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SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

# Among the Great Whales

Baja California & the Sea of Cortez



**March 16-23, 2013**

**Aboard *National Geographic Sea Bird***



**Cover:** Curious gray whale greets guests in the famous nursing grounds of Baja California.

**Inside cover:** The dramatic landscape of Isla Santa Catalina.



## Dear Museum Member,

**E**ach winter, one of the world's most exciting wildlife phenomena takes place in the bays and lagoons of Baja California's Pacific coast — gray whales arrive by the thousands from their Arctic feeding grounds to breed, give birth, and rear their young. This year, why not follow the whales on your own migration to the warm and sunny climate of Baja California and the Sea of Cortez?

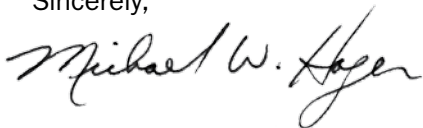
Join us **March 16–23, 2013**, aboard the intimate, 62-guest expedition ship, *National Geographic Sea Bird*, on a voyage exploring both Baja California's Pacific side and the Sea of Cortez. Linger in the sheltered lagoons observing gray whale mother and calf pairs. Sail around the tip of Baja, searching for fin, blue, sperm, and humpback whales in the azure waters of the Sea of Cortez. Go ashore on uninhabited desert islands for naturalist-guided walks among huge cardon cacti and sand dunes.

Although whales are the highlight of this journey, there's much more. Awake to a desert-hued sunrise; look for the green flash on the horizon at sunset; savor a beach barbecue as stars move across the desert sky; snorkel among playful sea lions in the clear waters of an isolated cove; search for dozens of species of birds as you kayak along the shores and into protected lagoons.

Join a dedicated staff of naturalists, experts in their fields who know this region well and take pleasure in sharing their knowledge. The captain and his crew keep a constant watch, surveying the seas for the next whale blow or giant fluke slapping the water's surface. And an undersea specialist provides a fresh perspective to the fascinating world beneath the surface.

I hope you will join us on this exciting adventure where the desert meets the sea. **To reserve your place, please return the enclosed reservation form or call Lindblad Expeditions toll free at 888-773-9007.**

Sincerely,



Michael W. Hager, Ph.D.

President and CEO

P.S. Travel with and learn from National Geographic photographer Flip Nicklin, a renowned whale photographer who was also named Photographer Of The Year for 2012 by the North American Nature Photography Association.



# Up Close With Baja California's Gentle Giants

**N**owhere in the world will you see the variety and number of whales that you will in Baja California.

On a voyage of this nature, it is not uncommon to see a dozen species of whales. When most people think of Baja and whales, they think of the California grays, which migrate yearly to the calving lagoon on the west side of the peninsula. An estimated 20,000 animals make the migration every year, and so they are very much in evidence. In birthing lagoons, where one might assume they would be the most protective, they are often incredibly social and have been known to even push their newborn calves up to the Zodiacs.



But it is on the other side of the peninsula, in the Sea of Cortez, that the greatest variety is observed, beginning with thousands of common dolphins, hundreds of bottlenose dolphins, and going all the way to the largest animals to ever exist on the planet, the blue whales. The second largest whales, fin whales, are sometimes observed in large numbers here, as well as Bryde's, humpbacks, and the largest of the toothed whales, sperm whales. You may also see other toothed whales, including killer whales, pilot whales, beaked whales, false killer whales, pygmy sperm whales, and spinner dolphins.

You'll see whales from the deck of a nimble expedition ship. You'll listen to whale communications via a hydrophone, while observing them under the sea via a bow-mounted camera with a live feed into the lounge TV screens. And, when the opportunity presents itself, you'll venture out among them aboard small, inflatable Zodiac landing craft for more personal, up-close encounters.

Nowhere else in the world does the opportunity exist to see all these large, graceful whales and playful dolphins. Baja California and the Sea of Cortez is a magical place, especially during this brief window of whale migration.

Opposite page (clockwise from top): As if sighting a fin whale weren't enough, Baja often offers the added magic of a looking-glass sea; breaching humpback; adult sperm whale fluke-up dive at sunset; pilot whale. Above: looking down into the inquisitive eye of a friendly gray whale.





# Discover an Eco-playground of Pure Wildness

**W**ith improbably inviting shorelines and crystal-clear waters, it's easy to call Baja California and the Sea of Cortez a beach destination. It is. But when you explore further, you'll find that the surprisingly varied habitats and rich, endemic wildlife place it in a class all by itself.

