

French Polynesia: The Society Islands and Tuamotus

From the sacred *marae* of Ra'iatea and the iconic emerald peaks of Bora Bora to the remote coral atolls of the Tuamotu Archipelago, this epic voyage reveals French Polynesia in extraordinary depth. Explore the legendary Society Islands, discovering crystalline lagoons and turquoise bays, and tracing the seafaring traditions that carried ancient Polynesians across the Pacific. Then venture deeper, voyaging to the lesser-visited Tuamotus, where Makatea's limestone cliffs, Rangiroa's vast lagoon and the UNESCO World Heritage-listed passes of Fakarava offer some of the most spectacular marine encounters on Earth. Two archipelagos, one unforgettable passage through the heart of the South Pacific.

From
£12,641 / per person
Does not include flights

DATES
Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug and Sep

DURATION
14 Days

SHIPS
National Geographic Orion

STARTS AT
Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia

→

ENDS AT
Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia

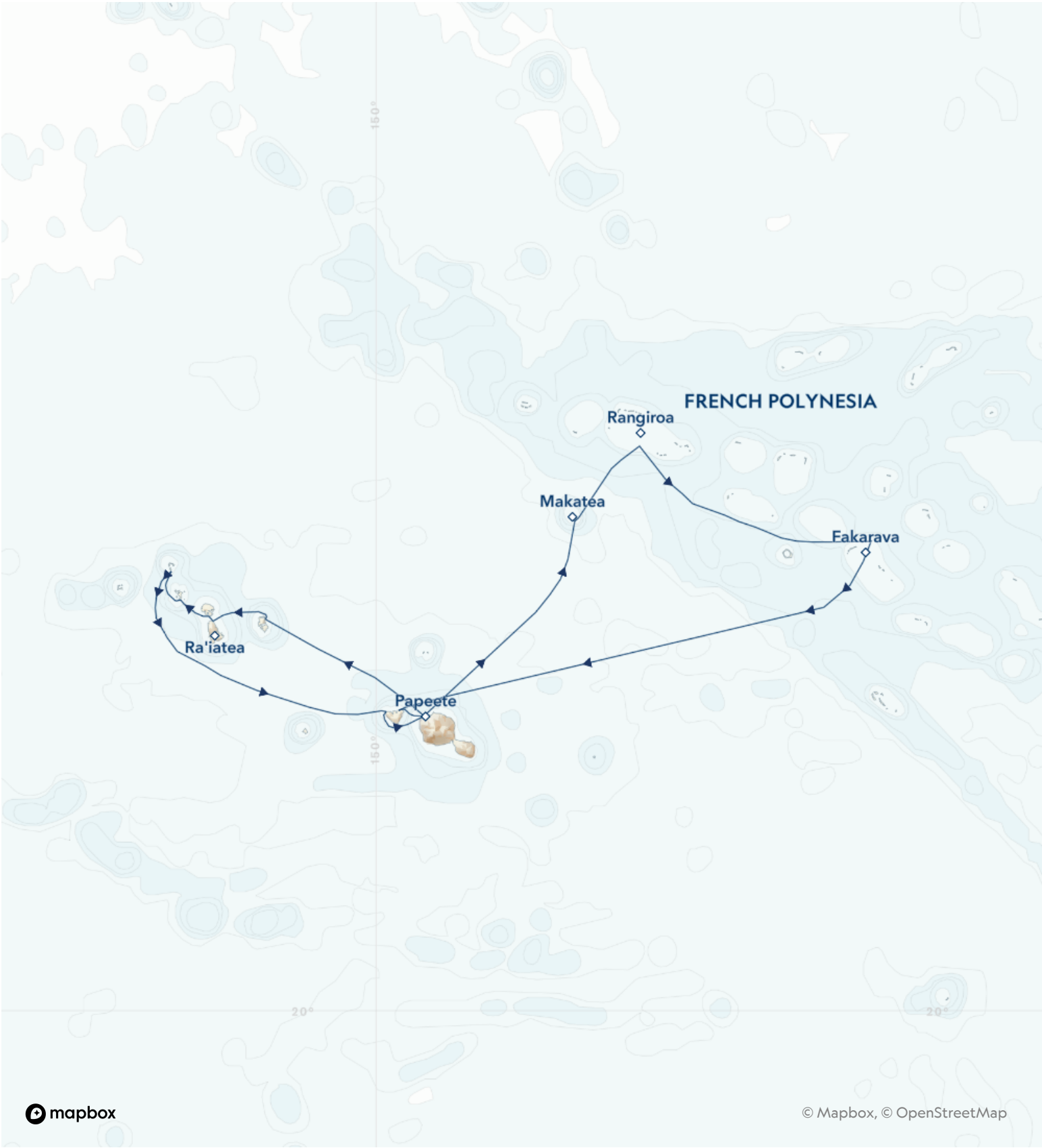
Highlights

- Witness the dramatic contrast between the emerald volcanic peaks of the Society Islands and the low-lying coral worlds of the Tuamotus—two different landscapes connected by the traditions of one seafaring culture
- Visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Marae Taputapuātea on Ra'iatea, the spiritual heart of the Polynesian world and launch point for ancient voyages across the Pacific
- Explore the Society Islands' most iconic waters—from Tupai's heart-shaped atoll to Bora Bora's outer lagoon and the emerald bays of Mo'orea
- Experience Fakarava's Tumakohua Pass, a UNESCO-designated coral haven teeming with marine life and extraordinary biodiversity








FRENCH POLYNESIA
Rangiroa
Makatea
Fakarava
Ra'iatea
Papeete
150°
150°
20°
20°
mapbox
© Mapbox, © OpenStreetMap

Day by day

■ DAY 1

Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia / Embark Ship

Arrive in Papeete, the vibrant capital of French Polynesia. Transfer from the airport to the meetup hotel for breakfast before embarking the ship.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 2

