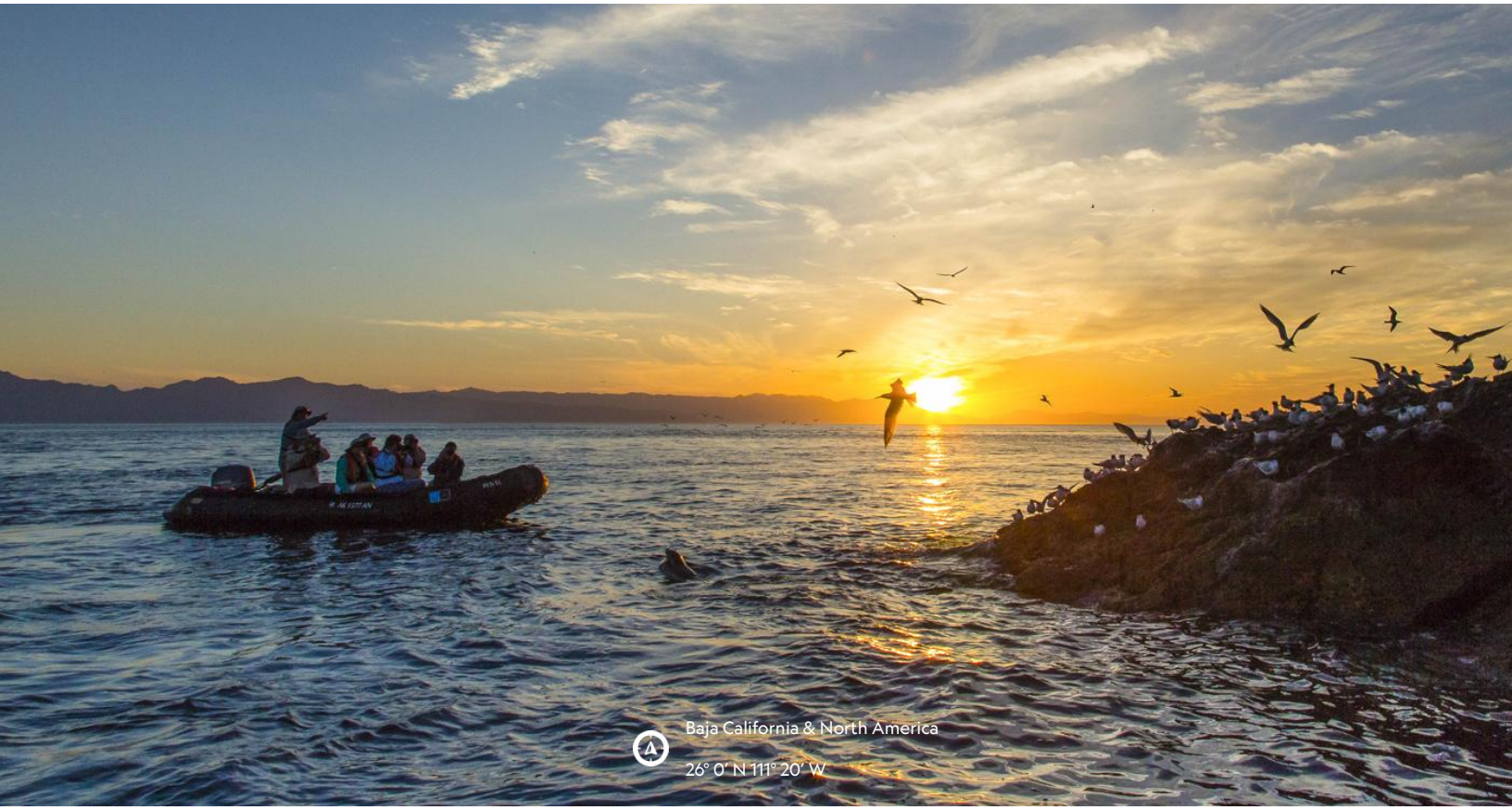


Baja California: A Living Sea and Desert Isles

Explore the wild waters and desert islands of the Gulf of California, a UNESCO World Heritage site dubbed "the world's aquarium" by Jacques Cousteau. Here, nutrient-rich seas meet cactus-studded shores, creating extraordinary biodiversity—from massive pods of dolphins and leaping mobula rays to curious sea lions, vast seabird colonies and remarkable endemic species.

