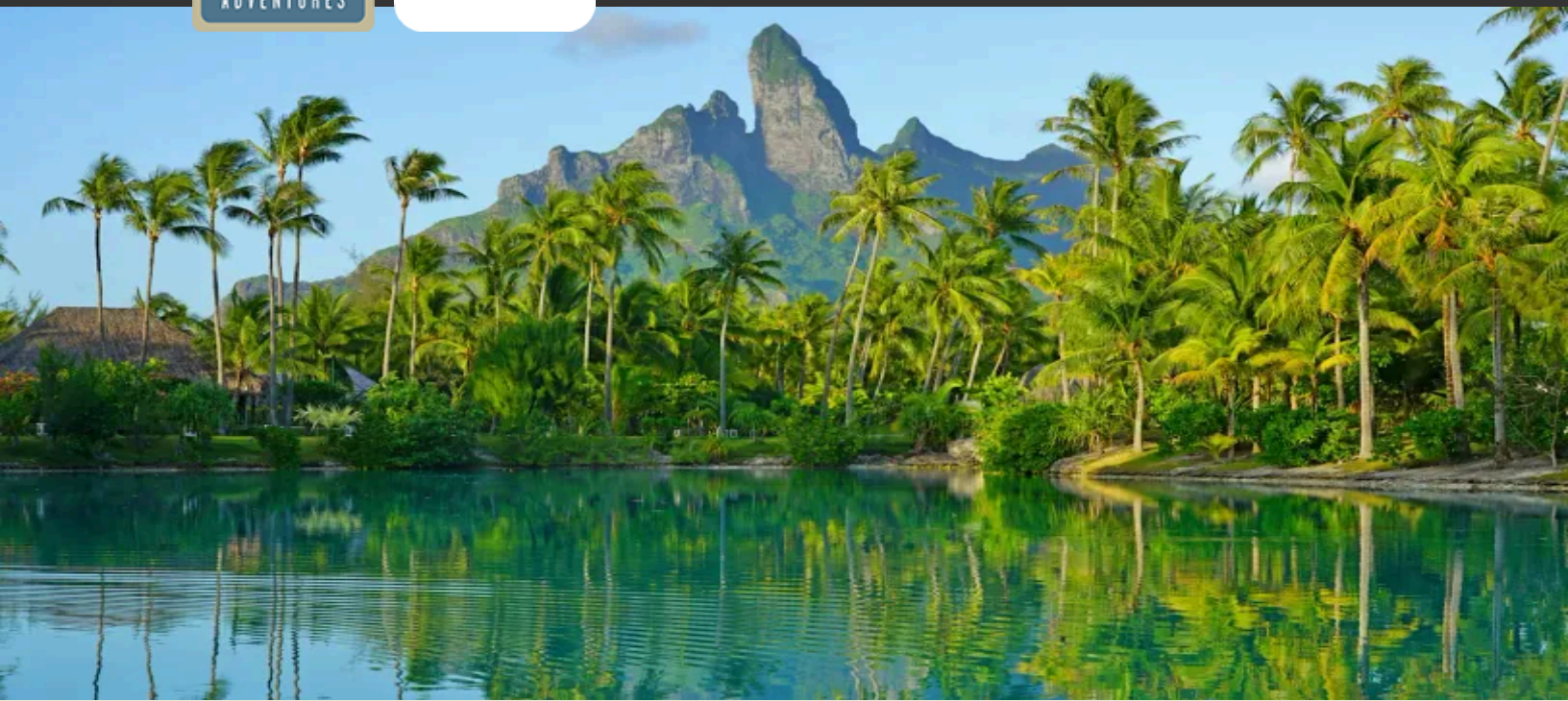




Discovering Our Planet Together



Pearls of the Pacific: Exploring the Society & Tuamotu Islands

Untouched Beauty & Biodiversity in a Polynesian Paradise

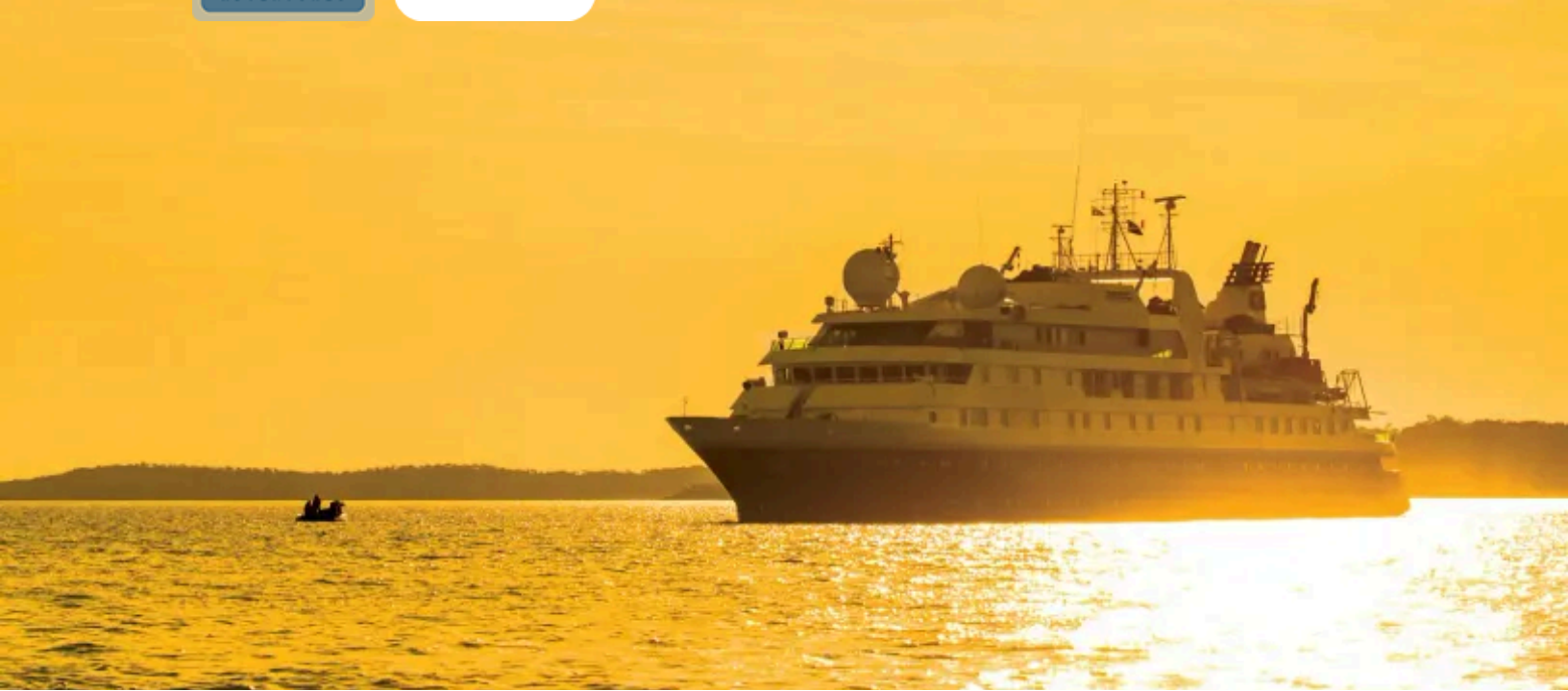


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Trip Details:

Days

12 Days / Jan-Mar

Price

From \$11365

Physical**Requirements**

Easy to Moderate

Pearls of the Pacific: Exploring the Society & Tuamotu Islands

Untouched Beauty & Biodiversity in a Polynesian Paradise

The islands of Polynesia are among the most idyllic places on Earth. Strewn like emeralds across the sapphire ocean, these palm-studded atolls and volcanic outposts draped in lush greenery are like a primeval Eden. In the beguiling Society Islands and remote Tuamotus, step ashore to walk on white sand beaches fine as powder. In azure lagoons ringed by coral reefs, a dazzling undersea world awaits as we swim among sea turtles, rays and schools of technicolor fish. Local islanders in flower leis greet us with traditional drumming and dancing. Those who experience this rare odyssey will surely concur with French painter Paul Gauguin that they have come to Polynesia to escape "everything that is artificial and conventional." Come discover Polynesia's warm hospitality, ancient culture, tropical nature, and one of the planet's purest underwater realms.

Trip Highlights

Dive and snorkel over healthy coral reefs with profuse and colorful marine life, swim in volcanic grottoes and float in a hidden cave

Learn about Polynesian history at Marae Taputapuatea, a UNESCO World Heritage Site on Raiatea, and meet local fishermen and artisans on Anaa

View Bora Bora's Mount Otemanu, jutting 2,400 feet above the turquoise sea, and Makatea's vertical cliffs plunging down to deserted beaches



