



The Delphi Club

Pre-Trip Information and Travel Checklist

The Delphi Club is very well equipped, but these notes are designed to ensure that you have everything you need and that you know what to expect when you arrive.

CONTACT DETAILS

The Delphi Club,
PO Box AB-20006,
Marsh Harbour,
Abaco, Bahamas
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Max Woolnough, *Lodge Manager*
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TIME ZONE

Eastern standard time (GMT-5).

CELL PHONE COVERAGE

The Club has cell phone coverage, BUT not all foreign networks have reciprocal agreements with the Bahamas telephone company, so yours might not work. If in doubt, please check with your service provider.

CURRENCY

The local currency is the Bahamian dollar, but US dollars are readily accepted everywhere on a 1-for-1 basis.

ELECTRICAL

110 volt, US-style sockets.

INNOCULATIONS

Not required for the Bahamas, but please take your own medical advice as to recommended precautions.

VISAS

Visas are not required for citizens of the EU, USA or most Commonwealth countries. For others countries, please refer to the official website www.thebahamasguide.com/travel/visa.htm

GRATUITIES

All tipping is entirely discretionary and no automatic service charges are applied. For guidance, it is usual to pay \$150-\$200 per guest, per week (c. \$25 per guest, per night) for household staff and \$75-\$100 per boat, per day for guides, shared by those in the skiff. But it's all entirely up to you.

PAYMENT & CANCELLATIONS

A 50% deposit is taken on reservation. The balance is normally payable no later than 30 days before the scheduled arrival date, unless otherwise agreed. All reservations must be secured by a Visa, Mastercard or American Express card, with an expiry date later than the scheduled arrival date.

All cancellations incur a \$100 handling fee. If cancelled more than 90 days before scheduled arrival, no further charges apply. Cancellations within 31-90 days of scheduled arrival will result in forfeit of the deposit. If 30 or less days notice is given, full accommodation package charges apply.

If a planned visit to the Club becomes impossible due to severely adverse weather, guests will be offered a choice of three sets of alternative but equivalent dates within the following 12 months in which to utilize their prepayment.

Guests are strongly encouraged to purchase travel & trip cancellation insurance - with a policy that deals adequately with disruption by storms. Do also consider the possible need for medical evacuation; for this we highly recommend www.globalrescue.com.

PAYMENTS FOR EXTRAS

Guests are actively encouraged to settle their accounts at the end of their stay using cash dollars (to avoid the exorbitant charges levied by Bahamian banks for credit card payments). The Club does, however, accept Visa, Mastercard and American Express.

CLUB FACILITIES

- *Eight ocean-view bedrooms*
- *Choice of king size or twin-queen beds*
- *Ensuite bathrooms with showers (two rooms with tubs)*
- *Heated, freshwater swimming pool*
- *1200 yards of sandy beach*
- *Fully air conditioned*
- *Free wi-fi access throughout (even by the pool)*
- *Excellent food and wine cellar*
- *Honesty bar*
- *Jura coffee machine (in the Great Room)*
- *Potable tap water & water coolers*
- *Irons & ironing boards in all rooms*
- *Hairdryers in all rooms*
- *Room safes*
- *Soap, shampoo & bath gel in bathrooms*
- *Basic laundry service*
- *Beach towels*
- *Well-stocked library*
- *Satellite HD TV (in the library)*
- *Guest computer and printer/fax (in the library)*
- *Card & games tables*
- *Rods for hire (top quality Thomas & Thomas Rods, Hatch & Shilton Reels)**
- *Two 10 weight Thomas and Thomas rods in every boat rigged for permit / tarpon / sharks and barracuda*
- *Fly-tying equipment*
- *A well equipped shop that carries fishing gear/tackle (with local fly patterns), Delphi logo clothing and various souvenirs*
- *Beach / fishing kayaks & stand up paddle boards*
- *Snorkeling gear & various beach toys*
- *A bocce / boules court and horseshoes and cornhole game set up*
- *Scuba diving over pristine reefs**
- *Guided snorkeling**
- *Nature & bird life tours**
- *Visiting masseuse**
- *Island-hopping boat rentals / swim with the pigs of Noname Cay!**
- *Hiring jet skis and parasailing**

* At extra charge

WEATHER

A detailed month-by-month weather chart is given on the Club's website at <http://delphi-bahamas.com/weather/>. The Bahamas weather is generally most benign. The summer months can be hot and humid, with occasional heavy tropical rains that, in general, pass over rapidly. Breezy weather in other

months can affect fishing quality, as can the occasional cool or cloudy front in the winter. As with any fishing, one can be unlucky with conditions. But bad weather rarely lasts for more than a few days. Hurricanes in Abaco are rare but possible. The official hurricane season is from June to November, but August and September are generally seen as the months of highest risk and the Club is generally closed at that time.