Huahine

Huahine is one of French Polynesia's lesser-visited islands, where lush mountains, sacred archaeological sites and crystalline lagoons offer a glimpse into the region's deep history and enduring traditions. Discover ancient *marae*—ceremonial stone temples that once served as important centers of Polynesian spiritual and community life—and learn about the island's connection to generations of Polynesian navigators and royalty. There will also be opportunities to explore the island's dazzling lagoon.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 3

Taha'a / Ra iātea

Arrive in Taha'a and spend the morning swimming its turquoise waters, where you may encounter black-tipped reef sharks. Or choose to go ashore and visit a family-run vanilla farm. This afternoon, visit Ra iātea, including a stop at one of the most important cultural sites in the Polynesian world: the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Marae Taputapuātea. This large complex was once a center for Polynesian seafarers and the location from which they set out for Hawaii, New Zealand and Rapa Nui (Easter Island). As you explore, you'll learn about the site's significance in Polynesian history.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 4

Bora Bora

Awake this morning as the iconic crags of Mount Otemanu come into focus. Today, choose to explore Bora Bora either on land or in the water and enjoy a barbecue dinner accompanied by Polynesian music on a private *motu* under the stars.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 5

Tupai / Bora Bora Outer Lagoon

Awake this morning to the stunning blue waters surrounding Tupai, an uninhabited coral atoll rarely visited by travelers and known for its distinctive heart-shaped lagoon visible from above. Spend a day exploring powder-white beaches, crystalline lagoons and coral gardens. Swim alongside tropical fish in remarkably clear water, stroll deserted motus edged with coconut palms or simply relax in one of the most remote corners of the South Pacific.

