

BOOK #005

The Smart Traveler's Whale Watching Guide

Chapter 6 — Whale Watching Etiquette

Imagine your captain quietly slows the boat as a humpback whale begins feeding nearby. No engines are revving, no one is shouting, and everyone watches in respectful silence. Responsible whale watching allows visitors to enjoy these magnificent animals while protecting them for future generations.

Respect Wildlife

Whales are wild animals, not performers. Professional captains follow strict regulations designed to minimize stress on marine mammals and provide a safe viewing experience for both wildlife and guests.

Keep a Safe Distance

Tour operators must follow federal guidelines that establish minimum viewing distances. If a whale chooses to approach the boat, passengers are treated to an incredible experience while the captain maintains safe operating practices.

Keep Noise to a Minimum

Excitement is natural, but excessive noise can disturb wildlife and make it more difficult to hear your guide's commentary. Quiet observation often creates the most memorable moments.

Listen to Your Naturalist

Most whale watching tours include experienced naturalists who explain whale behavior, migration, feeding habits, and conservation efforts. Their knowledge adds tremendous value to the excursion.

Support Responsible Tourism

Choose excursion companies that follow wildlife viewing regulations and promote conservation. Responsible tourism helps ensure Alaska's whales remain healthy for generations to come.

Aimee's Insider Tip

Some of my favorite whale watching memories happened during the quiet moments between sightings. Put the phone down for a minute, listen to the sounds around you, and simply enjoy being surrounded by Alaska's incredible natural beauty.