EXPLORING THE SEA OF CORTEZ: A LIVING SEA & DESERT ISLES

8 Days | NG Quest & NG Venture | 100 Guests Per Ship | Expeditions in: Apr/Dec | From $6,570 to $10,950

Explore the Sea of Cortez: among the best places in the world to see a great variety of whales, plus dolphins in abundance. With a flexible itinerary, rely on our expert staff to follow the seasonal movements of migrating birds and feeding whales ensuring excellent wildlife sightings. Hike forests of giant cacti, snorkel with sea lions, and discover rare wildlife among desert islands.

DAY 1: Home / Loreto / Embark
Arrive into Loreto and transfer to National Geographic Venture to set sail on the Sea of Cortez. (D)

DAY 2-7: Exploring the Sea of Cortez
As writer and longtime Lindblad naturalist, Stewart Aitchison describes it - “The Sea of Cortez – it’s a romantic name that conjures up visions of fiery sunsets, leaping dolphins, and deserted beaches.”

It is all this and so much more. Our routing is designed with flexibility in mind, to maximize opportunities for wildlife sightings. It will most likely include the islands and activities listed below, although the order may vary. (B,L,D daily)

**Isla San Esteban and San Pedro Mártir:**
Walk up a desert wash, to search for desert songbirds such as the handsome black-throated sparrow, listen for the cascading song of the canyon wren and search for the endemic pinto chuckwalla—a plump, harmless desert lizard. Later visit Isla San Pedro Mártir, a 1,000-foot-high guano-covered island that is home to thousands of seabirds: brown pelicans, magnificent frigatebirds, Brandt’s cormorants, and California sea lions.

**Isla San Marcos:**

Call us at 1.800.397.3348 or call your Travel Agent. In Australia, call 1300.361.012 • www.expeditions.com
At Isla San Marcos there is a beautiful shoreline for swimming, snorkeling, and kayaking. In the afternoon we are again in rich waters, near the mouth of Bahía Concepción. Here we are on the lookout for pods of dolphins – with common and bottlenose dolphins being the most frequently encountered species. With luck these beautiful animals may join us as we go, riding the bow wave, sometimes twisting and turning, and sometimes leaping from the water.

**Isla San José:**
One of the larger islands in the Sea of Cortez, San José 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 and visit the abandoned salt works to the west. Snorkel with sea lions and discover rare wildlife among desert islands.

**Bahía Loreto Marine Park:**
This morning we’ll search for the waters south of Isla Carmen, an area offering the possibility of encountering fin whales which researchers have recently concluded may be part a resident population. Bottlenose and common dolphins are frequently encountered. In the afternoon we visit one of the islands of Bahía Loreto Marine Park, with ample time for kayaking, snorkeling, stand-up paddleboarding and possibly hiking. In the evening, enjoy a beach barbecue under the desert sky.

**Los Islotes and Isla San Francisco:**
At Los Islotes, don flippers, a mask and snorkel (which we’ll gladly provide) and swim with curious sea lions. We have a leisurely afternoon to swim, kayak or hike at Isla San Francisco. Look skyward for yellow-footed gulls, brown pelicans, and blue-footed boobies.

**DAY 8: Disembark/Loreto/Home**
Disembark and explore Loreto where we will have the opportunity to visit the first mission in Baja California, as well as the nearby museum to learn more about what makes this town so special. Enjoy free time to explore quaint shops and vibrant side streets. After lunch, transfer to Loreto Airport for flights home. (B,L)

**2020 Departure Dates:**
12 Apr, 13 Apr
20 Dec, 27 Dec

**2021 Departure Dates:**
12 Apr

**Important Flight Information**
Please confirm your arrival and departure dates prior to booking flights.

**Advance Payment:**
$750

**Sample Airfares:**
Economy: from $540

**Cost Includes:**
- Accommodations aboard ship; meals as indicated; non-alcoholic beverages; excursions; services of Expedition leader, naturalist staff and expert guides; use of kayaks and snorkeling equipment; all port charges and service taxes.

**Cost Not Included:**
- Air transportation; voyage DVD; personal items such as alcoholic beverages, emails, etc.; discretionary tips to ship’s crew.

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Special Offers

SOLO SAVINGS

We are waiving the solo premium on solo cabins on select departures of Baja 2020 itineraries. New bookings only. Subject to availability. May not be combined with other offers or extensions. Call for details.

SAVE $1,000 ON KIDS 21 AND UNDER

Take $1,000 off for each child under the age of 22 when traveling with two full paying adults on select 2020 departures. Valid for new bookings only, subject to availability, not applicable on extensions, and may not be combined with other offers. Call for details.

FREE LORETO MISSION TOUR & HIKE EXTENSION

Take a deeper dive into the history, geology, and culture of Baja by discovering some hidden gems of lovely Loreto. Book the April 12 or 13, 2020 departures to receive a complimentary 2-day/1-night Loreto Mission & Hike pre-extension. You will explore the Misión San Francisco Javier de Viggé-Biaundó that was established by Jesuit missionaries in 1697 and houses an interesting collection of icons as well as a fascinating history of its own. Then, after the guided tour of the mission, go on a short hike into the Sierra de la Giganta foothills that ends with a picnic lunch. Our well-located and comfortable hotel allows you to take an evening stroll along the waterfront of the Sea of Cortez upon arrival. This exclusive extension includes 3 meals (with a welcome dinner on the first night), an overnight stay at the Hotel La Mision, and the mission entrance fee. Subject to availability, and must be requested at time of booking. Not redeemable for cash or credit. Call for details.

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**National Geographic Venture**

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We strongly recommend our guests to 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, damage or lost of baggage, medical assistance, and evacuation during your travels. Our Travel Protection Plan is available for U.S. and Canadian residents only, and may be purchased any time prior to final payment due date, Travel Protection premiums are non-refundable once plan is purchased.

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