

BAJA CALIFORNIA DISCOVERY: EXPLORING MEXICO'S GULF OF CALIFORNIA

Journey deep into the Gulf of California to discover its hidden treasures. This encompassing expedition is the result of years of careful exploration by our veteran naturalists and features the best destinations this rich sea has to offer. It truly captures the exploratory spirit of our earliest days on the peninsula, more than 40 years ago, when Sven Lindblad first introduced intrepid travelers to its wild waters and desert shores.



ITINERARY

Day 1 Loreto, Mexico / Embark Ship

Arrive in the charming seaside town of Loreto by early afternoon. If schedules permit, explore on your own by visiting the first mission in Baja California, learning the town's history at a nearby museum, or sampling local cuisine. Embark National Geographic Venture in the evening and begin our journey along the Gulf of California.

Arrival Time: Arrive before 2:30 p.m. local time.
 Arrival City: Loreto, Mexico



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Meals Included: Dinner

Day 2 Bahía Concepción

Awake in Bahia Concepcion, one of the largest bays of the Baja California peninsula, with over 50 miles of beaches. Take your coffee to the deck to witness the colorful landscapes revealed by the first of many gorgeous sunrises. This biodiversity hotspot is ripe for exploration. Board Zodiacs in search of whales and other marine life, kayak through lush mangrove systems, and snorkel in turquoise waters. On land, join an invigorating hike among towering cacti, or stroll the pristine beaches and learn about the ecology from our naturalists.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3 Santa Rosalía / Cruising

After breakfast, disembark in Santa Rosalía, established as a French copper mining town in 1884. The French influence remains in the architecture—including a steel church designed by Gustave Eiffel—and the mining facilities have been left intact, with old locomotives and machinery visible throughout. Engage with the city's culture and cuisine as you walk the streets, stopping in at a world-famous French bakery for a sweet or savory treat. Back on board, take in the desert landscapes and search for a variety of whales as we cruise to our next destination.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4 Bahía de los Ángeles

Get active this morning with options to hike, kayak, swim, snorkel, or beachcomb within the Bahia de los Ángeles Biosphere Reserve. Board Zodiacs to seek out this protected reserve's diverse marine population, including endangered species such as fin whales, California sea lions, and five species of sea turtles. Whale sharks have also historically been known to populate these waters. Later, enjoy a rare opportunity to see one of the strangest plants

on earth, the Boojum tree. Sacred to indigenous people, and believed to have supernatural powers, this evolutionary oddity takes its name from a Lewis Carroll poem. Capture the experience with help from your Certified Photography Instructor.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Days 5-7 Exploring the Midriff Islands / Bahía Loreto Marine Park

The islands of the Midriff region in the northern Gulf of California are favorites among our naturalists for their remoteness as well as their exceptional wildlife and birdlife. With nature as our guide, we will actively explore these areas by Zodiac, kayak, paddleboard, snorkeling, and hiking. Some of the locations we may visit include:

Isla San Pedro Martir

This 1,000-foot-high guano-covered island is home to the world's largest nesting colonies of blue-footed and brown boobies. The surrounding waters boast 14 species of marine mammals, including fin whales, Bryde's whales, and a resident group of sperm whales.

Isla San Esteban

Featuring volcanic slopes and cliffs, Isla San Esteban is home to spiny-tailed iguana and chuckwallas, cohabitant lizards with fascinating evolutionary traits. As we hike the broad arroyo, keep an eye out for the spiny-tailed iguana feeding on flowers atop cardon cacti, while the chuckwalla dines on the leaves and fruits of low-lying plants.

Isla Rasa

This legendary, uninhabited island is less than 0.21 square miles wide, and yet is crucial to the survival of two species of seabirds. Historically 95% of the world's Heermann's gulls and elegant terns use the island as their nesting grounds, creating a cacophonous, avian spectacle seen nowhere else on earth.

Bahia Loreto Marine Park

One of Mexico's natural treasures, this protected area offers a variety of

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pristine landscapes and a plethora of marine life. Search for bottlenose and common dolphins, with the possibility of encountering blue or sperm whales.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Days 8-10 Exploring Southern Gulf Islands

Venture south to discover the gems of the southern Gulf. These islands and surrounding waters are celebrated for their conservation stories, marine life, and the many thrilling experiences on offer. Some of the locations we may visit or enjoy by Zodiac include:

Cabo Pulmo National Marine Park

Set out to snorkel the pristine reefs of Cabo Pulmo National Marine Park, one of the most successful national marine parks in the world. Chat with locals about their advocacy to protect this unique place, including a cessation of fishing to protect the reef.

Isla Espiritu Santo

A national park as well as UNESCO World Heritage site with volcanic rock formations, scenic beaches, and coral reefs. This magical island offers excellent hiking opportunities and crystal-clear waters for snorkeling. It's a popular destination for researchers monitoring sea turtles.

