

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



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 Rosalia, 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 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.



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

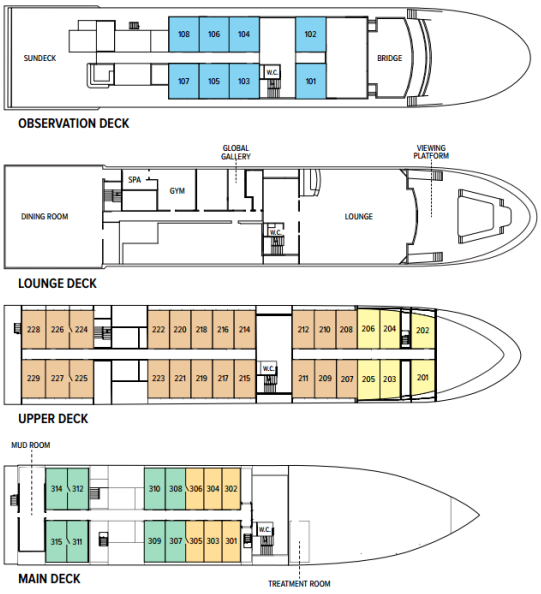
of their eerie, haunting sounds can be broadcast through the ship or recorded for later playback. Few experiences in nature are as captivating as watching humpback whales feed close to the ship as their vocalizations play through the ship's PA system. Electronic chartsAn electronic chart showing the 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.



INSIDE YOUR SHIP



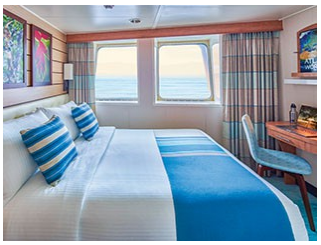
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