

# FRENCH POLYNESIA

WITH A TWIST

THE SOCIETY  
& TUAMOTU  
ISLANDS

ROAM FREE  
AS A YACHT

DISCOVER  
SACRED SITES  
FLY OVER  
REEFS ON A  
DRIFT DIVE

DEAR TRAVELER,

I never thought I could find places able to create the same sense of wonder and exhilaration I always feel in Galápagos, in Baja and the Sea of Cortez, in Central America, Antarctica or the Arctic—regions we've been exploring for decades. For me, it's the incredible wildlife in these places, and the sense our expeditions give of entering the lives of fascinating creatures and cultures. There's the diversity of the geographies, the different habitats—the remarkable specifics of the polar ice; the desert meeting the sea in Baja; or the ability to be among the animals in Galápagos.



I have explored many wild places, experienced a great variety of wildlife and landscapes in many different geographies, but I had yet to make as surprising a discovery as 'finding' Polynesia.

I went on a reconnaissance to Polynesia in 2016 to uncover opportunities for expeditions we were planning. I had absolutely astonishing experiences in a number of places—including Fakarava and Rangiroa—on the itinerary described inside. I had never experienced snorkeling or diving like this; had never seen the splendor of genuinely thriving reefs or been among such diverse and fascinating marine life, including sharks. The photo, at bottom right, is one of my favorites: it's my fiancée, surrounded by elegant grey tipped reef sharks, utterly unafraid—because she had learned that sharks living in a healthy system pose virtually no threat to humans.

I admire volcanic topographies. And these Polynesia islands display a spell-binding range of forms— from low-lying atolls with stunning lagoons, to the high island of Bora Bora. I've never seen anything like the unique limestone island of Makatea, or experienced anything as refreshing as swimming in a freshwater limestone cave there.

And, there are the people. Polynesia offers you an extraordinary cultural experience—as you'll meet exceptionally welcoming people, currently in the midst of re-discovering and celebrating their heritage as the world's greatest explorers. And as you'll have the opportunity to visit remarkable ancient sacred sites.

I can assure you that if you choose to go 'beyond the postcard' with us, you will be deeply rewarded. There is so much to see, do and learn here—you may be surprised by what you find, and you will certainly be thrilled by your discoveries.

I hope you will choose to join us this season.

All the best,

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sven Lindblad'.

Sven Lindblad







*Cover photo: National Geographic Orion in Fakarava Atoll. © Adam Cropp*

*All photos here from Sven's Polynesia reconnaissance trip in 2016 which informed subsequent itineraries, including our 2021 season. © Sven Lindblad*



# BE HERE NOW IS THE IMPERATIVE OF THE ENLIGHTENED

And that's what landing at the InterContinental Tahiti enables you to do—arrive. And adapt to the languid grace of French Polynesia. In no time you'll be off, unlike the rooted resort and overwater bungalow dwellers, to freely roam aboard *National Geographic Orion*. You'll traverse the vast Pacific like the early Polynesians, the greatest explorers on earth, to discover atolls and islands, coral gardens, reefs bursting with a kaleidoscope of marine life, and the people cupped within this far-flung, gentle splendor. Here are highlights of an itinerary that takes us not merely from place to place, but to and through extraordinary enchantments and unforgettable experiences.



**Ra'iatea** hosts the sacred **Taputapuatea** complex, recently designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site—"an exceptional testimony to 1,000 years of mā'ohi civilization." What's fascinating about this center of learning dating back to 1,000 AD, is that priests and navigators from all over the Pacific convened here, to offer sacrifices to the gods and share knowledge of the genealogical origins of the universe and of deep-ocean navigation—a uniquely Polynesian juxtaposition. As you unpack the history of this sacred ground with your expedition's cultural specialist, don't be surprised if you feel the mana, the indescribably powerful and mysterious energy said to emanate from this sacred island. Sharing the lagoon with Ra'iatea, **Taha'a** is the source of 80 percent of Polynesian vanilla. Spend the day enjoying the island's stunning vistas both underwater and on land as you explore from our private motu.

