



OYSTER CATCHER

GENERAL INFORMATION

THE VESSEL – Oyster Catcher, has been apart of our fleet since the beginning. She is certified to carry 12 passengers and 2 crew members. Oyster Catcher is registered as our secondary vessel for close encounter whale and dolphin watching vessel with Department of Environmental Affairs.

BUTT CAT – These vessels are famous for their stability and great handling on the ocean, making it perfect for navigating the passage through the iconic Knysna Heads and out to the vast Indian Ocean for an adventure of a lifetime. With a 8.4 meter hull and beam, the twin hulls ensure passenger comfort and stability.

SEATING – The vessels layout and seating has been designed and fitted to ensure our passengers have unobstructed views of the surrounds from a seated position. Moving around is possible with a passage standing area on either side of the vessel. Our “cinema style” seating and back support is cushioned, and comfortably seats four passengers per row with ample leg room. Seat rails can be found directly in front of the seat for passengers to hold on to for support. Directly underneath each seat there is a storage compartment for passengers to store belongings during the tour.

BOARDING – Boarding the Oyster Catcher is done with ease from our walk on jetties at the Thesen Island Blue Flag marina (NB. low tide can create a steep incline). Passengers step on board from the starboard side of the vessel, the deck is treated with a non-slip coating ensuring steadiness at all times. A safety briefing is given by the skipper before a smooth departure from our jetties into the diverse Knysna estuary.

PASSENGERS – Each passenger is fitted with a SAMSA approved ultra-lightweight inflatable Laliza Sigma life jacket. These life jackets are compact and self-inflating, eliminating the bulkiness of the ordinary orange life jacket. If required, passengers have access to windbreakers, ponchos and blankets. Bottled mineral water is available onboard for passengers during the tour.

HARDWARE – Oyster Catcher has been fitted with two BF Honda 200's outboard engines. Honda's technology has been designed to reduce the environmental impact of its products. With improved fuel efficiency and reduced emissions, their engines are no exception. These features are particularly important for us, as we can maintain the integrity of the marine environment we operate in and minimise any impact they may have on the marine life whilst observing them.



PERMITTED CLOSE ENCOUNTER WHALE AND DOLPHIN WATCHING

Ocean Odyssey IS THE ONLY CLOSE ENCOUNTER WHALE WATCHING PERMIT HOLDER FOR THE GREATER KNYSNA AREA, which extends from the Western side of the Robberg Peninsula to Gericke's point in Sedgefield. The permit, which is issued by the Department of Environmental Affairs, allows us to approach marine mammals to within 50 meters, and if whales approach us, we are permitted to stay and observe, moving away when safe to do so.

Our vessels depart from the Thesen Harbour Marina on Thesen Island. We cruise across the sweeping Knysna estuary and out to sea through the iconic Knysna Heads in search of marine life. Every year, both Southern Right and humpback whales leave their icy feeding grounds off Antarctica and migrate to mate and calve in the warmer waters of our Southern African coastline. Knysna is one of the best whale watching destinations in the country.

Whale season is from 1st June to 30th November annually, and the close encounter trips depart three times daily, 09h30, 12h00 and 15h00, weather and sea conditions permitting.

