TALES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC
EXPLORING REMOTE & STORIED ISLANDS

EASTER ISLAND
PITCAIRN
MANGAREVA
THE TUAMOTOS

ABOARD NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION | 2020 & 2021
DEAR TRAVELER,

Have you had the opportunity to travel with Tom Ritchie? If you’ve explored with us over the years, chances are good you’ve shared an adventure with him—and know how engaging he is. If you haven’t had the pleasure, you owe it to yourself. Tom is the consummate naturalist, versed in vertebrate paleontology, anthropology, geology, and much more. He is also an avid collector with a private museum specializing in traditional arts, tools, weapons, and other artifacts, many from the South Pacific. I’m delighted to have him introduce our Tales of The Pacific through the lens of his profound knowledge and personal experiences and memories. I hope his words ignite your curiosity and motivate you to join him, and the rest of our stellar expedition team. We look forward to following in the wake of early Polynesian navigators, and going where few can with you.

All the best,

Sven Lindblad

MY WILD POLYNESIA

BY TOM RITCHIE

Tom Ritchie, a zoologist and naturalist, grew up near the Everglades, exploring the swamps, marshes, forests, and reef systems of South Florida—a perfect training ground for his life with Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic. Since 1977, Tom has led voyages to the far reaches of the globe, including Antarctica, the High Arctic, the Amazon River, Africa, New Guinea, Indonesia, Southeast Asia, Australia, and many other wild and primitive regions, as well as the South Pacific.
I was lucky to meet Lars-Eric Lindblad back in 1977; he immediately hired me to be a naturalist, lecturer, boat handler, and guide aboard his famous ship Lindblad Explorer, otherwise known as the “Little Red Ship.” This was the original Expedition Passenger Vessel, a designation made up by the U.S. Coast Guard by necessity in order to categorize this exceptional ship. Lindblad has been in the business of conducting expeditions, ever since. And now, under Sven Lindblad’s guidance, a fleet of 13 ships has replaced the original Little Red Ship. Back then, Lars-Eric Lindblad passionately wanted to bring intrepid travelers to Rapa Nui. However, he was told that with no harbors, no airstrip ready, and no accommodations, it would be next to impossible. Impossible was not an obstacle to the man who had pioneered expedition travel to Antarctica and Galápagos, so he gathered a team of experts around him to develop a compelling itinerary and devised a plan—that involved building an airstrip and creating a ‘pop-up’ Africa safari-style luxury tent city for the first group of intrepid Lindblad travelers. I feel privileged to have been part of the vivid Lindblad history—my career of more than 40 years started in the South Pacific, and I have since managed to explore nearly all of it. This region, now easily reached by National Geographic Orion with her fleet of Zodiacs, kayaks and standup paddleboards aboard, plus excellent accommodations, has so much to offer expedition travelers: people, history, archaeology, marine life, and exceptional natural beauty. I think of all the islands in Polynesia, Easter Island, also known as Isla de Pascua to the Chileans, and both Rapa Nui (Broad Paddle) and Te Pito Te Henua (Navel of the World) to the Polynesians, is easily the most fascinating region within the sprawling Polynesia triangle. The most isolated habitable land in the world, it is located 2,350 miles west from Chile, 1,400 miles east from Pitcairn Island, the two nearest bits of land. Rapa Nui is a volcanic island roughly triangular in shape, with an extinct volcano at each corner. Although it is relatively small—14 miles east to west and 7 miles north to south—it sits atop a huge volcanic plateau some 150 miles in circumference, and is surrounded by some of the world’s deepest waters, more than 10,000 ft. deep in places. Mysteries still abound here, the origins of the moai remain stubbornly unsolved, despite the work of hundreds of archaeologists. And the thrill of landing on the remote and storied islands we visit aboard Orion will be as fresh for you as it was for the early Polynesian navigators, the Bounty mutineers, and the other seafarers, explorers and romantics who have ventured here over the centuries.