For many, the sight of the high central peak of Mount Otemanu signaling **Bora Bora**, is a kind of déjà vu—perhaps never seen, yet deeply familiar—that's how iconic this Society Island is. Surrounded by shallow and deep reefs and a bright, almost hypnotic turquoise lagoon, Bora Bora, formed 7 million years ago, was inhabited by the first Polynesians.



*Left to right: Underwater in Bora Bora, French Polynesia; Stand up paddle boarding in the Tuamotus.*

*This spread: Aerial view of Ra'iatea, French Polynesia.*





# FROM THE SOCIETY ISLANDS TO THE TUAMOTUS & BEYOND

Exploring the **Tuamotu Archipelago**, comprised of 75 atolls, one raised coral atoll, **Makatea**, and innumerable coral reefs, may prove one of the most memorable experiences of your life.

**Fakarava**, consisting of six atolls with a rich marine ecosystem, has been designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in order to ensure its preservation. Fakarava Atoll is home to several species of rare birds, many interesting plants, bizarre terrestrial crustaceans, and lots of marine life. **Makatea**, with a population of 100,000 during its phosphate mining heyday in the 60s is now home to 68 residents. Stretch your legs on the steep hike from the beach landing to the island's crest, or opt for a 4WD drive up and through this lush natural garden, grown over the cavities created during the island's phosphate mining past. Catch your breath at a scenic lookout—and then begin the descent to one of the more magical destinations ever—a freshwater grotto—for the most refreshing swim of your life.





Matairea Hill, on the beautiful island of **Huahine**, is home to an exceptional density of *marae*—a veritable Buckingham Palace—prompting a theory that it was inhabited by the families of nobles and chiefs. Enhancing the island's aura of mystery are two wonders: eels with blue eyes near the village of Faie. Anadromous, as our naturalists explain, these eels make their way from the sea to this river; legend has it that they hold the spirits of dead islanders. And well-preserved fish traps on Lake Fauna Nui that have been here for centuries and are still in use. As the fish are pulled towards the sea by the ebb tide they become trapped where they are easily netted. Proof that in paradise, the living truly is easy.



*Left to right: snorkeling in the pristine turquoise south Pacific Ocean; fishing in Huahine; a blacktip reef shark swims above a colorful coral reef*



# THE PERFECT SHIP TO EXPLORE ATOLLS, LAGOONS, ISLANDS & THE UNDERSEA

*National Geographic Orion* is your base camp for south sea adventure, uniquely equipped to get you out there and up close. The upper dive deck holds scuba gear for a number of qualified divers and is maintained by two Dive Masters. We also carry complete snorkeling gear for all 102 guests aboard. On the rear deck, a marina platform makes loading divers, snorkelers, and gear into Zodiacs efficient and safe. *National Geographic Orion* is also equipped with an ingenious platform, which allows us to snorkel or swim virtually anywhere, plus a glass-bottom Zodiac, custom-crafted to enable a remarkably clear view to those who prefer to stay dry. *National Geographic Orion* is the only expedition ship in the South Pacific with an undersea specialist equipped with a high definition video camera and underwater housing, along with an ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle) capable of exploring depths of up to 1,000 feet on board. You'll enjoy vivid HD video and engaging presentations in the comfort of the ship's lounge throughout your voyage.

*National Geographic Orion is your window on the gorgeous scenery of Polynesia, and the perfect platform for exploring it up-close, and personally.*





## JOIN OUR POLYNESIA TEAMS, INCLUDING THESE REPRESENTATIVES:



**TUA PITTMAN, Cultural Specialist**

**April 12 & May 10, 2021**

Internationally acclaimed as a traditional master navigator, Tua has navigated canoes across the great oceans of our planet from the coastlines of Asia through to the shores of the Americas for more than 30 years, without the use of modern instruments. This Cook Islander, also of New Zealand Maori and Tahitian bloodlines, uses an ancient navigational system based upon careful observation of celestial bodies—sun, moon, and stars—as well as using ocean swells, flight patterns of birds, and other natural markers.



