

## Optiquatics Photo Workshops and Dive Adventures California Channel Islands on the PEACE

### FAQs and PREPARATION BULLETIN

#### **ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION FORM**

We need additional information from you to ensure you have the best trip possible (your equipment needs, travel plans, dietary requirements, etc.). Please fill out the Pre-Trip Information Form (<http://www.optiquatics.com/forms/pre-trip.doc>) provided on our website and email to us as soon as possible. It is an MS Word document and is designed to allow you to download and email to us as often as necessary to get us all the information we need.

#### **DIVING ABILITY**

These trips assume that you are capable of conducting a safe dive from a boat in cold water and tidal currents accompanied only by your diving buddy. These are not normally guided dives, and while the boat provides surface support, you are responsible for your dive planning and safety in the water. However, if your diving skills are good but you like the services of an experienced guide so you can just relax and enjoy the dive, guided dives are available with advance reservation (and fees).

Prior to each dive, we will get a briefing from the boat crew. Since we will be diving where there are tidal currents, we need to be able to get in the water at the specified times. "Gate times" will be limited.

#### **DIVING CONDITIONS**

Diving Conditions are generally moderate with depths between 30-100'. The water temperature is usually between 50-65F with possible slight currents.

#### **DRYSUIT DIVING**

Because of the combined water and air temperature, you will probably get the most enjoyment out of the trip if you dive in a dry suit. In order to get the most dives in (with limited gate times) you should also be comfortable and proficient with your equipment. If you need a drysuit, we will be able to help you rent DUI drysuits. Let us know if you need help getting a drysuit, training or experience.

#### **TYPICAL ITINERARY**

- ✓ Night 1
  - Photo Workshop and introductions
  - Board after the workshop or between 9-10 PM
  - Departure between midnight and 6AM depending on weather and destination
  
- ✓ Day 1:
  - Safety briefing, drysuit intro, camera equipment checkout
  - Dive the Channel Islands
  - Evening slideshow, workshop critique, etc.
  
- ✓ Day 2:
  - More diving
  - Refine Day 1 lessons and techniques
  - Evening photo contest
  
- ✓ Day 3:
  - More diving
  - Experiment with new concepts
  - Camera (and drysuit) maintenance and repair
  - Return to harbor around 5PM

## WHAT TO BRING

### ✓ YOUR DIVER CERTIFICATION CARD

#### DIVING

##### (All Required)

- ✓ Drysuit (preferred) or Wetsuit-(at least 1/4"- jacket & pants
- ✓ Hood, Boots, Gloves
- ✓ Mask, Snorkel, Fins
- ✓ Buoyancy Compensator w/ Automatic Inflator & Backpack (if not part of B.C.)
- ✓ Regulator with spare second stage in form of: octopus or combined with BC inflator, or a Spare Air.
- ✓ Pressure Gauge / Depth Gauge / Compass, Dive Computer or Tables & Watch or Timer
- ✓ Gearbag
- ✓ Tanks and weights (rentals available with proper notice)

#### FOR NIGHT DIVING

##### (Required)

- ✓ Wide beam dive light with lanyard (one for each diver)
- ✓ One chemical light (Cyalume) per diver for each night dive

##### (Recommended)

- ✓ One backup light per buddy team

#### OPTIONAL

- ✓ PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT (Let us know what you need!)
- ✓ Small light for daytime exploration of crevices, holes, caves, and as backup light on night dive.
- ✓ Underwater slate
- ✓ Knife
- ✓ DIVE-ALERT & Safety Sausage, Scuba-Tuba (safety item)
- ✓ Logbook
- ✓ Marine life identification books
- ✓ Save-A-Dive Kit (extra straps, snorkel keeper, tank o-rings, etc.)

#### FOR GAME COLLECTION

We do not plan on taking game on this trip.

