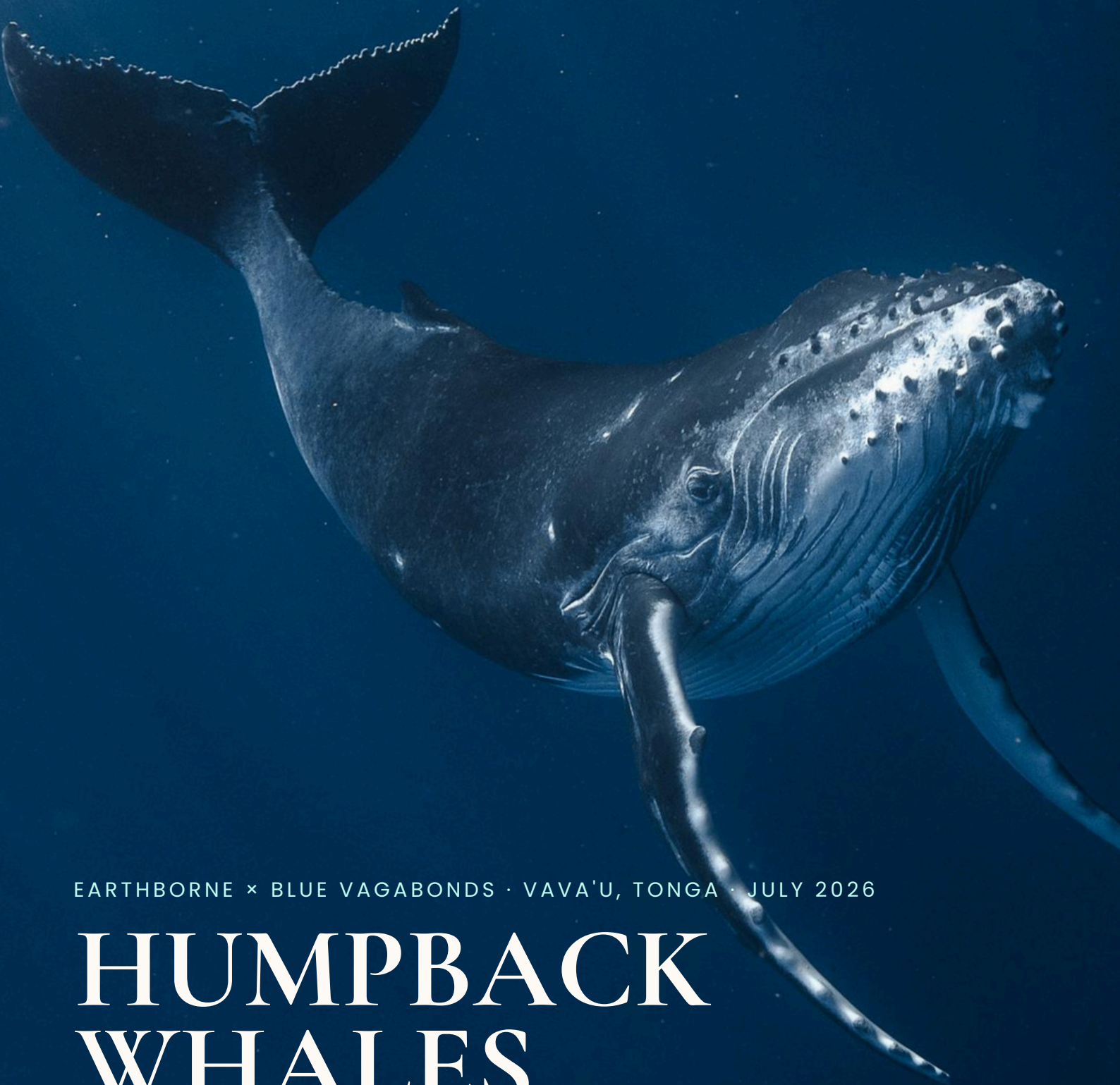




EARTHBORNE × BLUE VAGABONDS · VAVA'U, TONGA · JULY 2026

HUMPBACK WHALES

SWIMMING WITH THE GIANTS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC

9 days
DURATION

6 guests
MAX GROUP

5 days
ON THE WATER

July
SEASON

YOUR EXPERIENCE

OVERVIEW

ONE OF THE RAREST WILDLIFE ENCOUNTERS ON EARTH.