You'll find the Sea of Cortez bursting with marine life, but virtually empty of humans. The ocean explodes with hundreds of dolphins racing to the ship, and the sea boils as boobies plunge in search of fish. Watching humpbacks tail lobbing and breaching brings out a natural exhilaration. The Sea of Cortez is one of the planet's richest seas of



similar latitude, so it is well deserved that its islands are a UNESCO World Heritage site, and that Jacques Cousteau named it "the aquarium of the world."

But this Baja offers much more than sea life; you'll hike over desert sand dunes, kayak in protected lagoons, and observe the rich and diverse birdlife along the shores. Disembark on a Zodiac with a naturalist and land on an otherwise inaccessible shoreline to explore a deserted island. Hike in a forest of giant cacti and observe some of the rarely seen wildlife that inhabits this desert landscape. And dine in style, on fresh, sustainable food that is accented with a regional flair.

To capture the moments at the heart of your expedition, you'll travel with a Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic Certified Photo Instructor, a naturalist who's specially trained to help you with your camera's settings to take advantage of the peerless Baja light and ensure you go home with the photos of a lifetime.



Opposite page (clockwise from top): Guests take a stroll on the stunning sand dunes of Bahia Magdalena; guests explore the Sea of Cortez by kayak for more personal discoveries; a snorkeler captures the rich marine life with an underwater camera; guest ashore photographing the varied plant life of Baja California; up-close encounter with gray whale; cardon cactus.







## Expedition vs. Cruise

**S**ince this is an expedition, not a cruise, flexibility is a hallmark. The itinerary draws on the extensive Sea of Cortez experience of the expedition team and captain to maximize viewing opportunities. If a pod of whales is spotted off the bow or a gray whale mother and calf appear alongside us, the ship or Zodiacs will change course to take advantage of the encounter.

The naturalists' and expedition leader's experience in the region allows us to take advantage of the best landing sites for varying conditions and circumstances. Guests often compare the feeling of voyaging aboard *National Geographic Sea Bird* to that of a private yacht — with an *esprit de corps* that can only be found on an expedition.

## Cool Tools for Exploration

**ZODIACS:** These landing craft are perfect for viewing up close and photographing gray whales or the antics of sea lions. Zodiacs also land in pristine and otherwise inaccessible desert islands, dropping hikers to walk among plants and animals that are found nowhere else.



**KAYAKS:** Kayak along peaceful coastlines in one of the twelve double or eight single kayaks on board. Get a water-level look at stunning scenery.

**SNORKELING:** Don a mask, flippers, and wetsuit and explore the vibrantly colored undersea realm in these crystal-clear waters. All snorkeling equipment is provided.

**UNDERWATER CAMERA:** See the vibrant marine life without getting wet. An underwater camera can feed live images to the lounge, and often HD underwater videos shot during the day are played in the evening.

**MICROSCOPE:** A video microscope lets you examine the seldom seen and marvel at the intricacies of marine life in new ways.

**HYDROPHONE:** Listen to the awe-inspiring sounds of whales and dolphins in the surrounding waters.

Opposite page (clockwise from top): A family jumps into the Sea of Cortez; quick-deploying Zodiacs let us capitalize on sudden sightings; undersea specialist captures a sea lion on video to share with guests in the ship's lounge; *National Geographic Sea Bird* can easily maneuver to follow whales or playful dolphins; snorkeler; the staff is there to assist all levels of kayakers.

# Among the Great Whales: Baja California & the Sea of Cortez

ITINERARY: 8 DAYS/7 NIGHTS

*Aboard National Geographic Sea Bird*

Seeing whales in their natural habitat is one of the great delights of this voyage, and the decks of *National Geographic Sea Bird* are the perfect watching platform. In the gray whale breeding ground of Bahía Magdalena, expert naturalists will take you among these gentle giants in Zodiac landing craft. Being among these massive creatures at water level will give you a perspective that is a rare privilege in the natural world. The voyage also offers ample opportunities for nature walks, swimming, bird watching, snorkeling, kayaking, and interacting with the team of five onboard naturalists (one per every twelve guests).



The gray whales winter in Bahía Magdalena before migrating north to the Bering and Chukchi Seas.



## **DAY 1: LOS ANGELES/LA PAZ, MEXICO/EMBARK**

Upon arrival in La Paz, drive along the Malecón and embark. (D)

## **DAY 2: EXPLORING THE SEA OF CORTEZ**

With the luxury of no specific plan, search for whales among the islands of the southern Sea of Cortez, an area that has proven to be one of the best for finding blue whales, and often common and bottlenose dolphins. Explore the many uninhabited islands such as Isla San José or Isla Santa Catalina to walk among huge cacti and observe the diverse birdlife. Swim or snorkel with king angelfish, butterfly fish, damselfish, and beautiful parrotfish. (B,L,D)



A Zodiac brings guests ashore for a barbecue and campfire on a pristine and secluded beach, complete with delicious food, S'mores, storytelling, and guitar-playing under a starry sky.

