

## OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

We take great pride in preparing each of our tours with the goal of providing the highest quality service possible and creating an unforgettable experience in the price range of that tour.

We strive to make our tours as authentic, comfortable and fun as possible. By adding an accentuated unique personal touch we also strive to avoid the mentality of a generic mass-tourism day-trip.

In addition we only work with some of the best educated, skilfull guides from this area and use only the highest quality equipment, latest models of vans and quality control techniques to ensure the reliability and standards of our tours.

Our reputation is based on our steadfast pursuit of this policy as a destination management company.

At KayTours we are committed to investing in the design and implementation of new events, activities, tours, transportation and program logistics.

When you choose to purchase any services from KayTours, we encourage you to compare it, as we do, to competitive products.

We believe that this process will enhance your appreciation of the services you select.

With the best wishes from all of us at KayTours



### Emergency numbers

- Police Department 060
- Hospital PDC 01 984 803 1002
- Emergencies 066
- Fire Department PDC 01 (984) 879 366

### We need to know the following

- Any allergies, chronic diseases or special needs
- Please provide us a phone number

### What to bring when going on a trip to ruins?

- Wear light and comfortable clothes
- Wear solid footwear
- A hat and sunglasses
- Sunscreen and insect repellent
- Rain poncho (we provide umbrellas)
- Money for souvenirs, drinks during lunch and tips

### What to bring when going on a trip to cenotes or the ocean?

- Wear light and comfortable clothes and your swim wear underneath
- Wear a rash guard or a shirt while snorkeling
- Bio-degradable sunscreen only
- Wear sandals or flip flops
- Bring a towel
- Money for souvenirs, drinks during lunch and tips

## CENOTES

Dz'onot [dʒonoot] is a word the Mayans used to refer to any location with accessible groundwater, which the conquering Spaniards pronounced as cenote [*'senote*], (*/sɪ'noʊti/ or /sɛ'noʊteɪ/*). Basically a natural pit, or sinkhole, resulting from the collapse of limestone bedrock that exposes groundwater underneath.

It is estimated that there are more than 6000, although only 2400 are registered. The cenotes are water deposits of great depth, filled with the filtration water of underground rivers, streams and rain water. They were once the only resource for fresh water in the local Yucatecán jungle. For that reason they were the sacred places of the Maya, but also because they represented the entrance to the underworld also called "Xibalba" in the Mayan language. They believe that "Xibalba" was the place where the spirits of their gods lived and roamed free.

Besides many findings of artefacts by archaeologists, fossils of mammoths and other mammals were found. In 2007 scientists discovered the oldest intact human skeleton in a cenote near Tulum. In the Cenote Sagrado close to Chichen Itza many artefacts and skeletons were found. Therefore it is thought they were used for sacrificial offerings by the ancient Maya.

The formation of the Yucatán Peninsula is associated to the Chicxulub Ring. It's a semicircle of cenotes, which according to studies, constitute the edge of the crater that resulted from the impact of the asteroid that presumably caused the extinction of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago.

There are four different types of cenotes – those that are completely underground, those that are semi-underground, those that are at land level like a lake or pond, and those that are open wells.

Popular activities in these fresh-water holes are snorkeling, scuba and free diving, but taking underwater pictures of a fresh married couple trashing their wedding dress is currently a trend.

Source: <http://www.xenotes.com/what-are-the-cenotes.php>  
<http://yucatanoday.com/cenotes-underwater-sinkholes/?lang=en>

### Quick facts about cenotes

Longest explored underwater cave:

Ox Bal Ha – 167.7 miles / 269.8 km

Most popular: Dos Ojos – 54.6 miles / 88 km

Geology: Limestone



## CHICHEN ITZÁ

### “At the mouth of the well of the Itzá people”

Easily the best known and well-restored of Yucatán's archaeological sites, Chichén Itzá is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and was named one of the “New Seven Wonders of the World” in 2007. The ruins at Chichén Itzá cover an area of 2.5 miles<sup>2</sup> (6.5 km<sup>2</sup>) and can be toured in a day.