In the warm blue waters of Vava'u, Tonga, humpback whales arrive from Antarctica each July to mate, give birth, and rest — curious and calm in their winter sanctuary. **This is your invitation to meet them.**



LOCATION
Vava'u, Tonga



TWO DEPARTURES
July 10-18 & 18-25



WATER TIME
5 full days, 7hrs/day



PRIVATE CHEF
Andrea Sunna



MAX GROUP SIZE
6 guests



INCLUDES
All meals, workshops,
& transfers

We're running two back-to-back expeditions in Vava'u this July

Week One - July 10-18 · 9 days Our flagship departure. Everything in the core expedition, plus an added Earthborne arrival day. Curated activities, a surprise gift, and a welcome we think you'll love. Details shared with confirmed guests.

Week Two - July 18-25 · 8 days The full expedition with an Earthborne closing day built in — reflection, ceremony, and a proper farewell before you head home.

A PACIFIC PARADISE

TONGA

The Kingdom of Tonga, nicknamed “the Friendly Islands,” sits in the warm heart of the South Pacific, east of the International Date Line. With 176 islands to explore, only 40 of them inhabited, Tonga offers a rare kind of solitude.

Each winter, humpback whales migrate 6,000km from Antarctic feeding grounds to Tonga’s sheltered lagoons to breed, give birth, and rest. Tonga was the first country in the world to legally protect them, in 1978. The population has recovered significantly since.

Tonga is one of the only places on Earth where you can legally enter the water with humpback whales. An authentic mix of centuries-old traditions and modern culture, surrounded by azure waters and scenic settings, the nation is famous for its fantastic snorkelling opportunities, and most importantly: **for being the winter breeding ground of humpback whales.**

HUMPBACK WHALE SEASON

July – October

4 MONTHS / YEAR · PEAK: JULY





THE ISLAND OF VAVA'U

Vava'u is an archipelago of 60 limestone islands rising from one of the Pacific's deepest, clearest seas. The main island of Neiafu sits above a vast enclosed harbour: sheltered, warm, and extraordinarily rich in marine life.

Each July, humpback whales arrive here fresh from their Antarctic feeding grounds. The water is calmer in July than in August or September, and the whales, not yet fatigued by a long season, are more curious and playful. Calves are still young. Mothers are resting.

Away from the water, Vava'u offers caves, coral reefs, traditional Tongan villages, and a culture still deeply connected to the sea.

60+

ISLANDS IN THE GROUP

July

PEAK WHALE SEASON

1978

WHALES PROTECTED IN TONGA

"July is the sweet spot. The whales arrive fresh from Antarctica, the water is glassy, and the calves are still learning to breach."

— JONO ALLEN, BLUE VAGABONDS

MEET THE SPECIES

THE HUMPBACK

Humpbacks are among the largest animals ever to have lived, growing up to 16 metres long and weighing up to 36,000 kilograms. And, yet, in Vava'u, they are calm, curious, and quietly present.

Every year, these giants migrate 6,000km from Antarctic feeding grounds to Tonga's warm breeding waters. The Tongan humpback population is one of the most studied in the Southern Hemisphere — and one of the most willing to share their world with respectful observers.

In 1978, Tonga became the first country in the world to legally protect humpbacks. The population has recovered significantly, making this one of conservation's great success stories.

Tonga is one of the only places on Earth where you can legally swim with humpback whales. Strict protocols — small groups, no pursuit, whale-led interactions — mean every encounter is on the whale's terms.