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Itinerary At A Glance

Days 1 & 2

Depart USA / Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia—Embark Ship

Days 3 & 4

Cruising the Tuamotu Archipelago / Anaa

Days 5 & 6

Fakarava

Day 7

Makatea

Day 8

Tahaa / Bora Bora

Day 9

Raiatea

Day 10

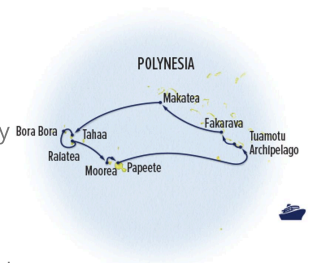
Moorea

Pearls of the Pacific: Exploring the Society & Tuamotu Islands Itinerary

Untouched Beauty & Biodiversity in a Polynesian Paradise

Days 1 & 2: Depart USA / Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia—Embark Ship

Depart from *National Geographic* for embarkation. Once you're settled in to your cabin, unwind on an *Orion* board or explore downtown Papeete on foot, including the central market where vendors sell fresh fruit, pareos, local arts and crafts, and coveted black pearls. Lunch is served aboard, and shortly after, we set sail for the Tuamotu Archipelago. This afternoon, meet the staff and your traveling companions as you relax into island time.





Itinerary At A Glance

Days 11 & 12

Moorea / Papeete—Disembark
/ Depart / Arrive USA

Days 3 & 4: Cruising the Tuamotu Archipelago / Anaa

Spend two days on an unscripted exploration of the Tuamotus, a group of nearly 80 islands and atolls that extends across an area roughly the size of Western Europe. Tuamotus means "distant islands," a name bestowed by Polynesian settlers from Tahiti who archaeologists believe brought their language and culture to this far-flung island chain in the 8th century. Rich in marine life, the crystalline lagoons of these low-lying coral isles are fringed by white sand beaches and lush coconut groves, evoking dreamy images of a tropical paradise. The world under the sea is equally beguiling, awaiting discovery on a dive or snorkel excursion. Among the coral gardens, look for large schools of pelagic fish, manta rays, dolphins, hammerhead sharks and endangered sea turtles. The calm waters protected in the atoll lagoons are an ideal place to try standup paddleboarding, for a view on the transparent waters from above. On the sparsely inhabited island of Anaa, meet the local residents and learn about their longstanding customs and traditions.

Days 5 & 6: Fakarava

Today *Orion* calls at Fakarava, one of the largest atolls in French Polynesia with the second-largest lagoon in the Tuamotus. The center of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve comprising seven low-lying coral islands and atolls, Fakarava is home to many rare and endemic species of birds, plants and crustaceans. Don't miss the opportunity to snorkel over its protected reefs and ride the current into the lagoon on a world-famous drift dive. In one of the passes that feed into the lagoon, a narrow underwater valley known as Shark's Hole is heavily populated with harmless lemon, whitecap and hammerhead sharks. Once you've had your fill of exploring beneath the sea, spend time discovering Rotoava, the main village on Fakarava. Take a leisurely bike ride, visit a pearl shop, or stroll the waterfront along the turquoise ocean sipping nectar from a fresh coconut.

Day 7: Makatea

An uplifted coral atoll in the Tuamotus, the island of Makatea is one of the most unique landforms in the Pacific. Tilted due to plate tectonics, it has dramatic vertical cliffs that ring its coastline, rising 260 feet from the ocean's surface—in stark contrast to other islands in the region. Its distinctive features have resulted in the name *makatea* being applied as a generic term for all other raised coral atolls worldwide. Spend the day exploring the island's limestone caves and grottos with your expedition team and local guides, or search for endemic fruit doves and myriad seabirds.

Day 8: Tahaa / Bora Bora



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Arrive in picture-postcard Tahaa and spend the morning snorkeling in the crystalline lagoon alongside black-tipped reef sharks. Or opt to go ashore and visit a family-run vanilla farm. Return to the ship for lunch as we sail for Bora Bora. Lying northwest of Tahiti and covering just 12 square miles, Bora Bora epitomizes the romance of the South Pacific. Be sure you're on deck to watch the iconic green crags of Mount Otemanu come into view, the remains of an extinct volcano rising out of Bora Bora's aquamarine lagoon.

While Bora Bora is most famous for its natural beauty, its cultural history is also of interest: The island was inhabited by Polynesian settlers who crossed the ocean from Tonga and Samoa around the 4th century. Perhaps the greatest navigators of all time, it is astonishing to consider that Polynesians could confidently navigate the vast Pacific using the stars, wind and patterns of bird flight more than a thousand years before the first Europeans mastered sailing in their own waters. The first European sighting of Bora Bora was in 1722 by Dutch seafarer Jakob Roggeveen. Captain James Cook set foot on the island in 1777 after locating it earlier with the help of a Tahitian navigator, Tupaia. Bora Bora was an independent kingdom until 1888, when the French annexed the island as a colony and forced its last queen, Teriimaevavua III, to abdicate. During World War II, the United States chose Bora Bora as a South Pacific military supply base, although the island never saw combat. Spend the afternoon getting acquainted with this beguiling island, exploring either on land or water. Then join us for a barbecue dinner and music on a private motu this evening.

