



**Passion for  
excellence**  
since 1994

**Myths vs Facts**

The ONLY one that LOVES  
DOLPHINS more than you

is...US



# Our history

**Dolphin Discovery began in 1994 with the goal of creating unique interactive programs for our guests to experience the magic of Dolphins closer than they ever imagined.**

Dolphin Discovery is widely recognized because of its unique Dolphin Habitats and for offering exciting personal interactions with Dolphins, Sea Lions and Manatees. With our prime facilities and the highest standards in Dolphin care, we are the largest Dolphin family in the world.

We currently have Dolphin Habitats in Mexico, USA, Argentina, Italy, Dominican Republic, Grand Cayman, Jamaica and St. Kitts.

Dolphin Discovery is an active member of the International Marine Animals Trainers Association (IMATA) and member of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums

(AMMPA). It's accredited by the American Humane Association (AH) and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). Additionally, Dolphin Discovery has been recognized as a Socially Responsible Company since 2004 and "Super Empresa" (Mexico) since 2013.

For over 26 years, Dolphin Discovery has contributed to the study and conservation of Marine Mammals, creating bonds of love and respect through the best interaction experience in unique habitats around the world. Millions of people have lived with us The Experience of a Lifetime.

# Dolphin Discovery's facts

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## What you should know about Dolphin Discovery.

There is a lot of misinformation regarding Dolphins in human care.

At Dolphin Discovery we are proud of our Dolphins and the way we take care of them.

Here are some myths and what you should know about us.



**Dolphin Discovery communicates with its Dolphins and other Marine Mammals through positive reinforcement.**



## **Myth 1: The most common training technique is depriving Dolphins from food.**

Dolphin Discovery communicates with its Dolphins with a technique known as **positive reinforcement**; this means that Dolphins learn that after every correct behavior they will be rewarded with toys, petting or food. Our Dolphins **ALWAYS** receive their maximum healthy diet of fish each day! This is crucial for the Dolphins' nutrition and hydration. Our notable international certifications are important verification of our proper training techniques. Dolphin Discovery's facilities are certified by IMATA (International Marine Animal Trainers' Association). Which only certifies companies whose training methods uphold high professional standards and the ethical treatment of Marine Mammals. We were also **the first Mexican Dolphin Habitat** and the second globally to be certified by AMMPA (Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums). Dolphin Discovery has more Dolphin Habitats certified by AMMPA than any other organization in the world. In fact, Dolphin Discovery's Gold Standard for Marine Mammal care and training, raises the bar for dolphinariums everywhere.

Dolphin Discovery is **the only company in the world** that has a Marine Mammal training school open to the public; it is called ABC Animal Training. This innovative educational program was created by one of Dolphin Discovery's founders in 2006. It is based in the understanding that the perfect way to communicate with a Dolphin is through a positive reinforcement system that creates a bond between the animal and the Marine Mammal Specialist, thus creating mutual cooperation. All Dolphin Discovery Marine Mammals Specialist take these courses. Additionally, six international workshops are annually hosted at Dolphin Discovery Puerto Aventuras in the Riviera Maya, Los Cabos, and Gulf World so that aspiring animal care Specialist from around the world can learn from the best – the Dolphin Discovery Animal Care Specialists.

Our **Dolphins' diet** was designed by our team of veterinarians, specialized in cetaceans. The record of the daily nourishment is available for anyone interested. A balanced diet and the care given by our team of experts, **greatly increases the life expectancy** of these Marine Mammals in comparison to Dolphins that live in the wild. Research indicates that Dolphins live between 25 and 35 years, however we have Dolphins of over 45 years old in excellent health conditions.

**Myth 2: Isolating Dolphins is a common technique used to train Dolphins even though in the wilderness they live in pods of up to 100 animals.**

At Dolphin Discovery no Dolphin is kept in isolation and this can be corroborated by any of our visitors. Our Dolphins live in pods and their habitats allow them to live long and healthy lives. Their excellent health and high rates of reproduction are proof of Dolphin Discovery's healthy Dolphin Habitats. The birth of calves in our Dolphin Habitats represents 50% of our Dolphin population – quite the achievement!

The only occasion when a special space is given to a Dolphin is at the moment of birth or to newborns accompanied by their mothers. These spaces give mothers a safe and restful environment, and it also helps biologists, veterinarians and Marine Mammal Specialists closely monitor their health. A few months after a Dolphin is born, it is introduced to other juvenile Dolphins and after that, they are able to interact with adults. Dolphin Habitats such as Isla Mujeres and Cozumel have more than 20 Dolphins interacting with each other in the same area.

