Aldabra Tortoise Encounter

Guests are currently required to wear a mask during the Aldabra Tortoise Encounter.
Sensory Key

There are lots of things to see here. It might be bright or hurt my eyes in places where I see this. I can wear sunglasses or cover my eyes.

There are lots of things to hear here. It might be loud in places where I see this. I can wear headphones or cover my ears if it gets too loud.

When I see this there will be things I can taste here. I do not have to put anything in my mouth if I do not want to.

There might be a strong smell in places where I see this. I can hold my nose or cover my nose with something that smells good.

There are lots of things to touch here. There might be things that I feel uncomfortable touching when I see this. I do not have to touch anything that I do not want to.
ZooTampa’s Modified Operation Plan during a Pandemic.

- The park, shops, and restaurants are operating at limited capacity.
- Reservations/Pre-purchased tickets are not required, but are recommended and the only way to guarantee entry.
- Touchless transactions will be available and encouraged.
- Always maintain 6 feet distance between groups.
- Masks are NOT required to outdoor areas of the Zoo except to participate in Signature Encounters and Giraffe Meet and Greet.
- Masks are required at any indoor location on Safari Expedition.
- Handwashing and sanitation stations have been increased throughout the Zoo. Please wash hands frequently using soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Temperature checks are conducted at the entrance. Anyone with a temperature over 100.4F will not be permitted entry.
- If you are feeling sick, please return home and seek medical care.
- Rides are sanitized between use and are operating at limited capacity.
- Some attractions may be closed.
Modified Operation Plan Signage

You will notice circle signs that say “Please stay 6 feet apart”, they signs are to help ZooTampa ensure we have lots of space between people.
We are going to the Aldabra Tortoise Encounter.

The Aldabra tortoise habitat is in Safari Africa. We can get there by following the map and signs.
Giant Tortoise Talk

Before we can go into the tortoise habitat, there will be a talk about giant tortoises. I will use my listening ears to learn about the animals. If I have questions, I can raise my hand after the talk and ask my questions.
When it is time to begin, we will go to the gate. An employee will check our name off and unlock the gate for us. I will follow the sidewalk back to the habitat entrance. I might see animals on the other side of the fence and want to go look, but I need to stay on the sidewalk.
Before meeting the tortoises, I will wash my hands. There is a handwashing station outside of the habitat.

How to wash your hands properly

1. Wet your hands
2. Liquid soap
3. Lather and scrub - 20 sec
4. Rinse - 10 sec
5. Dry your hands
6. Turn off tap

DON’T FORGET TO WASH:
- between your fingers
- under your nails
- the tops of your hands
While we wait for the tour to begin, we can put our face masks on. Face masks help keep the people and animals safe.

If there are other people inside the tortoise habitat I may have to wait my turn to go inside. That’s okay. We will all get a chance to meet the Aldabra tortoises. I can wait on the black circle on the ground near the gate.
We will meet an animal care employee at the habitat entrance. Here, the animal care employee will go over the rules and answer any questions we have.

The animal care employee will tell us when we can enter the habitat and show us which tortoise we will be meeting. I will use my walking feet to go to the tortoise.
If I would like, I CAN gently touch the tortoises on their neck, shell, or legs. The animal care employee will be nearby to answer any questions I have.
I will keep my hands **away** from the tortoise’s **eyes**, **nose**, and **mouth**.

Touching the eyes, nose or mouth is against the rules. I will not touch these areas of the animal.
Sometimes the tortoises are in the water, eating, or resting. I stay away from these tortoises. That’s okay. I can touch the other tortoises.
The tortoises are free to walk around. If a tortoise makes me nervous, I can always take a step back. When a tortoise is walking, I will make sure my feet are not in the way.
After I am finished meeting the tortoises, I will exit the habitat and wash my hands. There is a handwashing station outside of the habitat.
We will then follow the sidewalk to the exit and continue our visit at ZooTampa at Lowry Park.
ZooTampa at Lowry Park has teamed up with the Center For Autism & Related Disabilities at the University of South Florida to provide support and assistance with the goal of optimizing the potential of people with autism and related disabilities. Please utilize the resources provided to properly plan for your visit to ZooTampa at Lowry Park.

We also recognize the support of Autism Shifts, The Learning Academy, Autism Speaks and the Diversity Action Coalition and applaud their efforts to promote inclusive experiences.”