Los Islotes

Located at the northern tip of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Los Islotes is largely inaccessible to people and home to a large colony of sea lions. Conditions permitting, we'll anchor off the rocky island where we don flippers, a mask, and snorkel (which we provide) and swim with these curious inhabitants.

Isla San Jose

One of the larger islands in the Gulf of California, San Jose offers several landing possibilities depending on conditions and the whim of the moment. Photograph the ochre cliffs of the island's eastern shore, hike an enchanted, cactus-laden arroyo, or visit the abandoned salt works to the west. Discover rare wildlife among desert islands.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11 La Paz / Disembark Ship / San José del Cabo

Disembark in La Paz after breakfast and transfer to Los Cabos airport for flights home, or join a three-day, two-night culture and cuisine extension exploring La Paz, Todos Santos, and San Jose del Cabo.

Departure Time: After 2:00 p.m., local time

Departure City: San Jose del Cabo, Mexico

Meals Included: Breakfast

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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YOUR SHIP: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC VENTURE

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VESSEL TYPE: Expedition Ship

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY: 100

BUILT/REFURBISHED: 2017

National Geographic Venture is the perfect ship to explore Alaska's Inside Passage and beyond.

Cabins & Suites

The luxury of comfort on expedition

National Geographic Venture comfortably accommodates 100 guests in 50 outside-facing cabins. Cabins are efficiently designed, with sizes range from the 136-square-foot category 1 to the 185-square-foot category 5 suite. Twenty-two of the 50 cabins will feature small balconies with floor-to-ceiling sliding doors that bring in the spectacular views and ample natural light. Twelve cabins will connect via internal doorway access allowing families to combine their rooms. Plus, all category 5 suite cabins can accommodate a third person on a convertible sofa bed.

Comfort & convenience in every room

Every cabin has two portholes, a large window or balcony, Wi-Fi access, and temperature controls. Bathrooms are modern and stocked with botanically inspired hair products, soap, and shower gel, plus a hairdryer. Every room has outlets and USB outlets for charging your camera gear or electronics, and space for luggage storage.

Life Aboard

Dining

Food served aboard is fresh, local, and delicious, and sourced from suppliers who share our values of sustainable use whenever possible. Meals aboard are almost always served in the dining room, located aft of the lounge deck. When weather conditions allow, lighter fare may be served on the observation deck. There is no assigned seating and our dining room accommodates the entire expedition community in a single seating. During meals your expedition leader, naturalists, and any guest speakers aboard will join you.

Public spaces

National Geographic Venture was designed with 50 years of expedition heritage. The ship features a specially-designed, open bow and an observation deck for gathering to watch for wildlife or enjoy an evening cocktail with friends in the open air. An elevator access all decks, and public restrooms are available on every deck.

Bridge: You're invited to the ship's bridge to see the calm business of navigation unfold. Ask the watch officer Ventureions about navigation. Or, help yourself to the ever-ready binoculars to scan the horizon for whale spouts. There may occasionally be times when the bridge must be restricted to shipboard personnel only.

Lounge: The lounge is the heart of our expedition community, where we hold cocktail hour and Recap each evening. It's also where you'll gather for presentations, photography talks, and guest speaker presentations. Seating design takes advantage of



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the wraparound windows for an optimal view, and boasts multiple high-definition screens for slideshows and videos. Forward lounge doors provide direct access to the bow. There's also a small reference library and board games and cards are also available.

Bar: The bar is typically open from 11 a.m. until one hour after lunch begins and from 5 p.m. until closing. A variety of beverages are available for purchase including wine by the glass or bottle, cocktails, specialty drinks, and spirits. There is also a 24-hour self-service beverage station with coffee, tea, soft drinks, beer, water, ice, and snacks. The drinking age aboard the ship is 21.

Sundeck: Morning stretch classes are held in the open air of the sundeck, located aft on the observation deck. After stretch class the deck is set with tables and chairs, and lounge chairs.

Bow: National Geographic Venture's specially-designed bow observation area accommodates the entire expedition community at once for a shared wildlife viewing experience.

Mud room: Located aft on the main deck where you will embark and disembark expedition landing craft, the mud room has lockers that provide convenient gear and boot storage.

Wellness aboard

Making daily discoveries and exploring the wild world is naturally uplifting. Add to that a variety of wellness treatments available aboard, as well as outings led by your wellness specialist, and you'll find your expedition relaxing as well as revitalizing. Massages, body treatments, natural facial treatments, and hand and foot treatments are all available in the LEXspa. You will have the opportunity to sign up for a treatment once on board.

Fitness Center: Conveniently located on the lounge deck, the fitness center is outfitted with two treadmills, exercise bikes, elliptical machines, exercise bands, and sets of small hand

weights to use as well.