Up to 16m
LENGTH

36,000 kg
WEIGHT

6,000 km
ANNUAL MIGRATION

1978
PROTECTED IN TONGA



EXPERIENCE THE GIANTS OF OUR OCEANS

UNDERWATER

THREE OCEAN EXPERIENCES



WHALE WATERS

Snorkel and freedive with humpbacks in their natural habitat. Whale-led, ethical, unforgettable.



ISLAND REEFS

Swim through pristine coral gardens teeming with tropical marine life between the islands.



OCEAN CAVES

Explore the electric blue Swallows Cave — light refracting through stalactites into deep blue water.



IN WATER EDUCATION

WHALE BEHAVIOUR WORKSHOP

Led by Jono Allen — ocean megafauna guide, environmental scientist, and underwater photographer — these sessions go beyond the encounter. You'll learn to read whale body language, position yourself respectfully, and understand what you're witnessing.

01 Reading Whale Behaviour

Logging, singing, pec-slapping, breaching — what each signals about mood and intent.

02 Ethical In-Water Protocol

Tonga's strict whale-swim regulations and how to be in the water without disturbing the encounter.

03 Underwater Photography

Jono's field techniques for capturing meaningful images without chasing or stressing the animal.

04 Whale Science Talk

Biology, migration, and conservation status of the Tongan humpback population.

05 Tonga & the Whale

With Paluki. The cultural and spiritual relationship between the Tongan people and the humpback.

06 Photo Editing Masterclass

Final day session — apply new skills to your own images. Leave with work you're proud of.

DAY-BY-DAY

ITINERARY: WEEK ONE

JULY 10 – 18, 2026 · USD \$6,900

JULY 10: EARTHBORNE DAY

01

ARRIVAL & WELCOME

- Airport transfer to waterfront accommodation in Vava'u
- Afternoon coastal hike: arrive present, not depleted
- Welcome dinner with the Earthborne team
- Earthborne gift: branded journal & reflection prompts for the week ahead
- Group intention circle: What are you here for? What do you want to carry home?
- Added cultural experience

JULY 11: BLUE VAGABONDS PROGRAMME BEGINS

02

ISLAND & CULTURE DAY

- Sunday is the Tongan day of rest. You'll spend the day exploring the island & local culture
- Attend a Paluki Traditional church service: choral, communal, genuinely moving
- Afternoon whale behaviour masterclass with Jono
- In-water briefing
- Tongan welcome feast!

JULY 12-16: THE WHALE DAYS

03-07

ON THE WATER

- Early breakfast 6am · On the boat 7am · 7 hours searching for and swimming with humpbacks
- Chef-prepared lunch served on the boat
- Return to base ~2pm
- Evening: rotating Jono masterclasses (behaviour, photography, whale science)
- Tongan cultural evening, feast & kava ceremony with Paluki
- Themed dinners each night by chef Andrea

JULY 17: FINAL DAY

08

DEPART

- Photo editing masterclass with Jono — apply skills to this week's images
- Final group meal and exchange of photographs and stories
- Transfer to Vava'u airport

DAY-BY-DAY

ITINERARY: WEEK TWO

JULY 18 – 25, 2026 · USD \$5,500

JULY 18: ARRIVAL

01

ARRIVAL & WELCOME

- Airport transfer to waterfront accommodation
- Meet-and-greet with the team: settle in, swim off the private jetty
- Tongan welcome feast!

JULY 19: EXPLORATION

02

ISLAND & CULTURE DAY

- Island exploring and local culture with Paluki
- Afternoon whale behaviour masterclass with Jono
- Evening intention and reflection session — what brought you here?

