temperature) or shorty, and a mesh snorkel bag. Full foot fins are a plus. Each piece of gear should be marked with waterproof paint or tape.
- ✓ Sweatshirt, windbreaker, wide brim hat, neck buff and binoculars, dry bag, attaché case size, O-ring sealed, dry box for land cameras, dry gear, seasick medicine, sunscreen, lip balm.
- ✓ Land still camera with zoom lens and underwater still camera, video camera with housing. (Rain-X for your lens).

We recommend you pack a swimsuit, a change of clothes, medication, and toiletries in your carryon bag. Having these few items with you can make an unexpected luggage delay more bearable.

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

TURKS & CAICOS AGGRESSOR II INCLUDES:

All staterooms are air-conditioned and fitted with private toilets, showers, and sinks. A full breakfast (cooked to order), 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.

AGGRESSOR DETOUR TRAVEL DEPARTMENT

Our in-house travel department, Aggressor Detours, 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. To view the properties recommended, please visit www.aggressor.com. Email travel@aggressor.com

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 have not received a link to access the GIS, please contact an Aggressor Adventures agent. **Passengers who fail to complete the GIS prior to boarding will be denied boarding.** Many Aggressor destinations require passenger information for itinerary approval. Your travel information will assist the staff to locate guests more easily in case of any last-minute changes, or travel delays.

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 their itinerary and 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 specific requirements for children leaving the US, and many countries have adopted them for child protection. 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

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 Office 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.

ABOUT YOUR EXPEDITION

The Silver Bank area is one of the few places in the world where humans can have soft water encounters with Humpback Whales. The Silver Banks' warm clear water is an ideal location for viewing and photographing the whales.

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 strict, specific regulations that apply to 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 staff 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 after breakfast at 8:30 am and in the afternoon 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.

The Silver Bank provides a safe wintering haven for the entire North Atlantic Humpback Whale population who gather here by the thousands from January through April to court, mate, calve, and rear their young. Humpback whales find the area ideal for mating and giving birth. This magical and breathtaking location offers safety and protection to females and their calves until they are strong enough to embark on the long journey back to their feeding grounds on the North Eastern U.S. coast.

During your trip to the Silver Bank, prepare for an unforgettable experience with two distinct types of encounters with these magnificent creatures:

First, observe the whales' social behaviors on the surface as they engage in activities like breaching, tail slapping, pectoral fin waving, and spy hopping. You may also be fortunate enough to encounter a humpback whale rowdy group. These male whales compete aggressively for the attention of a female whale in heat, hoping to mate with her. The dominant male will use any tactic to attract the female's attention, from ramming and head-butting to biting and vocalizing loudly. It's an awe-inspiring sight to behold.

Secondly, you will enter the water wearing a mask, fins, and snorkel. This is a soft in-water encounter where you float calmly in the vicinity of a cooperative whale, allowing the natural curiosity of the whale to draw them close. The most approachable are mothers, calves, male escort trios, solitary females, and sleeping whales. The whales will choose to participate or exit. The whales may disappear in a flash, or an encounter may last over an hour. It's up to the whales. Another type of in-water encounter is with the singing of a male humpback whale. While you may not see the whale itself, you will hear and feel its complex and haunting songs that can last up to 20 minutes and are often heard for miles underwater. It's an experience you'll never forget.

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 on the tenders, the greater chance you will have to achieve the experience you are seeking. Guests 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. Our goal is to be gentle and non-threatening as possible. The way the whales are approached will impact and determine how close you can get. This starts with quietly preparing yourself on the tender and entering the water with as little noise or splashing as possible. Swimming quickly, aggressively, and loudly will scare away even the most curious whale. Slow gentle movements work best. Staying together as a group allows the whales to focus on one thing while it chooses to participate. When groups spread out or approach from multiple directions it is perceived as multiple “threats” to monitor and reduces the chances of a successful encounter. 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 ft 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.

