

Sardine Run

**THE GREATEST SHOAL ON EARTH 2018 – Port St Johns
Runs from June – July every year!**



You might be wondering what exactly is this Sardine Phenomenon people are talking about...

It is called "**The Greatest Shoal on Earth** - hundreds of people are engulfed in the sardine fever that strikes KwaZulu-Natal and, not only are the people in a frenzy; predators of the ocean congregate en-masse for a feast-of-the-year.



The Sardine Run Expedition is a unique wildlife encounter, following the annual Sardine migration along South Africa's beautifully rugged coastline. Typically, the annual migration of the Sardines from their beginnings in the Southern Cape to being sighted off shore on South Africa's Wild Coast starts in June each year. As the shoals of Sardines move north wards up the coast the size of the Sardines shoals tend to grow, ultimately forming the 'greatest shoal on earth' .

This amazing journey attracts a multitude of predators that track and follow the Sardines migration, exploiting this localized and abundant food source. It is hard to describe the excitement of the Dolphins, numerous bird species, Whales, Cape Fur Seals and Sharks as they 'hunt' the Sardines.

You can actually hear the excited squeals of Common and Bottlenose Dolphins as they travel in large breaching waves to pursue their prey, long before you see them. Attracted by the Sardines, game fish such as Shad and Garrick pursue the Sardine Shoals and provide another food source for the Dolphins. Contributing to the noise and surface action are the birds, Cape Gannets, Albatross (yellow nose and black browed), Terns and Petrels, diving into the shoals of Sardines from a great height. Humpback Southern Right and Bryde Whales can also be seen in pursuit of this moving feast.

Below the surface the action continues with the Sharks (Copper, Dusky, Blacktip, Whitetip, Bronze Whalers and Zambezi) feasting on the Sardines and other marine life. The Cape Fur seals actually sleep with one eye open, ready to react should they see a large shark in their vicinity.



The Dolphins and Sharks look for opportunities to herd the Sardines into balls, this is the Sardines natural reaction to feeling threatened as they perceive there to be safety in numbers. These 'bait balls' vary in size and frequency, with the action on some of the larger ones lasting hours.

After several weeks of migrating northwards, the sardines swim out to sea and are carried along the inner edge of the Agulhas current back to the southern Cape to spawn. It must be mentioned at this point that the Sardine Run is a natural phenomenon; therefore the exact timing cannot be predicted. Typically the best times to see the 'run' is June to July.

BEST DATES are from mid-JUNE & JULY:



PACKAGE ITINERARY

6 Nights / 7 days

- Day 1: Transfer to Port St Johns from King Shaka Airport (7 hour transfer) or Mthatha Airport (2 hour transfer)
- Day 2-7: After an enjoyable breakfast, board the RIB/zodiac for an exhilarating day of adrenalin rush as you experience the spectacular migration of the sardines. Unlimited diving! Sandwich lunch onboard.
- Day 8: Depart after breakfast – or travel on to Aliwal Shoal for baited shark diving and reef diving (see details below).



TYPICAL SARDINE RUN ITINERARY

DAY 1

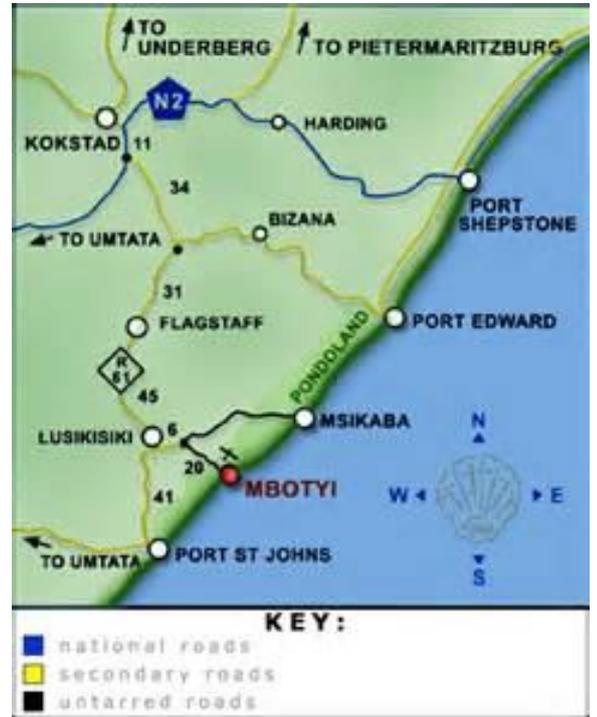
Location: Port St Johns

The drive from the Durban city central is about 6 hours, and from King Shaka airport is about 7 hrs. From the small airport called Mthatha Airort, transfers are about 2 hours. Meet for early evening for dive briefing and boat orientation. Dinner from 18h30.

