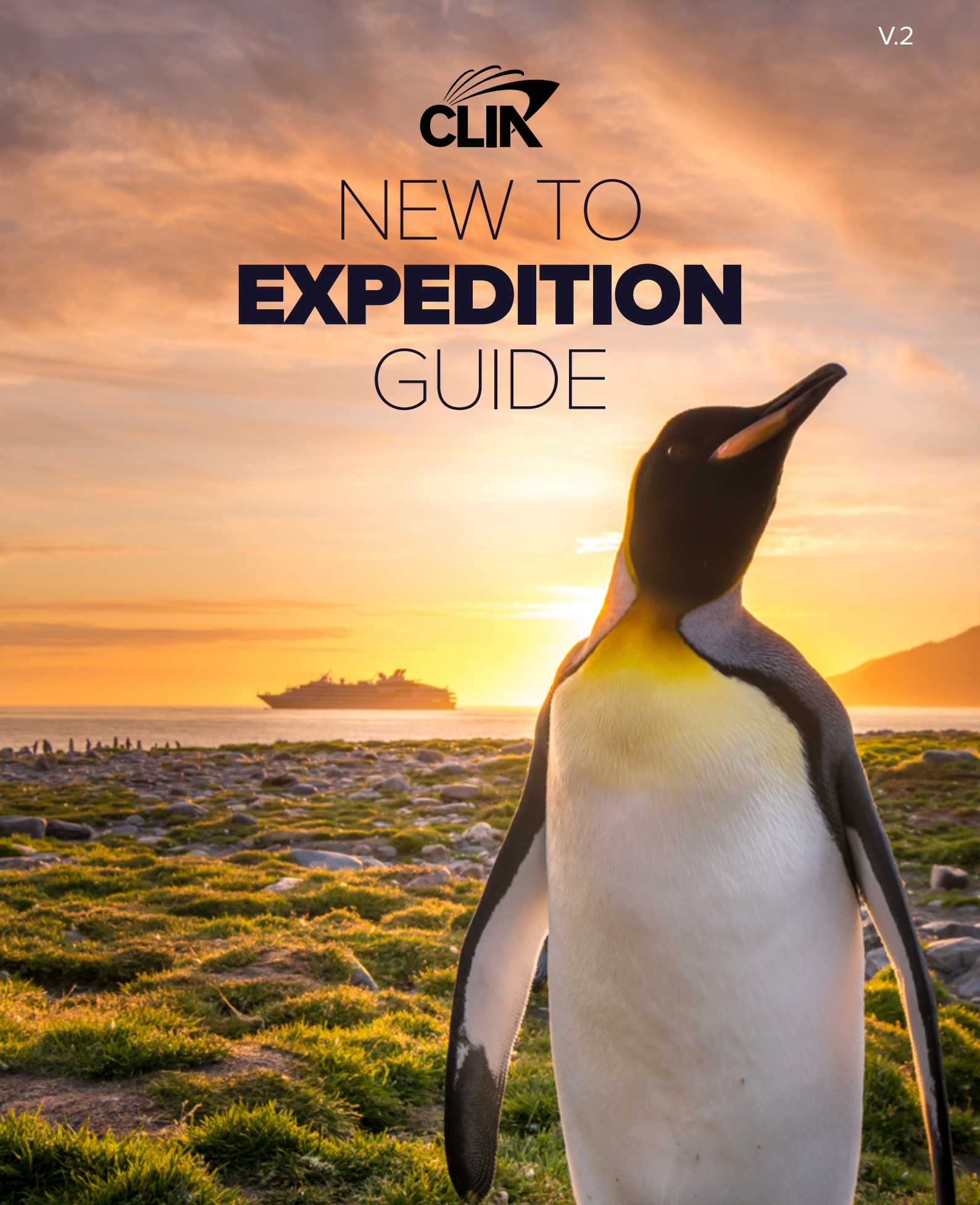


NEW TO **EXPEDITION** GUIDE



Adventure awaits...

cruising.org

NEW-TO-EXPEDITION CRUISE GUIDE



Welcome to the first Expedition Guide from CLIA – this is a sector that has grown and developed significantly over recent years such that we felt now was the time to launch this bespoke Guide, just for you.

Expedition Cruising has grown as new ships and cruise lines enter the sector, as new destinations open up to this small ship exploration, and as holidaymakers look for something different, adventurous and off the beaten track. They are the ultimate trip for making memories that last a lifetime, based on the scenery, wildlife, nature, culture and environment being visited.

Look out for expedition themed events from CLIA to get even more insights and information!

Andy Harmer
Managing Director
CLIA UK & Ireland



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Sea of Cortez

An Introduction to Expedition Cruising

Intrepid adventurers have never had it so good when it comes to exploring the most inaccessible regions of the planet by cruise ship. Expedition cruising has enjoyed unprecedented growth in the last few years which has virtually changed this niche sector of the cruise industry out of all recognition – and it shows no sign of running out of steam.

Cruise companies are forging ahead with new ships equipped with state-of-the-art technology, revolutionary designs and luxurious touches that could never have been imagined a few years ago.

Each new expeditionary ship ushers in ground-breaking innovations, from onboard science laboratories and underwater lounges with viewing portholes to high-tech toys that include drones, helicopters and mini-submarines. With their sleek lines and mega-yacht styling, today's generation of vessels is a world away from the gritty no-frills ice-breakers of the past, yet they still have top Polar Class classifications due to strengthened hulls that enable them to withstand tough icy conditions.

Pioneering technology has also been used to equip ships with environmentally-protective measures designed to cut fuel consumption and reduce emissions, achieved in some cases by innovative hull designs or hybrid technology.

Such a transformation has also been reflected in guest facilities onboard with a new wave of sophisticated craft that combine hardcore adventure with luxurious lifestyle. Think panoramic balcony suites, butler service and haute cuisine served in multiple upscale dining venues along with full-service spas and fitness areas, hot tubs and infinity pools.

This niche market has also broadened out from a core of established operators to new entrants, including some mainstream lines that have established their own dedicated expedition arms running alongside their classic cruise divisions. Fuelling this has been growing demand among travellers who are looking for authentic experiences to remote regions on small ships and prepared to pay handsomely for the privilege.

While total passenger numbers are low, as most ships carry just a few hundred guests, prices are not with average booking values hovering between £10,000 and £20,000. Such growth has, in turn, brought a proliferation of new cold water and warm water destinations as the rising number of expeditionary vessels seek out more undiscovered territories to explore.

The Polar regions remain the ultimate prize of expedition cruising, but the range of itineraries to these areas is expanding to encompass nearby destinations such as Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Norway and Greenland in the Northern Hemisphere, and New Zealand's Sub-Antarctic Islands, Cape Horn and Patagonia in the Southern Hemisphere.

Sailing along the fabled Northwest Passage through the Canadian Arctic presents one of the ultimate expeditionary challenges, while the Northeast Passage along the northern coast of Siberia opens up a wilderness that for many years was out of bounds.