Later this afternoon, continue toward the outer lagoon of Bora Bora, where the silhouette of Mount Otemanu rises dramatically above the horizon. As the sun sets across the lagoon, enjoy an evening on deck while the ship repositions overnight toward Mo'orea.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 6

Mo'orea

This morning, arrive at the lush volcanic island of Mo'orea, where towering emerald peaks, deep bays and vibrant lagoons create a breathtaking backdrop for your final day of exploration. Venture inland through tropical forests to panoramic viewpoints overlooking Cook's and Opunohu Bays, explore calm turquoise waters, or swim among coral reefs teeming with marine life.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 7-8

Mo'orea / Papeete

Begin the day with one final opportunity to explore the lush landscapes and crystalline waters of Mo'orea before sailing to Papeete. The vessel will remain in port overnight, offering a rare chance to experience the energy and charm of this vibrant capital after dark. The following afternoon, set sail for continued exploration of the surrounding islands.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 9

Makatea

An uplifted coral atoll, the island of Makatea is among the Pacific's most unusual and geologically fascinating landforms. Raised dramatically from the sea by tectonic forces, Makatea stands in striking contrast to the region's low-lying atolls, with towering limestone cliffs and rugged elevated terrain. So distinctive is this rare formation that the island's name has become the term used for uplifted coral atolls around the world. Spend the day with your naturalists and local guides, in search of endemic fruit doves and a myriad of seabirds. Explore the island's limestone caves and swim in the crystal-clear waters of its stalactite- and stalagmite-filled grotto.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 10

Rangiroa

The atoll of Rangiroa is a necklace of slender islands surrounding one of the world's largest lagoons, renowned for its turquoise waters and rich marine ecosystems. Beneath the surface lies large schools of reef fish, dolphins and other marine life. Take in the lagoon's extraordinary beauty, with opportunities to swim in the warm waters of this South Pacific paradise.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 11-12

Fakarava

Arrive at Fakarava, one of the largest atolls in French Polynesia and part of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve renowned for its extraordinary marine life and biodiversity. Go ashore in the village of Rotoava, where there will be opportunities to explore by bicycle, browse local pearl shops or stroll the waterfront.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 13

At Sea /Mo'orea

Arrive at the lush volcanic island of Mo'orea, where towering emerald peaks, deep bays and vibrant lagoons create a breathtaking backdrop for your final day of exploration. Venture inland through tropical forests to panoramic viewpoints overlooking Cook's and Opunohu Bays, and explore calm turquoise waters teeming with marine life. Back on board this evening, gather with fellow travelers for a farewell dinner as you celebrate your journey through French Polynesia.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

■ DAY 14

Mo'orea / Papeete / Disembark Ship

Disembark in Papeete and enjoy a dinner ashore before transferring to the airport for flights home.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

Expedition

Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia → Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia

2028 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *National Geographic Orion*

22 Apr				
06 May	20 May			
17 Jun				
01 Jul	15 Jul			
12 Aug	26 Aug			
09 Sep				



National Geographic Orion

GUESTS	CABINS
102	53

Joining the Lindblad fleet in 2013, the state-of-the-art *National Geographic Orion* serves as a luxurious base camp for voyages to the far-flung corners of the planet.

Built in Germany by the Cassens shipyard, the 102-guest *National Geographic Orion* was created with a high ice class to be able to venture safely into polar regions. A ship of her size is seldom built with such ice-cutting ability, which makes her a rarity. She is yacht-scale, yet rugged enough to venture far afield, making her a perfect addition to the Lindblad fleet, which she joined in 2013. Her size and nimbleness offer the perfect combination of safety and liberty to voyage untrammeled locations. In fact, *National Geographic Orion* currently holds the distinction of having sailed further south than any other Lindblad vessel.

Her menu, created by famed Australian chef, Serge Dansereau, owner of Sydney's acclaimed Bather's Pavilion restaurant, enormously popular with *National Geographic Orion*'s guests, so impressed Sven Lindblad, that Serge, a chef-owner who shared the Lindblad commitment to serving local and sustainable food, was enlisted to design the dining program for the entire National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions fleet.