Chichén Itzá translates “at the mouth of the well of the Itzá people” and was a large pre-Columbian city built by the Maya people of the terminal classic period. The archaeological site is located in Tinúm Municipality, Yucatán State, Mexico, and has two distinct architectural zones. The southern zone dates back to the 7th century and showcases Chichén Itzá's early construction in the traditional Puuc Maya style of the Yucatán region.

The central zone was constructed after the arrival of the Toltecs around the 10th century and showcases a unique fusion of highland central Mexican and Puuc architectural styles.

Chichén Itzá's most impressive sights and structures are located in the central zone. Here you'll find the “Juego de Pelota” (Ball Court), several platforms, temples and the spectacular “El Castillo” (Pyramid of Kukulcán). Toltec warriors are represented in the carvings around the doorway at the top of “El Castillo”.

The Cenote Sagrado (Sacred Cenote) at Chichén Itzá has been used by the ancient Maya for ceremonial purposes including human sacrifices.

Each year during the spring and autumn equinoxes the sun produces the illusion of a serpent ascending or descending the steps of the pyramid of Kukulcán, a fantastic phenomenon that attracts huge crowds.

Source: <http://www.mayasites.com/chichen.html>  
<http://www.visitmexico.com/en/chichen-itza-archaeological-site-in-merida>

### Quick facts about Chichen Itzá

Cancun > Chichen Itza: 117 miles / 188 km

PDC > Chichen Itza: 96 miles / 155 km

Tulum > Chichen Itza: 80 miles / 128 km

Average visit duration: 140 min

Location: State of Yucatán

Ruins: not accessible or climbable



## COBÁ

### "Water stirred by wind"

Cobá was first settled between 50 BC and 100 AD. After 100 AD, the area around Cobá evidenced strong population growth, and with it an increase in its social and political status among Maya city states which would ultimately make Cobá one of the biggest and most powerful city states in the northern Yucatán area with an estimated 55,000 people living in its domain.

After 600 AD, the emergence of powerful city states of the Puuc culture and the emergence of Chichén Itzá altered the political spectrum in the Yucatán peninsula and began eroding the dominance of Cobá, beginning around 900 or 1000 AD. After 1000 AD power centers and trading routes had moved to the coast, forcing cities like Cobá into a secondary status, although somewhat more successful than its more ephemeral enemy Chichén Itzá. Cobá was abandoned at the time the Spanish conquered the peninsula around 1550.

The Maya ruins at Cobá are unique in that only a few of its estimated 6,500 structures have been uncovered. As many as fifty "sacbes" (ancient roads) led into this huge Mayan city center, one of them over 62 miles / 100 km long - the longest in the Mayan world. The steepness of the "Nohoch Mul" pyramid (the tallest in the Yucatan at over 138 foot / 42 meters ) and the building techniques employed here are characteristic of the Peten region of Guatemala. There are stories that indicate a ruling queen here married a priest from Tikal, which has the tallest Mayan pyramid. Climbing the 120 stairs to the top of the Grand Pyramid at Cobá is well worth the effort. Standing here one can see over the jungle canopy for miles.

The small temple building which crowns the pyramid has two small carvings that are known as a "descending god" over the door. There are many theories about the meaning of these curious carvings, which are also found in Tulum.

On an early morning walk through these extensive ruins in the jungle, one can see numerous species of birds, butterflies and animals. The sounds of the jungle create an entertaining symphony. The beautiful natural setting of Cobá is a pleasure to explore.

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coba>  
<http://www.mayasites.com/coba.html>

### Quick facts about Cobá

Cancun > Coba 82 miles/132 km  
PDC > Coba 68 miles / 110 km  
Tulum > 29 miles / 47 km  
average visit duration 100 minutes  
Location: Quintana Roo, Mexico  
Ruins: accessible and climbable



## EK' BALAM

### “Bright Star Jaguar”

The startling and amazingly well-preserved sculptures uncovered at Ek' Balam are exciting to both newcomers and repeat visitors of Mayan sites. Dating from 100 BC to its height at 700-1,200 BC, it is unlike any other Mayan site.

