

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR DOLPHIN TOURISM OPERATORS PONTA DO OURO PARTIAL MARINE RESERVE

This code of conduct has been agreed upon by permitted operators within the PPMR and is set operating procedure for tourism with dolphins and whales.

Every attempt should be made by the operator NOT to interfere with natural behaviour of the dolphins.

Dolphins should have right of way in all circumstances.

Participants are to receive a mandatory briefing on in-water code of conduct and rules.

When cetaceans are encountered

Follow a one boat and no queue policy

The pod is approached slowly and off to the side

Boat crew to assess behaviour and likelihood of interaction

Participants are requested to prepare themselves for water entry

Feeding and coaxing of dolphins is not permitted

Tail slapping, fighting & erratic herding behaviours; no water entry

Newborns (folds visible <3 weeks); no water entry

Contact time with the dolphins should be kept to a minimum

PODS MERGE WITH TWO OPERATORS PRESENT

Boat going in direction of merged pod direction has right of way

If pods do not merge, give space for them to pass each other and then resume once 100m apart

Water entry and swim postures

Wait for the skippers instruction before getting off the boat.

Once off the boat immediately move away and stay clear of the motors.

Participants enter into the water in a slow, gentle motion, no backward rolls or diving off the boat.

Participants are to float with their hands at their sides and wait for the dolphins to approach them.

Drops

Operator is allowed one pod per launch

Operator is allowed two drops per pod in low season.

Operator is allowed one drop per pod in high season

10 December to 10 January

Operators must annually agree on high season dates

If on first drop dolphins behave unfavourably, the operator is allowed to find a second pod on which to do one drop.

In-water conduct

NO TOUCHING - if participant is caught, they are to return to the boat with no further dolphin water entry.

NO DIVING DOWN - one warning and then they are to return to the boat with no further dolphin water entry. Swim facilitator is permitted to dive down.

No persons to enter water without a swim facilitator.

- Once in the water stay in a group with your swim guide/facilitator.
- Wait quietly for the dolphins to approach.
- Follow the dolphin guide/facilitator who has been trained on how to interact with the wild dolphins and monitor their behaviour.
- Swim slowly and calmly causing as little turbulence as possible.
- The use of underwater scooters is not permitted.
- The use of underwater camera flash is not permitted.
- The use of selfie sticks is not permitted.
- Use of scuba gear is not permitted.


Different dolphin behaviour and view/swim conduct thereof

The dolphin swim experience is solely based on the dolphins behaviour.


Different wild dolphin behaviours:

- Avoidance; operator should leave pod
- Resting; operator discretion - one drop to confirm & satisfy participants
- Socialising amongst themselves; normal drops apply (as above)
- Hunting; very hard to get successful drops, therefore no drops should be attempted
- Mating; fighting, herding and other aggressive or potentially aggressive behaviours; no drops should be attempted, abandon swim if it occurs in-water.


Dolphin Encountours Research Center

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