Day 9: Raiatea

Take in the sunrise on deck as we sail to Raiatea in the early morning light. One of the most important cultural sites in the Polynesian world, the Taputapuātea marae complex on Raiatea was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2017. A political, ceremonial and funerary center for Polynesian seafaring culture for a thousand years, it is the location from which maritime explorers set out for Rapa Nui (Easter Island), Hawaii and New Zealand. Scattered throughout Polynesia, *marae* are known as holy sites where the world of the living and the world of the ancestors and gods converge. On a scenic lagoon cruise around the island, we sail for the village of Uturoa. Taste local Polynesian specialties during lunch at a beachside restaurant, then spend the afternoon swimming, snorkeling or paddleboarding from the beach in the calm transparent waters of Raiatea's turquoise lagoon.

Day 10: Moorea



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Wake up to views of Moorea's vertical green peaks as we anchor in stunning Opunohu Bay. Rising out of the ocean like an emerald cathedral, Moorea's jagged spires are draped in tropical vegetation and crowned by clouds, with waterfalls pouring down their steep sides. Spend the morning discovering the island's many charms: hike through a pineapple plantation, explore the lush interior on horseback, or snorkel in the crystal-blue lagoon. Relax on board over lunch on deck and admire views of the island as we cruise toward Cook's Bay, where we spend the rest of the day. Also called Paopao Bay, Cook's Bay is named for Captain James Cook, who visited Moorea for the first time on his third voyage to the Society Islands, when he landed in Opunohu Bay on September 30, 1777. Join an afternoon excursion to Moorea's newest museum, and enjoy the golden light of late afternoon from shore.

Days 11 & 12: Moorea / Papeete—Disembark / Depart / Arrive USA

This morning, stretch your legs with an early walk into the caldera interior of Moorea, revealing the island's status as an ancient volcano, or look for abundant marine life in the lagoon on a leisurely snorkel excursion. Known for its colorful fish, the clear waters of the lagoon may reveal butterflyfish, angelfish and triggerfish among the corals, as well as pink whiprays, spotted eagle rays and black-tipped reef sharks. Return to the ship for lunch as we cast off for Tahiti, just 11 miles away. On arrival in Papeete, disembark the ship and check into a hotel room for the afternoon, a base to relax and refresh before late-evening transfers to the airport for homeward flights.



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Accommodation Details:

National Geographic Orion

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/adventure-cruises/pearls-of-the-pacific-exploring-the-society-and-tuamotu-islands/accommodations

Pearls of the Pacific: Exploring the Society & Tuamotu Islands Accommodations

Untouched Beauty & Biodiversity in a Polynesian Paradise



National Geographic Orion

Among the most sophisticated ships in its class, with the highest sustainable marine environmental practices, *Orion's* luxurious accommodations and recreational tools treat 100 guests to 5-star comfort.



Sail with the World Leader in Conservation-Focused Small-Ship Cruising

We're proud to offer a worldwide slate of Adventure Cruises through our partner, Lindblad Expeditions. Nat Hab joined forces with Lindblad in 2016 to expand our mutual collection of nature adventures. Founded in 1958 by Lars-Eric Lindblad, the company pioneered eco-conscious expeditions for "citizen explorers" and today is the world leader in conservation-focused small-ship cruises. Our Adventure Specialists are intimately familiar with the ships and itineraries and are on call to answer any questions you might have.

1 An Immersive Encounter with the South Pacific

The small scale of our expedition ship means we can reach places larger vessels can't, offering more in-depth access, remote nature experiences and authentic cultural encounters. The ship's naturalists know the shores, reefs, birds and uninhabited atolls intimately, and their expertise offers our guests the richest possible experience of this fabled region of the world.

2 Experience Makes a Difference

Lindblad has been exploring the South Pacific since the 1980s. This deep experience is the key to helping you truly "get lost" in this tropical paradise—including all those dreamy islands and uninhabited atolls that are only accessible by sea. The world's leader in small-ship expedition cruising, Lindblad owns and operates the *National Geographic Orion*, a state-of-the-art expedition vessel used on all departures of this voyage. The result is matchless knowledge and attention to detail, along with a suite of amenities, which most other tour operators in the region simply cannot offer.