### **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHERS**

While you're exploring French Polynesia, you'll have the benefit of traveling alongside National Geographic photographers. Whether you're a smartphone/point & shoot beginner or an advanced shooter, our experienced photo team will meet you where you are. These photographers, with significant careers to their credit, have inspired countless professional and amateur photographers, and accompany our ships to inspire and assist you. Enjoy the company of these well-liked pros on each of these specific voyages



**Jonathan Kingston**  
**May 3 & 10, 2021**



**Susan Seubert**  
**April 12, 2021**

ITINERARY:

## FRENCH POLYNESIA: BEYOND THE POSTCARD

9 DAYS/7 NIGHTS—ABOARD *NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION*

PRICING FROM \$8,490 (SEE PAGE 11 FOR DETAILS)

### EXPEDITION DETAILS

2021 Dates: Apr. 12, May 3, 10\*

\* This departure travels in reverse

#### SPECIAL OFFERS:

- Free round-trip airfare from Los Angeles to Papeete when booked by Dec. 31, 2020. Plus, we will cover your bar tab and tips for the crew. See page 13, or call for details.

### ITINERARY AT A GLANCE

Day 1:	Depart U.S.
Day 2:	Papeete, French Polynesia / Embark
Days 3 & 4:	Tuamotu Archipelago
Day 5:	Rangiroa
Day 6:	Makatea
Day 7:	Ra'iatea / Taha'a
Day 8 :	Huahine
Day 9:	Bora Bora / Disembark / Papeete / U.S.

▶ Visit [expeditions.com/postcard](https://expeditions.com/postcard) for a complete day-by-day itinerary. Or call to speak with an Expedition Specialist.

#### ICONIC ISLAND

Disembark in the shadow of **Bora Bora**'s famous Mount Otemanu and revel in the lagoon's turquoise waters.

#### SECRET SPA OF ROYALS

See the ancient marae on off-the-beaten-path **Huahine**. Swim where Polynesian royals relaxed. Explore the crystalline lagoon by paddleboard.

#### CULTURAL CENTER

An important cultural site, Polynesian seafarers set sail from **Ra'iatea** to venture east, into the unknown, eventually settling Hawai'i and Easter Island.

Society Islands





### LOVELY LAGOON

Venture into the second largest lagoon in the world, **Rangiroa**. One of the region's best spots to snorkel or dive among large schools of fish, plus mantas, dolphins and sea turtles.

### RUINS UNDER, GARDEN OVER

Experience a cave swim on **Makatea**. See its history under the lush overgrowth. Spot a rare endemic dove.

### RESET YOUR CLOCK

The rhythms of tropical city life in Tahiti's capital **Papeete** gently help you settle into island time.

### THE IDEAL UNDERSEA

Dive or snorkel at stunning **Fakarava**. Thrill to the black-tipped reef sharks amid teeming colorful fish in this thriving UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

### UNSPOILED PARADISE

Explore the nearly 80 islands and atolls in the "Dangerous Archipelago" and get to know the locals on the palm-fringed island of **Anaa**.

### EXPEDITION HIGHLIGHTS

Explore Rangiroa's 'aquarium' teeming with vibrant marine life • Observe some of the region's 800 species of fish, plus reef sharks, rays, giant clams and more • Kayak and paddleboard in turquoise waters along idyllic palm-lined shores • Watch the ship navigate Tiputa Pass into the lagoon at Rangiroa, one of the world's largest atolls • Glide over a carpet of vibrant coral on a thrilling drift snorkel • Spot endemic birds like the imperial pigeon and fruit dove • Bike or stroll through the charming flower-filled village on Fakarava • Delve deep into the past at Marae Taputapuatea, one of the most sacred sites in all of Polynesia • Truck or walk up Makatea's steep ascent, then descend into the grotto for the most invigorating freshwater swim • Snorkel, swim or just chill on your own private motu (island) • Visit an over-the-water museum curated with fascinating archeological relics • See the sacred blue-eyed eels of Huahine • Meet welcoming locals at a family-run vanilla plantation • Discover the region's natural and human history alongside your knowledgeable expedition team • Capture the islands' epic scenery with help from a National Geographic photographer





## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION

**CAPACITY:** 102 guests in 53 outside cabins.

**REGISTRY:** Bahamas. **OVERALL LENGTH:** 338 feet.

The state-of-the-art *National Geographic Orion* is a fully stabilized, ice-class vessel with an ice reinforced hull. *National Geographic Orion* is at home navigating polar ice, as well as island harbors in the South Pacific.