(continued on pages 2-9)
Easter Island

Easter Island was colonized by Polynesians probably between AD 900 and 1000, according to the latest radiocarbon dates. Over the centuries, the Islanders became cut off from trading partners and contact with the rest of Polynesia, leaving the culture to evolve in complete isolation. The design and style of the incredible megaliths, or moai, are unlike any other statues found in Polynesia, or the rest of the world, for that matter. There are about 900 moai known to exist. The statues were carefully chipped out of relatively soft tuffstone (compacted volcanic ash) with handheld hammerstones made from much harder basalt. How many man-hours must it have taken to complete one of these behemoths? We’ll see the quarries where they were produced—and we can still only speculate on how they were transported and erected all over the island. Unfortunately, there is no written history or reliable oral traditions to describe what happened here before the coming of Europeans, which tragically resulted in the almost complete destruction of the Easter Islanders and their culture—through devastating diseases and forced enslavement for the nitrate trade in Peru. In recent decades, there has been a resurgence in all things Polynesian, and the indigenous population is now thriving.

I have known some of the archaeologists we’ll meet for the many years I’ve been coming here with our guests. They have pieced together much of the island’s prehistory, and you’ll find discussing Easter Island’s secrets with them fascinating. I have not found a more interesting island in all the world, and I am certain you will agree.
The statues at Ahu Tongariki, Easter Island. For more than one of the planet’s best photo ops, this iconic UNESCO World Heritage site is the focus for jaw-dropping majesty and mystery, and the ideal illustration of the capacity of committed archaeologists to resurrect. In our visits, we learn directly from Director Claudio Cristino, how the fifteen moai, dismembered and scattered by a devastating tsunami in 1960, were exactly, even lovingly, restored by his team in the 1990s.
Pitcairn

I thought I knew a lot about Pitcairn Island even before I ever got there—I had seen the first two movies about the infamous Mutiny on the Bounty, and had read part of Nordhoff and Hall’s trilogy so, I thought I knew what to expect. As I quickly learned when I first arrived in 1977, the island has little in common with the white sand beaches, waterfalls, lush vegetation, and calm, shallow lagoons found in Tahiti and Bora Bora where those movies were filmed. Pitcairn is a small, rugged volcanic island. The coastline is mostly steep exposed cliffs, often pounded by heavy seas, and with no protected bays or sandy beaches. Like Easter Island to its east, Pitcairn is one of the most isolated inhabited islands in the world. We all know the story of the HMS Bounty mutiny that occurred on April 22, 1789, near Tonga. Of the 44 men aboard the Bounty, 23 actively took part in the mutiny. Of those, Fletcher Christian (the leader of the mutiny) and eight crew, along with six Tahitian men, and 12 Tahitian women settled on little-known and uninhabited Pitcairn Island. When we visit, we’re reminded everywhere of the history by the place names and artifacts (there’s a marvelous little museum near the square). And examining the headstones in the graveyard I find especially interesting—one sees recognizable surnames like Christian, Warren, McCoy, Morrison, Young, etc. The isolated grave of the last surviving mutineer and undisputed patriarch of the early Pitcairn community, John Adams, is one of most important and revered historic sites on the island. The modern-day descendants are a unique blend of European and Polynesian cultures and genetics.
Although English is the official language (the island is a British Overseas Territory), the locals speak a unique language among themselves, a delightful mix of English and Polynesian words. It is great fun to interact with the Pitcairners. I have made numerous friends here over the years, although many have passed away since my earliest visits. Typical for Polynesian islanders, they are very friendly and welcoming. Our visit will be a major event in the community, because few people manage to reach their island. The meeting place for everyone is the tiny main square in the quaint village of Adamstown, and they always have plenty of items and crafts for sale. We'll also be able to hike, explore, view the wildlife, including numerous tropical bird species, and enjoy the natural beauty at such places as Christian's Cave and Saint Paul's Pool. As many places as I've been, I consider each opportunity to land here an accomplishment on my resumé.
Mangareva Island

Imagine an archetypal South Seas lagoon, the beautiful blue, encircled by a narrow, protective band of living coral reef: that’s Mangareva. The jewel of the Gambier Islands, Mangareva is a textbook example of the ongoing slow physical transformation of a high volcanic island like Mo’orea or Bora Bora into a low, flat coral atoll typical of the Tuamotus. I first came here in the mid-1970s and was blown away by the exotic beauty of the island and the graceful, laid back feel to the main settlement of Rikitea.

