



GEORGIA AQUARIUM

## Penguin Encounter

Thank you! Your reservation in Georgia Aquarium's *Penguin Encounter* sets in motion a chance to experience the unique opportunity to meet a penguin. The *Penguin Encounter* provides an engaging, educational, and inspirational experience by connecting our guests to some of Georgia Aquarium's most fascinating marine animals to inspire stewardship in conservation, research, and a greater appreciation for the animal world.

### **Ticket and Check-in Information:**

**Online Registrants** – Online registrants should have received an e-ticket to their email address following their reservation. If you did not receive your e-ticket, please respond with your online order number. On the day of your visit, proceed to the entrance for your ticket to be scanned by our guest services staff.

**Call Center Registrants** – If you placed your order through the Call Center, you should come to the main entrance on the day of your visit and present your order number to a guest service agent to receive your ticket for entry and proceed to the entrance for your ticket to be scanned.

*Penguin Encounter* participants can enter the Aquarium at any time on the day of the scheduled interactive program with their Total Ticket or Annual Pass. After entering the Aquarium, proceed to the Animal Interactions desk adjacent to the Ocean Voyager gallery. Guests are required to check in at the Animal Interactions desk 15 minutes prior to the scheduled program. As guests arriving late to their program cannot participate, it is recommended they arrive at the Aquarium approximately 1 hour prior to the scheduled time of their program to ensure arrival, parking, Aquarium entry, and check-in at the Animal Interactions desk prior to the scheduled program time.

### **General Program Information:**

Penguins are among our most beloved animals here at Georgia Aquarium. Now, in our Penguin Encounter, you can go behind the scenes at the Cold Water Quest gallery and meet and interact with one of these charismatic birds. In this program, you'll enjoy an up close and personal encounter with a penguin, and you'll also learn much more about these incredible animals, including how we care for them, as well as our research and conservation initiatives on their behalf – which are supported by your ticket dollars and participation in this program! At the close of this approximately 30-minute experience, you'll have a greater understanding and appreciation of these remarkable birds, and you'll even take home a professional photo of your memorable day, courtesy of Georgia Aquarium.

Since opening in 2005, the Aquarium's mission has always been to ensure current and future generations are inspired to care about all of the extraordinary animals that inhabit our oceans through the ambassadors they meet at Georgia Aquarium. Millions of guests have been introduced to the wonders of penguins, beluga whales, dolphins, whale sharks and hundreds of other aquatic ambassador species. The connections created between humans and marine mammals and species at the Aquarium, inspires guests to more carefully consider their environmental actions and choices.

As a leading facility for aquatic animal conservation and research, Georgia Aquarium explores ways to improve animal care methods, develop innovative and exciting new exhibits, contribute to the understanding of the underwater world, and apply new discoveries to the conservation of aquatic life. Every day, researchers throughout the Aquarium and in the field are learning more about marine life. Proceeds from programs, like the Penguin Encounter Program, ensure Georgia Aquarium can continue its research and conservation endeavors.

Animal interactions at Georgia Aquarium put the wonder of animals at guests' fingertips and deliver an unparalleled lesson in the appreciation of, and the passion to protect nature.

### Program Highlights:

- The program is **approximately 30 minutes** in duration
- Includes a special educational presentation on the biology, conservation, training, and care of African penguins
- Participation in an enrichment training session with a penguin alongside Aquarium animal trainers
- An opportunity to meet and touch a penguin
- Souvenir photograph of your encounter