**PUBLIC AREAS:** Outdoor café, lounge with bar and state-of-the-art facilities, restaurant, sun-deck, reception desk, observation lounge and library, global gallery, and marina platform. The whirlpool hot tub doubles as a plunge pool in warm climates. Our “open bridge” allows guests to meet our captain and officers and learn about navigation.

**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, featuring tastes of the regions we explore.

**CABINS:** All cabins feature ocean views, private facilities, climate controls, and a flat-screen TV.

Equipped with Ethernet and Wi-Fi connections and USB ports for mobile devices. Some cabins have French balconies. Single cabins in Category 1 and Category 3 include #301, 322, 323, and 512.

**EXPEDITION EQUIPMENT:** Zodiac landing craft, a fleet of 24 double kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, crow's nest camera, hydrophone, underwater video cameras, video microscope, and a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV). Plus, there is snorkeling gear for all guests, scuba gear for a number of guests, a glass-bottom Zodiac, and a splash-cam.

**SPECIAL FEATURES:** Laundry, a full-time doctor, National Geographic photographer and Lindblad-National Geographic certified photo instructor, plus an undersea specialist and video chronicler.

**WELLNESS:** A wellness specialist, fitness center, LEXspa treatment room and sauna are on board.





Left to right: Main lounge; National Geographic Orion; our hotel staff will do whatever it takes to ensure your comfort and satisfaction aboard; National Geographic Orion's dining room features no assigned seating for casual, easy mingling; Category 3 suite with window; Category 6 Owner's suite with French balcony.

**CATEGORY 1:** Main Deck with oval window #316, 318, 319-321

**CATEGORY 2:** Main Deck with oval window #302-312, 314, 315, 317

**CATEGORY 3:** Upper Deck—Suite with window #401-412, 414-419

**CATEGORY 4:** Bridge Deck—Deluxe suite with window #511, 515

**CATEGORY 5:** Bridge Deck—Suite with French balcony #501, 503-506, 508

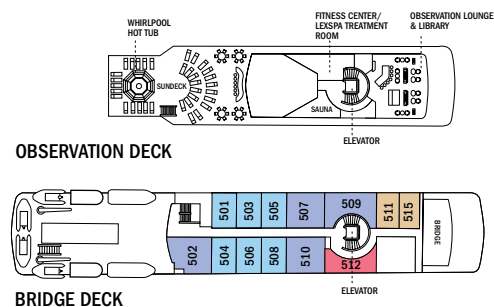
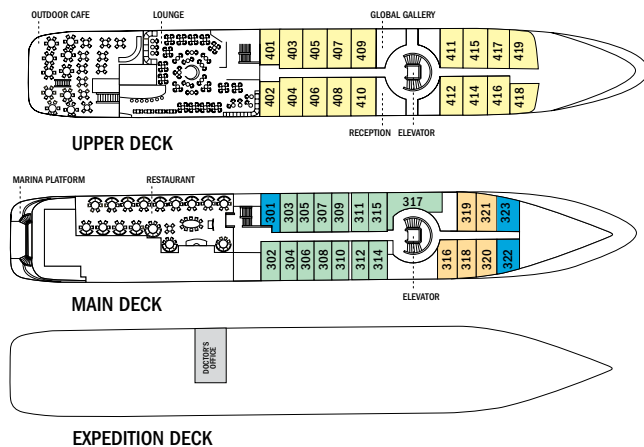
**CATEGORY 6:** Bridge Deck—Owner's suite with French balcony #502, 507, 509\*, 510

\*Cabin 509 has two windows in lieu of a French balcony.