DAY 2 – DAY 7

After an early breakfast, the RIB/zodiac dive boat will be ready with your cylinders, weight belts and weights. Full boat briefings are provided by our very experienced skippers who will also assess the safety of each launch.

The launch is from the river, which is in front of your accommodation, and out to sea. When the action has been found, it's all go! You are already in your wetsuits, so most of the day you will be in and out of the boat many times, either with scuba or on snorkel. It depends on how fast the predators and prey are moving. The scuba gear will be kept assembled and at hand on the boat so we can drop you into the action as soon as possible. After an action filled day at sea, return to the river lodge to either relax or for the more adventurous, enjoy some of the activities offered. We all meet for dinner and the plans for the next day are made.



DAY 8

Depart after breakfast – to the airport, or to Aliwal Shoal for extra dives and dive package.

ACCOMMODATION - Port St Johns, Wild Coast





Situated on the mighty Umzimvubu River, between Mountains Thesiger and Sullivan, at Port St Johns.

Newly upgraded and renovated, it's an establishment with a warm, comfortable atmosphere and exceptional scenic views. They offer good service and up market accommodation and are ideally situated for the Sardine Run!

Family Chalet

Two rooms – one with three single beds and one with a double bed. Bathroom and kitchen, with lounge and veranda. Extra price to upgrade to the Lodge Rooms.

Lodge Rooms

The lodge rooms are all en-suite with showers only. Tea and coffee facilities are available and the rooms are equipped with TVs with limited DSTV channels. The rooms have lovely garden, mountain or river views and some rooms are air-conditioned.

Restaurant & Pub

The A la Carte Restaurant offers a breakfast buffet which is included in the package. They offer scrumptious dinners, to choose off the menu, and some evenings there is a buffet evening. Fully licensed with a well stocked ladies bar, a pool table and a big screen TV for the sport enthusiast. Relax in our comfortable lounge and bar area or relax around the sparkling pool.

Evening Meals – there are also one or two delightful and interesting restaurants off site.



Other Attractions In The Port St Johns Area Include:

Gap and the Blowhole - a rock at Second Beach where you cross to the other side with a ladder. The blowhole pushes waves onto this crossing at high tide.

Mt. Thesiger (The Air strip) - visit the airstrip and army base for small planes and catch beautiful, aerial views of the big Umzimvubu River and the town.

Lighthouse (First Beach) - a walk to the lighthouse is a multimedia adventure and a very simple way to experience a wide spectrum of life in Port St Johns.

The National Museum (overlooking the Golf Course) - meet the Pondo people and experience their culture.

Silaka Nature Reserve (Third Beach) - this is a small coastal reserve which lies in a forested valley south of Port St Johns. Walking trails are offered through the evergreen forests which provides the opportunity for bird watching.



EQUIPMENT

The sea is about 18°C – 20°C/68°F. Cooler the better for the Run. Please bring your own 5mm wetsuit, fins, mask, booties, rash vest, dive gloves, BC, regulator – your usual scuba equipment. Remember everything plain black, no bright colours or silver/white/yellow fins.

Cylinders (either din or A-clamp fittings), weights and weight belts are provided. Please do not bring shiny fins! As it can be quite cool on the boat, please bring a splash or windproof jacket and a beanie. If you need to hire equipment please book this in advance so it can be brought down from Umkomaas for you. For safety - please bring your SMB/Rescue Sausage +-1.5m ht.