However, the rise in adventurous tropical spots has literally brought expedition cruising in from the cold with Australia's Kimberley region and the Galapagos Islands proving increasingly popular, while emerging Indonesian archipelagos such as the Spice Islands and Raja Ampat inject exotic appeal.

It's a similar story for Borneo and Papua New Guinea whose fascinating mix of equatorial rainforests and cultural riches is one of many factors that has turned expeditionary voyages into the cruise industry's hot ticket.



Mitchell Falls in outback Western Australia



Angkor Wat, Cambodia

Expedition style River Cruising

River cruises are increasingly carving a path into adventurous territory as more remote waterways open up to international travellers.

Asia has the biggest choice of sailings that venture off the beaten track into isolated regions where roads are non-existent and rivers are the key transport artery. Such sailings have an expeditionary air about them, giving guests a feeling of exploring somewhere special where foreigners rarely venture. It is quite common not to see another tourist boat for days at a time, if at all, and to be a source of curiosity for villagers who may never have encountered Western travellers before.

Days will be spent peacefully cruising through deserted pristine wildernesses of lush jungle or paddy fields perhaps with a spectacular mountainous backdrop, with stops at riverside villages and markets where the most memorable experiences come from meeting locals and visiting schools full of wide-eyed curious youngsters.

The Lower Mekong through Vietnam and Cambodia combines the metropolitan buzz of Ho Chi Minh City and Siem Reap with the cultural appeal of floating markets, village life and the Unesco-protected temples of Angkor, while the Upper Mekong, flowing through Laos into Thailand and China, has a more remote flavour.

Myanmar's Irrawaddy River is famous for its astounding collection of 2,000-plus temples scattered across the plain at Bagan, while cruises along the Chindwin River further north, which stretches up to the Indian border, take guests through remote tribal lands with a history of British colonial rule and Second World War conflicts.

Cruises in India promise cultural overload, from the temples and rituals that accompany Ganges voyages to the wildlife of the Brahmaputra River in Assam where animal sanctuaries are home to endangered tigers and rare one-horned rhinos.

Wildlife is also the main draw on Amazon cruises – where the narrower Peruvian section of this great river is better suited to small riverboats that take guests through the rainforest to spot exotic flora and fauna and visit indigenous tribes.





Antarctica

A Day in the Life

Unlike traditional voyages, expeditionary sailings – and especially those to the Polar regions – do not have a set route once ships arrive as they are then guided by weather / sea conditions and wildlife sightings that determine how long each vessel spends at a particular place.

Any sea days enroute to the destination tend to be spent attending talks given by the team of onboard expedition guides and lecturers on relevant topics that encompass wildlife and natural features of the region, history and culture. Sometimes there will be film screenings too.

On arrival, days fall into a regular pattern comprising two or three trip options, with passengers split into small groups which go ashore at alternate times to keep numbers low.

Activities can start early with passengers departing on tours by 7.30am/8am. Some groups may head off on a hiking expedition, while others may take a trip in one of the Zodiac boats to view the landscape and wildlife.

Where there is an early start, trips may return mid-morning, allowing for time to relax before an early lunch. The next outings may be a straight swap, enabling each group to try a different experience to earlier.

If these return by mid-afternoon, there can be a third option which could be a kayaking tour or snorkelling trip (in warm water destinations). Days where there are three different tours can be busy and tiring, with just an hour between trips in some cases.

Alternatively, on days where there are two trips, these tend to depart a little later – around 9am, returning for lunch, before setting off for the afternoon.

Not surprisingly, evenings are low key after such exertions. There is normally a debriefing session with expedition leaders before dinner, when they explain the following day's schedule.

Dinner becomes the sociable focus of the evening with shared tables and a chance to compare the day's experiences with other guests before retiring to the lounge for a night-cap and then bed.



Differences from classic ocean cruising

Size is everything – mainstream cruise ships carry an average of around 3,000 passengers, with the largest leviathans capable of holding nearly 7,000 passengers. The biggest expedition vessels tend to be around 500 passengers as this is the maximum limit permitted for ships wanting to land passengers in Antarctica. Most sea-going ships take 200 to 300 pax, while rustic riverboats may take around 30 or less.

Getting shipshape – while classic cruise ships have a roll-call of restaurants, bars and leisure facilities, expedition vessels are built to navigate areas inaccessible to larger ships and are equipped with Zodiac boats for shore landings, kayaks and, in some cases, high-tech gizmos, including helicopters and submarines. Some ships also have science centres where guests can assist on-board experts with scientific research.



Onboard entertainment – cabaret shows, live bands and nightclubs keep the beat going into the early hours on regular cruise vessels whereas lectures, film screenings (often relating to the destinations visited) and quizzes are the evening diversions on expedition voyages, often followed by an early night with many guests retiring by around 9/10pm.

Full days of activity – on classic cruises sea days tend to revolve around pool and leisure activities while port days offer a chance to visit local attractions on excursions. On expedition cruises, the theme is more about education and adventure. Early starts are commonplace, with explorations ashore for hikes or wildlife viewing, Zodiac boat rides, kayaking outings or snorkelling trips.

Black tie v hiking boots – regular cruises offer lots of chances to don your party gear. Don't even bother packing it for expeditionary sailings where the emphasis in Polar regions is on warm layers and waterproofs, while in warmer climates essentials are swimming gear and sturdy footwear for hikes, along with decent mosquito repellent.





FELICITY ASTON MBE
Explorer, Scientist, Speaker and Author

Felicity Aston is the first and only woman in the world to ski across Antarctica alone.

The 1,744km, 59-day journey completed in January 2012 also made her the first person in the world to traverse the continent purely by muscle power without the aid of kites or machines, earning her a place in the Guinness Book of World Records. In 2015 she was awarded the Queen's Polar Medal for services in Antarctica and was appointed MBE for services to Polar Exploration.

www.felicityaston.com

Speaking at the CLIA Conference, 2019

Onboard Experts and Lectures

The teams of experts that work aboard expeditionary ships help to bring each destination to life for passengers and are one of this sector's most defining features.

Guests can expect to be accompanied by expedition leaders whenever they leave the ship, whether it involves going ashore or exploring coastal waters in kayaks or one of the Zodiac boats. Team leaders have in-depth knowledge and experience of the local surroundings and bring their own specialisms too as qualified naturalists, marine biologists or ornithologists. But whatever their level of expertise, they all possess passion and knowledge they want to share with guests.

This is reinforced by an onboard programme of talks on various topics relevant to each destination. In Polar regions, for example, there may be glaciologists who will talk about glacial deposits and erosive features, or historians who will recall the heritage of the whaling industry and recount stories of famous explorers associated with the territories.

Such a flow of knowledge means expedition ships become a floating classroom where, in addition to daily briefings, there are opportunities to speak to the experts individually. When ships are sailing through areas of notable interest, guides will often give a running commentary over the ship tannoy about the area, pointing out particular features. If there is an unexpected wildlife event, sightings of whales or other sealife, one of the experts may give an ad hoc commentary.