### Information and Restrictions:

- **CHECK-IN TIME/LOCATION:** Guests are to check-in at the Animal Interactions desk, located in the Aquarium atrium adjacent to the entrance to the Ocean Voyager Built by The Home Depot gallery, **15 minutes prior to their scheduled program.**
- Participants must be at least **7 years old** in order to participate in this program.
- Participants **under 16** years of age **must** be accompanied by a **participating** adult responsible for the minor(s) (maximum 3 children per participating adult).
- **Participants under 18 years of age MUST have a program liability waiver SIGNED AND DATED by their PARENT OF CUSTODY or COURT APPOINTED LEGAL GUARDIAN.**
  - Waivers signed by those other than a parent or court appointed legal guardian will not be accepted.
  - **Waivers can be completed at: <https://www.smartwaiver.com/v/animalinteractive/>**
- Elements of this program may require guests to step into animal habitats and stand comfortably on their own. In addition to meeting age requirements, **guests must also possess a minimum level of physical dexterity and understand instructions provided by English-speaking staff.** Comfort around water and animals is necessary to ensure a safe and engaging experience.
- Guests with special needs **must call prior** to making a reservation at 404.581.4000.
  - **Reasonable** special needs **accommodations** can be supported on a case-by-case basis **with prior notification.** Should you have special needs but not provide notice, it may not be possible to accommodate your program and you may be required to reschedule your experience.
- **Cancellation and Date Change Policy:** The program fee is non-refundable; however, the program will be rescheduled whenever possible based upon program availability. The Aquarium will reschedule your encounter free of charge if the change is made at least 14 days in advance of the original date of visit. If the change is made less than 14 days prior to the original date of your visit, a \$20 change fee per reservation will be charged. No changes can be made less than 48 hours prior to the date of your original visit, and the guest will be charged the full program cost. **Cancellations and no-shows will not be refunded or rescheduled.** To change your reservation, please contact the Georgia Aquarium Call Center at 404.581.4000.
- **Guests arriving late will not be permitted** to participate in the program and will not qualify for reimbursement.
- **Personal photography or video recording is not permitted.**
- For the safety of the animals, guests may be required to remove jewelry and loose items prior to entry into the animal/encounter spaces.
- **Due to the nature of caring for animals, Georgia Aquarium reserves the right to modify, cancel and/or reschedule programs without notice. Reasonable accommodations will be made to reschedule guests as effectively as possible.**
- Prices are subject to change without notice.

### Animal Interactive Program Guidelines:

In order to ensure a safe and engaging program for all guests, animals, and staff, acknowledgment of and adherence to the following guidelines are required for participation in all interactive programs at Georgia Aquarium Inc. (GAI).

- All participants are required to listen to and follow direction of all employees and agents of GAI while participating in any activity offered by GAI.
- While participating in a program, always listen to and wait for specific instructions from animal interactive program and/or training staff prior to:
  - Approaching and/or entering an animal's exhibit or habitat
  - Approaching or interacting with an animal

- Touching and/or feeding an animal
- Guests not following instructions or direction from animal interactive program and/or training staff in a manner that compromises the safety or quality of the program for the animals, other guests, and/or GAI staff will be required to leave the program without reimbursement.
- For the safety of the animals, guests participating in the animal interactive program may be required to remove jewelry, watches, and any other loose item such as glasses, sunglasses, hair accessories, etc, prior to entering the animal habitats.
  - \* Prescription lenses necessary for vision correction are an exception to this guideline; however, we strongly recommend and may require they be secured with a neck strap.
- For the safety of the animals, guests participating in animal interactive programs may be required to wash their hands and/or sanitize their hands with an approved hand sanitizing product prior to any interaction with animals.
- Guests participating in animal interactive programs requiring a GAI wetsuit must wear personal swimwear beneath the suit. It is advised (but not required) to wear a t-shirt or rash-guard beneath the wetsuit for personal comfort.
- Footwear is required for all guests.
- The use of personal cameras, video equipment, and cellular phones are not permitted during animal interactive programs.
- Guests believed by GAI staff or agents to be under the influence of alcohol and/or a controlled substance, or who conduct themselves in a manner that compromises the safety or quality of the program for the animals, other guests, and/or GAI staff will be required to leave the program immediately, forfeit the right to participate in any remaining aspects of the interactive program, and will not receive reimbursement.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

#### **What times are the Penguin Encounters held?**

Daily\* at 11:15 AM, 2:30 PM and 3:45 PM (\*times are subject to change)

#### **What will the guest see, and how long is the program?**

The *Penguin Encounter* lasts approximately 30 minutes. Go behind the scenes and enjoy an up close and personal encounter with an African penguin. Learn about penguin biology, how we care for these beautiful birds as well as research and conservation initiatives done on their behalf.

#### **What should the guest bring with them?**

A photo I.D. and closed toe shoes. The penguin encounter program area is kept cool and guests should consider wearing attire that will keep them comfortable in an air conditioned space. Guests may not bring personal cameras to the penguin encounter program and will be required to set their loose belongings and phones in a designated area prior to the encounter.