From
£3,817 / per person
Does not include flights

DATES
Jan, Mar, Apr, Nov and Dec

DURATION
8 Days

SHIPS
National Geographic Venture
National Geographic Quest

STARTS AT
Loreto, Mexico

→

ENDS AT
Loreto, Mexico

Highlights

- Explore the nutrient-rich Gulf of California in depth, searching for massive pods of dolphins, leaping mobula rays, whales, seabirds and other marine life
- Navigate sculpted desert shores by kayak and Zodiac, hike uninhabited islands and snorkel among colorful fish
- Conditions permitting, snorkel beside curious sea lions in the protected waters surrounding Los Islotes
- Discover endemic plants and wildlife found nowhere else, from giant cardón and creeping devil cacti to black jackrabbits and chuckwallas

Isla San Esteban
Isla San Marcos
Bahía Loreto
Marine Park
Isla San Francisco
Los Islotes
30°
110°
mapbox
© Mapbox, © OpenStreetMap

Day by day

DAY 1

Home / Loreto, Mexico / Embark Ship

Arrive in Loreto, a picturesque gulfside town dotted with Spanish colonial architecture. Transfer to the ship and set sail at sunset. Opt to arrive a day early on the One-Night Loreto Pre-Voyage Extension to explore historic Loreto and visit San Javier Mission in the Sierra de la Giganta.

Arrival Time: Arrive before 2:30 p.m. local time.
Arrival City: Loreto, Mexico

Meals included: dinner

DAYS 2-7

Exploring the Gulf of California

Writer and longtime Lindblad naturalist Stewart Aitchison refers to this sliver of the Pacific Ocean as the Vermillion Sea, and notes it is "a romantic name that conjures up visions of fiery sunsets, leaping dolphins and deserted beaches." It is all this and so much more. Your route is designed with flexibility in mind to maximize opportunities for wildlife sightings. It most likely includes the islands and activities listed below, although the order may vary.

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

Isla San Marcos: At Isla San Marcos there is a beautiful shoreline for swimming, snorkeling and kayaking. In the afternoon you'll again be in rich waters near the mouth of Bahía Concepción. Be on the lookout for pods of dolphins—common and bottlenose dolphins are the most frequently encountered species. With luck these beautiful animals may follow the ship, riding the bow wave—sometimes twisting and turning, and sometimes leaping from the water.

Isla San José: One of the larger islands in the Gulf of California, San José offers several landing possibilities depending on conditions and the whim of the moment. Photograph the ochre cliffs of the island's eastern shore, hike an enchanted, cactus-laden arroyo or visit the abandoned salt works to the west. Search for the endemic Xantus's hummingbird on this desert island.

Bahía Loreto Marine Park: Explore the waters south of Isla Carmen, where bottlenose and common dolphins are frequently encountered. In the afternoon, visit one of the islands of Bahía Loreto Marine Park, with ample time for kayaking, snorkeling, stand-up paddleboarding and possibly hiking. In the evening, enjoy a beach barbecue under the desert sky.

Espíritu Santo Archipelago National Park / Los Islotes: At Los Islotes, don flippers, a mask and snorkel (which are provided) and swim with curious sea lions. Look skyward for yellow-footed gulls, brown pelicans and blue-footed boobies. In the afternoon, explore more of this stunning national park by swimming, kayaking or hiking. Keep an eye out for the endemic Black jackrabbit, and learn about the importance of mangrove habitats.

