



## **LUNDY SEAL ENCOUNTER DIVE TRIPS**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **Do I need to be an experienced diver to dive with the Seals at Lundy?**

The Lundy Seal dive sites are shallow and sheltered so our Lundy Seal encounter dive trips are suitable for all experience levels and make a great introductory dive if it is the first time that you have dived in UK waters. You just need a minimum of a PADI Open Water dive certification or equivalent

#### **Do I need to do a pool refresher/check dive before my trip?**

If you have less than 10 logged dives and do not have logged evidence of a dive in the 6 months prior to your trip, a minimum of a pool refresher session is compulsory.

If you have evidence of 10-50 logged dives and have not logged a dive in the 12 months prior to your trip, a minimum of a pool refresher session is compulsory.

If you are a dive professional or have 50+ logged dives, please check with us before you book your trip.

We run pool refresher sessions the day before each Lundy trip or you can book a session local to you, but it must be logged by a dive professional. If this is your first cold water dive, a pool refresher is recommended regardless of experience level, so you can relax on the day and enjoy the dives

#### **I haven't dived for more than 2 years, do I need to re-train?**

If it's been 2 years or more since your last dive, or maybe it's less than 2 years but you haven't dived since you qualified, PADI recommends that

you undertake a more comprehensive refresher. We offer PADI Reactivate, which covers a full e-learning theory refresher plus tuition time with an Instructor to practice and hone your dive skills and buoyancy control.

**Are there any age restrictions on your Lundy Seal encounter dive trips?**

Our trips are open to all Open Water qualified divers aged 12+ and under 18s need to be accompanied by an adult. The adult can be a boat passenger/snorkeller and does not need to dive

**I am a single diver, can I join a trip?**

We welcome single divers on our Lundy Seal encounter dive trips. You can either buddy with one of the dive guides or with another diver that you meet on the boat.

**Can I join your trips as a boat passenger/snorkeller?**

We are a dive boat, so it's an expensive option for snorkellers as everyone pays a share of the dive guide costs. Please note that there is no snorkel guide, but there is safety watch from the boat and we will include snorkel equipment in your ticket price. We do not recommend our trips as a boat trip only, as there is no opportunity to get off the boat, unless you snorkel or dive and it can be a long day if it's choppy

**Will I definitely see the Seals?**

In 10 years of operating trips, we have only had 1 trip where divers who did both dives did not see a Seal underwater. Seals are wild animals and we let them come and find us so nothing can ever be guaranteed. They are naturally curious and very playful, so normally they hear us enter the water and can't wait to check us out and it is common to enjoy very close extended encounters with the Seals on their terms.

**Do you offer dry suits? Will I be cold underwater?**

We offer our rental customers full 5mm wetsuits, plus a 5mm shorty and hood and gloves. We find this to be a good level of protection from end of May to mid-October. The Seal encounter dive sites are shallow and sheltered, so this helps with body warmth. Many divers find dry suits too hot in the summer months and we do not offer them for rental as sizing is highly individual for the suit to be effective

**What does your full equipment hire package include?**

2 tanks, weights and belt, BCD, regs, 1 x full 5mm wetsuit, 1 x 5mm shorty, hood, gloves, boots, fins, mask

**What size dive equipment do you offer for hire?**

We offer dive equipment for hire in standard small, medium, large and extra large sizes. If you think you are of a non-standard size (xxs, xs or xxl, xxxl or have an unusual body shape) it is worth discussing this with us before you book your trip, so that we can make sure we have equipment that will fit you. We do have xs and xxl dive gear in limited quantities so this needs to be pre-booked

**Do I have to dive with the guided group?**

Our trip price includes dive guides, but if you wish to dive in your own buddy pair that's fine with us as long as you and your buddy are reasonably experienced divers, so please discuss with our dive supervisor on the day

**What tanks do you offer for hire?**

We use 12L DIN tanks, so if you are using your own equipment and purely require tank hire, please check for compatibility or reserve 1 of our DIN to Yoke Adaptors if necessary

**What is the maximum dive time?**

The maximum dive time is 60 minutes

**Where do the trips depart from?**

Trips depart from and return to Ilfracombe Harbour

**What time will I need to be there and what time will I get back?**

If you are hiring dive equipment from us, you need to be prepared to be in Ilfracombe from 7am in the morning if your trip is an early departure. If you have all of your own gear you can meet us at the boat, load times vary and you will be contacted 2 days prior with full details. We are normally back into Ilfracombe harbour around 5.30-6.30pm depending on your trip departure time, but times can vary according to tide and weather conditions

**How long does the crossing to Lundy take?**

This depends on the weather conditions and tide, but around 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 and a half hours

**Is the crossing to Lundy likely to be rough?**

We won't travel if the weather conditions are judged to be unsafe, but otherwise trips go in all weathers. The crossing can be rough and we don't recommend our trip if you suffer badly with sea sickness

**I am staying on Lundy Island, so can I join you for a dive trip?**

Yes you can, but to embark onto the boat you have to descend/ascend a narrow metal ladder leading down from the Pier with your bags, which is not suitable for anyone with mobility issues and occasionally it is not possible to collect divers from the Pier due to strong wind/swell, so if you book it is at your own risk as we can only refund equipment hire if you are unable to join for the reasons mentioned above

**Do you have to cancel trips due to bad weather?**

Rain doesn't stop us from diving, but unsafe sea conditions do as it can be dangerous to cross the channel to/dive at Lundy. We try whenever possible to give 48 hours notice in event of cancellation, but we are at the mercy of the UK weather and sometimes conditions can change at the last moment, so very occasionally we have to cancel trips even as late as the morning of departure.

Please remember we are as disappointed as you are when this happens, because we don't get to dive or get paid! You will be offered alternative dates and if none of these dates are suitable, then a full refund will be paid.

If you are booking accommodation, it is worth mentioning that you are coming to dive at Lundy and checking the cancellation policy before you book. There is plenty of B&B accommodation in Ilfracombe, so if you are flexible about where you stay, you should be able to find somewhere last minute

**Will I get a refund if I need to cancel my trip?**

You will receive a full refund less booking fee and bank/payment system charges (5% of trip cost) if you cancel 30 days or more prior to your trip departure date. If it's less than 30 days then we will refund you if we can sell your space. Many of our trips are oversubscribed, so it is likely that we will be able to sell your space, but please don't rely on this. Please make sure that you have travel insurance in place, in case you need to cancel due to accident, illness, Covid 19 or another insurable event

**What boats do you use?**

Our trips are on-board Obsession II or Bright Horizon, Ilfracombe's premier dive boats, skippered by some of the most experienced boat handlers in North Devon. Both are super comfy catamarans, with plenty of space for 10 divers and undercover seating/seating in the wheelhouse for wetter crossings. There is space to securely tie-down tanks and stow kit, plus a dive lift to make exiting the water a breeze. There's an on-board toilet and hot drinks and chocolate bars are served in between dives

**How many dives do we do?**

The trip includes 2 guided dives, with a maximum dive time of 60 minutes per dive and a 1 hour surface interval between dives

**Is there food and drink available on the boat?**

You will need to bring plenty of food and drinking water. Hot drinks and chocolate bars are served in between dives, but there is nothing else available on the boat. Diving is hungry work so bring more food than you think you will need, eat a good breakfast and eat plenty before and in between dives. This will make a massive difference to your body temperature whilst diving