

Whales & Wildness: Spring in the Sea of Cortez

April 9-16, 2016

Aboard the National Geographic Sea Bird



“Nowhere else have I seen this variety and number of whales. There are thousands of common dolphins, hundreds of bottlenose dolphins and even the largest animals to ever exist on the planet—blue whales. We may observe fin whales, Bryde’s, humpbacks, sperm whales plus killer whales, pilot whales, beaked whales, false killer whales, pygmy sperm whales and spinner dolphins. In no other place can all these be seen together.”

—JIM KELLEY, EXPEDITION LEADER





Dear Museum Friend,

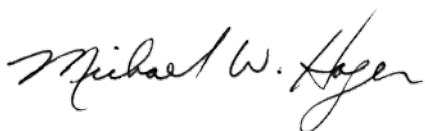
I hope you will join me April 9-16, 2016 on an extraordinary journey to the Sea of Cortés—one of the earth's richest seas—with Lindblad Expeditions. This trip marks my 25th anniversary with the San Diego Natural History Museum and highlights the Museum's dedication to the Baja region and my love for its natural history.

Aboard the newly remodeled 62-guest expedition ship, the *National Geographic Sea Bird*, we'll enjoy the advantages that only a small ship can provide—the ability to be flexible and follow the seasonal movements of the wildlife to optimize sightings. We'll see large pods of dolphins and probable sightings of various species of whales: Fin, Pilot, Bryde's, Sperm, or possibly Blue whales. Conditions permitting, we'll visit Isla Rasa, where 90% of the world's Heermann's gulls and the elegant tern come to breed. We'll be accompanied by a team of dedicated naturalists who will explain the wildlife, plants, native cultures, and history of the region.

Currently, we have the entire ship reserved exclusively for San Diego Natural History Museum enthusiasts. The trip is a year away, but if you are interested in joining us, we encourage you to sign up now—we do expect to sell out. You may register directly through Lindblad Expeditions via the enclosed form or call 888.773.9007.

In June 2016, I plan to retire from the Museum and this trip is not only a celebration of my tenure at the Museum, but an opportunity to honor and explore the incredible biodiversity of the Sea of Cortés—a place that is near and dear to my heart. Thank you for your continued support of the Museum and I hope you can join me on the Sea of Cortés in April of 2016!

Best regards,



Michael W. Hager, Ph.D.
President & CEO

Cover: A fun ride alongside a common dolphin.

Opposite: Humpbacks are just one of the many species of whales seen on this journey.

Ship's registry: United States



Discover Pure Wildness: Desert Islands and a Living Sea

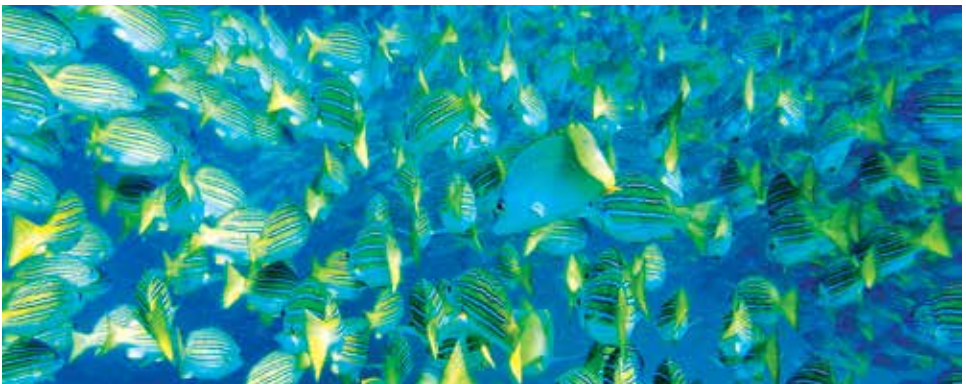
With improbably inviting shorelines and crystal-clear waters, it's easy to call Baja California and the Sea of Cortez a beach destination. It is. But when you explore further, you'll find that the surprisingly varied habitats and rich, endemic wildlife place it in a class all by itself.

You'll find the Sea of Cortez bursting with marine life, but virtually empty of humans. In April, it is the best place in the world to see many different kinds of whales in good conditions. The ocean explodes with hundreds of dolphins racing to the ship, and the sea boils as boobies plunge in search of fish. The Sea of Cortez is one of the planet's richest seas of similar latitude, so it is well deserved that Jacques Cousteau named it "the aquarium of the world."



Sunset in the Sea of Cortez.

But this Baja expedition offers much more than sea life. Stroll the streets of Santa Rosalita, a historic mining town, and enjoy a visit to a local bakery or gelato shop. Kayak in protected lagoons and observe diverse birdlife along the shores. Join a naturalist aboard an expedition landing craft to explore a deserted island. Hike through an otherworldly forest of gigantic cacti that tower overhead. At the end of the day, relax at a beach barbecue and bask in the splendid solitude of Baja.



Opposite page (clockwise from top): Sperm whale fluke; kayaks enable guests to explore Baja's many hidden coves; guest photographing the desert's dramatic landscape; a royal tern takes off. Above: Blue and gold snappers.