Mexican Law, requires dolphinariums to have special areas of a smaller size to assist pregnant Dolphins or medical cases. Dolphin Discovery fulfills these norms and we have certifications that endorse it. Under no circumstances are these spaces used for isolation, as a training technique or lifestyle for our Dolphins.

**Our Dolphins live in pods. At Dolphin Discovery, some of our Dolphin Habitats are home to more than 20 Dolphins living together.**



**One of the signs that our Dolphins are in good mental health is the fact that they reproduce with great success.**



### **Myth 3: The Dolphin's anatomy makes it look like they are smiling but this doesn't mean that they are happy.**

It is true that the jaw shape is always the same but this doesn't mean they are unhappy either. A better measure of Dolphins' "happiness" can be their body language and health. If a Dolphin doesn't want to do something, it simply swims away and ignores the Marine Mammal Specialist. At Dolphin Discovery, we believe that our Dolphin friends enjoy the cooperative interaction with their Marine Mammal Specialist and the guests.

Interacting with humans in the water is in fact a very stimulating activity for Dolphins that builds an emotional bond.

Reproduction is also a great sign that our Dolphins are in excellent health.

Through our 26 years, more than 200 calves have been successfully born and still live with us. Dolphin Discovery is widely recognized for having one of the most successful reproduction programs in the world.

**Because our Dolphins are well cared for, they are very friendly. Thousands of people a year enjoy our Dolphin swim experiences safely.**



#### **Myth 4: A Dolphin in a facility suffers from stress and becomes more aggressive than in wilderness.**

For our Dolphins, interacting with humans is a normal, yet stimulating part of their daily lives. At Dolphin Discovery, our well-balanced swim program provides excitement as well as a sense of comfort and safety, for both the Dolphins and our guests. We believe our Dolphins truly **ENJOY** expressing their incredible grace, strength and intelligence with people from around the world!

Swimming with Marine Mammals in open seas or feeding them is a punishable activity in some countries as animals may feel invaded and react aggressively towards humans, especially mother Dolphins defending their calves.


Because our Dolphins are well cared for, they are very friendly and thousands of people enjoy swimming with them every year in a safe environment.

The AMMPA (Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums) certifies the quality and safety of our programs. Of over 400 dolphinariums in the world, only 67 are members of AMMPA, and **Dolphin Discovery has the most Dolphin Habitats certified by this organization**, which demonstrates our commitment to raising the standards for dolphinariums everywhere.

During 2015, 2016 and 2017, studies were conducted at Dolphin Discovery in Mexico and the Caribbean, in conjunction with renowned Universities to determine if Dolphins suffer from stress. For this, enzymes and hormones were measured before and after the interactive programs. The conclusion was that there were no statistically significant changes in levels. The enzymes that reflect stress level did not increase and cortisol, which reflects the level of stress, did not increase and in some cases was reduced after the interactive programs.

The interaction of the Dolphins with the human being has no negative implications.





**AMMPA certifies the optimum water quality in our Dolphin Habitats.**

**Myth 5: Dolphins' skin and eyes get burnt from the chlorine used to maintain the transparency of the pool waters.**

At Dolphin Discovery most of our Dolphin Habitats are in the ocean, the Dolphins' natural environment. On the other hand, our in-land Dolphin facilities use state-of-the-art ozone water filtration which is harmless for animals and allows us to keep chlorine levels extremely low.

Chlorine levels are monitored by the hour, both manually and automatically. In our ocean Dolphin Habitats, Dolphin lagoons and our in-land Dolphin facilities, AMMPA (Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums) certifies the water quality. Dolphin Discovery keeps a record and this information is available for authorities and anyone interested on it.

A photograph of two dolphins leaping from the water, creating a large splash. The dolphins are light-colored with darker patches on their backs. The water is a vibrant turquoise color. The image is partially obscured by a purple and blue curved graphic on the right side.

**Since 2004, importation and exportation of Marine Mammals has been banned in Mexico.**

**Myth 6: Every year 250,000 Dolphins are captured to exhibit in shows. Some die from shock and others are injured or abandoned. Less than 50% arrive to their final destinations alive.**

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Around the world, there are less than 2,000 Dolphins under human care. If 250,000 Dolphins were captured each year, they would have been extinct years ago. Since 2004, importation and exportation of Marine Mammals has been banned in Mexico.