National Geographic Orion is gracious and intimate, with a rewarding, almost clubby feeling. Of her many amenities and features, the most appealing is her outside deck space which beckons in the balmy reaches of the Pacific, and on those days in Antarctica when the midnight sun and the spectacle of the ice makes going indoors, let alone going to bed, impossible.





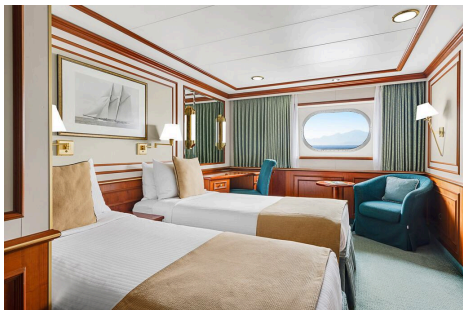


Cabin Categories

Category 1

MAIN DECK **#316, 318-321**

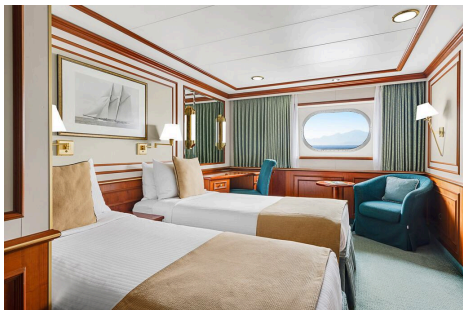
Cabins feature a luminous oval window and configurable beds: two single beds that can be converted to a queen. An armchair, reading lamps, a flat screen TV, two bedside tables, coffee table, desk and climate controls complete the amenities. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 2

MAIN DECK **#302-312, 314, 315, 317**

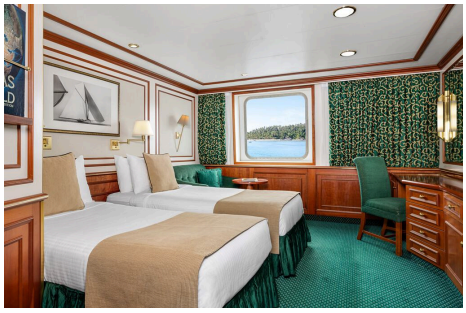
Cabins feature a luminous oval window and configurable beds: two single beds that can be converted to a queen. An armchair, reading lamps, a flat screen TV, bedside table, coffee table, desk and climate controls complete the amenities. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 3

UPPER DECK **#401-412, 414-419**

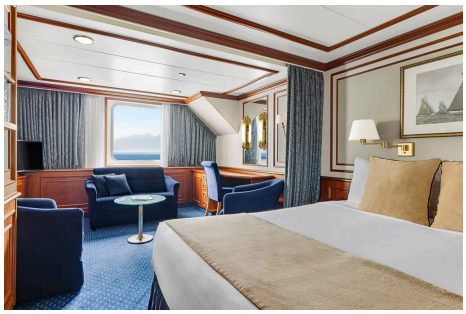
These suites feature a sitting area with a large window, a sofa—except slightly smaller #401 & #402—an armchair or two, writing/laptop desk, reading lamps, coffee table, flat screen TV, bedside table and climate controls. Beds are configurable (call for details). Marble bathrooms include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 4

BRIDGE DECK **#511, 515**

These two suites feature separate sleeping and sitting areas, with a chair and armchair, coffee table, and a two-cushion sofa facing an expansive window. Beds are configurable (call for details). Ample storage, reading lamps, a flat screen TV and climate controls complete the amenities. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 5

BRIDGE DECK **#501, 503-506, 508**

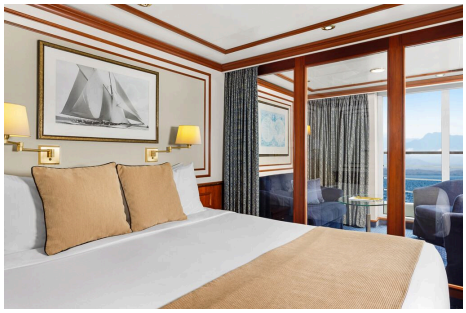
These spacious suites feature open living areas and sliding glass doors opening to a shared French balcony. Beds are configurable (call for details). A separate sitting area with armchairs and a sofa, a writing/laptop desk, coffee table, well-placed reading lamps, a flat screen TV and climate controls complete the decor. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 6