The global gallery: a window on regional talent
Discover the talent of local artisans in the places National Geographic Venture ventures in the ship's global market. The global market is a collection of items made by local residents in the places we explore. It is conveniently located on the ship's lounge deck. You may find silver jewelry crafted in Alaska, woven baskets from Panama, paintings and books by your naturalist staff, plus expedition clothing and other essentials. Every item purchased in the global market contributes to the Lindblad Artisan Fund, which supports artisans in communities around the world to develop their potential more effectively and successfully. Five percent of all National Geographic Venture's global market sales will be earmarked for this fund, and the Lindblad-National Geographic Fund will match dollar for dollar what is raised through these earmarks.

Tools for Exploration

Expedition Landing Craft

Key to our operation is our fleet of expedition landing craft, which we use to land in places that would otherwise be inaccessible. With 8 of these boats and two loading stations used every time we disembark, we're able to transfer guests off the ship quickly, so you can be out on adventures, not idly waiting. The expedition landing craft we use are 19 feet long, powered by four-stroke outboard engines, and are capable of comfortably carrying 10-12 people. They are widely recognized as the safest and most versatile small boats afloat.

Remotely Operated Vehicle

Capable of reaching 1,000 feet, far beyond the range of any Scuba diver, the ROV allows you to literally view parts of the undersea that are as unexplored as the moon. Chances are you, like many of our guests, will be struck by how surprisingly

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colorful undersea life is in these unlikely places. And this glimpse may fundamentally change how you view the ocean.

Kayaks

National Geographic Venture is equipped with 24 two-person kayaks--a fleet large enough to ensure everyone who wants to can paddle at every opportunity.

Consequently, prior kayaking experience isn't necessary--many of our guests have their first kayaking experience in extraordinary locations. Our custom-designed floating platform lets us deploy kayaks from the ship, or any location we want--including far from shore. Kayakers are usually free to explore where they want within boundaries set by the undersea specialist and officer of the watch.

Underwater camera

Our undersea specialist will dive often during your expedition, even in Alaska, with cold-water gear, to shoot high-definition, Cousteau-like footage of the deep. Colorful nudibranchs, swimming, plant-like crinoids, and mysterious fish with antifreeze blood that thrive in the frigid sea will give you an entirely new appreciation of the marine environment.

Video microscope

Naturalists will use the video microscope to help explain all elements of the environment, including tiny organisms that are the building block of the marine ecosystem. Spellbinding live views of krill at 80x magnification fills the high-definition screens in the lounge with vivid detail, and fills every onlooker with a sense of wonder at the importance of otherwise unobservable creatures.

Hydrophone

This underwater microphone is deployed to listen to the vocalizations of marine mammals. Real time transmissions of their eerie, haunting sounds can be broadcast through the ship

or recorded for later playback. Few experiences in nature are as captivating as watching humpback whales feed close to the ship as their vocalizations play through the ship's PA system.

Electronic charts

An electronic chart showing the ship's location, course, and speed is almost always on display in the lounge.

Open bridge

You'll find our captains are engaged, knowledgeable members of your expedition who are eager to share their passion with you. Venture's open bridge features comfortable spaces to sit, enjoy the view, drink your morning coffee, or simply chat with the officers.

Snorkeling gear & wetsuits

On warm weather itineraries where there will be snorkeling, you'll select a mask, snorkel, fins, and wetsuit that remain yours for the duration of the expedition. There's no need to pack and tote your own gear, although guests who prefer to are welcome to bring their own.



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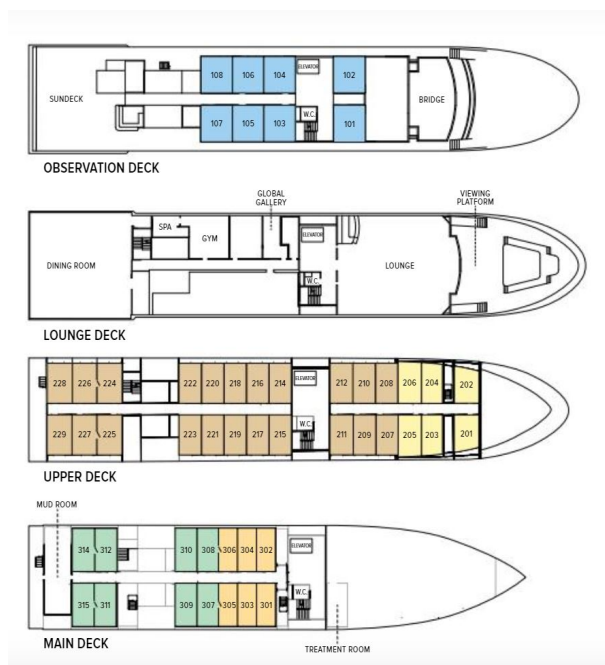
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