Long before that, Dolphin Discovery created its reproduction program as a sustainable future for the animals. We now have **more than 200 Marine Mammals born in our care!** The success of our reproduction program includes our Manatees and Sea Lions too.

No Dolphin at any Dolphin Discovery facility comes from either Japan or the Solomon Islands. Dolphin Discovery does not participate in drive fisheries and opposes any activity that purposely harms Dolphins and Whales! As a member of AMMPA since 2004 our commitment to nature is strong. In fact, defending the environment is a key component of our corporate policies on **sustainability ethics.**

## Myth 7: More than half of Dolphins in dolphinariums do not survive their first year due to illnesses or poor training.

At Dolphin Discovery we have Dolphins that are over 45 years old still in excellent health, while in the wild their average life expectancy is around 25 to 35 years. The original Dolphins who started Dolphin Discovery are still in perfect health. We have Dolphins with a variety of ages that range from 1 to 45 years old. If the hearsay was true, our Dolphin population would be of only a few animals.

Our very successful survival rate is over 90%. Having more than 200 Marine Mammals born in our care is proof that our survival rate is better than in wild populations. Everyone can visit our facilities where they will see our Dolphin calves developing normally.

Dolphin Discovery is the first company in the world that has been able to open Dolphin Habitats where all the Dolphins have been born in our care.

We have 5 Dolphin Habitats that are home to only Dolphins born at Dolphin Discovery, these facilities have obtained the "Miracle" certification.

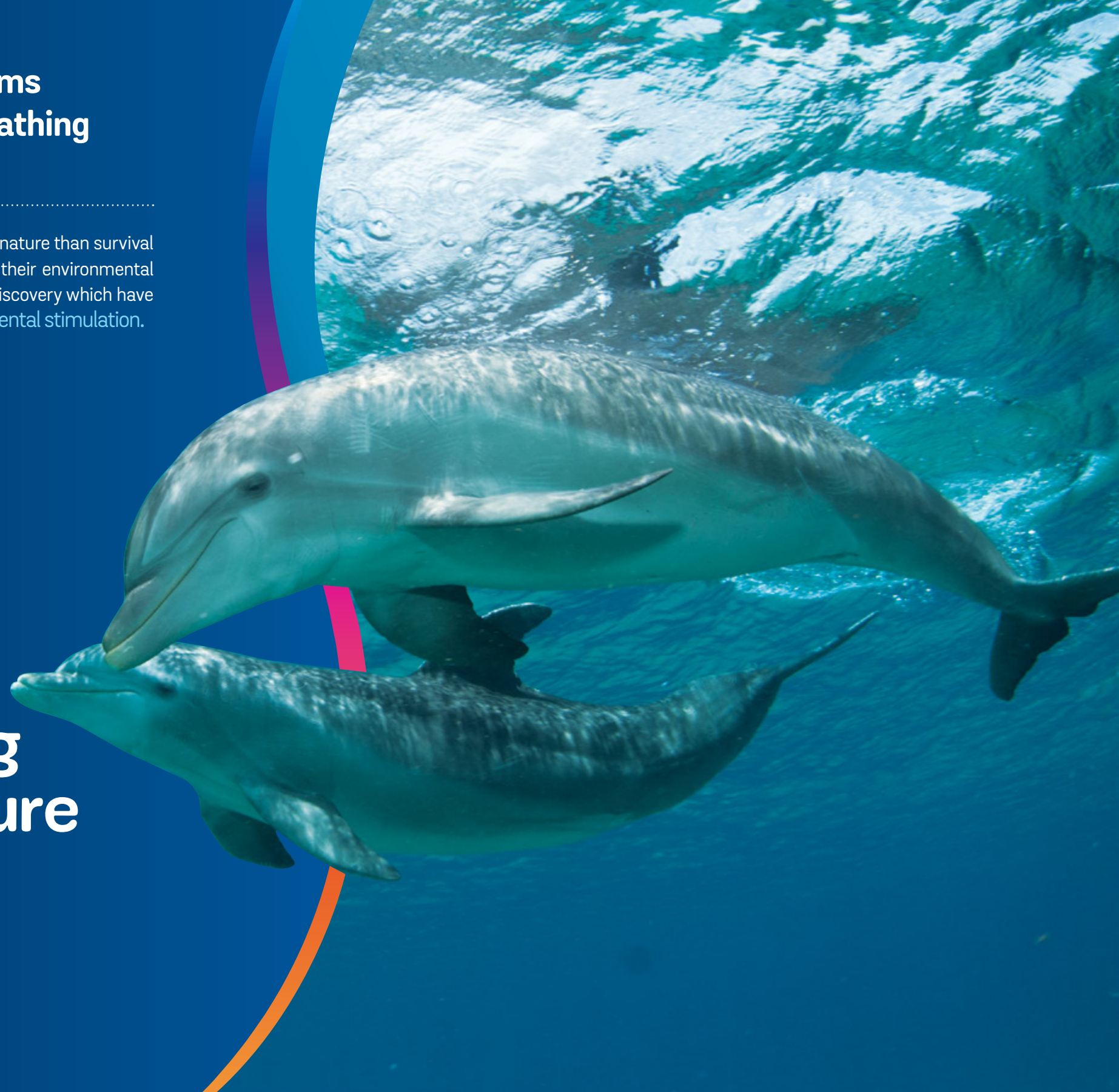
# We have Dolphins with a variety of ages that range from 1 to 45 years old.