BRIDGE DECK **#502, 507, 509*, 510**

These large, elegant suites feature a French balcony, except for #509 which has double windows. Each provides a separate living area with a sofa and two armchairs, coffee table, except for #502, which uniquely offers a 'soaking tub with a view' in addition to a shower stall and expansive vanity. All cabins have reading lamps, a flat screen TV and climate controls. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



Category 1 Solo

MAIN DECK **#301, 322, 323**

These solo cabins feature a window or two portholes, a queen-size bed, except for #301 which has a double bed, writing desk and chair, climate controls, reading lamps, coffee table, two bedside tables and a TV. Marble bathrooms are generously sized and include a roomy shower stall with a glass door.



Category 3 Solo

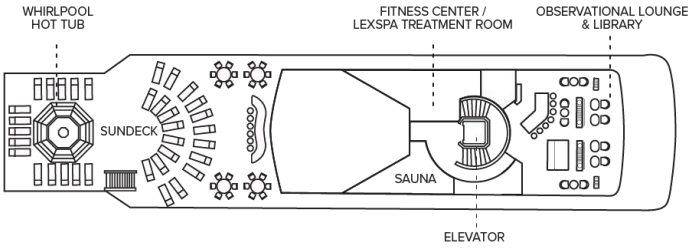
UPPER DECK **#512**

This solo suite features two single beds and two large windows, plus two armchairs and a small table, reading lamps, coffee table a flat screen TV and climate controls. The marble bathroom is generously sized and includes a spacious shower stall with a glass door.