When ships are sailing in Polar regions, there will often be scientists onboard conducting their own research who will deliver lectures during the voyage.

With more expedition ships now equipped with science laboratories, guests can also watch them at work or even take part in research themselves. Where there are indigenous settlements, cultural guides will help to lead the way with information and arrange visits to meet local tribes while acting as interpreters.

For activities such as kayaking or mountain hiking, qualified leaders will be on-hand to assist and guide groups, while photography experts accompany many voyages to help guests perfect their picture-taking skills.



Additional Craft

Helicopters, mini-submarines and ROVs are some of the new sophisticated twists that are helping to transform expedition cruising.

Such ships have traditionally carried small rigid inflatable boats (RIBs), such as Zodiacs, to ferry passengers to landing points or take them on wildlife-spotting trips and forays along the shoreline.

As guests have become increasingly active, more vessels are equipped with fleets of kayaks, enabling passengers to paddle away on trips designed to bring them closer to the natural surroundings.

But a new wave of modern and more luxurious expeditionary craft is upping the ante with ever-more adventurous ways to explore remote terrain, especially in Antarctica.

Some ships are equipped with ROVs (Remotely Operated Vehicles). These are robotic submarines that can explore to depths of 1,000ft and are tethered to their “mother boat” from where they are remotely operated by a crew member. Highly-tuned controls mean an ROV can be manoeuvred with the utmost precision, enabling its high-definition video camera to project underwater shots back to the ship for passengers to view on a large screen.

Helicopters are also starting to appear on modern expedition vessels with some carrying not one, but two such craft that can carry around six passengers on sightseeing flights, heli-skiing and heli-hiking trips.



Small submarines are another high-tech addition on the latest generation ships. Holding between two and six passengers, they can reach depths of up to 1,000ft, and some are equipped with video recorders to give passengers a lasting memento of their dive.

Such one-off experiences are not cheap, though guests looking for less expensive options can opt for other new alternatives such as snowshoeing, stand-up paddle-boarding or e-biking.

Another option is to sit back and admire panoramic views from the observation decks. However, some ships have brought a new dimension to this with hydraulic viewing platforms that fold out from the bow, while others have underwater lounges where guests can watch passing marine views through large portholes.





Sustainability

Expedition cruise lines are at the forefront of a concerted campaign to reduce their carbon footprint and protect the pristine wildernesses they sail through.

The relatively small size of expedition ships already means their impact on the local environment is less than their larger ocean-going counterparts, but revolutionary technical innovations have made the latest generation of expedition vessels more fuel efficient than ever before.

Pioneering new hull designs and hybrid technology that reduces emissions by using liquefied natural gas (LNG) and battery power are being increasingly employed on ships. Meanwhile, dynamic propulsion systems that replace the need to drop anchor, thus avoiding potential damage to the seabed, are also becoming more widespread.

Expeditionary lines have led the way in introducing environmentally-friendly practices governing everything from waste disposal and banning single-use plastics to sourcing ethical food producers, utilising biodegradable cleaning materials and recycling wherever possible.

Expedition crews and tour leaders are also passionate about safeguarding natural surroundings, educating passengers and promoting a strong conservation message. Trips ashore are strictly controlled with limits on group numbers, ensuring that guests follow designated paths and maintain a safe distance from wildlife.

In Antarctica – which has some of the strictest regulations governing cruise ship visits to protect its unique eco-systems – passengers have to disinfect their boots before and after shore trips to prevent cross-contamination, while taking food ashore is prohibited. The largest ship permitted to land passengers on the so-called White Continent can carry a maximum of 500 guests and only 100 of them are allowed ashore at any one time.

In the Galapagos Islands off the coast of Ecuador, the national park authorities decree that ships cannot exceed 100 passengers and must follow a pre-arranged itinerary to specific islands that locks in the date and time window they are permitted to visit. Guests are not allowed to go ashore without guides and must keep a distance of at least two metres from wildlife.

As expeditionary ships visit such remote areas, they also play a vital role in scientific research, often carrying scientists to collect critical data and gather field samples. With more vessels now equipped with laboratories, experts have increased scope to analyse their findings and there are also opportunities for guests to get involved and attend lectures and workshops.

Additionally, some cruise companies organise voluntourism activities that guests can participate in. These include beach clean-ups, releasing newly-hatched baby turtles, tracking cetaceans for research projects and planting trees as part of reforestation efforts. On sailings which stop at local communities, guests are asked to bring pens, pencils and other stationery to give to local children on school visits.

Packing List

Casual, comfortable and practical are the main considerations when packing for an expedition cruise.

Sailing to such isolated places means the chances of replacing forgotten items or stocking up on supplies are virtually non-existent, so it's worth taking extra back-up. Polar destinations command a different checklist of items than tropical spots, but for both life onboard is casual with a relaxed dress code. Wherever you are headed, cameras are a must, preferably with a good zoom lens, a large capacity memory card and extra batteries as cold conditions tend to drain them more quickly. And don't forget your binoculars.



Life in the freezer

A key ingredient is a warm, windproof parka-type jacket. Several companies provide these as part of the cruise, so it's worth checking in advance.

Many also provide waterproof boots, which are essential for exploring and negotiating shallow water when going ashore in Zodiac boats. Windproof and waterproof trousers are crucial, along with warm, waterproof gloves – in both instances ski clothing is ideal.

The secret is to dress in layers with T-shirts and fleeces, leggings and thermal underwear.

It's also worth donning silk gloves as a first layer under thicker gloves because these make it easier to operate camera equipment and will still help to keep hands warm. Remember to bring a hat and neck-warmer too.

UV protection sunglasses and sunscreen are essential due to the snowy glare, along with a rucksack to keep items in when ashore.

Don't forget swimming costumes as more ships now have hot tubs and/or pools, and there's always a chance for brave souls to take the polar plunge in the freezing waters.



Feeling hot, hot, hot

Tropical attire revolves around lightweight clothing and swimwear, though long-sleeve tops and flowing dresses or loose trousers can protect against insects, particularly mosquitoes.

Rain ponchos or lightweight, quick drying jackets are also handy in a sudden downpour.

Footwear varies between sandals or slip-on beach shoes which are useful for beach landings, though more sturdy walking shoes or boots are needed for hikes.

Sunscreen, insect repellent containing deet and cream to treat insect bites or stings are essential, along with UV sunglasses and a hat.

If snorkelling trips are on the agenda (particularly in areas such as the Galapagos), it's worth taking an underwater camera to record marine encounters.



Top Sales Tips for Selling an Expedition Cruise



1. Know your polar bears from your penguins

Gen up on the Arctic (the so-called Kingdom of the Polar Bear) and Antarctica (where penguins roost in colonies thousands strong). These icy wildernesses may seem similar, but in many respects are a world apart.