## **Myth 8: Dolphins in dolphinariums commit suicide by stopping breathing voluntarily.**

Animals never commit suicide. There is nothing stronger in nature than survival instincts. Dolphins do not end their own lives especially if their environmental conditions are good as in the Dolphin Habitats of Dolphin Discovery which have ample open space, proper care and lots of social and mental stimulation.

**There is nothing stronger in nature than survival instincts.**



**Myth 9: Some facilities promote themselves as conservation enterprises; however, few such facilities are involved in substantial conservation efforts.**

Dolphin Discovery participates in conservation efforts as part of our corporate commitment and as one of the main reasons we care for Marine Mammals in our facilities. [Dolphin Discovery](#) has both a Conservation and Educational department “in house” that is dedicated exclusively to these important activities. We have 15 marine biologists that freely share information with our guests and the community about environmental stewardship. [Since 2006, Dolphin Discovery has been awarded the Socially Responsible Certification](#) for promoting and participating in important environmental days and conservation projects, such as Coastal Clean Up Days.

In the last 3 years alone, [Dolphin Discovery](#) has created free educational programs for over 12,000 local children to visit our facilities to learn about Marine Mammals and caring for the environment. We are certified by [AMMPA](#) (Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums) and [IMATA](#) (International Marine Animals Trainers' Association), US based organizations that are dedicated to promoting educational and conservation programs and supporting the Marine Mammal community in the US, Mexico and around the world.



**Dolphin Discovery has hosted over 12,000 local children in free environmental programs at our facilities in the last 3 years alone.**

**Myth 10: Dolphins that come from the wilderness gradually lose their natural behaviors as they are deprived from the natural conditions in which they developed.**

Dolphin Discovery has the largest Dolphin Habitats in the world which gives us the ability to maintain Dolphins in pods. This allows the Dolphins to interact naturally as can be witnessed by their social behavior and communication. At Dolphin Discovery, the Dolphins interact with each other freely, constantly playing and vocalizing with one another.

**Our Dolphins are able to interact freely; they play and vocalize with each other.**





**The diet and weight of our Dolphins are monitored daily to ensure optimum health.**

**Myth 11: Dolphins at dolphinariums are fed constantly by the audience, getting overweight and at risk of ingesting other objects.**

At Dolphin Discovery the diet and weight of our Dolphins are monitored daily by both the resident veterinarian and the Marine Mammal Specialists to ensure optimum health. Additionally, the size of our [Dolphin Habitats with large open spaces](#) allows our Dolphins to jump, swim and interact freely which keeps them in excellent health.

**Myth 12: There is risk of disease transmission both from Marine Mammals to humans and the other way around. Some trainers have reported numerous health conditions related to their job.**

The Veterinarian Committee of AMMPA (Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums) certifies that among the 8 million people that have participated in a Dolphin swim program there is not one single case of contagious disease that can be related to this activity.

Additionally, there is absolutely no such research that proves that disease transmission between Dolphins and humans is even possible.