JULY 20–23 · THE WHALE DAYS

03–06

ON THE WATER

- Early breakfast 6am · On the boat 7am · 7 hours searching for and swimming with humpbacks
- Chef-prepared lunch served on the boat
- Return to base ~2pm
- Evening: rotating masterclasses, Whale Science Talk, Tongan cultural evening & kava with Paluki
- Themed dinners nightly by chef Andrea

JULY 24: EARTHBORNE CLOSE

07

INTEGRATION & CEREMONY

- Photo editing masterclass — refine and curate your images from the week
- Guided group reflection session — what did you witness? What shifts with you now?
- Final meal together · exchange stories and photographs

JULY 25: DEPARTURE

08

FAREWELL

- Breakfast at accommodation
- Transfer to Vava'u airport
- Carry this one with you

SUMMARY

WHAT'S INCLUDED

INCLUDED

- ✓ 7 nights (8 nights for week 1) private waterfront accommodation
- ✓ 5 full days on the water (7 hours daily)
- ✓ Breakfast, chef-prepared boat lunch & themed dinners
- ✓ Whale behaviour & photography workshop with Jono Allen
- ✓ Whale science conservation education
- ✓ Photo editing masterclass
- ✓ Tongan cultural evening — feast, dance & kava with Paluki
- ✓ Snorkelling on coral reefs & Swallows Cave
- ✓ Airport transfers in Vava'u, both ways
- ✓ Photography package of trip highlights
- ✓ Pre-trip welcome call with the Earthborne team
- ✓ Earthborne field journal & branded gifts
- ✓ Closing reflection session & integration gifts

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights & domestic connection to Vava'u
- Travel insurance (mandatory)
- Snorkel mask, fins & wetsuit (bring your own)
- Café items between meals
- Alcoholic beverages
- Freediving weights (certification required)

WEEK ONE · JULY 10-18

USD \$6,900

JULY 10-18, 2026 · 9 DAYS / 8 NIGHTS

WEEK TWO · JULY 18-25

USD \$5,500

JULY 18-25, 2026 · 8 DAYS / 7 NIGHTS

WHO WE ARE

EARTHBORNE

We're losing touch with wildness—outside and within. Earthborne exists to reawaken our primal connection to the natural world through experience, storytelling, and impact. We believe adventures change lives, conversations shift cultures, and witnessing the wild can save what's left of it.

Earthborne was built by people who couldn't stop going back to wild coastlines, to remote bush, to places where something ancient is still intact. We design expeditions and tell stories that bring others there too. Not as tourists passing through, but as witnesses. Participants. People who come home are different.

WHO THIS IS FOR

Earthborne is for people who are drawn to wild places — not for the adrenaline, but for what those places do to your thinking. You care about the natural world. You want to travel with people who know what they're doing and why they're doing it. You want the story, not just the photo. **If that's you, you're in the right place.**

THREE WAYS EARTHBORNE IS REAWAKENING THE WILD

THE SIGNAL

Content & Story



Field dispatches, interviews, and multimedia storytelling from explorers, conservationists, and wild thinkers.

THE JOURNEY

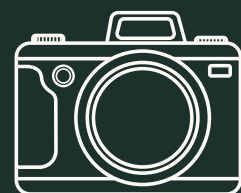
Expeditions



Small-group adventures designed around conservation, culture, and personal thresholds in wild places.

THE LENS

Film & Documentary



Cinematic stories that amplify the urgent beauty of Earth and the people protecting it.



MEET THE TEAM

EARTHBORNE



Photo : Chet Strange

CO-FOUNDER

JAY
DIKE

National Geographic photographer, expedition guide, and wildlife conservationist. Jay founded Earthborne to build what he'd spent a career searching for: an adventure company that puts story, conservation, and community at the centre. Jay has travelled and explored over 45+ countries, attempted multiple world firsts, and thrives in building community.

Based in Cape Town.



CO-FOUNDER

PETER
RICHARDS

Former National Geographic expedition guide and photographer with a background in global operations, guest experience, and adventure travel. Driven by a passion for authentic connection, conservation exploration, culture, storytelling, and the outdoors, Peter is dedicated to helping travelers engage more deeply with the places they visit.

Based in Michigan, USA.



Photo : Gary Van Wyk

CO-FOUNDER

ANDREIA
PAWEL

Rolex Perpetual Planet Explorer primatologist, conservationist, storyteller, eco-healer, guide extraordinaire. Andreia has lived with indigenous communities for a decade across the African bush. Andreia connects guests with the depth behind the experience, and will bring out your unique magic to the expedition.

