

SAFETY ON BOATS, IN THE WATER AND SNORKELLING WITH DOLPHINS IN THE AZORES

Please read carefully and check how to signal for the guide or the boat when in the water

Please prepare for your time in the The Azores with care. Please ensure you get adequate sleep and you are NOT hungry before a boat trip. Drink alcohol in moderation the evening before a trip.

Remember YOU are responsible for informing snorkelling guides of your proficiency in the water. If you need assistance, ask. You will have to wear a life jacket on the boat. If weather and sea conditions are not suitable for swimming in the open sea, you will be advised to stay on the boat for your own safety. If the boat cannot go out to sea, you will be offered a replacement trip when conditions are more suitable.

Snorkelling (Practice, Practice Practice BEFORE you see the dolphins)

We assume most of our guests are proficient in snorkelling in open water. Your guide will discuss your snorkelling experience on arrival and he will advise if you need a snorkelling training to get confident with your equipment b4 you go to the open sea. This will avert any problems like swallowing water, cramp, panic etc.

SNORKELLING and SWIMMING WITH FINS

Fogging up: If it is a new mask, scour gently the inside with toothpaste, this will help. For clearing the mask: spit onto the glass and wipe it with your finger or ask the guide for special mask cleaner.

Water in the mask: Often because of hair breaking the seal, if the mask is placed over the eyes and nose before the strap is pulled behind the head it helps. Having the mask on the forehead and then pulling it down tends to pull the hair down with it! A better seal is created if the mask and face is wet before putting it on. Practice till you are confident.

Water in the snorkel; Simply blow hard and most of the water will fly out. There may be a little left and try not to panic if a little water is taken into the mouth.

Bending the knees: When snorkelling on the surface with fins, slightly bend your knees and put your fins beneath the water. This reduces the splash and doesn't scare the dolphins.

Swimming ability: You may be in the water for up to an hour.

DOLPHINS: You will be taken from the big boat to the area where the dolphins have been sighted. Swim towards them without splashing, softly. If you cannot see the dolphins it is best to look around you for their fins. Look underwater to both sides and forwards and backwards. When the guide or a guest sees dolphins they lift their arm, point down whilst swimming so others in our groups know.

OK SIGNAL and emergency sign: The OK sign is made with thumb and forefinger in the shape of an "O" make sure you both understand the way you will signal to request the boat comes to get you if you need help **It is best you establish this with either your guide or zodiac driver so you both know the same signs** . Usually it is an arm in the air waving from side to side. Sometimes it is a fin waving from side to side. It is NOT advisable to shout unless you are with other people. Stay with the group as much as possible for safety

(EMERGENCY ACTION PROCEDURES) ONGOING PERSONAL HEALTH CHECK

Discuss with a member of the boat crew any medical conditions or injuries whatsoever that you have or any symptoms that arise during your holiday.

PANIC: Panic drains energy fast and leads to greater problems. If you do feel scared try to keep the body relaxed and the breathing regular, make the agreed signal clearly to request the boat comes to pick you up and relax. If you are in the water and want the boat to pick you up wave one arm above your head from side to side. Do not call out too much as this wastes energy.

TIREDDNESS: Sometimes you may swim a lot and get tired quickly. Don't overdo it! If you are tired, relax in the water and use a buoyancy aid to get your breath back.

CRAMP: If you feel cramp, you can pull the end of your flipper towards you. This will help release the muscle. It is advisable to get back to the boat if it continues.

SWALLOWING WATER: If you swallow water, stop swimming, relax and take your mask off while you clear your throat. Signal for the boat to come and pick you up if you are in any distress.

DEHYDRATION: There is water, soft drink, teas and coffee on the boat. Keep your fluid levels high to avoid dehydration especially as you are in a hot climate.

BLEEDING: Please alert the boat crew if you find yourself or another person bleeding, if you cut yourself on the coral or a sting etc

If you experience any pain or discomfort, we advise asking for help as soon as possible as you are in the open sea and it takes time to get a boat to you.

PROCEDURES FOR SWIMMING WITH DOLPHINS AZORES

- Only 2 persons are allowed in the water at any one time and you will be watched by skipper and guide who will look after your safety. They can also direct you towards the dolphins so you get the best encounters. Stay calm and relaxed and do not “race” at the dolphins or splash a lot. Let them come to you, they are very curious. You will spend 10-20 mins in the waer on average and rotate you turn with other guests on the boat (max 8 persons)
- The boat approaches to the dolphins are done in a low impact way to avoid disturbing the natural behaviour of the dolphins or alarming them. This way we get to see ther natural behaviour rather than “avoidance” behaviour.

**Please print and sign the Liability Release Form below
and return to us via email or post to:**

info@dolphinandwhaleconnection.com

**The Dolphin & Whale Connection
111, Carden Hill
Brighton
BN1 8DA**

LIABILITY RELEASE FORM FOR THE AZORES

I hereby affirm that I am of good health to participate in the activity.

I have completed the Dolphin and Whale Connection medical form. I have revealed all information about my health and physical fitness which is up to date and I have not withheld any information.

I confirm that I can swim, I am confident snorkelling in open water. After swimming, I will climb back on board the boat using a small ladder. I will make the crew aware if I have any joint or back problems so they can best advise me.

I will familiarise myself with the 'normal operating procedures' and 'emergency operating procedures' that are followed by Futurismo the local operator which, when I understand and agree, I will comply. This means that in the event of any difficulty I may experience, I know that all procedures are in place to respond appropriately.

I also understand that snorkelling in open water and being a passenger on a sea going vessel is a physically strenuous activity and that I will be exerting myself doing this. I fully agree to LISTEN to INSTRUCTIONS and follow the guidance of the boat crew on board.

I confirm that I am not taking any medication that carries a warning about impairment of my physical or mental abilities. I agree to abide by the safety regulations and codes of conduct set out by the Dolphin and Whale Connection and to follow recommendations from Futurismo regarding activity in the water and around the dolphins and Whales.

If I have any past or present medical conditions that would put me at risk, I confirm that I have sought medical advice as to my participation in the programme which has been authorised. I am not withholding any information from the operator which would put me at risk. I am responsible for my participation in the program and will opt out if I feel something is beyond my limits and will request assistance if I need it.

All guests in group please sign below to confirm your acceptance of these terms:

.....(Full Name and Signature)

.....(Full Name and Signature)

.....(Full Name and Signature)

.....(Full Name and Signature)

Parents sign for children under 16yrs

..... (Date)