



Frequently asked Questions about Snorkeling

Also browse our Safe snorkeling guidelines for further advice.

1) What is snorkeling?

Snorkeling is swimming with fins, a mask, and a tube called a snorkel that allows you to have your face down in the water and still breathe.

2) What is the difference between snorkeling and scuba diving?

Snorkeling doesn't require tanks and other expensive equipment like regulators. Scuba diving allows you to breathe underwater, while snorkeling allows you to breathe while you are on the surface with your face down. Snorkeling doesn't require any certification, while scuba diving requires certification.

3) Why do people snorkel?

Because it's loads of fun. :) Fair enough?

4) Is snorkeling safe?

One of the wonderful things about snorkeling is that people of all ages can participate. And one of the great things about Grenada is that there are many great places for beginners to try out.

5) But don't I need to be a good swimmer?

Well it sure can't hurt, but it's not required. It is recommended that you do have some comfort and experience when you are in water though. A few things to consider is that your fins help you a great deal in terms of movement, and they float. As well, the mask that you wear will have air trapped in it will helps you float as well. If you don't feel safe enough, you can also borrow floatation devices that you can lay on top of, or strap around your waist. Many of the snorkeling spots around the Grenada are right off shore and are in water less 3 Meters deep. It just depends which sites that you go to, and your comfort level with water and your equipment.

6) What equipment do you need to snorkel?

Well, there are 3 main things that most snorkelers use.

Mask: This is what you put on your face. This allows you to see underwater without getting your eyes and nose wet. It's important that the mask is a good fit when renting or buying a mask. If the mask doesn't fit well, you will experience some leakage of water in the mask. I would highly recommend using a mask that has a "silicon skirt". The skirt is the soft substance that is molded to fit your face, and prevents water from entering the mask. You can also rent or buy masks that use rubber as the skirt, but the seal is not nearly as good as the silicon, and is quite simply a dated technology. Ask your local snorkel or dive shop about choosing a mask that fits well. They will know what to look for. Make sure the glass should be tempered – shatterproof. Those cheap snorkel kits you can buy in the corner stores are NOT safe.

Snorkel: This is what makes you a snorkeler. A snorkel is a hollow curved tube that is placed in the mouth that allows you to breathe while you are face down in the water. So basically, while you looking down into the water, the snorkel is sticking out of the water on one end while the other end is in your mouth. When looking for a snorkel, I would recommend asking for what is called a "purge" snorkel. If you don't like water in your mouth (and who does) look for the splash protection systems that are very common on snorkels. These reduce the amount of water that goes down the tube if you splash or a wave strikes you.

Fins: This is what makes life a lot of fun. Fins allow you to swim like a fish. There are 2 kinds of fins, but for snorkeling in warm water, most people will do just fine with the close heeled kind. The open heeled kind is more for Scuba Divers which requires a special boot (bootie), or for colder waters. Any ways, make sure that the fins are a good fit, or else you will either be cutting off circulation to your feet, or they will easily come off. Make sure that they are a snug fit, but you should be able to wiggle your toes.

7) Can I wear contacts while snorkeling?

Of course you can. Just be aware that if your mask floods, you may lose your contacts. An alternative to wearing contacts is to purchase a mask with prescription lenses. It's a simple and relatively inexpensive procedure to install prescription lenses into a modern snorkeling mask.

8) Hey! I have my equipment. What should I do now?

Well, it's a good idea to get comfortable with your equipment before you go out to the reef. Try out the equipment at your Hotel pool. The first step is getting used to the mask. One thing about masks is that they have a tendency to fog up. You can either apply anti-fog goop (available at all snorkel shops) to the inside of the mask, or you can use your own spit. It sounds gross, but spit works quite well for preventing the fogging up of your mask. Make sure that the spit/anti-fog goop is spread across the full

surface of the glass on the inside of the mask. Now wash it out in the water. This should greatly reduce any fogging up of the mask. When putting on the mask, make sure there are no hairs stuck it between the silicon part of the mask. Hair will break the seal that keeps the water from entering the mask. Also keep the strap in the middle of the back of your head, and don't have the strap too tight. Now, put on your mask and look under water while you're standing up. You're looking underwater. *Hint: Sunscreen is waterproof. If you have too much sunscreen on where your mask attaches, it may not seal correctly. Next, attach the snorkel to your mask strap with the clip that's on the snorkel. Put the snorkel in your mouth and breathe. Don't try to breathe with your nose or else the mask will quickly fog up. Breathe through your mouth in relaxed, normal breaths. Now try breathing with your face in the water. Nothing to it, right? Take as long as you want to get used to breathing underwater. That's the biggest mental hurdle for first time snorkelers. If so, put on your fins and give it a try. With your face down and body stretched out, start kicking with your fins. Remember to keep your legs straight while you lightly kick. You don't have to thrash around to swim well. Stay relaxed, and swim around the pool, getting used to breathing, kicking, and looking around. There is no need to hurry when you're snorkeling, so just take your time and relax.