THE FISHING SEASON

Bonefishing is a year-round activity in the Bahamas, although the Club usually closes for the height of the hurricane season in August & September. For an idea of what species will be in season during your trip you can refer to the table below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bonefish	G-?	G-?	G-E	E	E	E	E	?	?	E	E	?
Permit	G-?	G-?	F-G	G	G	G	G	?	?	F-G	F-G	?
Snapper	G-?	G-?	G-E	E	E	E	E	?	?	G	G	?
Cuda	G-E	G-E	G-E	G-E	G-E	G-E	G-E	G-E	G-E	G-E	G-E	G-E
Jacks	G-E	G-E	G-E	G	G	G	G	G	G	G-E	G-E	G-E

(E = excellent, G = Good, F = Fair and ? = Weather dependent)

FISHING NOTES

The main target is bonefish. For these wonderful sporting fish the Club generally applies a fly-fishing only rule, on a catch-and-release basis using barbless hooks. Exceptions are sometimes made for complete beginners.

Fishing for shark, barracuda & other species is also popular and the fly-only rule does not apply, although fly-fishing is encouraged for them too. There are also some permit at various times of year and occasional tarpon.

We recommend fishermen leave the lodge at 8.00am (to get the most of the day), and normally return back to the Club by 4.30pm (or 1.30pm on short days). Fishermen are provided with a picnic lunch cool box and their choice of drinks, whether doing full or short days.

Fishermen normally fish in pairs with a guide, however, single occupancy of a boat may be available at an extra charge.

The Club boats (Dolphin 16ft skiffs with 40hp Yamaha motors) have padded seats, a leaning bar on the casting platform and dry storage lockers, as well as radios & GPS locators.

The great majority of the fishing is from boats, but there may be opportunities for wading, especially at Cherokee Sound or Sandy Point. Most of the fishing, however, is normally on the west side of Abaco in the famous Marls, where wading is less easy. Bonefish and other species are sometimes also caught right off the Club beach.

The Club guides – and the launch points for the boats – are rotated during the week to provide maximum diversity of scenery and opportunity. It is not possible to reserve specific guides, but all the Club's guides are highly competent professionals. Boat launch points are normally just a 10-20 minute drive away from the Club, although we sometimes range further afield.

The Club shop has plenty of local fly patterns but no monopoly of wisdom, so bring all your bonefish and other saltwater flies.

We have top of the line rental gear (Thomas & Thomas fly rods, with Hatch and Shilton reels) available at \$30 per day. Each boat is also equipped with a Penn spinning rod, for those that want a go at a shark, barracuda or other big species!

OTHER ACTIVITIES & DAY TRIPS

Unlike some other bone-fishing destinations, Abaco has a very good tourism infrastructure and offers a wealth of attractive options for day trips, many of them involving boat rides. The outer Cays, with their charming colonial settlements such as Hope Town and Green Turtle Cay, are easily reached by ferries from Marsh Harbour and Treasure Cay respectively and make for pleasant day trips.

Big game fishing charters are available in Marsh Harbour and golf is available at Treasure Cay and sometimes, by special arrangement, at the superb Winding Bay course. The Club has close links with excellent scuba diving instructors and snorkeling guides. Abaco has some wonderful reefs.

There is an excellent guide for birding and nature tours who is a mine of information about Abaco's bird life, flora and fauna. Advanced booking is recommended. For more information on the local wildlife, see our fascinating sister website <http://rollingharbour.wordpress.com>.

DRINKS NOT INCLUDED

Note that, unlike some fishing lodges, we do not include any drinks in our accommodation package prices. Why not? Well there are three main reasons:

1. We see no reason why non-drinkers should subsidize those who do drink – and boy, do some people drink! Nothing in life is really “free”- you can be sure that “inclusive” lodges have priced in some estimate of average consumption into every package, which seems fundamentally unfair on the light drinkers or non-drinkers.
2. We believe in offering a very wide range of wines and drinks to suit every taste and price point. At most “inclusive” lodges, they tend to serve only basic liquor brands, local beers and mass-market wines. But we have over 50 wines to choose from, ranging in price from \$40 to \$1,000 a bottle. And we have over 50 different spirits and liqueurs, some costing upwards of \$20 a shot. It is impractical to try to identify which are basic brands and which should be extra. It's just far easier to go a la carte.
3. This policy enables us to keep our prices lower. And our prices *are* lower than almost *all* the leading fishing lodges in the Bahamas.