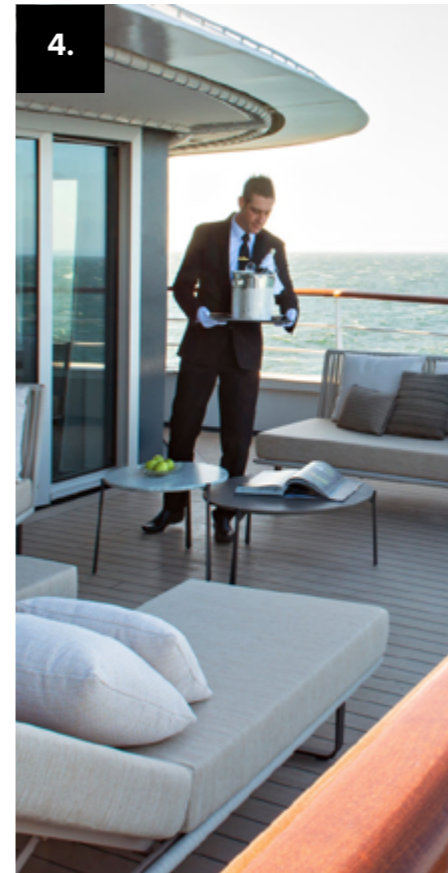
2. Hot water v cold water

Expedition cruises aren't all about Polar regions. There are tropical adventurous spots in Asia, Latin America and the Kimberley region of Australia, while the growth of this sector means the choice of destinations is increasing.



3. Soft adventure or hardcore expedition

Some companies offer a gentle taste of exploration that just scratches the surface, while others pack in a full programme of immersive activities that requires a decent degree of fitness and stamina too.



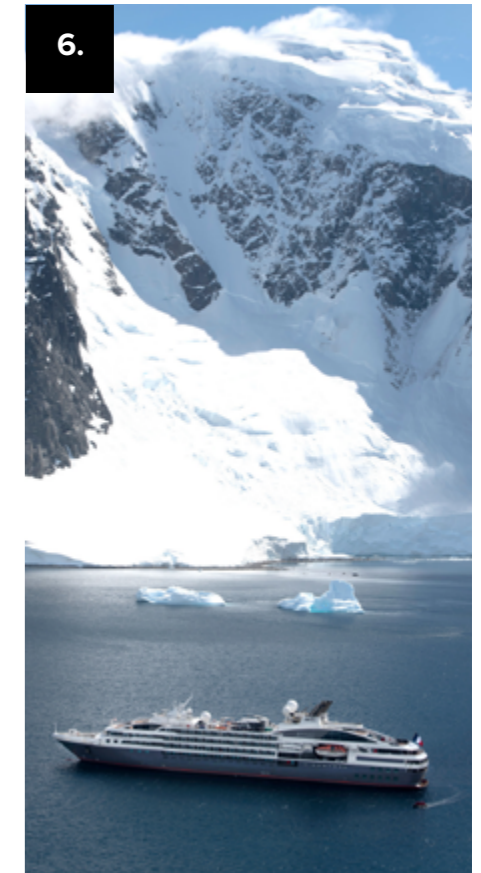
4. No-frills to opulent luxury

No-nonsense Russian ice-breakers are big on hardcore adventure, but come with fewer home-comforts, while a new generation of plush expedition ships or "yachts" combine exploration with gourmet dining, spas and butler service.



5. Potential expedition cruisers

These could be adventurers who enjoy going off the beaten track; who may never have cruised before and would never countenance big-ship sailings; and solo travellers who will enjoy the camaraderie of small-ship explorations.



6. Small is beautiful

Passengers are in their hundreds rather than thousands. The smaller the ship, the more personalised the experience and the more chances guests get to explore, especially in Antarctica where the maximum ship size permitted for landings is 500 pax and only 100 pax are allowed ashore at any one time.

Top Sales Tips for Selling an Expedition Cruise



7. Paying the price

Expedition cruises carry a high price tag, but if cost is an issue, search for lines that include more in the overall price, and research departure dates at the start or end of the season when rates are generally lower.



8. Value for money

Highlight the bucket-list factor of expeditionary cruises and paint an evocative picture of the mind-blowing experiences guests will enjoy, sharing your own first-hand knowledge where applicable. Breaking down the total cost into a daily rate also helps to underline the value.



9. Timing is everything

Research the best seasons for expeditionary destinations; the type of wildlife and natural wonders that guests can expect to see and when; local festivals and celebrations, plus weather conditions.



10. A taste of adventure

Examine the range and scope of activities offered in different destinations; how active or innovative they are; how much of a flavour they give of the region. Look at how this relates to each client's wish-list.



11. Tapping into a theme

Some designated sailings have visiting experts on topics such as photography, wildlife or history that will help guests to get the most out of each destination with lectures and visits ashore.



12. Plant the seeds

Suggest an expeditionary sailing as a special holiday. Perhaps to mark a birthday, anniversary or as a family treat with children/grandchildren to somewhere like the Galapagos Islands.

Destination Guides





Antarctica

South Georgia

Falkland Islands

Sub-Antarctic Islands

Cold Water

What You Will See...

Antarctica:

- Whales, seabirds and thousands of penguins
- Snow-covered landscapes that remain the most untamed, majestic and unspoilt on the planet.
- The picturesque Lemaire Channel
- Bergs the size of houses in Iceberg Alley (the Antarctic Sound)

South Georgia:

- Dramatic Alpine-style landscape
- King penguins, fur and elephant seals, whales

Falkland Islands:

- King penguin and macaroni penguin rookeries
- Battlefields from the conflict between the UK and Argentina in 1982

Sub-Antarctic Islands:

- Rugged landscapes of mountains, forests, fjords and rocky cliffs
- Rookeries of thousands of penguins including king, yellow-eyed and crested varieties
- Ten of the world's albatross species
- Sea lions, fur and southern elephant seals, whales

Useful tip: Only ships with 500 passengers or fewer can make landings in Antarctica. Choose a vessel with 200 guests or fewer for the opportunity (weather permitting) to visit two landing sites a day.

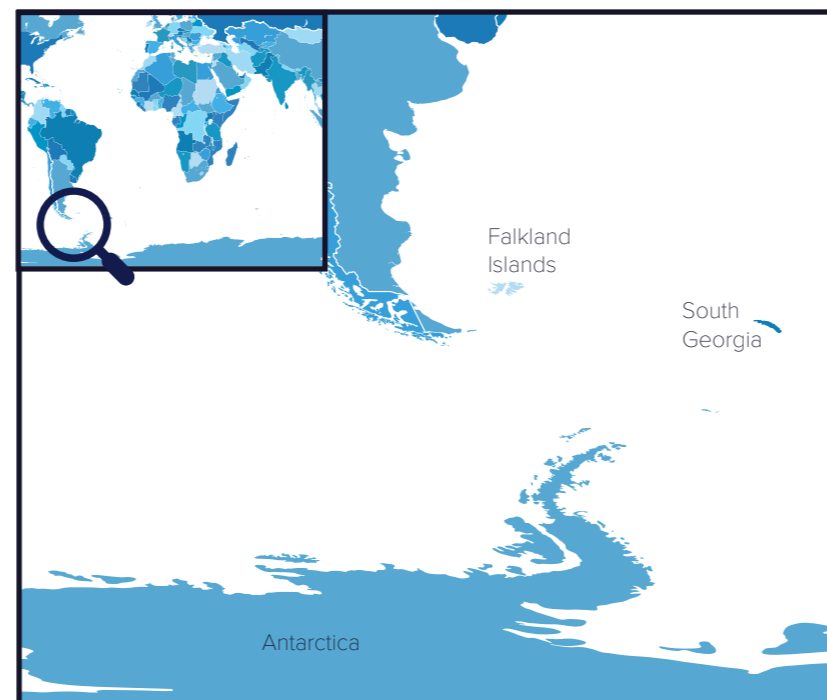
Key embarkation ports:

