








French Polynesia & Pacific Islands
17° 31' S 149° 34' W

Pearls of the Pacific: Exploring the Society and Tuamotu Islands

Experience idyllic islands and atolls of renowned biodiversity and untouched beauty. Begin with underwater explorations in the Tuamotu Archipelago and Fakarava, whose flora and fauna are so diverse that its breathtaking reefs and other habitats are protected by UNESCO. Makatea’s sheer volcanic cliffs and Bora Bora’s jagged Mount Otemanu create indelible memories and complement the underwater Gardens of Eden that surround these remote tropical islands.

From
\$ 10,910 / per person
Does not include flights

 DATES Jan and Feb	 DURATION 10 Days
 SHIPS <i>National Geographic Orion</i>	
 STARTS AT Papeete, Tahiti	 ENDS AT Papeete, Tahiti

Highlights

- ★ Discover an extraordinary undersea world via snorkeling, diving, kayaking, paddleboarding, glass-bottom boat, or swimming, plus watch for cetaceans from the expansive open deck
- ★ Swim into an otherworldly grotto on Makatea and float in a hidden cave surrounded by stalagmites and stalactites
- ★ Learn about Polynesian history and culture at Ra’iatea’s Marae Taputapuātea, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- ★ See iconic and awe-inspiring landscapes like Bora Bora’s verdant Mount Otemanu, jutting 2,400 feet above turquoise waters, and Makatea’s steep cliffs that drop straight to deserted beaches





Day by day

■ DAY 1

Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia / Embark Ship

Arrive in Papeete and transfer directly to *National Geographic Orion* for embarkation. While in port this morning, take some time to freshen up and settle into your cabin as we prepare to depart. Alternatively, choose to walk around downtown Papeete and visit the central market where vendors sell fresh fruit, pareos, artwork, and coveted black pearls. Join us for lunch aboard and be on deck as we set sail from Tahiti toward the Tuamotu Archipelago. This afternoon meet the expedition team and your fellow travelers and settle into island time.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 2-3

Tuamotu Archipelago

Spend two days exploring some of the nearly 80 islands and atolls in the “Dangerous Archipelago,” a corner of Polynesia that is as rich with marine life as it is vast. With crystalline lagoons fringed by white beaches and lush coconut groves, the Tuamotus are a tropical dream, both in the water and ashore. Meet the locals on sparsely inhabited Anaa and learn of their unique traditions. Discover the abundant marine life on a snorkel or dive, or learn to stand-up paddleboard in the calm lagoon of one of the many pristine atolls in the archipelago.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 4-5

Fakarava

Today we arrive at Fakarava, one of the largest atolls in French Polynesia and part of a UNESCO

Biosphere Reserve. This coral atoll is home to many rare species of birds, plants, and crustaceans, and we will have the opportunity to snorkel its protected reefs. Spend time exploring Rotoava, the main village on Fakarava. Take a leisurely bike ride, visit a pearl shop, or stroll along the turquoise waterfront with a fresh coconut.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 6

Rangiroa

The atoll of Rangiroa is a ring of slender islands known for some of the best diving and snorkeling in French Polynesia. The turquoise lagoon at its center is the second largest in the world. Kayak, snorkel, and scuba dive in the rich waters here, home to large schools of pelagic fish, manta rays, dolphins, and sea turtles.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 7

Makatea

An uplifted coral atoll, the island of Makatea is one of the most unique landforms in the Pacific. A makatea is a raised coral atoll that is tilted due to plate tectonics and appears much different than the other islands in the region, containing spectacular, vertical cliffs. This specific island of Makatea gives its name to all other uplifted coral atolls worldwide. Spend the day in search of endemic fruit doves and a myriad of seabirds with your expedition team and local guides, 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 8

Ra'iatea / Taha'a

Encircled by a single fringing reef, and sharing a common lagoon, Ra'iatea and Taha'a are islands well worth exploring. The UNESCO World Heritage site of Marae Taputapuātea on Ra'iatea is one of the most important cultural sites in the Polynesian world. The centuries-old complex was a center for Polynesian seafarers and the location from which they set out for Rapa Nui (Easter Island), Hawaii, and New Zealand. Our afternoon is spent at Taha'a where we visit a family-run vanilla plantation and spend time snorkeling in the crystalline lagoons where we encounter black-tipped reef sharks.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAY 9