However, it has a complicated history. Polynesians have inhabited the Gambier Islands since at least the 10th century. Life must have been easy early on with abundant food crops, including coconuts, breadfruit, bananas, taro, papaya, etc., and plenty of fish and shellfish in both the lagoon and just offshore. But, archaeologists have discovered a drastic reduction in the population size and a cessation of inter-island trade during the 15th or 16th century, resulting in near total isolation from the rest of Polynesia. Then, Europeans arrived in the late 18th century. In 1834, Father Louis Honoré Laval came here and began to convert the Polynesians to Christianity. Once King Maputoea converted, Laval gained complete control over the populace, and during the next 30 years he oversaw what historians call ‘the death of a people’. He established a theocratic dictatorship, exerted control of the pearl trade, locked up the entire female population whenever whaling or trading ships arrived, and ordered the construction of St. Michael’s Cathedral. It took nine years to build and when completed, could accommodate 1,200 people. In addition, he also orchestrated construction of a palace, a monastery, a convent, a prison, a textile factory, and coastal watchtowers. It became a city, unlike anything a Polynesian island had ever experienced. Forced labor, the loss of ancient customs, unaccustomed clothing, and European diseases are all believed to have contributed to a second devastating depopulation of the Gambier Islands. Reports of the terrible loss of life and suffering...
Guests are welcomed at Mangareva island, part of the Gambier islands.

within the Gambiers eventually reached the provincial government in Papeete, an investigation ensued, and Father Laval (a.k.a. the ‘mad priest’) was recalled. His infamous response to the inquiry was “…they have but gone more quickly to heaven.” We’ll visit the recently restored cathedral, and observe the ruins of other European-style coral stone buildings. The natural history rivals the island’s vivid human history, and we’ll experience the natural magnificence: exploring the islands topography, snorkeling or diving. Plus, for those so inclined—there’s a challenging hike up to the summit of Mt. Duff for stunning lagoon views.

Guests are welcomed at Mangareva island, part of the Gambier islands.
Tuamotus

Thinking of the Tuamotu Islands brings back wonderful memories of carefree days enjoying the typical ways of island life. The amazingly friendly, welcoming, and accommodating islanders would put on a dance at the spur of the moment, and fresh fruit was always offered. While the islanders now live in solid concrete block houses with corrugated iron roofs rather than thatched houses, and use fiberglass boats with outboard engines instead of canoes, plus motorbikes, cars, and trucks on even the most remote inhabited islands, their attitudes and lifestyles haven’t changed a bit. The Tuamotu Islands are beautiful, the people who live there are beautiful, as is their culture and outlook. It really is a privilege to meet these people.

The islands themselves are low, and flat—linear along the horizon, circles seen from the air—coral atolls, characterized by roughly round narrow bands of flat-topped coral reefs and low, sand-covered islands and islets encircling internal lagoons. Of course, there are variations on the theme, but the islands generally follow this same design. Whether you’ve found geology interesting in the past or not, I think you’ll find the talks on the subject here, illustrating the volcanic formation of these ancient islands and the effects of their ‘collapse’, fascinating. Many have cuts in the reefs that allow National Geographic Orion’s skilled captain to bring the ship into the lagoons. On recent voyages, using Google Earth and
drones, our expedition team has brought us into locations never visited by a ship—an occurrence celebrated by the residents. Less than half of the islands are inhabited, so we’ll enjoy an exhilarating mix of cultural and natural history opportunities. As a trained archaeologist and paleontologist, I am always fascinated by the opportunities to visit ancient archaeological sites, some well-studied by archaeologists, and others untouched since prehistoric times. Birders contemplating this trip should know—there are endemic land birds on these islands, including a species with a total population of just 37. And, of course, the coral reefs and coral reef fish will be a thrilling facet of our time in the Tuamotus—with snorkeling and diving a near-daily option, as is National Geographic Orion’s glass-bottom Zodiac for ‘dry’ observations! Black pearls are important to the Tuamotus economically, and we will come across islanders selling black pearls (which can also be bluish, greenish, brownish, etc.). In my opinion, black pearls are more interesting and more beautiful than typical white pearls. And I’ve learned they’re a perfect gift—surprising and appreciated—to bring home for female friends and family expecting travel gifts.

