



The Small Cruise
Ship Collection

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ANCIENT POLYNESIA: TUAMOTUS AND MARQUESAS ISLANDS

On an expedition to some of the world's most remote islands, volcanic peaks rise dramatically from turquoise lagoons, 20 species of whales and dolphins thrive in protected waters, and welcoming villagers share their ancient cultural traditions. Begin in the renowned diving destination Rangiroa in the Tuamotu Archipelago, where 16-foot manta rays, colorful butterfly fish, whales, and sea turtles flourish in pristine, nutrient-rich waters. Exploring the sparsely populated Marquesas Islands, encounter moss-covered giant tikis on Hiva Oa, thousand-year-old petroglyphs on Nuku Hiva, the wild horses of Ua Huka, and lush rainforests with rare birds and rushing waterfalls. Join the legacy of explorers, writers, and artists like James Cook, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Paul Gauguin who crossed oceans seeking distant primordial landscapes and distinct ways of life in a region that embodies paradise in both the breathtaking landscapes of its islands and in the abundant biodiversity of the surrounding sea.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia

Arrive in Tahiti and proceed 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 staff and fellow travelers and settle into island time. (B,L,D)

DAY 2: Rangiroa, Tuamotus

Today and tomorrow, we visit the Tuamotu Archipelago. 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. (B,L,D)

DAY 3: Takarua Atoll

Today we'll visit Takarua Atoll, a remote island nearly 350 miles from Tahiti. We visit the main village and snorkel or dive stunning healthy reefs. Kayak and stand-up paddleboard in its turquoise lagoons and walk pristine beaches beneath coconut palms. (B,L,D)

DAY 4-5: At Sea / Tahuata, Marquesas

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A relaxing day at sea brings us to one of the most remote island groups on Earth, the Marquesas Islands. We begin our exploration of this archipelago on Tahuata, the smallest of the inhabited Marquesan Islands. Choose to attend a local church service with stunningly beautiful music, and spend some time exploring Vaitahu, the main village on the island. In the afternoon we reposition to nearby Hapatoni Bay where both land and sea excursions await. (B,L,D)

DAY 6: Nuku Hiva

Start the day at Hatiheu Bay, on the north shore of Nuku Hiva Island. Visit ancient petroglyphs and witness a spectacular dance performance at a Marquesan me'ae, or hike up the valley with the naturalists and local guides in search of rare birds and spectacular views. Later, sample local foods in the village, and peruse unique arts and crafts. (B,L,D)

DAY 7: Ua Huka

Today is open for exploration. Dive some of the incredible waters here and search for rare cetaceans with your naturalists. Marvel at the rugged volcanic silhouettes of these legendary islands from the Zodiacs and kayaks. (B,L,D)

DAY 8: Fatu Hiva

Be sure you're on deck this morning to photograph the volcanic pillars of Hanavave Bay, as National Geographic Orion approaches one of the most storied shorelines in the entire Pacific. Visit a remote village where you'll see displays of uniquely Marquesan arts and crafts. Choose a challenging hike to a remote waterfall, or take Zodiacs to the next bay where local transport takes you on a birdwatching foray deep into the Omoa Valley. (B,L,D)

DAY 9-10: Exploring / Hiva Oa / Disembark / Papeete / Home

This morning, we let nature guide us as we set out exploring one of the Marquesas' remote, uninhabited islands. In the afternoon we arrive at Hiva Oa, where we'll visit the village of Puamau to explore a well-maintained Marquesan sacred site, a me'ae lipona. Accompanied by our team and knowledgeable local guides, we'll learn about religious rites, and photograph one of the largest, most arresting ancient tikis in Polynesia. On our last morning, we'll visit the village of Atuona before disembarking the ship and flying by charter aircraft back to Papeete. This evening, transfer to the airport for flights home. (B,L,D)

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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YOUR SHIP: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION

YOUR SHIP:	National Geographic Orion
VESSEL TYPE:	Luxury Expedition
LENGTH:	103 metres
PASSENGER CAPACITY:	102 (in 53 cabins)
BUILT/REFURBISHED:	2003 / Refurbished 2014

Engineered for maximum comfort and safety, *Orion* is equipped with the latest technology including large retractable stabilizers, sonar, radar, and an ice-strengthened hull. A shallow draft plus bow and stern thrusters provide the convenience of being able to maneuver close to shore. 14 Zodiacs ensure quick disembarkation and offer the ideal transport for up-close exploration. *National Geographic Orion* meets strict specifications for environmental protection and the on board waste management systems meet the stringent Antarctic operational standards enabling us to travel to the most pristine environments. A host of advanced design features and technology ensures sustainable marine environmental practices. *National Geographic Orion* accommodates 102 guests in 53 cabins, including several with balconies. She is spacious and modern, with a variety of public rooms that offer panoramic views of the passing landscape. Friendly and informal, *Orion* fosters a welcoming atmosphere where like-minded guests share in exceptional experiences and enrichment. Her public rooms include a dramatic window-lined main lounge, as well as an observation lounge and library perched at the very top of the ship, with plentiful observation decks. The spacious lounge is

the heart of our expedition community, and is suited for spirited cocktail hours, informative presentations and our nightly tradition of Recap. In addition, a dedicated theater provides a unique setting for specialist presentations or films and slideshows. Both the main dining room and outside buffet easily accommodate all guests at once for open seating dining. On selected nights, weather permitting, our dining room menu is also available on the outside deck. While *Orion* interiors are elegant, life aboard is always casual, with no need for formal clothing. And you'll find shipboard services like laundry, in-room cabled internet, and public-area wifi make packing and traveling more



convenient.



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PRICING



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