3 A Premier Expedition Team The ship is your base camp for exploring the idyllic isles of the South Pacific, and your Expedition Team are the consummate hosts. Every voyage sails with a veteran Lindblad Expedition Leader and a hand-picked team of naturalists and specialist guides with a deep expertise in the region's natural and cultural history. You won't find a more impressive interpretive experience as you explore alongside the ship's stellar staff.



4

Gear Up to Explore the Region's Beauty & Biodiversity

The ship has a full complement of tools to help you be an active and engaged explorer. Expedition landing craft, kayaks and standup paddleboards provide access to intricate shorelines and crystalline lagoons. Snorkel gear is available for every guest, so you'll never miss a chance to swim with schools of colorful fish and other tropical marine life—and you'll keep your set-up for the entire voyage. The ship also provides scuba gear for certified divers, and a divemaster accompanies every excursion. If you'd rather stay dry, a glass-bottom Zodiac lets you look underwater without ever getting your face wet. And we travel with an undersea specialist and an ROV, which takes video images up to 1,000 feet below the surface, far beyond the range of divers—meaning you get incomparable, up-close access to the dazzling marine environment and its inhabitants. Video microscopes, high-definition screens, hydrophones, a crow's nest camera and other tools provide added opportunities for in-depth understanding.

5

Get the Finest Possible Photos

Clear turquoise lagoons, pristine beaches fringed with coconut palms, and green-cloaked mountain spires offer enticing opportunities for photographers. A Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic certified photo instructor is on board to provide assistance with your camera and instruction in elements of composition and technique to help you take your best photos ever.

6

We're Committed to the Planet

Natural Habitat Adventures is a standard-setter in eco-conscious travel. We have been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007. And we continue to break innovative ground in adopting practices that help to protect our global environment. Because of our concern for the environment, we are pleased to partner with Lindblad Expeditions for our Adventure Cruises, a company that shares our values and commitment to the planet.

7

Natural Habitat Adventures is WWF's Travel Partner

Because of our environmental commitment and the outstanding quality of our adventures, World Wildlife Fund has chosen Natural Habitat Adventures as its worldwide travel partner, a designation we're very proud of! When you book your Lindblad Expeditions cruise with us, a portion of your trip fee supports WWF.



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**Dates & Pricing
Summary:**

Prices:
From \$11365

Group Size:
Limited to 102
Travelers

**Physical
Requirements:**
Easy to
Moderate

Pearls of the Pacific: Exploring the Society & Tuamotu Islands Dates, Pricing & Info

Untouched Beauty & Biodiversity in a Polynesian Paradise



Pricing

2025 Prices

Pricing

Note that pricing is subject to change and may vary based on availability. For per-departure pricing, hover your cursor over the dates above (desktop) or tap the date of your choosing (mobile).



Trip prices are per person based on double occupancy and are given in U.S. dollars. A deposit of **15%** of the cabin fare is required to reserve your space.

Please read Lindblad's Payment & Refund Policy here.

Included

Accommodations; meals indicated; alcoholic beverages (except premium brands); excursions; services of Lindblad Expeditions' leader, naturalist staff and expert guides; use of kayaks; entrance fees; all port charges and service taxes; gratuities to ship's crew.

Not Included

Air transportation; immigration fees; personal items such as internet, laundry, voyage DVD, etc.; optional travel and/or medical evacuation insurance.

Recommended Insurance

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we strongly recommend that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. While this is not required, we make this strong suggestion in the interest of our guests' safety. We recommend that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least \$250,000 in medical evacuation coverage. To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage. Please contact our office if you would like more information about the medical evacuation and comprehensive travel insurance policies we offer by calling 800-543-8917.



Physical Requirements

Easy to Moderate

Our South Pacific adventure cruise does not require a high degree of physical fitness, although numerous short walks on shore excursions may be involved. Some of the physical activities include kayaking, snorkeling, walking and scuba diving. We stress that all activities are optional. Travelers should be aware that the heat and humidity may be very high and roads may be bumpy.

Getting There & Getting Home

Please arrive in Papeete in the early morning of Day 2 of the itinerary. Departure is on Day 11 from Papeete. We can best serve you by having Lindblad Expeditions' air department book your flights, since Lindblad is most familiar with the special requirements of each trip. Please call Lindblad directly at 800-397-3348. Note that while Lindblad Expeditions' air department will offer you its best available rates on airfare, you may find better fares online.



Natural Habitat & WWF: Discovering Our Planet Together

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WWF's membership travel program is operated by Natural Habitat Adventures (Nat Hab). To date, Nat Hab has provided more than \$6 million in support of WWF's mission and will continue to give 1% of gross sales plus \$175,000 annually through 2028. WWF® and ©1986 Panda Symbol are owned by WWF. All rights reserved.