Cabo Pulmo National Park: Snorkel among vibrant coral reefs in Cabo Pulmo National Park, home to

the only coral reef system in the Gulf of California and one of the region's great marine conservation success stories. Explore with local guides and learn how community-led protections have helped safeguard the park's extraordinary abundance of marine life.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

DAY 8

Loreto / Disembark Ship / Home

After breakfast, disembark the ship and transfer to the Loreto airport for flights home.

Departure Time: Depart after 1:00 p.m. local time.
Departure City: Loreto, Mexico

Meals included: breakfast

Expedition

Loreto, Mexico → Loreto, Mexico

2026 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *National Geographic Venture*

04 Dec	12 Dec	19 Dec	26 Dec	

2027 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *National Geographic Venture*

02 Jan				
25 Nov				
02 Dec	09 Dec	16 Dec	23 Dec	30 Dec

2028 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *National Geographic Quest*

10 Nov	17 Nov	24 Nov		
01 Dec	08 Dec	15 Dec	22 Dec	29 Dec

Aboard *National Geographic Venture*

08 Jan				
29 Mar				
05 Apr				

2029 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *National Geographic Quest*

05 Jan				

National Geographic Venture

GUESTS	CABINS
100	50

The *National Geographic Venture* is a state-of-the-art expedition ship ideal for discovering remote locations in domestic waters.

Following the build of *National Geographic Quest* at Nichols Brothers shipyard, her sister ship, *National Geographic Venture*, floated into the bay on Whidbey Island, Washington, becoming the 4th ship in the Lindblad fleet built at this storied shipyard. In the 1970s, Nichols Brothers built the twin ships *National Geographic Sea Bird* and *National Geographic Sea Lion*, which continue to sail the waters of the west coast of North America and Central America.

National Geographic Venture, like much of the wildlife she follows, is migratory. She follows the seasons from Alaska, along the coast of British Columbia, up the Columbia and Snake Rivers and along the Baja California coast. In each region, her design innovations were informed by 50+ years of expedition expertise to ensure extraordinary discoveries. *National Geographic Venture*'s shallow draft enables her to provide intimate 'insider' experiences of the charismatic regions we explore.

Like her sister ship *National Geographic Quest*, *National Geographic Venture* has dual boarding platforms. Enabling our team to load two Zodiacs at once means guests get off ship quickly to take advantage of wildlife sightings and maximize exploring time. Modern and clean-lined, with large expanses of glass to keep you connected to the extraordinary views, *National Geographic Venture* enables you to see, do and experience the best of her geographies.

Cabin Categories

Category 1

MAIN DECK **#301-306**

Cabins feature two single beds that can convert to a Queen, a writing desk, two nightstands and two portholes, full length mirror, and reading lights.

Category 2

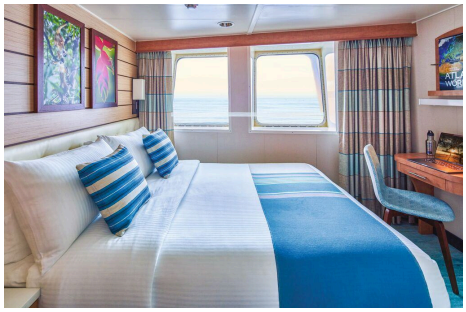
MAIN DECK **#307-315**

Cabins feature two single beds that can convert to a Queen, a writing desk, two nightstands and two portholes, full length mirror, and reading lights.

Category 3

UPPER DECK **#201-206**

Cabins feature two single beds that can convert to a Queen, a writing desk, two nightstands, a large view window, full-length mirror, and reading lights.



Category 4

UPPER DECK **#207-229**

Cabins feature two single beds that can convert to a Queen, a writing desk, closet, two nightstands, full-length mirror, reading lights, sliding glass door, and a small, private balcony.

Note:

Solo occupancy cabins are available in Categories 1 and 2 only. Third person rates are available in Category 5 cabins at one half the double occupancy rate.