#### PERSONAL ITEMS

- ✓ Light sleeping bag or sheets. Pillow (w/ pillowcase) and a light blanket is provided.
- ✓ Casual clothes for between dives. Windbreaker, warm jacket or sweater for evening, depending on the time of year.
- ✓ Towels & toiletries (including soap).
- ✓ swimwear, sun protection. Suntan lotion
- ✓ Motion sickness preventative (bonine, marezine) if you think you might have a problem.
- ✓ Special Drinks and Alcohol--the boat provides water, juices and sodas. However, please BYOB for any specialty items you may be particularly fond of.

**MARK YOUR GEAR TO DISTINGUISH IT FROM OTHERS.**  
**STORE IT IN YOUR GEARBAG or BUNK SPACE WHEN-NOT IN USE**

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE DIVE BOAT "PEACE"

#### PERSONAL ITEMS

Each diver or passenger should provide his/her own personal items/toiletries for their trip (i.e., towels, bathing suits, comb, toothbrushes, toothpaste, sunscreen etc.) Each head (there are two) contains a shower with a Hair and Body Shampoo dispenser for your convenience. Paper towel and toilet paper dispensers are also provided in each head for your convenience. You are also responsible for your own medication including seasickness, sinus, etc. However, the PEACE does maintain a supply of aspirin/ibuprofen and has a fully stocked first-aid kit in case of emergencies.

## **FOOD AND BEVERAGES**

All trips include food and non-alcoholic beverages (milk, juice, water, coffee and other hot beverages, and a soda machine with Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, Sprite, Root beer and Pink Lemonade). Passengers are welcome to bring their own alcoholic beverages. However, we request that you bring your ice and cooler to store them in. For passengers with special diets (i.e., vegetarian) please be sure to inform Optiquatics when booking your trip. In most cases, with proper notice, the PEACE can accommodate your dietary needs.

## **BUNK ROOM**

Upon confirmation of your reservation, you will be assigned a bunk. Sleeping accommodations are in single and double bunks with each bunk having a privacy curtain, an individual light, a pillow and blanket/accommodation. Passengers are welcome to bring a sleeping bag or extra pillows/blankets for their comfort. In order to keep the bunkroom dry and comfortable, no wet bathing suits, wetsuits or wet dive equipment is permitted in the bunkroom.

Although doubles are normally for two people (married couples and passengers wishing to share a bunk), these limited load trips will allow us to be flexible with our bunk assignments. (Bunks on the PEACE can normally accommodate up to 32 people. On these trips we will limit the number of passengers to 18). However, particular bunk requests are honored on a first paid, first served basis whenever possible. Bunk assignments will be posted in the galley of the PEACE above the sign in sheets. Please let us know about your bunk preferences ahead of time. But, please, do not take a bunk that is not assigned to you.

## **STORING YOUR DIVE EQUIPMENT**

The PEACE provides tank racks along the sides and middle section of the back deck. Dive bags and/or storage containers can be stored underneath the benches and along the sides of the boat. Dry suits can be hung outside along the port side of the boat. Camera gear can be placed on the center console on the back deck.

## **AIR FILLS**

The PEACE is able to fill tanks, including high-pressure tanks, up to a maximum of 3500psi. Nitrox and Argon (for dry suits) are provided by special requests only and are available only by previous arrangements.

## **TANKS & WEIGHTS**

\$45.00. Please be sure to indicate on your Additional Information Form what kind of tanks and how much weight.

## **NITROX**

Price for the 3-day trip unlimited fills = \$75 or \$8/dive - whatever is less. You will be required to present your NITROX certification card prior to receiving any fills.

Nitrox divers are strongly encouraged to use their own NITROX analyzers to test their own fills. You do not have to fill before you come. You should empty tank of any other gases. But you do not need a special tank.