As the vast majority of your in-water activity can be conducted with ease on snorkel this makes the Sardine Run an accessible and exciting marine expedition for non-divers and divers alike. As long as you are comfortable snorkelling you will not miss out on the action. From our experience we would recommend that the majority of your time in the water be spent on snorkel as this will give you the speed and flexibility to enter and exit the water easily and therefore not miss out on the fast moving action. If we do encounter activity that is of sufficient size you will have the opportunity to enter the water on scuba.

We use 8m RIBs that are nimble but robust enough to tackle the typical surf launches we have as a consequence of the structure of our coastlines

DIVE CERTIFICATIONS

Scuba divers require a minimum of open water certification. The dive depth is from the surface to +-20m. Snorkelers and day boat viewers are welcome.

ACTIVITY LIKELY TO BE SEEN

Sharks:

- Copper sharks
- Spotted ragged tooth shark
- Black tip sharks
- Dusky sharks
- Oceanic black tip
- Bronze Whaler shark

Cetaceans:

- Common Dolphin
- Indian Ocean Bottlenose dolphin
- Killer whale
- Bryde's whale

Pinnipeds:

- Cape fur seal

Birds:

- Cape Gannet
- Petrels and Shearwaters
- Black browed Albatross
- African penguin
- Activity seen on past runs, although rare:
- Bull/Zambezi shark
- Sail fish and Sun fish

THE SARDINE RUN SHOULD BE THE 8TH WONDER OF THE WORLD, BOOK IT & DIVE IT!



PACKAGE PRICE

R27 950 per person sharing

Included:

- Accommodation in twin room, private ensuite.
- Breakfast and lunch-packs are included in the package price.
- You are welcome to bring your own favourite snacks too.
- Cylinders, weights, weight belt
- Airport return transfers.

Excluded:

Dinner is R185 per person on location, or we may go to another favourite restaurant. Drinks.

Optional – Sardine Run Pack – peak cap, warm jacket, hoodie, water bottle R1800
Single supplement R250 extra per night

- Beverages outside of the daily boat
- Travel Insurance
- Flights and taxes
- Passports and visas
- Gear rental (can be rented) - full dive kit rental R350.00 per person per day.
- Items of personal nature



Optional extra: night at Tala Private Game Reserve and Boma farewell dinner/ hourly transfer to airport - R 1920-00 per person sharing.

All bookings are subject to a 50% non-refundable deposit.

BOOKINGS:

In order to secure your booking a 50% deposit is payable by EFT. This deposit is payable per person and is non-refundable. The outstanding balance is to be settled prior to the due date of arrival by EFT. Any additional expenses are to be settled prior to the clients' departure by either cash or credit card.

CANCELLATION POLICY

In the unlikely event, and due to the expeditionary nature of this event there will no refunds for no launch days / no show days, however we will go up the river mouth for an event, should the weather not permit us to go out to sea.

Please Note: Bait-Balls are rare and we cannot expect to dive on these every day.

ADD ON PACKAGE



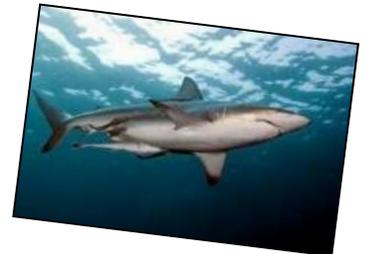
Includes a baited shark dive and Aliwal Shoal reef dive; 2 nights accommodation

- Day 1:** Arrive and book into your bed and breakfast accommodation
- Day 2:** Baited dive followed by Aliwal Shoal dive
- Day 3:** Aliwal Shoal dive then transfer to Port Saint John's, the Wild Coast.

BAITED DIVING - South Africa is one of only three countries in the world offering this kind of diving.

Using a baiting technique that closely resembles the shark's natural feeding habits – sardines and similar fish. Divers as well as snorkeler's and non-divers share in the experience. Excellent for researching the sharks, as normally they are very shy and divers never see them. They are always surrounded by hundreds of black tip sharks.

NOTE:
Cylinder, weights, weight belt included.





Your dive boat

a ccommodation in Umkomaas



Your transfer

Surf launching



Baited
dive at
Aliwal s



Raggies; Black Tip; Guitar
shark



We look forward to hearing from you with all the questions you may have.

Always at your service

Best Regards

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E&OE Terms and Conditions apply