Brazilian/British origins, based in Cape Town.

"We don't build trips around logistics. We build them around what it means to stand in the presence of something wilder and older than us — and to come home changed."



YOUR GUIDES

BLUE VAGABOND



TRIP LEADER

JONO ALLEN

Jono Allen is a professional wildlife photographer, environmental scientist, marine megafauna expedition guide and freediving instructor. Driven by a desire to document and protect our oceans' threatened giants, his work has been featured in global campaigns including Save the Beyond.

Whether leading encounters with humpbacks in Tonga or tiger sharks in the Maldives, Jono's experiences are guided by one motivation: to facilitate unique connections with wildlife — those once-in-a-lifetime moments of silent, face-to-face dialogue with the giants of the sea.

Jono co-founded Blue Vagabonds with Eva Sychold. Together, they have led hundreds of whale encounters across the Pacific.



TRIP GUIDE

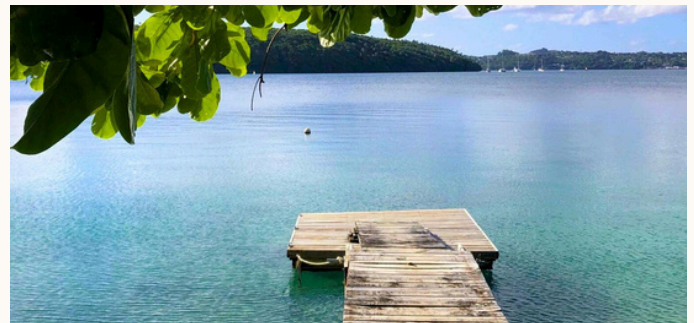
EVA SYCHOLD

Eva is an enthusiastic expedition host at Blue Vagabonds, where she combines her passion for the ocean with a wealth of experience in hospitality and adventure. She is a skilled Freediver who captures the breathtaking beauty of marine life through photography, while providing guests with unforgettable experiences in the deep blue.

At Blue Vagabond, Eva is dedicated to crafting unique ocean adventures that inspire, educate, and purposefully connect people to the deep blue world. Each adventure an invitation to explore the mysteries of the sea and share in the magic of nature's wonders.

PRIVATE WATERFRONT ACCOMMODATION

A private waterfront property in Vava'u. Steps from the water, with a private jetty for direct boat access. Exclusively held for Earthborne guests across both weeks.



SETTING

Private waterfront, Vava'u harbour

ACCESS

Private jetty — boat departs from the door

MEALS

All included — by chef Andrea

EXCLUSIVITY

Private to Earthborne guests only

TRANSFERS

Airport included both ways

ROOMS

Shared basis · single supplement available

* ACCOMMODATION SUBJECT TO FINAL CONFIRMATION · PHOTOS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

PRIVATE CHEF

ANDREA SUNNA

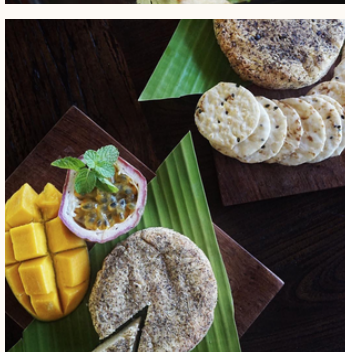


Andrea Sunna is an award-winning chef with over a decade of experience across Stockholm's fine dining scene and private kitchens worldwide. Born in Swedish Lapland, she has cooked for discerning clients on every continent — including AI Gore.

Andrea specialises in plant-forward menus built around locally sourced, seasonal ingredients, demonstrating that food that's good for the planet can be extraordinary to eat.

Her menus abroad are designed around the rhythms of the trip: light and energising at dawn, generous and restorative in the evening. All dietary requirements are accommodated.