The Joys of Baja: Expedition-Style



Our expedition style of travel offers the best way to experience the Sea of Cortez. Since this is an expedition, not a cruise, flexibility is a hallmark. The itinerary draws on the extensive experience in the region of the expedition team and captain to maximize viewing opportunities. If a pod of dolphins approaches us, the ship will change course to take advantage of the encounter. The kitchen can also respond flexibly to an unexpected dinner hour whale sighting and still ensure that your meal will be superb.

You'll discover that life aboard the 62-guest *National Geographic Sea Bird* is warm and welcoming, with everyone participating equally in the adventure. Evening Recaps in the lounge are a chance to swap stories of the day's surprises with family and new friends over hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. Guests often compare the feeling of voyaging aboard this ship to that of a private yacht—with an esprit de corps that can only be found on an expedition.

Cool Tools for Exploration

EXPEDITION LANDING CRAFT: These boats are perfect for viewing up close and photographing frolicking dolphins or the antics of sea lions. Land on pristine and otherwise inaccessible desert islands 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 dolphins in the surrounding waters.



Guests on expedition landing craft.

Opposite page (clockwise from top): A family jumps into the Sea of Cortez; 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 playful dolphins; after a beach barbecue, guests gather around a bonfire; wildlife sighting on deck.



Travel with an A+ Expedition Team



Naturalists are always on hand to point out the wildlife.

Learn, see, and do more by exploring with experts who know the region best. Your team consists of an expedition leader and four naturalists, including a Lindblad-National Geographic certified photo instructor and an undersea specialist. Additionally, a wellness specialist leads morning stretching and aerobic hikes, and a video chronicler films the story of your adventure.

The Thrill of Photography in Baja California

Baja California is beautiful, so photography and our expeditions go hand-in-hand. The peerless light where the desert meets the sea offers photographic opportunities unlike any other place on Earth.

Capture moments at the heart of your expedition and learn from the best—a National Geographic photographer who will be on board throughout the expedition. Plus, travel with a Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic certified photo instructor—a naturalist who's specially trained to help you with your camera's settings and ensure you go home with the photos of a lifetime. You'll learn tricks for shooting close-ups of flowering cacti, striking desert and sea landscapes from afar, and capturing the action of rare birds flitting past your lens. Our Baja expedition is perfect for every photographer, from point-and-shoot enthusiasts to burgeoning pros.



Opposite page (clockwise from top): Baja offers endless photo ops; shooting Baja's stunning sunset; common dolphins; expert photographers share photo tips in small group and even one-on-one settings; brilliant sunrise, Sea of Cortez; sea lion and snorkeler.

Whales & Wildness: Spring in the Sea of Cortez

ITINERARY: 8 DAYS/7 NIGHTS – NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SEA BIRD

Watch whales and dolphins from the deck of an intimate, 62-guest expedition ship and at water level from nimble expedition landing craft. Spring in the Sea of Cortez is the best time to see large pods of dolphins and various species of whales—blue, sperm, humpback, pilot, fin, and Bryde’s—all in the same week. Hike uninhabited beaches and desert landscapes. Observe a myriad of seabirds. Kayak in pristine waters, snorkel among sea lions and reef fish, and enjoy the serenity of a sunset beach barbecue under a starry sky. Plus visit the old mining town of Santa Rosalita, with its wooden homes and a steel church designed by Gustave Eiffel.



This unique journey is designed with a flexible itinerary, with the staff choosing sites based on conditions and to maximize wildlife sightings, adding a stimulating sense of adventure to each day. The expert six-person expedition team will illuminate the wonders of the Sea of Cortez from every possible angle. They are dedicated to ensuring an incredible voyage. You'll discover the richness of the Sea of Cortez's marine life all around the ship and with help from an undersea specialist, who shoots video of life beneath the sea. And you'll see it for yourself when you don snorkeling gear to dive in and swim with playful sea lions.



Breaching humpback.

DAY 1: HOME/LOS CABOS, MEXICO/LA PAZ/EMBARK

Fly into Los Cabos and transfer to La Paz, where you embark ship to set sail on the Sea of Cortez. (D)

DAY 2-7: EXPLORING THE SEA OF CORTEZ

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)

ISLAS SAN ESTEBAN AND SAN PEDRO MÁRTIR:

Walk up a desert wash to search for desert birds and the endemic pinto chuckwalla—a fat, harmless desert lizard. Later visit Isla San Pedro Mártir, a 1,000-foot-high guano-covered island that is home to thousands of seabirds. Blue-footed boobies, red-billed tropicbirds, pelicans, and frigatebirds are all found here.

ISLA RASA: In the spring, one of the great wildlife spectacles of the Sea of Cortez is in full swing at Isla Rasa—the nesting of thousands of Heermann's gulls and elegant and royal terns. We will go ashore to meet researchers and unobtrusively observe the behavior of these three species.