The main temple here is impressive, both in size and architecture. Its massive size of over 500 feet / 152 meters long and 200 feet / 61 meters wide easily makes it one of the largest structures ever excavated in the Yucatán. The intricate detail of the artistry and symbolism incorporated into the frescoes and sculptures decorating this temple are an artistic marvel.

Ek' Balam's most striking temple is one with a huge “monster mouth”. To the Maya this represents a portal to the “other world”. The enormous mouth of the Witz Monster (entry to the underworld), complete with teeth, is inspiring.

Evidence has been found at Ek' Balam that blood letting rituals were practiced here. This was self-inflicted by the priest and nobles. Some suggest that one of the human figures depicted above the mouth is in the posture of a defeated enemy about to be sacrificed, so it may also be a site of human sacrifice but to what extent they are not sure yet. The sculpted works of the Maya ruins at Ek' Balam are unusual and extremely well preserved. Some figures are winged, some in the meditative “lotus” position, one sits headless above the center of the monster mouth. All are beautiful and exquisitely crafted.

Ek' Balam also has a very beautiful arch connecting to a “sacbe” (ancient road). In ancient times, these “sacbes” connected the Maya kingdoms, such as its neighbor Chichen Itzá. Raised sacbes stretch out in each direction, testimonies to the high civilization achieved by the ancient Maya. With sculptures and representations unique among all Mayan sites and its majestic palace and grounds, Ek' Balam seems literally untouched by time. In terms of art and architecture, this is a site that is sure to change our fundamental concepts of the ancient Maya.

Source: <http://www.mayasites.com/ekbal.html>

### Quick facts about Ek' Balam

Cancun > Ek' Balam: 106 miles / 172 km

PDC > Ek' Balam: 97 miles / 156 km

Tulum > Ek' Balam: 79 miles / 127 km

Average visit duration: 75 min

Location: State of Yucatán

Ruins: accessible and climbable



## ISLA MUJERES

### “Island of the women”

Isla Mujeres is an island in the Caribbean Sea, about 8 miles /13 km off the Yucatán Peninsula coast. The island is some 4.3 miles / 7 km long and 2,130 ft / 650 m wide. To the east is the Caribbean Sea with a strong surf and rocky coast, and to the west a sandy beach and the skyline of Cancún can be seen across the clear waters. In the 2010 census, the town on the island had a population of 12,642 inhabitants.

The island was used by the Mayan people as a sanctuary dedicated to Ixchel, the goddess of love and fertility. According to the legend, when the Spanish arrived they found a large number of women statues carved in stone in honor of the goddess, and it is from here that the island gets its name “Isla Mujeres”. Another legend also has it that the island was used as a refuge by the pirate and slave trader, Fermin Mundaca, who built a beautiful hacienda here to try to make a local island girl fall in love with him.

The first information available about Isla Mujeres is from the period between 564 - 1516 AC, when it was part of the Maya province called Ekab. There were 4 Maya provinces in what is today the State of Quintana Roo. The Maya also exploited the salt that the island produced in the “salinas” (small interior lagoons). The salt was used not only for the conservation of food and medicine but also as a generally accepted currency for commerce of goods along the whole Maya region. The Maya goddess Ixchel had a temple in what is today the Hacienda Mundaca.

Isla Mujeres is available via ferry. Transportation on the island consists primarily of taxis or golf carts and moped scooters. There is also a bus service that runs from the downtown to the different neighborhoods and a small airport.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isla\\_Mujeres](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isla_Mujeres)

### Quick facts about Isla Mujeres

Cancun > Isla Mujeres: 9 miles / 14 km  
PDC > Isla Mujeres: 47 miles / 75 km  
Tulum > Isla Mujeres: 84 miles / 136 km  
Average visit duration: 300 min  
Location: State of Quintana Roo



## MUYIL

### Muyil – Sian Ka'an

Muyil (also known as Chunyaxché) is situated near to the Sian Ka'an lagoon of Chunyaxché and is connected to it. There are two archaeological sites in Muyil, but only one is open to the public. Archaeologists refer to the public site as Muyil A and the private site as Muyil B.

