

BAJA CALIFORNIA CRUISE: AMONG THE GREAT WHALES

Explore Baja California's pristine coastlines and living sea in search of dolphins, sea lions, and as many as five different varieties of whales. Board local pangas and enter sheltered lagoons for up-close encounters with California gray whale mothers and their newborn calves. Witness an undersea wonderland, serene desert isles, and the most beautiful sunsets on Earth. Hike through towering cacti and up striking desert canyons or take a slow photo stroll along the shore. Every day is different and rewarding, with opportunities to indulge in active or relaxing pursuits.



ITINERARY

Day 1 Loreto, Mexico / Embark Ship

Arrive in Loreto, a picturesque gulfside town dotted with Spanish colonial architecture. Transfer to the National Geographic Venture to set sail at sunset.

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

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 Exploring the Gulf of California

The Gulf of California is home to great biological diversity, and with some luck, sightings of whales, dolphins, and other sea life are among the highlights of our journey. Our plan is flexible as we explore some of the uninhabited islands sprinkled across these waters. Our Captain and Expedition Leader collaborate to choose the perfect combination of activities for the day. Conditions permitting, we may hike, kayak or paddleboard. Learn about this ecosystem from naturalist and capture amazing photos with help from your certified photo instructor.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4 Boca de Soledad

After breakfast, transfer by motorcoach from Puerto Escondido to Puerto Lopez Mateos. Settle in for unforgettable experiences in this tranquil lagoon. Each winter, during their long migration, gray whales travel south from their Arctic feeding grounds to breed and give birth to their calves in these sheltered waters. Together with savvy local fisherman, we'll venture out in local pangas to view the numerous mother-calf pairs. With luck, enjoy up-close interactions with these curious creatures. Enjoy lunch at a traditional restaurant before returning to the ship in late afternoon.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Days 5-7 Cabo Pulmo / Los Islotes / Gulf of California

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 8 Loreto / Disembark Ship

After breakfast, disembark the ship and transfer to the Loreto airport for flights home or to Loreto's city center to begin a two-night history and whale-watching extension.

Departure Time: Depart after 12:00 p.m. local time.
Departure City: Loreto, Mexico

Meals Included: Breakfast

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC VENTURE

YOUR SHIP: **National Geographic Venture**

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Launched 2018 Designed with over 50 years of expedition heritage, National Geographic Venture is able to explore the same remote locations as National Geographic have sought out for decades while setting a new standard in comfort and style. She will follow National Geographic Quest in featuring step-out balconies (available in 22 of the 50 spacious cabins), plus 6 sets of connecting cabins for families and groups; a Sun Deck bar, and a designated mudroom for expedition gear. Comfortably accommodating 100 guests, Venture has a shallow draft depth, allowing us to navigate the same inner reaches and provide the same intimate experiences of the charismatic regions we explore. Her twin expedition craft landing platforms allow you to get on and off the ship quickly to take advantage of wildlife sightings and to ensure we maximize our time off the ship exploring. Designed with decades of expedition experience in the region, the purpose-built vessel also features open decks, generous windows, and specialty tools for exploration--the ideal platform for sailing into the fast-moving channels and shallow coves of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest and for exploring the tropical waterways of Central America. Remotely Operated VehicleCapable 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 colorful undersea life is in these unlikely places. And this glimpse may fundamentally change how you view the ocean. KayaksNational 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 cameraOur 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 microscopeNaturalists 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. HydrophoneThis underwater microphone is deployed to listen to the vocalizations of marine mammals. Real time transmissions

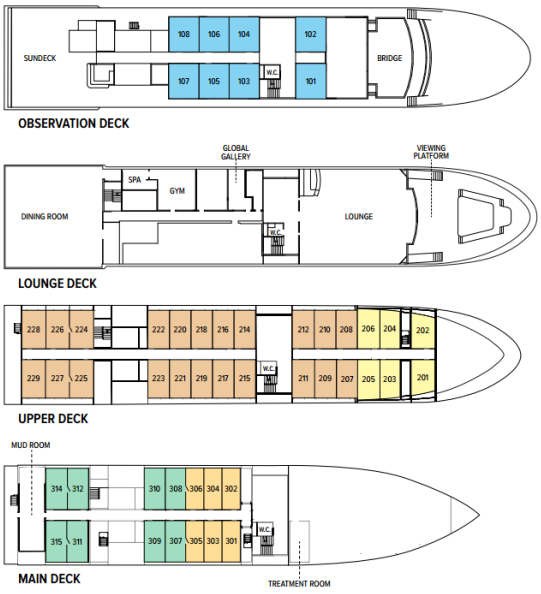
of their eerie, haunting sounds can be broadcast through the ship or recorded for later playback. Few experiences in nature are as captivating as watching humpback whales feed close to the ship as their vocalizations play through the ship's PA system. Electronic chartsAn electronic chart showing the ship's location, course, and speed is almost always on display in the lounge. Open bridgeYou'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 & wetsuitsOn 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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