## **DAY 3: LOS ISLOTES AND ISLA ESPÍRITU SANTO**

At Los Islotes, don flippers, a mask, and snorkel, and swim with curious sea lions. We have a leisurely afternoon to swim, kayak, or hike at Espíritu Santo. Brown pelicans, gulls, and boobies are all part of the landscape. Finish the day with a beach barbecue complete with campfire and a star-filled sky. (B,L,D)

## **DAY 4: GORDA BANKS AND LOS CABOS**

The morning is spent at the Gorda Banks seamount, a gathering place for whales, especially humpbacks, as well as dolphins and other sea life. In the afternoon, cruise past Friars Rocks at Land's End. For those who wish, we will arrange a visit to the historic town center of San José del Cabo. (B,L,D)

## **DAYS 5-7: BAHIA MAGDALENA**

Navigate through an immense system of protected coves and channels, surrounded by a fringe of mangrove channels at one edge of a vast, windswept plain. Each winter, during their long migration, gray whales travel south from their Arctic feeding grounds to breed and raise their calves in these sheltered waters. Observe migrating whales from the ship and up close from Zodiacs. Discover dense mangroves by kayak and watch for magnificent frigatebirds, pelicans, cormorants, terns, great blue herons, ibis, and willets. (B,L,D)

## **DAY 8: SAN CARLOS/DISEMBARK/LA PAZ/LOS ANGELES**

Disembark after breakfast in San Carlos and drive across the peninsula to La Paz for flights home. (B)



# National Geographic Sea Bird

**CAPACITY:** 62 guests in 31 outside cabins.

**REGISTRY:** United States.

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 152 feet.

**PUBLIC AREAS:** Ship features a library; global market; lounge with full-service bar and facilities for films, slide shows, and presentations; Observation Deck; partially covered Sun Deck with chairs and tables. Our “Open Bridge” provides guests an opportunity to meet our officers and captain and learn about navigation.

**MEALS:** Served in single seatings with unassigned tables for an informal atmosphere and easy mingling. Breakfast is a wide selection buffet, and lunch is often served family style. Menu emphasizes local flavors.

**CABINS:** All face outside with windows, private facilities, and climate controls.

**EXPEDITION EQUIPMENT:** Zodiac landing craft, kayaks, snorkeling gear,

bow camera, hydrophone, Splash-Cam, underwater video camera, and video microscope.

**SPECIAL FEATURES:** Guest Internet access. A video chronicler, undersea specialist, and ship’s doctor on board all voyages.

**WELLNESS:** The vessel is staffed by a wellness specialist and features exercise equipment, LEXspa, and morning stretch classes on the Sun Deck.



Prices are per person, double occupancy unless indicated as solo.

ITINERARY	CAT. 1	CAT. 2	CAT. 3	CAT. 1 SOLO	CAT. 2 SOLO	ADVANCE PAYMENT	NOTE
Among the Great Whales	\$5,550	\$6,410	\$7,190	\$8,330	\$9,610	\$550	Sample Airfare: Round-trip Los Angeles/La Paz/Los Angeles: Economy from \$650. Subject to change.





**CATEGORY 1:** Main Deck #300-305 — Conveniently positioned between the dining room and lounge, these cabins feature two single lower beds, a writing desk, and a large view window.

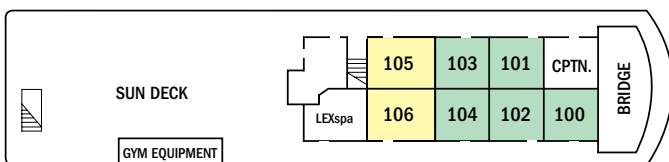
**CATEGORY 2:** Bridge Deck #100-104; Upper Deck #200-212, 215 — These well-located cabins include two lower single beds and a window.

**CATEGORY 3:** Bridge Deck #105, 106; Upper Deck #214, 216, 217, 219 — These cabins feature a seat-ing unit with table and two large view windows. Upper Deck cabins include

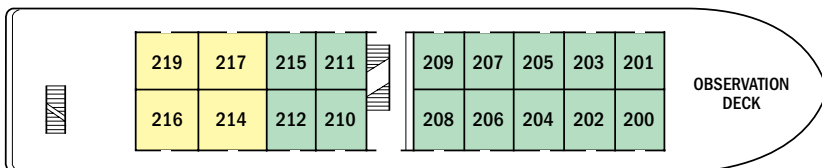
two lower single beds which can convert to a double bed and a pull-out single bed for a third person; Bridge Deck cabins include two lower single beds only.