- **Antarctica, South Georgia and the Falkland Islands:** Ushuaia in Argentina and Punta Arenas in Chile
- **Sub-Antarctic Islands:** Invercargill, Christchurch, Dunedin in New Zealand and Hobart in Tasmania

Best time to go:

Cruise ships are in the Southern Ocean between November and March. This is the Antarctic summer but chilly with average temperatures from minus 10C to plus 10C. December and January are best for whale, iceberg and penguin chick sightings. Shorter cruises focus on the Antarctic Peninsula, longer ones add South Georgia and the Falkland Islands.

The Sub-Antarctic Islands, a collection of five island groups that lie to the south and east of New Zealand in the Southern Ocean, may also be slotted into long Antarctica voyages or as the focus of shorter sailings, with most departing between November and February.





Cold Water

Svalbard (Spitsbergen)

What You Will See...

Svalbard:

- Arctic wildlife including polar bears, whales, walrus, Arctic foxes and seals
- Kittiwakes, guillemots, puffins and many other seabirds
- Deep fjords and vast glaciers

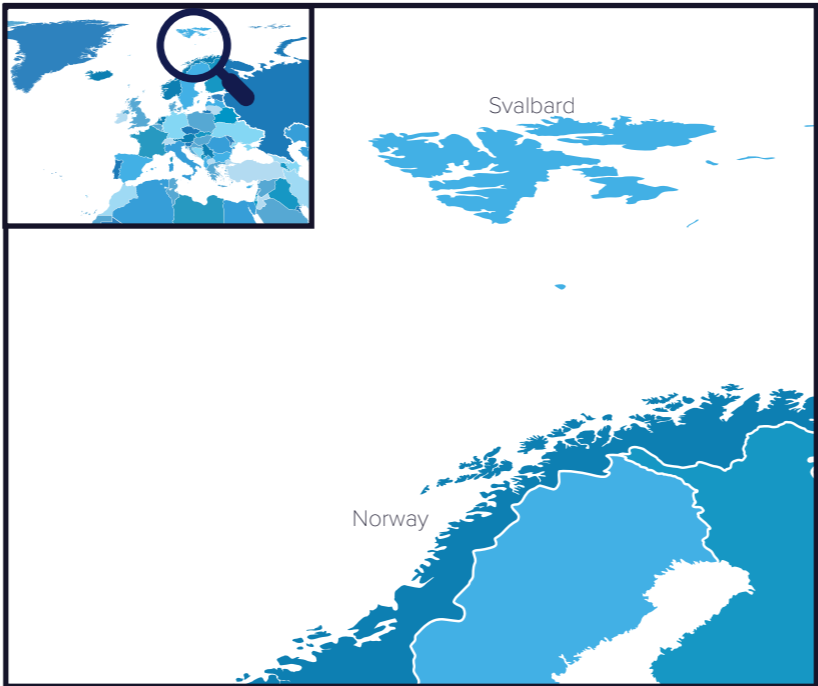
Useful tip: Be flexible. The itinerary will depend on weather and ice conditions, while trips ashore are possible only once the expedition team is sure an area is free of polar bears.



Key embarkation port:
 Longyearbyen in Spitsbergen; Tromsø in Norway

Best time to go:
 Cruise ships are in Svalbard between June and August, very occasionally nudging into September.

Early in the season is good for polar bear spotting as they are out on the ice looking for immature seal pups.



Cold Water



Greenland

What You Will See...

Greenland:

- Inuit villages and west coast settlements including Ilulissat, Sisimiut, Qeqertarsuaq and Uummannaq and the capital Nuuk
- Scoresbysund – the world’s largest fjord, plus icebergs, glaciers and active volcanoes
- Potential polar bear sightings plus excellent whale-watching with narwhals, beluga and blue whales
- Eqip Sermia Glacier

Useful tip: Budget for a tour to the mouth of the Ilulissat icefjord, where massive bergs jostle to get into the open sea.



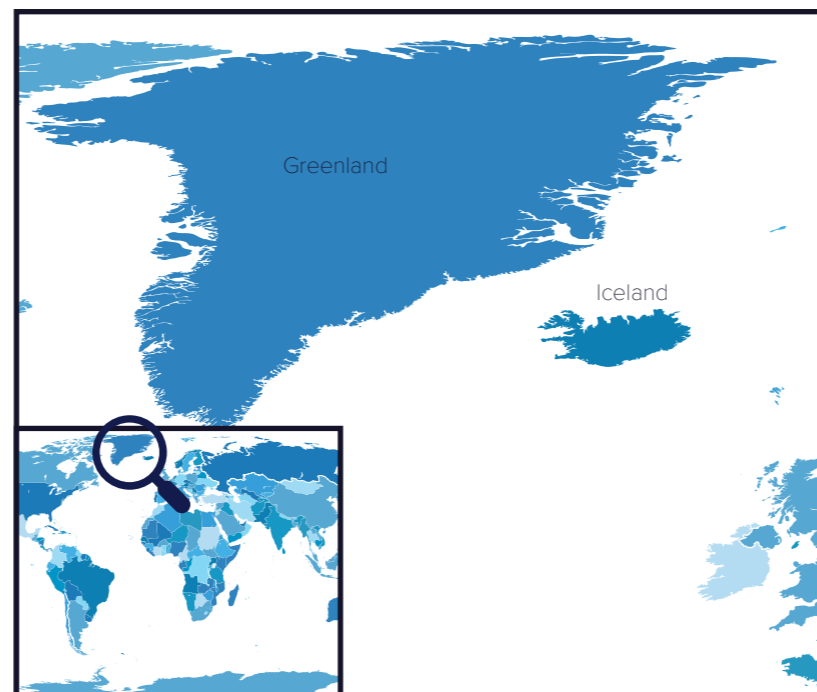
Key embarkation port:

Nuuk or Kangerlussuaq in Greenland; Reykjavik and Akureyri in Iceland; Longyearbyen in Spitsbergen; Tromso in Norway

Best time to go:

Expedition ships are in Greenland between May and October, when the ice has receded, the days are long and the wildlife has come alive after the icy winter.

The peak time is from mid-July to mid-August, though September is also noted as one of the best months to sail here as the Northern Lights can be spotted.





Cold Water

Northwest Passage

What You Will See...