Bora Bora

Enjoy lunch on board as we sail to nearby Bora Bora and be on deck as the iconic crags of Mount Otemanu come into focus. Spend the afternoon on a nearby motu for a relaxing beach day and BBQ lunch.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

■ DAY 10

Disembark Ship / Papeete

In the afternoon, disembark in Papeete and check into a hotel room for the afternoon. In the late evening, transfer to the airport for international overnight flights home.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch

Jan. 2025 Expedition

Papeete, Tahiti → Papeete, Tahiti

2025 Departure Dates

Aboard *National Geographic Orion*

29 Jan		
--------	--	--

Alternative Routes

Visit Expeditions.com for more information.

2025 Departure Dates

28 Feb



National Geographic Orion

Guests

102

Cabins

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 untrammelled 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 Lindblad-National Geographic 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, & 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; B&H 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 is 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, Lindblad-National Geographic certified photo instructor and video chronicler. On all South Pacific voyages, there are a minimum of two dive masters. A central staircase, and elevator reaches all decks. Enjoy teatime, daily. And the smoothies served after the sunrise stretch sessions on the sundeck in Polynesia. Don't miss either opportunity.

Wellness

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

Self-Disinfecting Ships

ACT Clean Coat™ 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

SUITE EXCLUSIVES

Spacious living areas and incredible views immerse you in the beauty of your marine surroundings. Our new Suite Exclusives package helps make your voyage all the more memorable. [Learn more](#)

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. Valid for new bookings only on select departures, subject to availability, not applicable on airfare or extensions, and may not be combined with other offers. Deposit, final payments, and cancellation policies for group travel vary from our regular policies. 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.

BRINGING THE KIDS

We believe sharing an expedition with children is a life-enhancing experience. Take \$500 off for each child under the age of 18 on any departure. Not applicable on extensions or airfare. Call for details.

SAVE 5% TRAVELING AS A GROUP

Save 5% when traveling as a group of eight or more

people. Valid on voyage fares only and not applicable on extensions or airfare. Deposit, final payments, and cancellation policies for group travel vary from our regular policies. 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.

Included in price

All accommodations aboard ship or in hotels per itinerary; all meals as indicated in the itinerary, both aboard and onshore; beer, wine, cocktails, and spirits aboard the ship (except certain super premium brands which are available for purchase); hors d'oeuvres, 24-hour access to snacks, premium coffees and teas, non-alcoholic beverages, and filtered water; excursions and airport transfers to and from recommended flights, as indicated in the itinerary; crew gratuities; exploration tools curated to destination, such as Zodiacs, stand-up paddleboards, kayaks, snorkeling equipment (including wetsuits, masks, and fins); guidance and company of our leading expedition staff; assistance by the National Geographic Photography Expert and Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic certified photo instructor; access to the OM System Photo Gear Locker; presentations by expedition staff and expert guest speakers; complimentary reusable water bottle; services of a physician, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner, or paramedic; morning stretch classes and 24-hour access to exercise equipment; 24-hour access to lounges, observation decks, library, and other shared spaces; park and site entrance fees, special access permits, and port taxes. Unused services or items included in our programs are non-refundable.

Not included in price

Airfare (except flights when indicated as included); pre- and post-expedition extensions; additional hotel nights (except when indicated as included); private transfers; laundry, spa treatments, scuba diving for pre-qualified divers on select voyages*, Wi-Fi, and phone services (except when indicated as included); travel protection plans; and passport, visa, and immigration fees.

*Scuba Diving Requirements

- Dives can be challenging so divers must have ample previous experience
- Divers need at least 25 lifetime dives if you're advanced open water and at least 35 if you're just open water
- Divers need to have completed an open water dive or professional refresher course within 12 months of the voyage
- Divers need to receive medical clearance to dive from a doctor (form provided upon registration) and provide proof of dive insurance

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/>