9) Can you go underwater with a snorkel? What if I want to get closer to things?

Although many snorkelers dive underwater, I have found that some people would rather not, or don't find the need to do so. If you see a fish several feet below you though, and you want to get a closer look, you'll have to dive down. By doing this, your snorkel will fill up with water, and you will not be able to breathe until you clear the passage of your snorkel of water once you have resurfaced. It sounds a bit iffy, but it's a common thing for more experienced snorkelers to dive down and fill their snorkel with water. To clear the snorkel of water, you must resurface, give a good strong blow of the snorkel as your head reaches the surface once again, and the top of the snorkel has penetrated the surface of the water. This should clear most if not all of the water that has filled the snorkel, and allow you to breathe normally through the snorkel once again. If you use what is called a "purge" snorkel, (which I would recommend), you will rarely get water back in your mouth. I would also recommend trying this technique first in a pool. Once you get comfortable doing this as well as the other techniques mentioned, you will feel more confident, and will have a more positive relaxed experience out on the reef.

10) What conditions are good for snorkeling?

The best times to go are when the waves are minimal, and it's sunny outside. For us that is usually all year around! Not only do large waves make things more challenging to get around and potentially dangerous, but a disturbance such as big waves also make the water murky, greatly decreasing visibility. It's also best to go snorkeling when the sun is out. Sunlight increases visibility, and brings out the true colors of fish and coral. It brings out the 'wow' factor for fish and overall experience. But the sun also brings out the 'sun burn' factor. We suggest wearing some sort of wet suit, diveskin, or other

coverings, make sure that you've got your back, neck, shoulders, butt, and thighs covered. To make things a bit easier, I would often just wear an old junky shirt.

11) How do I take care of my equipment? How should I store it?

Protect your equipment from light, heat and fumes. Sunlight is known to damage the silicon parts of the mask, making the seal brittle. Heat also degrades the mask, as well as snorkel. After you finish snorkeling, make sure your equipment gets washed off with fresh water. Salt water that dries will start wearing away at your equipment. Many beaches will have a place to do this. If not on the beach, make sure you wash the equipment off back in your hotel room that day. It's also a good idea to wash your mask lens with soap or toothpaste every once in a while. This washes away any grease that causes your mask to fog up. Just make sure that you've washed it out good so there is no residue. Don't pile heavy objects on top of any of your equipment. Prolonged weight on top of a mask, snorkel, or fins can warp them. To avoid bent fins, they should lie flat, and not on their tips. Keep walking in your fins on land to a minimum.

12) Why take a group trip versus snorkeling on our own?

Most dive boats are exactly that: dive boats that cater to the needs of SCUBA divers, not snorkelers. Most often, independent snorkelers are told simply to use the beach. While shore snorkeling can be excellent, many of the most exciting snorkeling sites are more easily accessed by boat. At most shops, snorkelers are permitted to "tag along" on a dive boat if they wish: but are firmly instructed to stay out of the way of the divers, and when the dive is over, so is your snorkel. Snorkeling Tourson Corsair are different. We dictate the timing and location, picking the most ideal sites for snorkeling an diving. But that's just one significant answer. It is also that our guides are trained in the local marine environment. Not only the fish life and coral, but the hazards as well. Our guides will make sure you have fun and avoid injuries to yourself or the corals.

13) What are your Safe Snorkeling Practices?

We believe firmly in safe snorkeling practices. Our guides provide a general snorkeling orientation at the start of each program, followed by any level of instruction or assistance that's needed. Whether you're novice or experienced, skills can always be developed and our staff is always happy to assist. We deliberately limit our groups to insure that everyone receives the personalized attention you deserve. Before entering the water, either from shore or from a boat, Wicked guides provide a brief evaluation of the site including any particular highlights. Also, any relevant conditions are briefly reviewed: surge, currents, depth, visibility, etc. And staff members will always be present to assist in any way needed: helping with a mask, entering or exiting the water, or helping you identify an unknown fish.

14) Do I need to be an experienced snorkeler?

We cater to both novice and experienced snorkelers. Every program is distinguished by snorkeling instruction on whatever level is needed, whether it's how to put on a mask, or how to improve your free diving skills. We concentrate on allowing you to develop a calm confidence in the water regardless of swimming ability or previous experience. Your relaxation in the water enhances both safety and enjoyment. Plus, it also reduces any perception of threat in the animals we've all come to view.

15) What will the weather be like?

We have carefully chosen times that should give us optimum weather conditions. However, even the best preparations cannot guarantee good weather.

16) What does the tour fee include?

On most programs (see specific trips for details), tour fees include all local transfers as specified in itinerary, meals as indicated in the itinerary, accommodations as specified, all snorkeling activities, guided excursions, local taxes, services of the trip leader and National Park Fees and top of the line snorkel equipment in various sizes!