Note: for the safety of the animals, guests participating in the animal interaction *may be* required to remove jewelry and sunglasses prior to entering the animal spaces (prescription lenses worn for vision correction is an exception to this guideline).

#### **How much does it cost?**

\$59.95 plus tax per person in addition to Total Ticket general admission; \$53.95 plus tax for Annual Pass Members. Price includes a souvenir photo (cell phones and cameras are not allowed in the encounter area). **PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE** general admission access to the Aquarium.

#### **Do guests need to make reservations?**

Reservations are not required. However, we strongly encourage reservations to guarantee your experience as spaces are limited. Space is currently capped at five participants per scheduled program.

#### **How does one make a reservation?**

To purchase a ticket to the *Penguin Encounter Program*, please visit the Animal Interactions desk or the Guest Information desk.

#### **Are there age requirements for the participants?**

Minimum age is 7 years. All guests under 16 years must be accompanied by a participating adult (maximum of 3 children per participating adult). **All guests under 18 years REQUIRE a waiver signed by a PARENT or COURT APPOINTED/GUARDIAN.**  
<https://www.smartwaiver.com/v/animalinteractive/>

**How many participants can participate in a single program?**

There can be 10 participants per scheduled program.

**Where do the participants go if they have reservations?**

Please go to the Animal Interactions desk, located next to the Ocean Voyager Built by The Home Depot gallery, to check in **at least 15 minutes prior** to your *Penguin Encounter*.

**What happens if the guest is late or cannot make it?**

Guests must check in at the Animal Interactions desk **15 minutes prior** to the start of their program. This means guests must check in no later than 11:15 am for the morning encounter and no later than 2:30pm for the afternoon encounter. **Guests arriving late will not be permitted to participate in the program and will not be refunded or rescheduled. We encourage guests to arrive at the Aquarium with plenty of time to park, enter, and check into the program. Please plan accordingly.**

A date may be changed free of charge if the change is made at least 14 days in advance of the original date of your visit. If the change is made less than 14 days prior to the original date of your visit, a \$20 change fee per reservation/ticket will be charged. No changes can be made less than 48 hours prior to the date of your original visit, and the guest will be charged the full program cost. Cancellations and no-shows will not be refunded or rescheduled. To change your reservation, please contact the Georgia Aquarium Call Center at 404.581.4000.

**Can friends or family watch? Do they have to buy a ticket?**

The entire *Penguin Encounter Program*, including the animal experience, occurs behind the scenes and is not viewable by the public. Only ticketed participants in the program will be taken to the interactive areas.

**Are guests with special needs permitted to participate in a *Penguin Encounter*?**

Georgia Aquarium makes every effort to accommodate guests with special needs. Please be aware that to participate in this program, guests must be able to navigate the animal habitat spaces with minimal assistance, and must be able to understand and take direction in English from staff members. To ensure the best experience, please contact the Call Center at 404.581.4000 to make a reservation, and be sure to let the reservists know you have special needs. Someone from the program will contact you prior to your visit to review your options. **Should you have special needs but not provide notice, it may not be possible to accommodate your program and you may be required to reschedule your experience.**

**What do we get to do with the penguins?**

Participants in the Penguin Encounter get an exclusive and up close meeting with one of our resident African penguins. The level of interaction between the penguins and the program participants is variable and dependent upon the behavior of the individual animals, the conduct of the guests in the program, and the discretion of the animal trainers working with the penguin during the program. Our goal is to provide an engaging, interactive encounter experience for not only the guests participating, but for the penguins as well.

**What is the purpose of this program/overview of the interactive experience?**

To provide an engaging, educational, and inspirational experience by connecting our guests to some of Georgia Aquarium's most fascinating resident marine animals to inspire stewardship in conservation, research, and a greater appreciation for the animal world.

**Animal Interactive Program Liability Waiver and Program Guidelines**

All program participants must complete a liability waiver and acknowledge Georgia Aquarium's Animal Interactive Program Guidelines prior to their interaction. Minors must have the waiver signed by a parent or legal guardian and completed at time of check-in. To complete a waiver in advance please visit:

<https://www.smartwaiver.com/v/animalinteractive/>