FOOD

Aggressor yachts, river cruises, signature lodges and floating resorts operate in remote locations which limits the availability of certain foods and edibles, which can be unavailable in grocery stores and markets. While our culinary teams strive to accommodate individual requests, it is important to recognize that they cannot guarantee it despite their best efforts. Guests with dietary restrictions and food allergies should be aware that the same meal is prepared for all guests, making cross-contamination a possibility. Based on this, travelers should plan accordingly and bring pre-packaged goods if needed. The availability of fresh produce may vary weekly, and they may have a limited selection depending on the destination and availability. The concept of "organic" is infrequent, and items like "gluten-free" products are seldom found in these remote locations.

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 feature 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.

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 liveaboard 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 cabin. Clothing should be lightweight, comfortable sportswear; sunscreen and swimsuits are a necessity. A light sweater or jacket is ideal for evenings. The dress is always casual and informal. Additional items you may want to bring are sunglasses and walking shoes for your time on shore.

GREEN THE FLEET

Contribute to our Green The Fleet sustainability initiatives. Here are a few reminders:

- Avoid traveling with single-use plastics.
- Remove packaging from any new purchases before traveling.
- Use rechargeable batteries.

- Use an environmentally safe sunscreen, or better yet use fabric to cover up instead of relying on chemical protection.
- Conserve and responsibly use fresh water when at your adventure destination.
- Be environmentally conscious in everything you do.

INSURANCE

We strongly recommend each guest purchase a CFAR (cancel for any reason) insurance policy. To learn more about insurance options, please visit www.aggessor.com and go to 'Insurance'.

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 trans-dermal 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 Adventures 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. Smoking is NOT 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 staff especially loves new releases of movies, recent magazines, and books.

CELEBRATING A SPECIAL OCCASION

If you will be celebrating a special occasion like an anniversary, birthday, honeymoon, wedding, or your 100th dive, please let us know so the staff can celebrate your occasion. Kindly advise the Reservations Office prior to traveling so the staff is notified in advance.

PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER'S/VIDEOGRAPHER'S FEES

Any person/group or company who is 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 permit's cost. 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 1mm, 3mm, or 5mm wetsuit or shorty and full-foot fins are suggested. Most snorkeling is done from the tenders. Some whale observations occur from the mothership. The Whale Commission does not allow scuba units or rebreathers in the Whale Sanctuary. Guests will board the tenders and when the whales are located, you may slip into the water and snorkel with the whales face-to-face.

PHOTOGRAPHY:

For topside photography, 28-85mm and 200-400mm zoom lenses, a 4 gig and higher card are best; a 300mm lens works for distance shots from the mother ship and anything longer than 400mm will be hard to use due to movement of the boat and targets.

For the in-water experiences, a housed camera with a 10-24mm lens is a viable choice. 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 masks, fins, and snorkels. If any of your equipment fails while onboard, the crew will loan you equipment free of charge.

PHOTO/VIDEO

The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II offers a PC for downloading photos. The Photo pro is available for free coaching. The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II has a camera charging station and a large camera table available for your camera and video equipment. Our Video Professional can capture your adventure onboard the Turks & Caicos Aggressor II to share with family and friends. Video of the week/ (includes all guests and staff) are USD \$65 per person.

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 staff will have a 'boutique day.' The Turks & Caicos Aggressor II accepts cash, Visa, and MasterCard. Sorry, no personal checks, traveler's checks or American Express. You may also purchase boutique items online at <https://aggressorboutique.com>.

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 staff hosts a sunset Guest Appreciation Cocktail Party Friday evening. The staff will assist you with your dinner reservations in the marina.

GRATUITIES

Staff gratuities are not included in the charter. We believe gratuities should be voluntary and based upon the quality of service the staff 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, or credit card.

CHECKOUT

Saturday morning after a continental breakfast, check out is at 8:00 am. Guests may wait in the Ocean World Marina lobby with free Wi-Fi before taking a taxi to your hotel or airport. If you are extending your stay in Puerto Plata, contact our Aggressor Detours Travel Agents about booking tours or other land-based excursions. Email: Travel@aggressor.com

ADVENTURE LOG'S

Each week we post the Adventure log of the previous charter. Please feel free to visit www.aggressor.com and the Turks & Caicos, Adventure log to find out water temperature, visibility, and sightings.