**There has never been a documented case of a disease transmitted between Dolphins and humans.**





**Dolphin Discovery has one of the world's most successful Marine Mammals reproduction programs.**



**Myth 13: The records in the United States show a history of alarming deaths, high rates of mortality and low rates of births.**

At Dolphin Discovery we are proud of having one of the world's most successful reproduction programs, called "Miracle". This name signifies the high value we place on preserving healthy Dolphin populations for generations to come and the ecological importance of each Dolphin born. With more than 100 Dolphins born in our care, our mortality rate is a very low 2% and it is due to age or natural causes. The register of births and deaths are sent to authorities and are available for the public. Because of the excellent success of our reproduction program, we now even have second generation Dolphins living in our facilities meaning that they are offspring of Dolphins that were already born at Dolphin Discovery.




## Myth 14: All Dolphins should be released back into the wild.

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At Dolphin Discovery more than half of our Dolphins have been born in our care, so sending them away and turning our back on them would be quite cruel since they would not know how to survive in the wild. In fact, previous attempts to release Dolphins from facilities have been made in other countries with no survival success.

We are in favor of [prohibiting the capture and killing of Dolphins](#) in countries such as Japan or the Solomon Islands. [We diligently work for a better quality of life for Dolphins](#) everywhere in the oceans and in human care. We encourage all dolphinariums to join AMMPA (Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums), which requires high standards of care and healthy environments for the sustainable future of Marine Mammals.

At Dolphin Discovery, we believe that the Dolphins, Sea Lions and Manatees living in our care, are important ambassadors not only for their own species but for the oceans too. We also believe they deserve the best possible life we can provide and so our knowledgeable team of Marine Mammal Specialists and veterinarians work diligently to ensure healthy, fulfilling lives for these very important animals. Our goal is to foster environmental stewardship among all human generations, through joyful, personal interaction with our planet's most fascinating Marine Mammals.



**More than half of our  
Dolphins were born in  
our care, and would not  
know how to survive in  
the wild.**

# Curious facts about Dolphins.

Learn more about these beautiful Marine Mammals.



Dolphins ingest 24.2–28.6 lbs. of fish a day, nearly a tenth of their body weight. For the average human, this would be equivalent to eating 16 hamburgers (15.4 lbs.) a day.



The skeletal structure of a Dolphin's pectoral fin looks very much like the bones of a human hand with all five fingers!

Gestation lasts 12 months in Atlantic bottlenose Dolphins. They can be born any month of the year. Newborns emit a unique sound signature to communicate their identity, location and even their emotional state.



Dolphins' eyes function independent and they move in different directions! The special "U" shaped lens in Dolphin's eyes, allows them to see well both above and below water.

When asleep, Dolphins shut off one side of their brain and the opposite eye. The other half is awake with a low alertness level which allows them to be aware of predators and obstacles. This process reverses sides every two hours, and helps them to determine when to come up to the surface for air. Their average sleeping time represents 33.4% of the day.

# Certifications & awards

## ACCREDITATIONS

We accomplish **the highest standards in animal welfare.**  
Accredited by International Associations.



 <p>AMMPA accredits animal welfare in our Habitats.</p>	 <p>Accredited for meeting the highest standards of animal care and welfare.</p>	 <p>Humane Certified for ensuring the safety, welfare, and protection of animals in our care.</p>
 <p>Accredited by IMATA for our positive reinforcement techniques to communicate with animals in our care.</p>	 <p>We ensure the delivery of safe and memorable experiences to all our Guests.</p>	 <p>Affiliated to the Mexican Association of Habitats for the Interaction and Protection of Marine Mammals.</p>

We are 100% dedicated to the Marine Mammals in our care.

## ALSO RECOGNIZED BY:

 <p>Platinum member of the FCCA Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association.</p>	 <p>We promote and implement the values of professionalism, integrity and sustainable tourism development.</p>	 <p>Honored to receive the Travelers' Choice Award 2020 which highlights the quality of our experiences.</p>	 <p>Recognized for the implementation of standardized global health and hygiene protocols.</p>
 <p>Proud partner of the United Nations in caring for the environment, inspiring and informing.</p>	 <p>Socially Responsible Company for our social and environmental commitment to our stakeholders.</p>	 <p>Awarded for our organizational culture and associates' well-being.</p>	 <p>Commitment to the equality of opportunities among men and women.</p>

We inspire our guests to become environmental stewards, through joyful, personal interaction with our planet's most **fascinating Marine Mammals.**

# Dolphin Discovery



[DolphinDiscovery.com](http://DolphinDiscovery.com)

PROUDLY PART OF **The Dolphin Company**

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