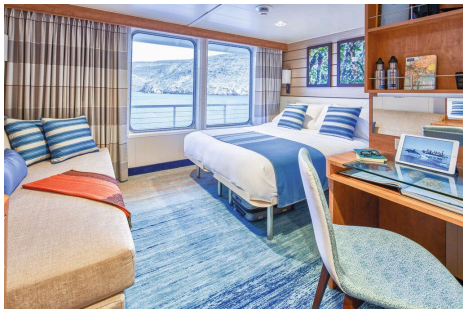
Connecting Cabins via internal doorway access:

Main Deck: #312-314, #311-315, #306-307;
Upper Deck: #224-226, #225-227

Category 5

OBSERVATION DECK **#101-108 (SUITE)**

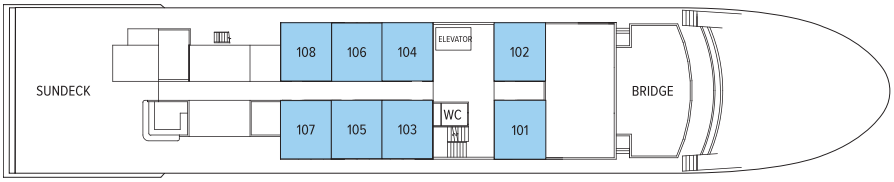
Cabins feature two single beds that can convert to a Queen, large view windows, closet, two nightstands, full-length mirror, reading lights, a suite-sized expanded bathroom, writing desk, ample storage space, and a convertible sofa bed to accommodate a third person.



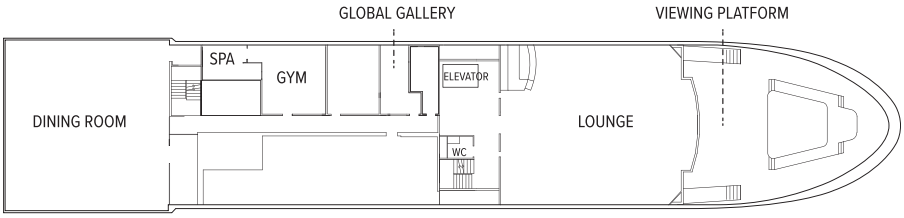
Deck Plans

Observation Deck

- Category 5



Lounge Deck

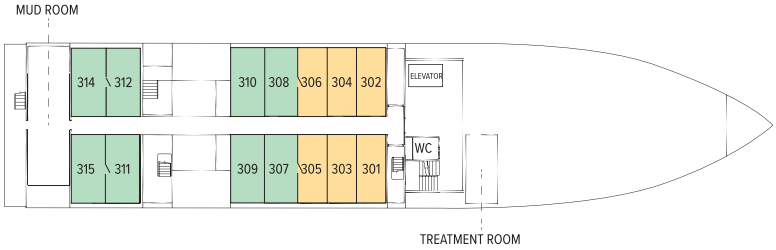


Upper Deck

- Category 3
- Category 4

Main Deck

- Category 1
- Category 2



Ship Amenities

Public Areas

Reception; main dining area; global gallery; fitness center; lounge with full-service bar and state-of-the-art presentation facilities; observation deck; mudroom with lockers for expedition gear; partially-covered furnished sundeck; plus open access to the Bridge, the Captain, officers and on-duty wildlife spotters.

Meals

Meals are served in the dining room at a single seating with unassigned tables for an informal atmosphere and easy mingling. Menus feature sustainable choices, local where possible.

Cabins

50 outside cabins. All cabins face outside with windows, private bathroom, and climate controls. Cabins are equipped with Wi-Fi, phone, multiple electrical and USB outlets, and phones. Luxury linens and pillows. Botanically inspired shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, and lotion are all available in cabin bathrooms, as well as an Expedition Essential Kit. Hair dryers, complimentary insulated water bottles and a National Geographic Atlas are also available in each cabin.

