



GEORGIA AQUARIUM

## Sea Otter Encounter

Thank you! Your reservation in Georgia Aquarium's *Sea Otter Encounter* sets in motion a chance to experience the unique opportunity to meet a sea otter. The *Sea Otter 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.

*Sea Otter Encounter* participants can enter the Aquarium at any time on the day of the scheduled interactive program with their General Admission 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:**

Energetic and playful, the sea otters at Georgia Aquarium are among our most popular animals. In our *Sea Otter Encounter*, you will go behind the scenes at the otters' home in the Cold Water Quest gallery and interact with these charismatic animals. Over the course of approximately 40 minutes, you'll enjoy an exclusive tour of the sea otter facility and a special educational presentation on sea otters, help prepare a sea otter meal, and participate in an exciting sea otter training session alongside Georgia Aquarium animal trainers. Guests will get an exclusive, up close and personal encounter with a sea otter while learning more about the Aquarium's rescue, research and conservation initiatives, which includes providing much-needed homes for orphaned and stranded sea otters!

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 sea otters, 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, inspire 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 *Sea Otter Encounter* Program, ensure Georgia Aquarium can continue its research and conservation endeavors into the future.

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

### **Program Highlights:**

- The program is **approximately 40 minutes** in duration
- Get an exclusive tour of the sea otter facility
- Enjoy a special educational presentation on the biology, conservation, training, and care of sea otters
- Exclusive behind-the-scenes view of the sea otter habitat and living areas
- Participation in a training session with the sea otters alongside Aquarium animal trainers
- An opportunity to meet and feed a sea otter
- Souvenir photograph of your encounter

### **Information and Restrictions:**

- **CHECK-IN TIME/LOCATION:** Guests are to check-in at the Animal Interaction 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.**
- **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 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. The program is an exploration into the behind the scenes of the Cold Water Quest gallery and an in-depth look into Georgia Aquarium's care of and conservation efforts with sea otters. The 40-minute program includes an educational orientation where participants learn about the biology, care, training, and study of sea otters and Georgia Aquarium's role in the conservation of this fascinating species.

#### **How long is the program and what will I see?**

The *Sea Otter Encounter* lasts approximately 40 minutes. During your experience, you will go behind the scenes of the sea otter habitat in Cold Water Quest, enjoy an educational presentation about sea otters, help prepare a sea otter meal, participate in a training session, and meet one of our resident sea otters.

#### **What should I bring with me?**

A photo I.D., appropriate footwear and attire that can be splashed, and your sense of adventure! The sea otter habitat 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 into sea otter program areas. Note: for the safety of the animals, guests participating in the encounter 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?**

\$69.95 plus tax per person in addition to general admission; \$63.95 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.

#### **Are reservations required?**

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

**How do I make a reservation?**

When purchasing your General Admission ticket, select *Sea Otter Encounter* under the Enhance Your Experience section of the shopping cart. You can also make a reservation by calling Georgia Aquarium Call Center at 404.581.4000.

**What are the age requirements?**

Minimum age is 7 years. All guests under 16 years must be accompanied by a participating adult. (Maximum 3 children per participating adult.) All guests under 18 years need a waiver signed by a parent/guardian.

**How do I get to the aquarium?**

For directions to the Aquarium and information on parking, please refer to the [Hours, Directions & Parking](#) section of our website!

**Where do I go when I arrive?**

Please go to the Animal Interactions desk, located next to the Ocean Voyager gallery, to check in **at least 15 minutes prior** to your *Sea Otter Encounter*.

**What happens if I am late or cannot make it?**

At Georgia Aquarium, we recognize that vacation plans can change. A date may be changed if it is made more than 48 hours in advance. 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. Program no-shows or cancellations made with less than 48 hours advance notice will not be refunded or rescheduled. To change your reservation, please contact the Georgia Aquarium Call Center at 404.581.4000.

**Guests must check in** at the Animal Interactions desk **15 minutes prior to** the start of their program. 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.**

**Are guests welcome to watch? Do they have to buy a ticket?**

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

**Are you able to participate in a *Sea Otter Encounter* with special needs?**

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 program.**

**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/>