PLANT-FORWARD · ALL DIETS CATERED · LOCALLY SOURCED · SEASONAL INGREDIENTS ·
BREAKFAST, BOAT LUNCH, & THEMED DINNERS · ZERO WASTE KITCHEN PHILOSOPHY



BEFORE YOU GO

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I get to Vava'u, Tonga?

Flights operate from Australia, Fiji, and New Zealand. The easiest route connects through Nadi (Fiji) to Tongatapu, then a short domestic hop to Vava'u (VAV). We'll send full routing guidance once confirmed.

Do I need diving experience?

No. The whales come to the surface — we meet them there. Comfort in open water and basic snorkelling experience is strongly recommended. You should be able to swim 200m unassisted.

What fitness level is required?

Moderate. Days are long on the water and require sustained snorkelling. You don't need to be an athlete, but being comfortable in open ocean conditions makes a real difference.

What gear should I bring?

Bring your own snorkel, mask, fins, and wetsuit you've tested and trust. We can provide some gear on request, but your own equipment will always serve you better in the water.

Are whale encounters guaranteed?

July is peak season — Tonga has one of the highest whale encounter rates in the world. We cannot guarantee encounters (wild animals), but our record speaks for itself.

I'm travelling solo — single room option?

Accommodation is shared basis. Solo travellers can request a private room at a single supplement fee. We'll pair solo travellers where possible — reach out to discuss.

Will photos be taken during the trip?

Yes — Jono documents moments throughout and shares a curated photography package with all guests. His focus is always the experience first, the image second.

How do I secure my spot?

Email us to register interest — we'll send a booking form, payment schedule, and trip information pack. A deposit secures your place. Group is capped at 6 per week.

CONFIRM YOUR SPOT

IN PACIFIC PARADISE

WEEK ONE · 9 DAYS

July 10–18, 2026 · USD \$6,900

WEEK TWO · 8 DAYS

July 18–25, 2026 · USD \$5,500

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

Hello@weareearthborne.com

WEBSITE

WeAreEarthborne.com

EXPERT PARTNER: BLUE VAGABONDS (JONO ALLEN & EVA SYCHOLD) · BLUEVAGABONDS.COM
MAXIMUM 6 GUESTS PER WEEK · TRAVEL INSURANCE MANDATORY · SUBJECT TO FINAL CONFIRMATION

\$2000 deposit to secure your spot. Deposits are required by June 15. If you have a group, you can book a full week for a discounted rate



HOW TO COMPLETE YOUR PAYMENT

VAVA'U WHALE SWIMMING EXPERIENCE
TRIP TOTAL: \$6,900 / \$5,500 USD PER PERSON

Bank Transfer for USD

Name: Jonathan William Allen
Bank: Wise US Inc.
ACH/Wire routing: 084009519
Account number: 727771925395551
Account type: Checking
Bank address:
Column National Association
A4-700 1 Letterman Drive
San Francisco CA 94129
United States

Bank Transfer for EUR

Name: Jonathan William Allen
BIC: TRWIBEB1XXX
IBAN: BE86 9051 7514 7550
Bank:
Wise, Rue du Trône 100, 3rd floor
Brussels, 1050
Belgium

Bank Transfer for GBP

Name: Jonathan William Allen
Bank: Wise
Sort code: 23-08-01
Account number: 13267803
IBAN: GB66 TRWI 2308 0113 2678 03
Wise's address:
56 Shoreditch
High Street. London, E1 6JJ,
United Kingdom

Bank Transfer for AUD

Name: Jonathan William Allen
Bank: Wise
Account no: 225462933
BSB: 774-001

Bank Transfer for other currencies or PayPal

Email: info@bluevagabonds.com

TO SECURE YOUR SPOT FOR THIS EXPERIENCE, WE REQUIRE A DEPOSIT OF \$2000 USD, PAID THROUGH
ONE OF THE ACCOUNTS ABOVE. THE REMAINING BALANCE IS DUE BEFORE JULY 2ND, 2026.

By making this payment, you agree to the terms and conditions stated on the Blue Vagabond's website.