

Wild at Heart

A naturalist from Bozeman, Montana, **Sue Perin** has spent 21 years traveling with **Lindblad Expeditions** from Antarctica to Arctic Svalbard – the last eight as an expedition leader for the Peruvian Amazon, southeast Alaska, and beyond. We caught up with her in Mexico's Baja California, to find out what makes a great trip there.

WHY BAJA?

"Looking a California gray whale in the eye from a Zodiac is a humbling, awe-inspiring experience. Also, snorkeling with California sea lions, hikes on beautiful desert islands, dolphins bow-riding and leaping in front of the ship, and star-filled skies."

WHEN SNORKELING WITH SEA LIONS, REMEMBER:

"They're like playful underwater puppies, fun and lovable, but never hold out your hand like a toy."

PASSENGERS OFTEN UNDERPACK:

"Camera cards – and jump drives for sharing photos with shipmates."

... AND OVERPACK:

"Fancy clothes. It's very relaxed on board."

THE KEY TO SLEEPING WELL ON SMALL SHIPS:

"Play hard during the day. And if you're a light sleeper, learn to sleep with earplugs beforehand."

BEST SEAT IN THE ZODIAC:

"Depends on your perspective and the weather: The front's more adventurous and bouncy, with the wind in your face. Choose the back if you want more stability – or if you're tall and like to stand to take photos. On cold days, the middle gives you the added warmth of people on both sides."

FAVORITE BINOCULARS:

"Brunton Epochs."

MOST UNDERUSED CAMERA TRICK:

"Taking close-ups with the 'macro' setting. That said, my best tip is to

spend a few hours shooting beside one of our *National Geographic* photographers."

HOW TO LOOK YOUR BEST FOR ONBOARD VIDEOGRAPHERS:

"Relax and pretend they aren't there."

SEA KAYAKING DO:

"Try it even if you haven't been before."

... AND DON'T:

"Critique your partner's steering. It's harder than it looks – and sound travels over water."

Perin serves as one of Lindblad Expeditions'

Arctic Svalbard naturalists this June, then heads to the Peruvian Amazon in August and September. She'll be back in Mexico with the whales next spring.



Kayaking in the Sea of Cortés, shortly before ceviche and cocktails as the sun sets over Baja's Sierra de la Giganta.