## **CAMERAS AND VIDEO EQUIPMENT**

Optiquatics trips emphasize underwater photography and we make every effort for both you and your camera gear to be accommodated. The PEACE provides two fresh water rinse tanks, outside, along the starboard side of the boat. There is also a storage area, a charging station, a TV and VCR (to view u/w videos) in the galley. The tables in the galley will be used during the workshops and for working on camera equipment, mounting/viewing slides etc. Film that goes through the E-6 processing will be dried below decks and returned to their owners in the galley where they can be mounted, viewed and critiqued. During your diving day, your camera equipment can be placed on the center console in the middle of the back deck. The crew will hand the camera to you after you get in the water and take it from you at the swim-step when you return.

## FORMAL STUFF

### **TRIP PRICING**

| <b>2005 Price Schedule</b>                       |                          |                                 |                            |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| \$660 plus additional \$100 for Drysuit Workshop |                          |                                 | Vacation Package<br>\$1005 |
| Payment  | Due Date                 | Amount                          | Amount                     |
| Non-refundable deposit                           | to reserve your spot     | \$300                           | \$400                      |
| Final Payment                                    | 30 days before departure | \$360 (\$460 if drysuit rental) | \$595                      |
| <b>2006 Price Schedule</b>                       |                          |                                 |                            |
| \$700 plus additional \$100 for Drysuit Workshop |                          |                                 | Vacation Package<br>\$1045 |
| Payment  | Due Date                 | Amount                          | Amount                     |
| Non-refundable deposit                           | to reserve your spot     | \$340                           | \$440                      |
| Final Payment                                    | 30 days before departure | \$360 (\$460 if drysuit rental) | \$605                      |

Includes everything on the boat except alcoholic beverages, which are not available unless you bring your own. For tanks and weights rental, see boat info above.

- In addition, the Photo Workshop includes underwater camera and video equipment, all the film you need, on-board film processing, group and hands-on instruction, slide mounting supplies, computers, imaging software, CDs and prizes for photo contest.
- Drysuit Workshop price includes all your DUI Drysuit equipment and drysuit instruction.
- Vacation Package pricing includes Drysuit Workshop, your transportation to and from the PEACE, one night hotel accommodations, tanks & weights.
- Not included in either price: Crew tips, dinners night of departure or arrival, or airfare.

### **PAYMENT DUE DATE**

Full payment is due 30 days prior to the trip date. If payment is not received on time and we do not hear from you, we assume that you are forfeiting any monies paid, you are not going on the trip, and your space is available to be resold. Please communicate your intention to us--we want to help!

### **CANCELLATION / REFUND POLICY**

- If you cancel a reservation more than 60 days prior to the trip you will receive a full refund of any monies paid less \$50 handling fee.
- If you cancel a reservation less than 60 days but more than 30 days prior to the trip, we will refund all monies paid less the deposit.
- If you cancel a reservation less than 30 days prior to the trip you will not receive any refund

### **TRIP CANCELLATION**

Although it is unlikely, Optiquatics reserves the right to change an itinerary or cancel any trip due to weather, equipment failure, insufficient sign-up, or any unforeseen problem which may impede trip operations. In the event Optiquatics cancels a trip, clients will be offered either a full refund of monies received or credit towards a future trip.

### **TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE**

Trip cancellation insurance is available to protect you in case certain unforeseeable events that may prevent your participation in the trip such as cancelled airline flights; sickness, injury or death of you or a family member; or in the case of trip cancellation because of adverse weather or natural disasters. We strongly recommend this type of coverage to ensure against loss of non-refundable deposit and payments due to trip cancellation.

### **TRAVEL PLANS**

You should plan to arrive in Ventura and board the boat the night before the first day of the trip (even if you are not planning on taking the workshop). Directions to the boat are on the last page of this bulletin. First workshop begins at 7PM at Milano's Restaurant in Ventura Harbor, which is located right next to the dock where we board the Peace:

Milano's Restaurant (in Ventura Harbor, next to the dock where we board the Peace)  
1559 Spinnaker Dr  
Ventura, CA 93001

We will board after the Workshop, between 9-10 PM. Be prepared to depart at midnight.

On the last day, the boat returns to the dock about 5pm.