It is a less excavated site which is significant for being one of the earliest and longest inhabited Mayan sites on the Yucatán Peninsula. The pyramid is 57 feet / 17 meters high, making it the highest pyramid on the Riviera Maya coast. The buildings were mainly of a civic-religious and residential nature and show the Peten architectural style, a style typical of older, more southern Mayan sites with their steep walled pyramids.

The settlement extends across 38 hectares of jungle and its proximity to the lagoon made it an important maritime trade route, with relations to Cobá well documented. Pottery shards and other artifacts have been found dating back from as early as 350 BC to as late as 1200-1500 CE and indicate that the city probably served as key point along a trade route between Yucatán, Belize, Guatemala, and Cozumel, once accessible via a series of canals. Jade, obsidian, chocolate, honey, feathers, chewing gum, and salt were commonly traded goods.

This site, at which numerous subterranean chambers have been found, has a very different feel from other Mayan sites in the Yucatán. The architecture, with rounded edges on its pyramid and other buildings, and its proximity to protected Caribbean waters makes it an interesting contrast in comparison to some of the more exacting architecture of the inland sites.

A walk down a path populated with birds, butterflies and abundant wildlife leads to the lagoon in the Sian Ka'an biosphere. The crystal clear waters and lush mangroves are a nature lover's delight. Floating gently through canals that have been used for over 2,000 years, one envies the ancient Maya who once inhabited this unusually tranquil place.

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muyil> - <http://www.mayasites.com/muyil.html> - [http://inneroptics.net/mayan\\_kingdom\\_book/muyil/](http://inneroptics.net/mayan_kingdom_book/muyil/)  
<https://www.locogringo.com/mexico/ways-to-play/mayan-ruins-archaeological-sites/muyil-ruins/>