Expedition Equipment

A fleet of 8 Zodiacs, 24 kayaks, paddleboards; an ROV, hydrophone, splash-cam, underwater video camera, video microscope; snorkeling gear and wet suits for all guests (where applicable).

Special Features

Internet access. Elevator. The design of the outside decks—with the perfect wildlife viewing platform. The proximity of the Lounge to the deck gives you instant access to spontaneous sightings. Have your camera ready!

Wellness

A fitness center with elliptical, treadmill, weights and resistance bands; LEXspa treatment room, staffed by wellness specialists.

Self-Disinfecting Ships

ACT Clean CoatTM is a light-activated, self-disinfecting cleaning process that continuously breaks down viruses, bacteria, mold, and airborne allergens across all ship surfaces. Not only does this create a cleaner, healthier shipboard environment for guests and crew alike, but this non-toxic, chemical-free system also saves more than one million gallons of water each year in our cleaning procedures, and reduces our carbon footprint as well as the amount of plastic and waste in our supply chain.

National Geographic Quest

GUESTS	CABINS
100	50

National Geographic Quest, built in 2017, is designed for sailing into fast-moving channels and shallow coves in pan-American waters.

When she rolled out of Nichols Brothers shipyard and into the bay on Whidbey Island, the 100 guest National Geographic Quest became the third ship in the Lindblad fleet built at this storied Pacific Northwest shipyard. In the 1970s, Nichols Brothers built the twin ships *National Geographic Sea Bird* and *National Geographic Sea Lion*, which continue to sail the waters of the west coast of North America and Central America.

National Geographic Quest was purpose-built to explore the fast-moving channels and narrow straits of Alaska, along the coast of Costa Rica and into the gray whale nursery lagoons of Baja, her design and engineering informed by our nearly 40 years of experience in these regions. Her twin boarding platforms, for example, were suggested by a veteran staffer. Enabling our team to load two Zodiacs at once means guests get off the ship quickly to take advantage of wildlife sightings and maximize exploring time.

National Geographic Quest's shallow draft allows her captain to navigate the same inner reaches and provide intimate "insider" experiences in these charismatic regions. Modern, clean-lined, with large expanses of glass to keep you connected to the extraordinary views, *National Geographic Quest* enables you to see, do and experience the best of her geographies.

Cabin Categories

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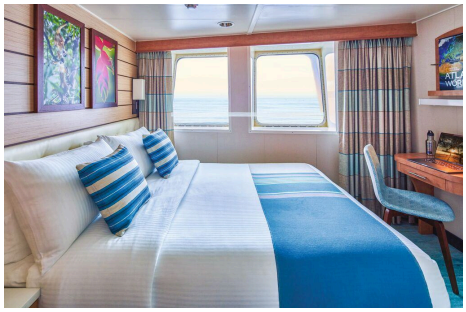

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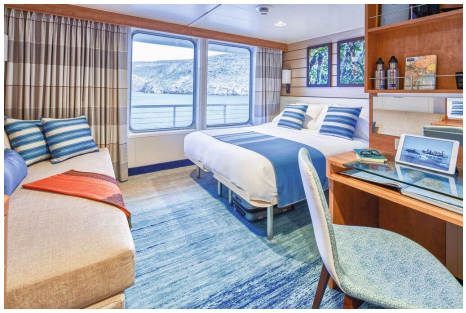
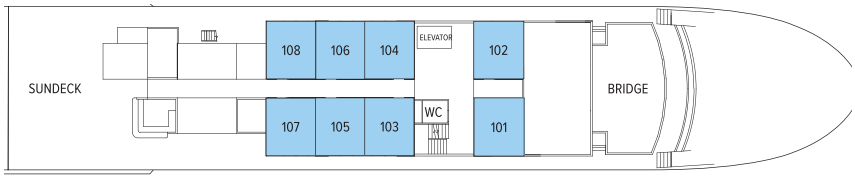