Main image: Aerial view of a beautiful tropical atoll in the Tuamotu Archipelago, French Polynesia. Left: Discover the vibrant undersea and spot fish like these butterfly fish on a snorkel dive. Above: Marae Tahiti Vairau, built of coral slabs, sits in a coconut grove near a lovely strip of coral sand in Fakarava.
SHARE THE ADVENTURE WITH ENGAGING INDIVIDUALS, WHO IN TANDEM WITH OUR EXPEDITION NATURALISTS WILL GREATLY ENHANCE YOUR EXPERIENCE

SUSAN SEUBERT
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER

An award-winning storyteller, she has shot more than 20 featured stories for National Geographic Traveler. She will help you capture your trip & improve your skills. Join her aboard the Mar. 28, 2020 departure.

1-800-EXPLORATION (1-800-397-3348)
CHRISTINA THOMPSON
GUEST SPEAKER
She is the author of the recent *Sea People: The Puzzle of Polynesia*, a thrilling look into who first settled remote Pacific islands, where they came from, how they got there, and how we know.

ALEX SEARLE
CULTURAL SPECIALIST
Alex’s childhood dream was to explore Easter Island. Visiting during his university years, he met and then married a woman born on the island. He shares his insider knowledge with our guests.

JACOB EDGAR
ETHNOMUSICOCLOGIST
Jacob has traveled to hundreds of the world’s top music festivals and performance venues to uncover exceptional musical talent, and curate exclusive experiences for our guests.

These individuals and staff naturalists will be on the Mar. 28, 2020 departure. Visit [expeditions.com/bios](http://expeditions.com/bios) for more info.
EASTER ISLAND TO TAHITI:
TALES OF THE PACIFIC

20 DAYS/17 NIGHTS—ABOARD NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION

PRICING FROM: $19,520 TO $41,360 (See page 13.)

DAYS 1–5: U.S/SANTIAGO, CHILE/ EASTER ISLAND/EMBARK
Depart the U.S. on an overnight flight to Santiago, Chile. Upon arrival, transfer to the Mandarin Oriental in central Santiago, then join your Lindblad-National Geographic staff this evening for a welcome reception. Early the next morning, fly to Easter Island where you will check into the Hangaroa Eco Village & Spa (or similar) for two nights. Explore volcanic calderas, jagged lava fields, and sweeping grasslands to discover the colossal moai statues, the astonishing legacy of a long-lost culture. Join archaeologists to examine these statues and discuss their meaning and creation; visit burial sites, quarries, and intricately carved ceremonial altars. Embark National Geographic Orion. Day 3: L, D; Days 4 & 5: B, L, D

DAYS 6–7: AT SEA
Set sail from Easter Island on our journey west. As we voyage, head up to the Bridge to watch for wildlife and observe expert navigation at work as our skilled Captain and officers sail these historic waters. There’ll also be time to enjoy a massage in the wellness center, workout in the gym, and browse in the library. Each day our naturalists offer talks that add depth to your experience. (B,L,D)

DAYS 8–10: PITCAIRN ISLANDS
We begin our exploration in Ducie Atoll, where we spend time watching for frigatebirds and boobies and snorkeling or diving among spectacular reefs. Our next stop is the UNESCO World Heritage site of Henderson Island, an uplifted atoll that is uninhabited and virtually untouched by humans. Discover the island’s four endemic bird species, rich flora and fauna, and fascinating geology. Continue to Pitcairn Island, where many of the mutineers of the legendary Bounty made their home in the late 18th century. Meet their descendants and hear a few words of the unusual Pitkern dialect—a combination of English “sailor speak” and Polynesian phrases. Visit the gravesite of the last surviving Bounty mutineer, John Adams, and see the Bounty’s anchor, which was salvaged in 1957. (B,L,D)

DAYS 11 & 12: AT SEA/MANGAREVA, FRENCH POLYNESIA
Spend a day at sea scanning the horizon with our naturalists, or relaxing on deck with a good book. We then arrive at Mangareva, the largest of the Gambier Islands, with its interesting history and beautiful lagoon. Venture underwater to snorkel or dive, meet islanders to learn about their culture and the missionaries who made their home here, or go on a hike with our naturalists. (B,L,D)