### Quick facts about Muyil

Cancun > Muyil: 95 miles / 153 km

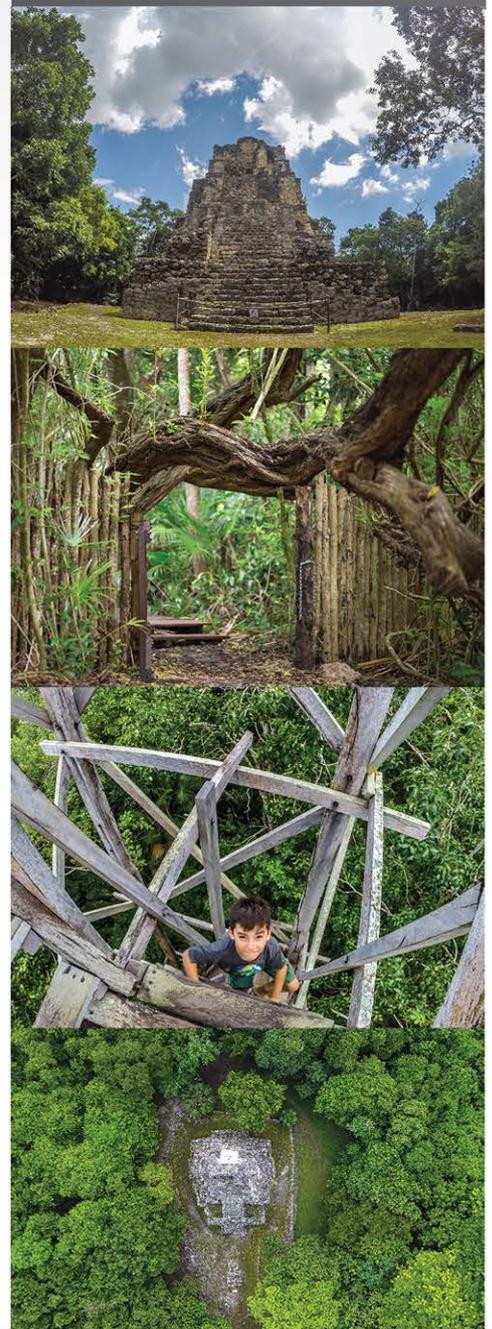
PDC > Muyil: 54 miles / 87 km

Tulum > Muyil: 30 miles / 48 km

Average visit duration: 75 min

Location: State of Quintana Roo

Ruins: not accessible or climbable



## PUNTA LAGUNA

### “House of the spider monkey and the jaguar”

The village was established in the 1930's by a Mayan man named Ignacio Canul, whose two sons and their families still live there today. Along with other villages, Punta Laguna is part of a 5000 hectare, government-protected nature reserve called Ma'ax Yetel Kooh, which is Mayan for “House of the spider monkey and the jaguar.”

In addition to the unique subspecies of spider monkeys that inhabits the area, the preserve is also home to howler monkeys, pumas, coatis and a variety of birds. When it comes to observing the spider monkeys or any of the animals, remember that they are wild. They are not on a schedule and may or may not feel like making an appearance at the time you are out hiking.

Our guided tours through some of the jungle trails reveal the wealth of exotic plants and animals, as well as partially buried pre-hispanic ruins. Despite the thick jungle growth, there are several spots where temples and the tops of pyramids can be clearly seen. Most of the ruins are from the late classic to post-classic periods, around 700 to 1000 A.D., and are a fascinating alternative to popular sites like Chichén Itzá or Tulum because they are in the same condition they were discovered in and have not been restored by archaeologists.

The jungle terrain is not especially difficult or steep, but a good pair of boots or tennis shoes that have grip is recommended because some of the rocks can become slick from moss or afternoon showers.

Where there is jungle there are bugs, so to protect yourself, bring plenty of insect repellent and cover as much skin as possible. Long socks, breathable pants, a long-sleeved shirt and a hat are necessities. And as always, carry plenty of water and sunscreen.

Source: <http://yucatanoday.com/punta-laguna-nature-reserve/?lang=en>

### Quick facts about Punta Laguna

Cancun > Isla Mujeres: 60 miles / 100 km

PDC > Isla Mujeres: 37 miles / 60 km

Tulum > Isla Mujeres: 31 miles / 50 km

Average visit duration: 120 min

Location: State of Quintana Roo



## SIAN KA'AN

“Where the sky is born”

Sian Ka'an is a biosphere reserve in the municipality of Tulum established in 1986 and became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987. Part of the reserve is on land and part is in the Caribbean Sea, including the section of the Meso-American coral reef. The reserve has an area of 5,280 km<sup>2</sup>. It also includes 23 known archaeological sites of the Maya civilization including Muylil.

Located on the east coast of the Yucatán peninsula, this biosphere reserve contains tropical forests, palm savanna, one of the most pristine wetlands, mangroves and marshes, as well as a large marine section intersected by a coral reef. It provides a habitat for a remarkably rich flora and a fauna comprising more than 300 species of birds, as well as a large number of the region's characteristic terrestrial vertebrates, which cohabit in the diverse environment formed by its complex hydrological system. Among the more than 100 documented mammals include endangered species like Black-handed Spider Monkey, Yucatán Black Howler Monkey, Jaguar, Puma, Ocelot and Central American Tapir.

A small population of the vulnerable West Indian Manatee occurs in the coastal waters. Amphibians and reptiles are represented by more than 40 recorded species, among them the vulnerable American Crocodile and four of the six turtle species found along the Mexican coast, all reproducing within the biosphere reserve. Jointly with the many other aquatic habitats it harbors more than 400 species of fish and a wealth of other marine life.

About a third of the property is comprised of highly diverse and productive mangrove communities, of vital importance to fisheries in the broader region. Hundreds of forested islands, locally known as “Petenes”, emerge from the flooded marshes, some reaching over a kilometer in diameter.