**NOTE:** Sole occupancy cabins are available in Categories 1 and 2 only. Third person rates are available in certain categories at one half the double occupancy rate.

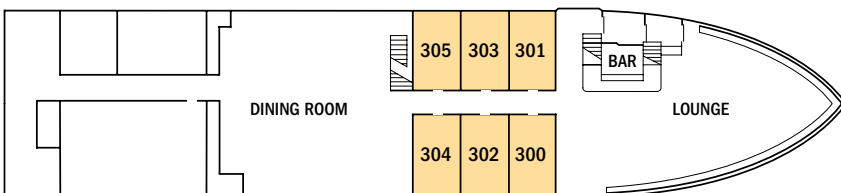
**SHARED ACCOMMODATIONS:** Shares can be arranged at the double occupancy rate in Categories 1 and 2 only.



## BRIDGE DECK



## UPPER DECK



## MAIN DECK



## SPECIAL OFFER

**Bring the Kids:** We believe sharing an expedition with your kids or grandkids is a life-enhancing experience. So, take \$500 off the double occupancy price for each person under 18.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

**Costs Include:** Accommodations aboard ship; all meals as indicated; nonalcoholic beverages aboard ship; shore excursions, sightseeing, and entrance fees; transfers to/from airport if traveling on group flights; use of kayaks and snorkeling gear; taxes, service charges, and gratuities (except to ship's crew); services of Lindblad Expeditions' natural history staff and a ship physician.

**Not Included:** Airfare; passport and visa fees; baggage/accident/travel protection plan; items of a personal nature such as alcoholic beverages, voyage DVD, email, and laundry; gratuities to ship's crew at your discretion.

**Airfare:** Airfare is an additional cost. Sample airfares are subject to change. Lindblad Expeditions will gladly assist in making your air arrangements. There will be a \$50 per person service fee if you elect for Lindblad to handle your air arrangements.

**Note:** A complete packet of pre-departure information, including recommended reading list and packing suggestions, will be sent to you approximately four months prior to your departure.

**Reservations:** To confirm your place, an advance payment of US\$550 per person is payable by check, Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover.

**Final Payment:** Due no later than 60 days prior to departure.

**Travel Protection Plan:** Travel protection and medical insurance are available at extra cost. Information will be sent upon registration.

**Smoking Policy:** Allowed only in designated outdoor areas.

**Responsibility:** Certain other provisions concerning, among other things, limitations of the Company's (Lindblad Expeditions) liability for loss of property, injury, illness or death during the voyage will be provided to all guests prior to final payment, and to prospective guests upon request.

CANCELLATION POLICY	
Number of Days Prior to Expedition Start	Per Person Cancellation Fee
90 or more days	\$150
89–60 days	Deposit
59–30 days	50% of trip cost
29–0 days	No refund
We strongly recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan.	

*Itinerary and prices listed in this brochure are as of publication date, and are subject to change. The Company reserves the right to impose surcharges based on increases in the Company's actual cost of fuel.*



## Reservation Form: Among the Great Whales

**March 16–23, 2013 — Aboard *National Geographic Sea Bird***

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ place(s).

Name 1 (*As it appears on passport*): \_\_\_\_\_

Name 1 (*Preferred name for name badge*): \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Name 2 (*As it appears on passport*): \_\_\_\_\_

Name 2 (*Preferred name for name badge*): \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Accommodations: ☐ Double ☐ Single ☐ Twin share w/friend

☐ Twin share (Roommate assigned by tour operator)

Please indicate choice of cabin category in order of preference:

1st choice: \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd choice: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Enclosed is my advance payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (US\$550 per person).

Make your check payable to **Lindblad Maritime Enterprises, Ltd.**

☐ Charge my advance payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (US\$550 per person)

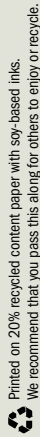
to my ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express or ☐ Discover.

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Expedition Highlights

- ▶ Travel with and learn from National Geographic photographer Flip Nicklin, a renowned whale photographer who was also named Photographer Of The Year for 2012 by the North American Nature Photography Association.
- ▶ Discover Baja California's natural wonders: whales, dolphins, sea lions, blue-footed boobies, and giant cardon cacti.
- ▶ Have close encounters with gray whales aboard Zodiac landing craft.
- ▶ Kayak in turquoise waters, hike up desert canyons and sand dunes, and snorkel among sea lions.
- ▶ Join an expert staff of naturalists, including an undersea specialist and a photo instructor to help you take your best shots.



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