ISLA SAN MARCOS: At Isla San Marcos, there is a beautiful cove for swimming, snorkeling, and kayaking. In the afternoon, we are again in rich whale waters, near the mouth of Bahía Concepción where we stand a good chance of sighting several species of whales, particularly fin or sperm.

ISLA SANTA CATALINA: This morning we'll search for whales in the waters south of Isla Carmen, an area that has proven to be one of the best for finding blue whales, and often bottlenose and common dolphins. In the afternoon, we visit Isla Santa Catalina, famous for its giant barrel cactus and lovely cardon cactus forest. The protected bay of our anchorage is also an excellent site for snorkeling. With a full afternoon here, there is time for swimming, snorkeling, and hiking.

LOS ISLOTES AND ISLA ESPÍRITU SANTO: At Los Islotes, snorkelers have one of life's great opportunities—swimming with graceful and curious sea lions. With a deeply indented shoreline and dramatically eroded cliff faces, Isla Espíritu Santo is perhaps the most beautiful island in the Sea of Cortez. We have a leisurely afternoon for swimming, snorkeling, kayaking, and in the evening, a beach barbecue under the desert sky.

DAY 8: DISEMBARK/LA PAZ/LOS CABOS/HOME

Disembark in La Paz and transfer to the Los Cabos airport for flights home. (B)



A snorkeler captures the rich marine life with an underwater camera.



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 sundeck 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: Expedition landing craft, kayaks, snorkeling gear, bow camera, hydrophone, Splash-Cam, underwater video camera, and video microscope.

SPECIAL FEATURES: Guest Internet access. A video chronicler, Lindblad-National Geographic certified photo instructor, 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 sundeck.

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
Whales & Wildness: Spring in the Sea of Cortez	\$5,990	\$6,870	\$7,860	\$8,990	\$10,300	\$750	Sample Airfare: Round-trip Los Angeles/ Los Cabos/ Los Angeles: Economy from \$650. Subject to change.

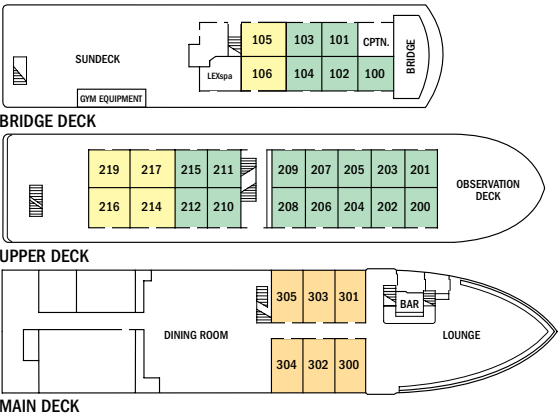
CATEGORY 1: Main Deck #300-305 – Conveniently positioned between the dining room and lounge, these cabins feature two single lower beds, a writing desk, and a large view window.

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 seating 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.



From top: A comfortable Category 2 cabin freshly redesigned; twin beds can be pushed together to form a double bed in Category 3 cabins on the Upper Deck; the newly refurbished lounge.

THE PRIVILEGE OF WILDNESS IN COMFORT AND STYLE

National Geographic Sea Bird has been transformed: the lounge, bar, and dining room have been handsomely renovated. And every cabin category has been refreshed with warm cherry veneer, our signature bed linens, sleekly framed photos, and more. Now, the ship sets new standards for expedition hospitality and comfort.



Red sandstone, Sea of Cortez.

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 and 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; 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 for a \$50 per person service fee.

Reservations: To confirm your place, an advance payment of US\$750 per person is payable by check, Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover,.

Final Payment: Due no later than 90 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 and Other Terms & Conditions: Certain other provisions concerning, among other things, limitations of Lindblad Maritime Enterprises 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 or upon request. By registering for a trip, the guest agrees to all such terms and conditions.

Prices listed in this brochure are as of publication date, and are subject to change. Lindblad Maritime Enterprises reserves the right to impose surcharges based on increases in the actual cost of fuel.

CANCELLATION POLICY	
Number of Days Prior to Expedition Start	Per Person Cancellation Fee
120 or more days	\$350
119-90 days	Advance payment cost
89-60 days	25% of trip fare
59-45 days	50% of total fare
44–0 days	No refund
We strongly recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan.	

Please return to:

Lindblad Expeditions
96 Morton Street
New York, NY 10014
Ph: (888) 773-9007
Fax: (646) 390-2050

Email: groups@expeditions.com

Reservation Form:

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April 9-16, 2016 | 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\$750 per person).

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

☐ Charge my advance payment of \$ _____ (US\$750 per person)


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

Account Number: _____ Expires: _____

Cardholder Signature: _____ Date: _____

Expedition Highlights

- ▶ Explore the Sea of Cortez, a UNESCO World Heritage site, at the best time of year.
- ▶ Travel aboard a newly redesigned 62-guest ship with expert naturalists, an undersea specialist, and a Lindblad-National Geographic certified photo instructor.
- ▶ See large pods of dolphins and various species of whales, as well as abundant bird life and giant cardon cacti.
- ▶ Kayak, swim, and snorkel with sea lions in pristine waters, and hike diverse desert landscapes.

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