Northwest Passage

- Beechey Island, the last known stop of the failed 1845 Franklin Expedition to find the Northwest Passage
- Inuit settlements
- Narrow Peel Sound
- Arctic wildlife including whales, seals, polar bears and musk ox
- Deep fjords, icebergs and glaciers

Useful tip: If time is at a premium, certain cruise lines offer shortened "passage" crossings between Greenland and the Canadian Arctic.



Key embarkation port:
Kangerlussuaq in Greenland; Reykjavik in Iceland; Nome in Alaska

Best time to go:
August. The excitement of August is that the receding ice allows the arrival of a small number of expedition ships, which provide the best means to explore the Northwest Passage on a cruise.





Cold Water

Northeast Passage

What You Will See...

Northeast Passage

- One of the most isolated parts of the world, dotted with small communities and uninhabited islands and bays
- Polar bears, whales, walrus, reindeer and thousands of sea birds
- Highlights including bird-watching in Kangerlussuaq and hikes across the tundra in Cape Florens

Useful tip: The combination of limited capacity and huge demand means you need to be quick to secure a cabin on these sailings.



Key embarkation port:
 Nome in Alaska; Tromsø in Norway; Anadyr in Russia

Best time to go:
 Cruises are in late August and early September. Only three ships will make this journey, across the top of Russia, in the next two years.



Russian Far East

Cold Water



What You Will See...

Russian Far East

- Volcanoes and brown bears on Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula, a remote spot that spends most of the year covered in snow
- Seals, sea lions and seabirds including kittiwakes, puffins, cormorants and tufted ducks
- A former Soviet gulag on Atlasova Island where female political prisoners were held
- The Aleutian Island of Attu, site of the only World War 2 land battle fought on US soil

Useful tip: Expect the unexpected. Planned itineraries can change due to weather conditions and local bureaucracy.



Otaru, Japan

Key embarkation port:

Otaru in Japan; Seward and Nome in Alaska; Petropavlovsk in Russia

Best time to go:

Cruises operate between June and September.





Cold Water

Iceland / Faroe Islands

What You Will See...

Iceland / Faroe Islands

- Spectacular scenery and rich marine life that includes seals, dolphins, humpback, minke and blue whales, plus numerous other species
- Iceland's "Golden Circle" trio of natural wonders comprising the Gullfoss Waterfalls, Thingvellir National Park and Geysir Geothermal Area
- Iceland's capital, Reykjavik, and the Blue Lagoon geothermal springs
- Faroe Islands' capital and former Viking trading hub Torshavn

Useful tip: For cruises starting or ending in Reykjavik, add on a few days in the city to allow time to explore it properly and visit the Blue Lagoon.



Key embarkation port:
 Reykjavik in Iceland; Bergen and Tromsø in Norway; Longyearbyen in Spitsbergen

Best time to go:
 The cruise season runs from May to September, though June and July are popular for Midnight Sun sailings when there is 24-hour daylight.





Alaska & Pacific Northwest

Cold Water

What You Will See...

Alaska & Pacific Northwest

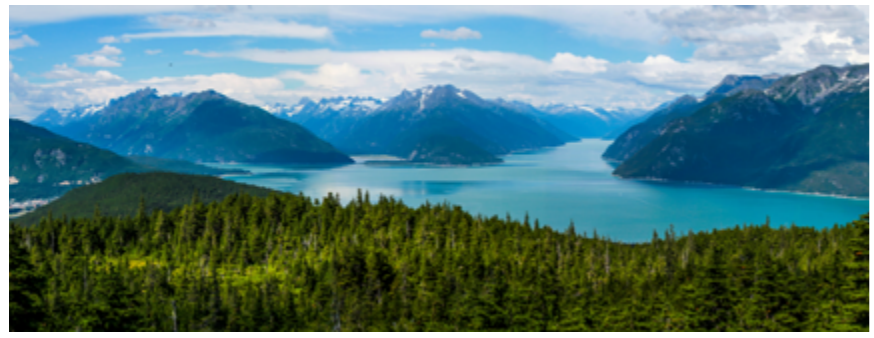
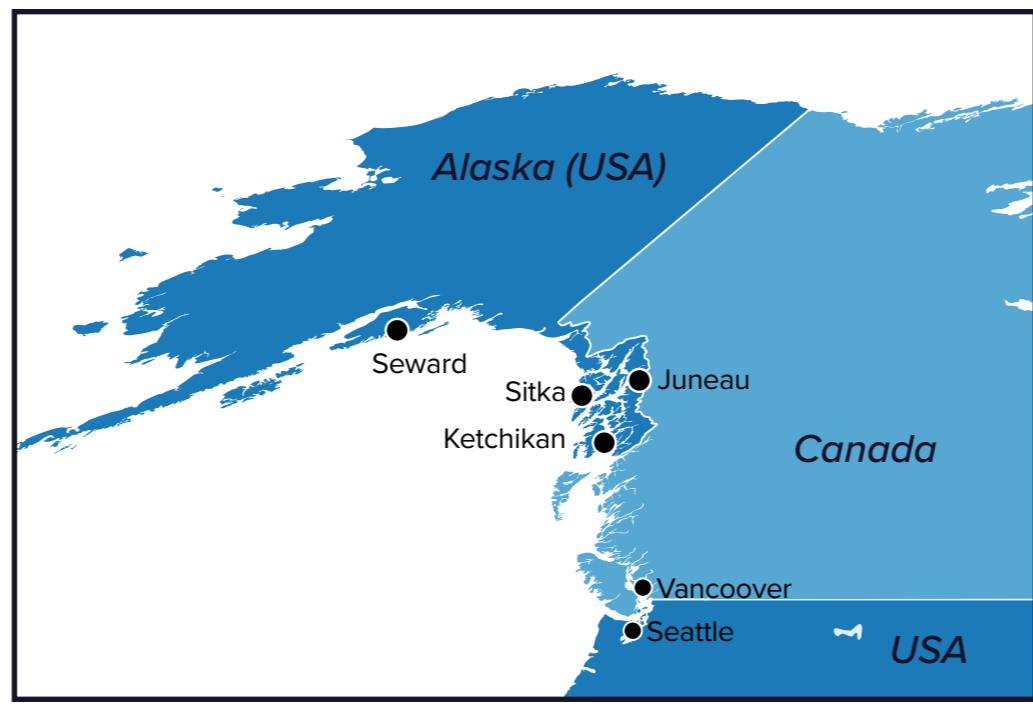
- Breathtaking mountain ranges, vast forests, glaciers and thousands of miles of pristine wilderness
- Numerous species of bears and whales, plus dolphins, colonies of sea lions, spawning salmon, eagles and caribou
- Historic “Gold Rush” era towns, fishing villages, Russian heritage and indigenous communities
- Inside Passage, Glacier Bay, Tracy Arm Fjord, San Juan Islands, Aleutian Islands and Haida Gwaii Islands

Useful tip: Be prepared for unpredictable conditions as Alaska is famous for “liquid sunshine”, especially in the summer months when wildlife is more prevalent, so be sure to pack layers and waterproofs.