DAYS 13–17: AT SEA/TUAMOTU ARCHIPELAGO
A day at sea brings us to the furthest reaches of the “Dangerous Archipelago,” where our Captain and Expedition Leader will determine our next spot for exploration. In true expedition mode, we will visit some of the Tuamotus’ most remote islands, taking the opportunity to explore them by land and by sea. Navigate reefs and islets as we make our way east and explore one of French Polynesia’s many uninhabited atolls such as Tahanea. Continue to Fakarava, one of the largest atolls in French Polynesia and part of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Snorkel the protected reefs or ride the current into the lagoon on a world-famous drift dive. (B,L,D)

DAY 18: MAKATEA
An uplifted coral atoll, the island of Makatea is one of the most unique landforms in the Pacific. Spend the day exploring limestone caves and grottos with your expedition team and local guides, or search for endemic fruit doves and myriad seabirds, then snorkel and dive among colorful fish on the nearby reef. (B,L,D)

DAYS 19 & 20: PAPEETE/DISEMBARK/U.S.
Arrive in Papeete, and take a tour of Tahiti before your overnight flight home. (Day 19: B,L)

EXPEDITION DETAILS
DATES: 2020 Mar. 28; 2021 Mar. 26
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER
National Geographic photographer Susan Seubert is on March 28, 2020 departure.

SPECIAL OFFERS:
• Book by Dec. 31, 2019 and receive FREE ROUND-TRIP AIRFARE between Los Angeles/Santiago and Papeete/Los Angeles. Plus, we will cover your bar tab and tips for the crew on all National Geographic Orion departures. See page 13 for details.
• SAVE 10% when you book two or more voyages in South Pacific aboard National Geographic Orion. Call for details.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION
Add a three-day post-voyage extension on the isle of Moorea. Call or visit expeditions.com/moorea for details.
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION

The state-of-the-art National Geographic Orion is a modern, fully stabilized, ice-class vessel with a reinforced hull.


PUBLIC AREAS: Outdoor café, lounge with bar, restaurant, sundek, reception desk, observation lounge and library, global gallery, fitness center, sauna, and marina platform.

MEALS: All meals are served in a single seating with unassigned tables for an informal atmosphere and easy mingling. The cuisine is international with local flair.

CABINS: All cabins feature ocean views, private facilities, climate controls, and a flat-screened TV. Equipped with Ethernet and Wi-Fi connections and USB ports for mobile devices. Some cabins have French balconies.

SPECIAL FEATURES: Zodiac landing craft, kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle), underwater video camera, crow’s nest camera, laundry, full-time doctor, National Geographic photographer and Lindblad-National Geographic certified photo instructor, underwater specialist, video chronicler, wellness specialist.

Prices are per person, double occupancy unless indicated otherwise.

CABIN 201: $9,520
CABIN 202: $23,090
CABIN 203: $27,560
CABIN 204: $29,870
CABIN 205: $35,670
CABIN 206: $41,270
CABIN 207: $41,360

Note: Sole occupancy cabins available in Categories 1 and 3. Shared accommodations available in Categories 1 and 2. Note: Third person rates available at one-half the double occupancy rate in designated triple occupancy cabins.

Price includes two hotel nights on Easter Island. Immigration fees are not included.

Prices quoted in this brochure are valid as of the time of printing, are subject to modification, and are not guaranteed until booked and required deposit is made. For current rates and details visit expeditions.com/easterisle-rates, call an Expedition Specialist, or your Travel Advisor. For best pricing book early.

For Reservations: Contact your travel advisor or Lindblad Expeditions

1.800.EXPEDITION (1.800.397.3348) WWW.EXPLORATIONS.COM

Terms & Conditions: For complete terms and conditions please visit www.expeditions.com/terms

Free Air: Must book by December 31, 2019. Free round-trip airfare is from Los Angeles to Santiago and Papeete/Los Angeles, and is based on round-trip group economy flights that must be ticketed by Lindblad Expeditions. In the case that Lindblad’s group flights are no longer available at the time of booking, we reserve the right to issue a credit. This offer is valid for new bookings only, subject to availability at time of booking, and may not be combined with other offers.

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AND PAPEETE/L.A.
BOOK BY DECEMBER 31, 2019
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