The lush green of the forests and the many shades of blue of the lagoons and the Caribbean Sea under a wide sky offer fascinating visual impressions.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sian\\_Ka%27an](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sian_Ka%27an)  
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/410>

### Quick facts about Sian Ka'an

Cancun > Entrance Tulum: 87 miles / 140 km

PDC > Entrance Tulum: 46 miles / 75 km

Average visit duration: 140 min half day tour/  
360 min full day tour

Location: State of Quintana Roo

Ruins: not accessible or climbable



## TULUM

Tulum may formerly have been known by the name Zama, meaning City of Dawn, because it faces the sunrise. The main temple is located on a 12-meter (39 ft) tall cliff facing east toward the Caribbean Sea. Tulum is also the Yucatán Mayan word for fence, wall or trench. The walls surrounding the site allowed the Tulum fort to be defended against invasions. Tulum had access to both land and sea trade routes, making it an important trade hub, serving as a major port for Cobá. From numerous depictions in murals and other works around the site, Tulum appears to have been an important site for the worship of the Descending god “Ah Mucen-cab” and had an estimated population of 1,000 to 1,600 inhabitants.

Tulum was one of the last cities built and inhabited by the Maya; it was at its height between the 13th and 15th centuries and managed to survive about 70 years after the Spanish began occupying Mexico and is one of the best-preserved coastal Maya sites. There are three major structures of interest at the Tulum site. The Frescoes and the Temple of the Descending God are the three most famous buildings. Among the more spectacular buildings here is the Temple of the Frescoes that included a lower gallery and a smaller second story gallery. The Temple of the Frescoes was used as an observatory for tracking the movements of the sun.

The Castillo was built on top of a previous building that was colonnaded and had a beam and mortar roof. The lintels in the upper rooms have serpent motifs carved into them. The construction of the Castillo appears to have taken place in stages. A small shrine appears to have been used as a beacon for incoming canoes. This shrine marks a break in the barrier reef that is opposite the site. Here there is a cove and landing beach in a break in the sea cliffs that would have been perfect for trading canoes coming in. This characteristic of the site may be one of the reasons the Maya founded the city of Tulum exactly here, as Tulum later became a prominent trading port during the late Postclassic.

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tulum>  
<http://www.mayasites.com/tulum.html>

### Quick facts about Tulum

Cancun > Tulum: 75 miles / 121 km

PDC > Tulum: 37 miles / 60 km

Average visit duration: 90 min

Location: State of Quintana Roo

Ruins: not accessible or climbable



## WHALE SHARKS

As the largest fish in the sea, reaching lengths of 40 feet (12 meters) or more, whale sharks have an enormous menu from which to choose. Fortunately for most sea dwellers and us, their favorite meal is plankton. They scoop these tiny plants and animals up, along with any small fish that happen to be around, with their colossal gaping mouths while swimming close to the water's surface.

The world's biggest fish are hungry migrators on a mission, according to a tracking study that mapped whale sharks' long journeys around the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean to a favorite feeding hot spot off the Yucatan Peninsula.

One whale shark's incredible 5,000-mile (7,200-kilometer) swim could even help solve the long-standing mystery of where whale sharks give birth, an event no scientist has ever seen. Preferring warm waters, whale sharks populate all tropical seas. They are known to migrate every spring to the continental shelf of the central west coast of Australia and Mexico.

### General guidelines: Swimming with Whale Sharks Tour

- DO NOT TOUCH ANY ANIMAL
- The ability to swim is required
- Leave items of value (tablets, cameras, etc.) in your hotel
- Feel free to bring your own equipment, but we provide snorkel equipment
- Bring towel, hat, sun glasses, money for tips and souvenirs, sandals or flip-flops
- Rash Guards or Organic sunscreen only
- Please do not put any sunscreen or repellent on before we go into the water

Source: <http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/fish/whale-shark/>  
<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2013/08/130821-whale-shark-satellite-tracking-migration-gulf-mexico-science/>  
<http://www.myprivate.tours/single-post/2016/05/10/Swimming-with-Whale-Sharks>