We even charge for bottled water. How come? Two more good reasons:

4. Bottled water in the Bahamas is a scam. Read the small print and you find it's *all* RO stuff – reconstituted seawater. And it's not cheap. But on Abaco we are blessed with a delicious supply of good, clean water from limestone aquifers underneath the pine forests. This is available throughout the lodge – for free. Why would anyone drink anything else?

The inclusive policy adopted by many lodges has its roots in history. Many of the early lodges were in far off places that did not have good quality water supplies, and maybe none at all. Even though this may no longer be the case in many lodges, the policy has become established.

5. And, last but no means least, a walk along any oceanfront beach in the world will reveal the huge amount of plastic waste brought in on the tide, including vast numbers of discarded water bottles. We would like to do our little bit to help save the planet from this ghastly mess, and so we provide every guest with a

Delphi Club vacuum drinking flask on arrival, which keeps water cold for hours (even when left in the sun!), and is yours to keep and take home with you!

As well as the tap water, we have water coolers which can be used for filling up the flasks. On the skiffs, each cool box will have larger flasks of water to refill guest flasks throughout the fishing day.

For people who still find our policy controversial and want to be able to compare apples with apples when assessing lodge prices, the average charge for wines and drinks at the Club last year was \$27 per person per day or \$190 per week.

GETTING TO THE DELPHI CLUB

FROM THE USA/CANADA

There are direct flights to Marsh Harbour (not all run every day)

From Miami – American

From Fort Lauderdale – Silver Airways

From West Palm Beach – Silver Airways or Bahamas Air

From Orlando – Silver, or Air Unlimited (Cessna 421 - \$598 round trip)

From Atlanta – Delta

From Charlotte - American

Private charters

There are also many private charter companies that fly from a variety of Florida (and other US) airports direct into Marsh Harbour. For further information, please contact the Delphi Club office.

Via Nassau

Many US carriers fly into Nassau, including American, Continental, Delta & Jet Blue. Air Canada flies in daily from Toronto & Montreal.

Nassau to Marsh Harbour

Bahamasair (bookable online)

SkyBahamas (bookable online)

FROM EUROPE

Via Nassau

The only direct flight into the Bahamas from Europe is with British Airways from London Heathrow to Nassau, which operates four days a week. From Nassau guests then connect with a local flight to Marsh Harbour with Bahamasair or SkyBahamas.

Via USA

Many European airlines fly to US airports that have direct onward flights to Marsh Harbour - please see above on travel from the US.

GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Transfers from Marsh Harbour airport are normally by taxi. If your package includes free transfers (most do), the taxis will be booked through the Club and we will need your flight details. Otherwise, taxis are generally plentiful at the airport – expect to pay c. \$100 for the 35-minute trip.

For those who prefer to be independent and free ranging during their stay, car hire is also available at the airport. To pre-book, contact seastar@coralwave.com.

The Club also has its own car for guests aged over 25, which is used for day trips. This can be rented at \$1.75 per mile and booked on arrival.

We greatly look forward to welcoming you to the Delphi Club. If you have any questions in the meantime, please feel free to ring me at the Club or on my cell phone +1-242-577-1698.

*Max Woolnough
Lodge Manager*

Travel Checklist

FISHERMEN

- Rods - Bones: 9ft, 8-9 wt*[®]
- Rods - Permit/other: 9ft, 10-11wt
- Reels (with very good drag system)*
- Lines (floating WF)*
- Leaders (10-15lbs)*
- Flies (see fishing notes)*
- Poppers & steel traces for other species*
- Brimmed hat (with dark underside)*
- Sunglasses (top quality polarized, 2 pairs)*
- Fishing pliers*
- Snippers/scissors*
- Small floating fly box*
- Wading shoes (or old trainers)
- Boat socks (to prevent burnt feet)
- Fingerless stripping gloves*
- Bandana/face buff*
- Small tape measure
- Band aids (for line burns!)
- Lightweight long fishing trousers
- Lightweight shirts, long sleeved*
- Small waterproof boat bag

* *Can be purchased in the Club shop (subject to availability).*

[®] *Club rental rods are available.*

ALL GUESTS

- Passport & visa (if required)
- Transportation tickets (plane etc.)
- Health/travel insurance cards/document(s)
- Driving licence
- Credit cards & cash
- All relevant contact numbers/addresses
- Sun block (high protection)*
- After-sun lotion*
- Swimming gear
- Cap* or sun hat/visor
- Sunglasses*
- Spare spectacles/lenses
- Rain jacket/poncho*
- Light fleece jacket*
- A light sweater
- General clothing/footwear
- Toiletries
- Medications
- Bug repellent*
- Antihistamines & after-bite cream*
- Books/e-Reader & charger
- Camera, memory card(s) & charger
- Laptop/iPad & charger
- Cell phone & charger
- US plug adaptors