**CATEGORY 1 SOLO:** Main Deck with oval window or two portholes #301, 322, 323

**CATEGORY 3 SOLO:** Bridge Deck—Suite with two windows #512

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



ITINERARY	YEAR	CAT. 1	CAT. 2	CAT. 3	CAT. 4	CAT. 5	CAT. 6	CAT. 1 SOLO	CAT. 3 SOLO	ADVANCE PAYMENT	NOTE
French Polynesia: Beyond the Postcard	2021	\$8,490	\$10,320	\$11,990	\$13,200	\$15,890	\$18,410	\$12,690	\$17,990	\$1,000	Sample Airfares: Round-trip Los Angeles/ Papeete: Economy from \$1150; Business from \$4930. Charter airfare from \$390 (Papeete-Bora Bora), subject to change.

Prices quoted in this brochure are valid as of the time of printing, are subject to modification, and are not guaranteed until booking and required deposit is made. For all categories, current rates, and details, visit [expeditions.com/postcard](http://expeditions.com/postcard), call an Expedition Specialist, or your Travel Advisor. For best pricing book early.



**ADD THIS EXPERIENCE**

## THE BRANDO, TETIAROA

**FROM \$4,575 per villa per night**

**IDYLLICALLY SITED ON THE ATOLL OF TETIAROA, THE BRANDO IS BUILT ON LAND MARLON**

Brando purchased in the 60's after falling in love with the region and his Tahitian co-star while shooting *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Accessible by a 20-minute private plane ride from Tahiti, the lodge features one- to three-bedroom private villas, set among palm trees, and each with its own plunge pool. All meals, most beverages, activities and one spa treatment per villa per day is included.

► Visit [expeditions.com/brando](https://expeditions.com/brando) for a detailed day-by-day itinerary. Or call to speak with an Expedition Specialist.

**ADD THIS EXPERIENCE**

## INTERCONTINENTAL BORA BORA RESORT & THALASSO SPA

**2 DAYS PRE OR POST VOYAGE EXTENSION**

**FROM \$1,410 per person**

**TRANSPORT YOURSELF TO ONE OF BORA BORA'S TRANQUIL AND**

picturesque outer motus and fall into island time at the InterContinental Bora Bora Resort & Thalasso Spa. Check into a stunning overwater villa, surrounded by turquoise waters and lush tropical gardens, and explore as much (or as little) as you choose during this two-day stay. Discover the resort's pristine beaches, browse the treatment menu in the resort's renowned spa, or luxuriate in the comfort of your own private villa, all while taking in the incredible views of Bora Bora's Mount Otemanu.

► Visit [expeditions.com/BoraBora](https://expeditions.com/BoraBora) for a detailed day-by-day itinerary.  
Or call to speak with an Expedition Specialist.





## FREE AIR: BOOK BY DEC. 31, 2020:

Free air 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 time of booking, we reserve the right to issue a credit. For new bookings only, subject to availability, and may not be combined with other offers or extensions. Call for details.

## INCLUSIVE PRICING MEANS VALUE + EXPERIENCES

We include just about everything you have the opportunity to do as part of your expedition aboard ship and ashore. The only things not included are those of a personal nature—internet usage, wellness treatments and other specialized arrangements.

### ABOARD SHIP

- ✓ All meals, alcoholic beverages (except certain super-premium brands) and non-alcoholic beverages
- ✓ Cappuccinos, lattes & complimentary refillable water bottle
- ✓ 24-hour coffee, tea & soda
- ✓ Hors d'oeuvres & snacks during recap
- ✓ Sauna & Fitness Center
- ✓ Fully stocked library
- ✓ The guidance and company of our expedition staff
- ✓ Gratuities to ship's crew

### ASHORE

- ✓ Meals on land, as indicated in itinerary
- ✓ Special access permits, park fees, port taxes
- ✓ Transfers to and from group flights
- ✓ The expertise of our expedition staff

### ACTIVITIES

- ✓ All shore activities
- ✓ Zodiac, kayak and stand-up paddleboard explorations
- ✓ Snorkeling, including wetsuits, masks, fins
- ✓ Lectures & presentations in the lounge