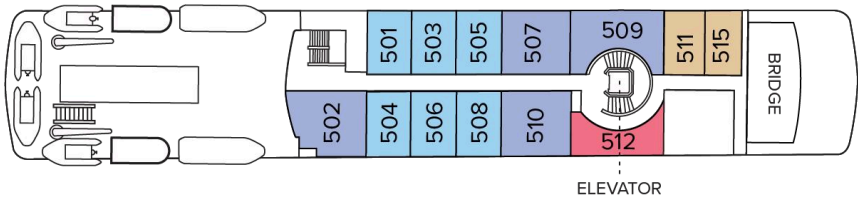
Deck Plans

Observation Deck



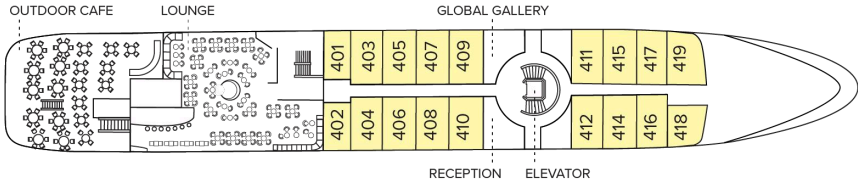
Bridge Deck

- Category 4
- Category 5
- Category 6
- Category 3 Solo



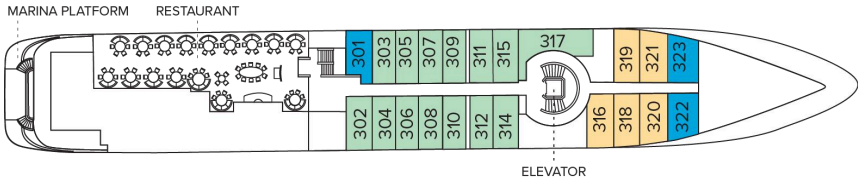
Upper Deck

- Category 3

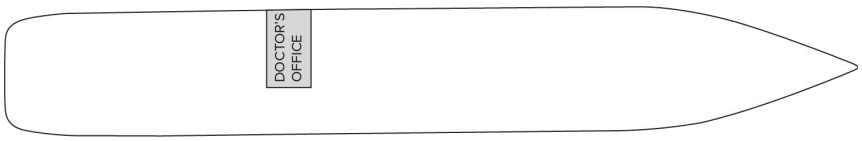


Main Deck

- Category 1
- Category 2
- Category 1 Solo



Expedition Deck



Ship Amenities

Public Areas

Reception; two dining areas; lounge with bar and state-of-the-art presentation facilities; OM System photo locker; sundeck with a whirlpool hot tub that doubles as a plunge pool in warm climates; observation lounge and library; global gallery; a marina platform; plus open access to the Bridge, the Captain, officers and on-duty wildlife spotters.

Meals

Meals are served in the dining room, or weather permitting, the outdoor café, at a single seating with unassigned tables for an informal atmosphere and easy mingling. Menus feature sustainable choices, local where possible.

Cabins

All cabins face outside with windows or portholes, private bathroom, and climate controls. Cabins feature a coffee table, lounge chair, desk, phone, TV with on demand entertainment, multiple outlets and USB, mini refrigerator, and safe. Luxury linens and pillows. Botanically inspired shampoo, conditioner, shower gel and lotion are all available in cabin bathrooms, as well as an Expedition Essential Kit. Hair dryers, complimentary insulated water bottles and a National Geographic Atlas are available in each cabin.

Expedition Equipment

Zodiac landing craft, a fleet of double kayaks, a crow's nest camera, a hydrophone, underwater video cameras, video microscope and an ROV. Plus, for South Pacific voyages: snorkeling gear for all guests, scuba gear for a number of pre-qualified guests, stand-up paddleboards, glass-bottom Zodiac and splash-cam.

Special Features

A full-time doctor, undersea specialist, National Geographic photographer and National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions certified photo instructor. A central staircase and elevator reach all decks. Enjoy daily teatime and the smoothies served after the sunrise stretch sessions on the sundeck in Polynesia.

Wellness

A fitness center, LEXspa treatment room and sauna, staffed by wellness specialists.

Self-Disinfecting Ships

ACT Clean CoatTM is a light-activated, self-disinfecting cleaning process that continuously breaks down viruses, bacteria, mold, and airborne allergens across all ship surfaces. This non-toxic, chemical-free system also helps us save over one million gallons of water each year in our cleaning procedures.

Special Offers

CELEBRATE LIFE'S MILESTONES

Celebrate a milestone with a group of eight or more and enjoy a special amenity package including: 5% savings on voyage fares, custom group photo, US$150 shipboard credit for the group, and other special gifts. Milestone celebration to be communicated at time of booking.

SAVE 5% TRAVELING AS A GROUP

Save 5% when traveling as a group of 8 or more people. Valid for new bookings only on select departures, subject to availability, not applicable on extensions, and may not be combined with other offers. Call for details.

10% OFF BACK-TO-BACK VOYAGES

Save 10% on consecutive departures, applicable on voyage fares only and not valid on extensions or airfare. Valid for new bookings only, subject to availability, and may not be combined with other offers. Call for details.

COMBINING OFFERS

Certain offers may be combinable, up to two savings opportunities, except where noted otherwise. For example, travel with a group of 8 or more on back-to-back expeditions, and take advantage of both savings.

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN

We strongly recommend our guests to take advantage of our Travel Protection Plan. This plan offers comprehensive coverage to protect you from cancellation fees, costs incurred due to trip delays/interruption, damage or loss of baggage, medical assistance, and evacuation during your travels. Our Travel Protection Plan is available for U.S. residents only, and may be purchased any time prior to final payment due date, Travel Protection premiums are non- refundable once plan is purchased. Learn more about our Travel Protection "Plus" Plan: https://www.expeditions.com/terms-conditions/travel-protection-plan/

CANCELLATION POLICY

Review our cancellation policy: https://www.expeditions.com/cancellation-policy/