Key embarkation port:
Vancouver in Canada; Seattle, Seward, Ketchikan, Sitka and Juneau in USA

Best time to go:
The season runs from May to September.



Warm Water



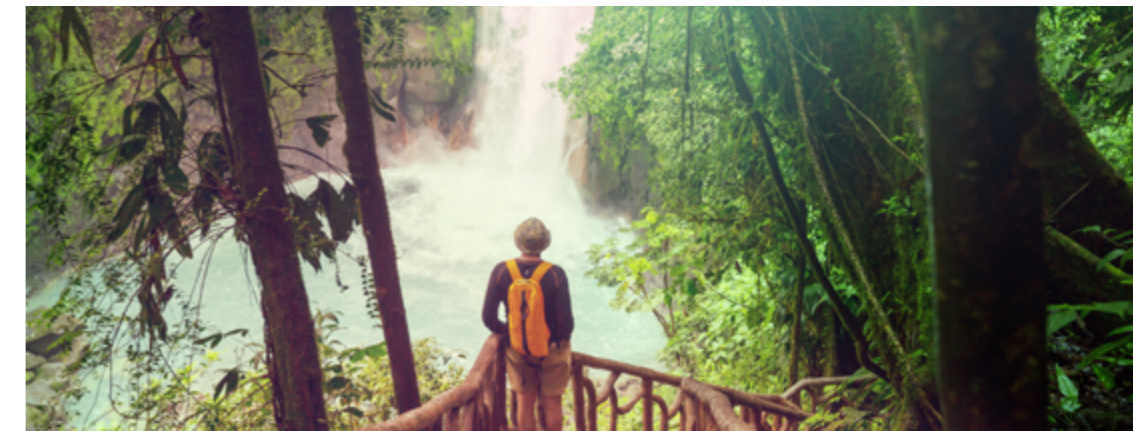
Americas (Sea of Cortez, Costa Rica, Panama)

What You Will See...

Americas

- Outstanding marine life in the Sea of Cortez, off Mexico's Baja Peninsula. Dubbed the "aquarium of the world" there are hundreds of species of whales, turtles, manta rays, sea lions and dolphins
- Panama Canal – the 50-mile waterway connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans
- Costa Rica's lush jungle, hot springs, cloud forest and abundant tropical wildlife
- Pacific and Caribbean coasts of Costa Rica and Panama, though expeditionary sailings largely explore the Pacific side.

Useful tip: While cruises focus on the varied marine life (an underwater camera is a must), hiking boots are needed for treks across the rocky, mountainous terrain.



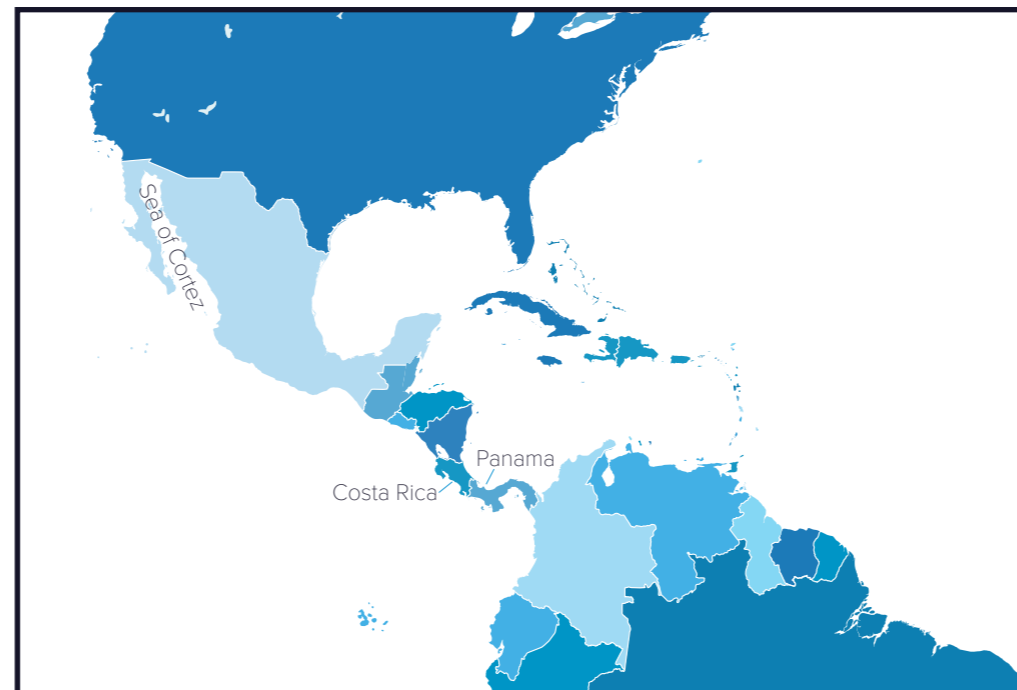
Key embarkation ports

- **Sea of Cortez:** San Carlos, La Paz, Cabo San Lucas in Baja California, Mexico; Los Angeles and San Diego in USA; Colon in Panama
- **Costa Rica/Panama:** San Jose in Costa Rica; Panama City in Panama

Best time to go:

November to April is peak season for the Sea of Cortez as this is when whales arrive to breed.

For Costa Rica and Panama, December to April are the most favourable months.



Warm Water



Asia (Indonesia, Borneo, Papua New Guinea)

What You Will See...

Asia

- Indonesia's Spice Islands, Komodo National Park and the Raja Ampat Islands
- Uninhabited islands, smoking volcanoes, bountiful flora and fauna, spectacular diving, indigenous tribes
- Rich wildlife with Komodo dragons in Indonesia, orang-utans in Borneo, whale sharks in Papua New Guinea
- World War 2 history of Papua New Guinea, particularly the Battle of Milne Bay, and history of Dutch traders and Portuguese explorers in Indonesia

Useful tip: Indonesia's most popular archipelagos are spread across a large area, so choose which one you want to visit as they cannot be combined in one sailing.

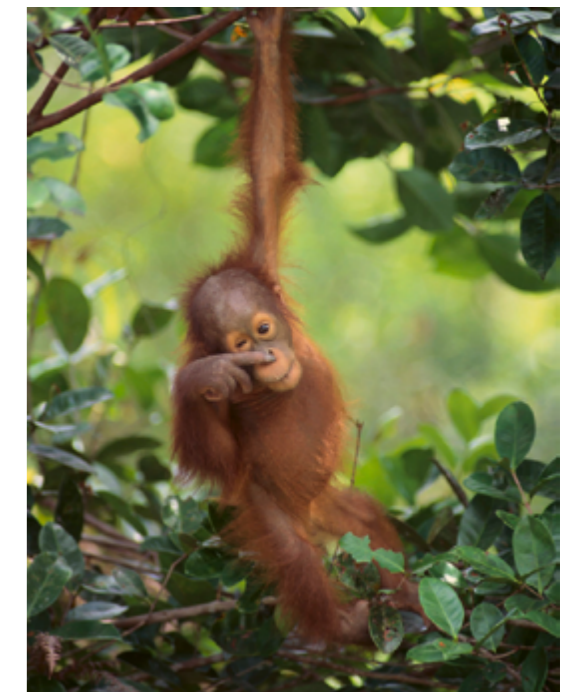
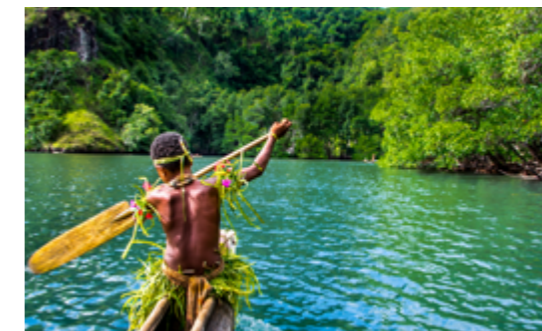