### **LATE ARRIVAL OR DEPARTURE**

No roll call is taken prior to departure. It is your responsibility to be on board. We will do our best to accommodate any situations that may arise because of conditions out of our control, like lost baggage, late flights. However all extra charges caused by delays (late luggage, extra flights, or catching up with a trip in progress) or any variations from the itinerary (early departure) will be at customer expense.

### **SCHEDULE CHANGES DUE TO WEATHER**

All destinations and departure times are subject to change depending on decisions made by the Captain(s) on weather, sea conditions and probable diving conditions. Unfortunately, we are not able to predict what the weather will be like for the upcoming trip. The crossing to the islands may be rough, but there are many places the boat can "hide" from the weather so that your diving is still enjoyable. The Captain(s) will not place the passengers, or the boat, in danger. The local marine forecast is checked prior to the departure of all trips. Unfortunately, as with any forecast, conditions can change quickly. The Captain(s) will make the final determination as to the destination and departure times, for the safety of all aboard.

### **LEFT ABOARDS**

Neither Optiquatics nor the PEACE are responsible for any lost or stolen items while on the dive trip. All unclaimed dive equipment and/or other miscellaneous items left aboard the PEACE for more than 30 days will be discarded. Please be sure to check for your personal items and dive equipment before you leave the boat. If you have left an item on board, please contact Optiquatics immediately so that we can track the item down for you. Arrangements can be made to ship items back to you via FedEx, UPS or regular mail. Shipping charges for returned items are the responsibility of the recipient.

### **FISHING LICENSES AND GAME TAKING**

All divers taking game must possess a current California Saltwater Fishing License with an Ocean Enhancement Stamp. If you plan to take game, please be sure you have both licenses. All divers/passengers who take game are responsible for adhering to California Department of Fish and Game laws. Each diver/passenger is responsible for all game he/she takes, including the legal size, possession limits and applicable season dates. Neither Optiquatics, nor the PEACE, will be responsible if you are caught and fined for taking illegal game.

### **DIRECTIONS TO THE BOAT**

**Ventura Harbor is located 60 miles north of Los Angeles and 26 miles south of Santa Barbara off Highway 101.**

**From the North (Northern California, Santa Barbara etc.):** Take the Seaward Avenue Exit. Turn left at the exit signal. You will now be on Harbor Blvd. Continue another 4 signal lights to Spinnaker Drive. Turn right on Spinnaker Drive. You will now be entering the Ventura Harbor area. Continue to the first sign that reads "Ventura Harbor Village. You have just entered the parking lot for a number of businesses. Continue towards the water to the end of the parking lot. Loading zones for the PEACE are in front of Hornblower's & Milano's Restaurants.

**From the South (LAX, Burbank & Ontario Airports, San Diego etc.):** Take the Seaward Ave. Exit. Turn left at the exit signal and cross the overpass to the next signal. Turn left at this signal. You are now on Harbor Blvd. Continue another 3 signal lights to Spinnaker Drive. Turn right on Spinnaker Drive. You will now be entering the Ventura Harbor area. Continue to the first sign that reads "Ventura Harbor Village. You have just entered the parking lot for a number of businesses. Continue towards the water to the end of the parking lot. Loading zones for the PEACE are in front of Hornblower's & Milano's Restaurants.

**PARKING**--There are two loading zones near Milano's Italian Restaurant in the Ventura Harbor Village. You may park in the loading zones ONLY to load/unload your gear. Once you have loaded/unloaded your gear, please move your vehicle to the back of the parking lot (near the sign where you entered). The parking at the Village is free. Please do not park in the red zones to load/unload your gear. Dock carts are located on the dock where the PEACE ties up. These are provided for your convenience. Please return them to the dock when you are done.

(Workshops begin at 7PM in the Captain's Room at Alexander's Restaruant, which is located in the lobby of the Sheraton Four Points, which is at the entrance to Ventura Harbor. Parking is free in front of the restaurant. We will all go to the boat around 10PM.