### Quick facts about Whale Sharks

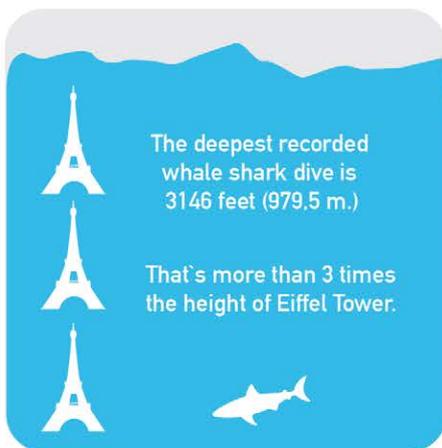
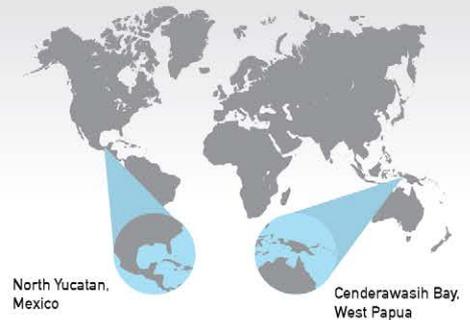
Scientific Name: *Rhincodon typus*  
Slow moving plankton feeder  
Largest known fish species  
Length: up to 12.5 meters / 41 feet  
Weight: up to 21.3 metric tons / 47,000 lb



## THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SHARK

Whale sharks are found in tropical and temperate waters around the world, in shallow coastal water and the open ocean.

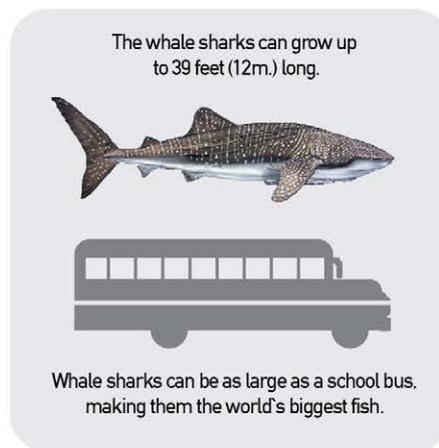
While Whale sharks are mostly solitary animals, they are known to feed in large groups. This behavior has been documented in Cenderawasih Bay in West Papua and in the north of the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico, the most marine biodiverse waters on Earth.



The deepest recorded whale shark dive is 3146 feet (979.5 m.)

That's more than 3 times the height of Eiffel Tower.

The whale sharks can grow up to 39 feet (12m.) long.



Whale sharks can be as large as a school bus, making them the world's biggest fish.

### FAQ'S:

**CAN A WHALE SHARK ACCIDENTALLY SWALLOW YOU?**

No, although its mouth can be over 3 feet wide its throat isn't big enough to pass large objects.

**DO WHALE SHARKS BITE?**

No, Whale sharks have over 3.0000 teeth, but they look like velcro and are too small to cause any damage.

## PROTECTING WHALE SHARKS

### PROBLEM:

Whale sharks are valuable to humanity and the economy, yet are being exploited worldwide.

- Many killed for fins to use in soup
- Fins are high-value commodities
- Highly valued in Asian markets

### SOLUTION:

Enhance current protective measure and create new policies that curb exploitation.



### ENHANCE ECO - TOURISM

Swimming with whale sharks in their natural habitat, without touching them, creates awareness about the threat of extinction of these animals.

### BAN SHARK FINNING

Finning involves cutting off a shark's fins and throwing the rest of the body back into the water only to experience a slow death. Creating legislation that bans finnings is critical to helping preserve all sharks. The US and EU recently closed loopholes in laws that prohibit this wasteful practice.

### CREATE SHARK SANCTUARIES

The establishment of shark sanctuaries in places such as the Marshall Islands the Bahamas and Mexico protects sharks by prohibiting all commercial shark fishing, allowing populations to recover and improving the health of the whole ecosystem.