Key embarkation ports:

Bali, Biak, Ambon, Sorong in Indonesia; Darwin, Cairns in Australia; Honiara in the Solomon Islands; Colombo, Sri Lanka; Singapore

Best time to go:

Warm, tropical conditions mean cruises can operate year-round, though the dry season from April to October is generally regarded as the best time to visit this part of Asia.





Kimberley, Australia

Warm Water

What You Will See...

Kimberley, Australia

- The vast Montgomery Reef rising up out of the sea as the huge tide recedes
- The powerful Horizontal Falls In Talbot Bay
- Ancient Wandjina and Gwion Gwion rock art
- The twin King George River and 80-metre-high Falls
- Salties (crocodiles), sea turtles, kingfishers, egrets, sea eagles, whales.
- The beehive-like Bungle Bungle Mountain range

Useful tip: Grab a few nights to relax and swim at one of Broome's Cable Beach resorts; once on the cruise, swimming is a no-no due to the salties.



Key embarkation ports:

Broome and Darwin

Best time to go:

Cruises operate between April and October. The waterfalls are most spectacular in April and May, but there might be some rainy days. June, July and August are most popular for warm days and blue skies.





Warm Water

Galápagos

What You Will See...

Galápagos

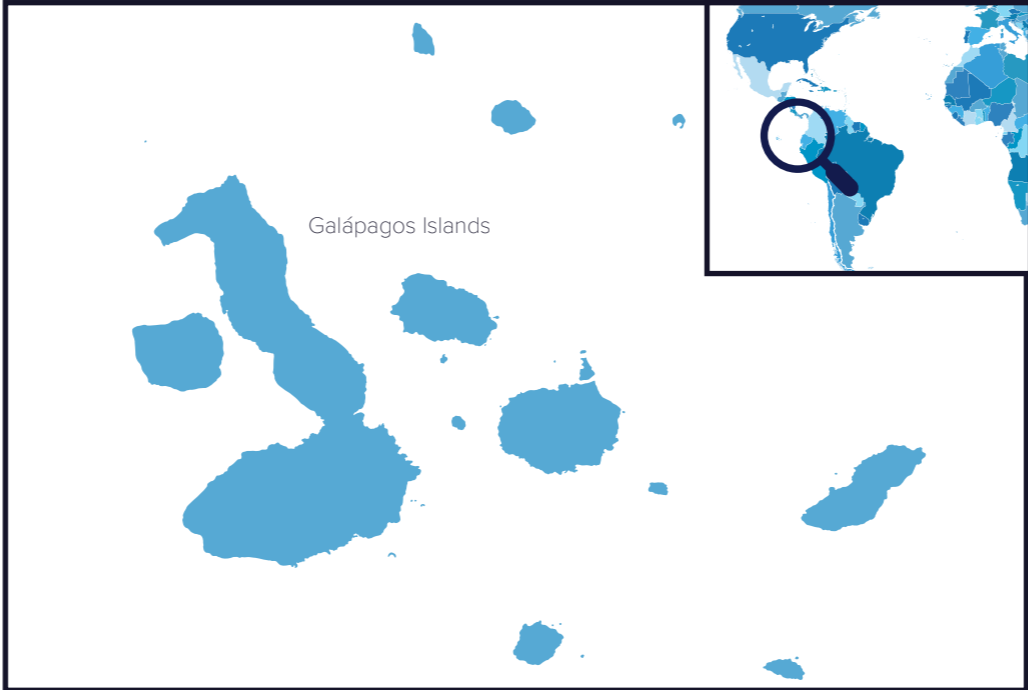
- An abundance of animals with no fear of humans, that have adapted to the different island environments in which they live. Favourites include: giant tortoises, marine iguanas, sea lions and lava lizards that communicate with each other via a sequence of press-ups
- A "post office" on Floreana Island, where passengers can leave postcards and pick up ones that others have left to be delivered
- The Charles Darwin Research Centre in Puerto Ayora, the capital, on Santa Cruz Island

Useful tip: Pack wet shoes as landings are made by inflatable Zodiacs and often require stepping into the sea or on to rocks.



Key embarkation ports:
Baltra and San Cristobal, Ecuador

Best time to go:
Cruises operate year-round. January to May is hot and maybe a bit rainy. June to December is dry and a bit cooler.





Top Tips

- Be flexible. Expedition itineraries change with the weather, ice and landing conditions
- Wildlife sightings are likely but never guaranteed
- Wrap up and get out on deck as much as possible to be sure of the best views and wildlife sightings
- Dress in layers for the polar regions; wear light cotton clothes for warmer climates. A good camera and binoculars are musts
- Tread lightly in Antarctica, where just stepping on the fragile vegetation will leave scars for years
- Keep a distance from wildlife and never try to touch animals, no matter how tame they seem
- Passengers need to be fairly nimble to climb in and out of the inflatable Zodiacs used for landings in remote spots



Expedition Calendar

	Antarctica/South Georgia/Falkland Islands/Sub-Antarctic Islands	Americas: Sea of Cortez	Americas: Costa Rica & Panama	Asia	Galápagos	Arctic: Svalbard	Russian Far East	Iceland	Alaska & Pacific Northwest	Greenland	Kimberley, Australia	Northwest Passage	Northeast Passage
April		Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water						Cold Water		
May				Warm Water	Warm Water			Cold Water	Cold Water	Cold Water	Cold Water		
June				Warm Water	Warm Water	Cold Water	Cold Water	PEAK	Cold Water	Cold Water	PEAK	Cold Water	
July				DRYER	Warm Water	Cold Water	Cold Water	PEAK	Cold Water	PEAK	PEAK	Cold Water	
August				Warm Water	Warm Water	Cold Water	Cold Water		Cold Water	PEAK	Cold Water	Cold Water	
September				Warm Water	Warm Water	Cold Water	Cold Water		Cold Water	Cold Water	Cold Water	Cold Water	
October				Warm Water	Warm Water					Cold Water	Cold Water		
November	Cold Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water								
December	Cold Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water								
January	Cold Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water								
February	Cold Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water								
March	Cold Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water	Warm Water								

DRYER

COOLER & DRYER

PEAK

PEAK

PEAK

Warm Water Cold Water



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