Photo Credits: Alamy, Andy Bardon, David Cothran, Adam Cropp, David Doublet, Jan Butchofsky Houser, Jonathan Irish, Keenpress, Michael Melford, Marco Ricca, Vincent Truchet, David Vargas, Craig Wilson

## RESERVATION INFORMATION

**Terms & Conditions:** For complete terms and conditions please visit [www.expeditions.com/terms](http://www.expeditions.com/terms)

**Costs Include:** All accommodations aboard ship or in hotels per itinerary or similar, all meals and beverages aboard ship (excepting certain super-premium brands of alcohol), air transportation where indicated as included, all shore excursions, sightseeing and entrance fees, special access permits, transfers to and from group flights, use of kayaks (where available), tips (including gratuities to ship's crew), taxes and service charges, services of a ship physician, and services of our expedition staff.

**Not Included:** Air transportation (except where shown as included), extensions, passport, visa, immigration fees, meals not indicated, travel protection plan, items of a personal nature such as alcoholic beverages, internet access, voyage DVD, flightseeing, laundry. Gratuities to ship's crew are at your discretion.

**Airfare:** For all programs, airfare is an additional cost unless otherwise indicated. Sample airfares are subject to change. We will gladly assist in making your air arrangements for a \$50 per person service fee.

**Reservations:** To reserve your place, an advance payment is required at the time of reservation. A per-person deposit begins at \$1,000 and is dependent upon itinerary.

**Final Payment:** Payment is due 120 days prior to departure. Payment schedules may vary for certain longer voyages, due to high demand for these voyages. We reserve the right to cancel your reservation if payment has not been received by final payment due date.

**Travel Protection Plan:** We strongly recommend that you take advantage of our Travel Protection Plan. This plan offers comprehensive coverage to protect you from cancellation fees, costs incurred due to trip delays/interruption, medical assistance, and damaged or lost baggage, and provides medical assistance and evacuation during your travels. Our Travel Protection Plan is available for U.S. residents only, and may be purchased any time prior to final payment due date. If you are not satisfied for any reason, you may return your plan within 10 days after purchase. Your premium will be refunded if canceled within 10 days, provided you have not already departed on the trip or filed a claim. When so returned, the coverage under the plan is void from the original date of purchase.

**Responsibility and Other Terms & Conditions:** Certain provisions concerning, among other things, limitations of Lindblad Expeditions' and the National Geographic Society's liability for loss of property, injury, illness or death during the voyage will be provided to all guests on the ship's ticket sent prior to departure, and are also available on our website at [www.expeditions.com/terms](http://www.expeditions.com/terms), or upon request. By registering for a trip, the guest agrees to all such terms and conditions.

**Note:** Itineraries and prices listed in this brochure are as of publication date and are subject to change. Under normal conditions the total expedition price is guaranteed at the time of booking. However, our expedition pricing is determined far in advance of initial departure on the basis of then-existing projections of fuel and other costs. In the event of increases in those costs, including but not limited to increases in the price of fuel, currency fluctuations, increases in government taxes or levies, or increased security costs, we reserve the right to adjust the price of your expedition or add a surcharge to cover such unexpected increases. We will always provide an explanation of the reason for increase in costs.

**Cancellation Policy:** Cancellation penalties may apply after payment is received. Please visit [www.expeditions.com/terms](http://www.expeditions.com/terms) for complete cancellation policies.

Unused services or items included in our programs are non-refundable.

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**For Reservations: Contact your travel advisor or Lindblad Expeditions**

**1.800.EXPEDITION (1.800.397.3348)**

**Reservation Hours: Monday – Friday 9am – 9pm ET**

**Saturday & Sunday 10am – 5pm ET**

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**Phone: 212.261.9000 • Fax: 212.265.3770**

**For additional information and online reservations,  
visit us on the Web: [www.expeditions.com](http://www.expeditions.com)**

Account Number:

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SPP-060

## ACCEPT THE ISLANDS' INVITATION: LINGER AT THE BRANDO OR BORA BORA RESORT

SEE PAGE 12

## OUR FREE AIR OFFER GETS YOU THERE

SEE PAGE 13