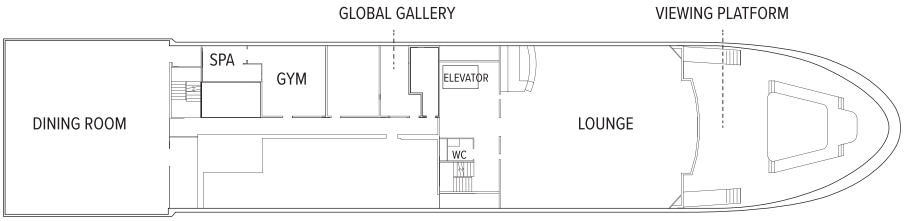
Deck Plans

Observation Deck

- Category 5



Lounge Deck

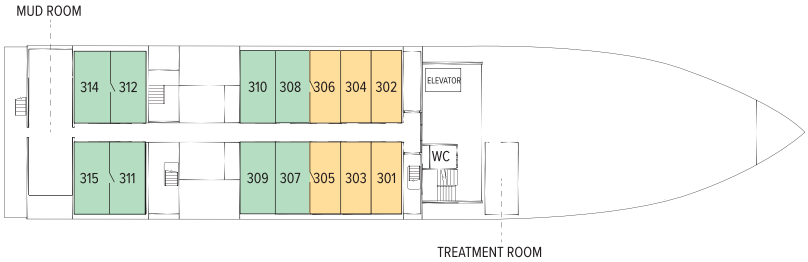


Upper Deck

- Category 3
- Category 4

Main Deck

- Category 1
- Category 2



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Special Features

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Special Offers

SUITE EXCLUSIVES

Spacious living areas and incredible views immerse you in the beauty of your marine surroundings. Our new Suite Exclusives package helps make your voyage all the more memorable. **Learn more**

CELEBRATE LIFE'S MILESTONES

Celebrate a milestone with a group of eight or more and enjoy a special amenity package including: 5% savings on voyage fares, custom group photo, US$150 shipboard credit for the group, and other special gifts. Milestone celebration to be communicated at time of booking.

COMBINING OFFERS

Certain offers may be combinable, up to two savings opportunities, except where noted otherwise. For example, travel with a group of 8 or more on back-to-back expeditions, and take advantage of both savings.

10% OFF BACK-TO-BACK VOYAGES

Save 10% on consecutive departures, applicable on voyage fares only and not valid on extensions or airfare. Valid for new bookings only, subject to availability, and may not be combined with other offers. Call for details.

SAVE 5% TRAVELING AS A GROUP

Save 5% when traveling as a group of 8 or more people. Valid for new bookings only on select departures, subject to availability, not applicable on extensions, and may not be combined with other offers. Call for details.

INCLUDED IN PRICE

All accommodations aboard ship or in hotels per itinerary; all meals as indicated in the itinerary, both aboard and onshore; beer, wine, cocktails, liquors and spirits aboard the ship (except certain premium brands which are available for purchase); hors d'oeuvres, 24-hour access to snacks, premium coffees and teas, non-alcoholic beverages, and filtered water; excursions and airport transfers to and from recommended flights, as indicated in the itinerary; exploration tools curated to destination, such as Zodiacs, stand-up paddleboards, kayaks, snorkeling equipment (including wetsuits, masks, and fins); guidance and company of our leading expedition staff; assistance by the Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic certified photo instructor; access to the OM System Photo Gear Locker; presentations by expedition staff and expert guest speakers; complimentary reusable water bottle; onboard physician consultations; morning stretch classes and 24-hour access to exercise equipment; 24-hour access to lounges, observation decks, library, and other shared spaces; basic WiFi, park and site entrance fees, special access permits, and port taxes. Unused services or items included in our programs are non-refundable.

NOT INCLUDED IN PRICE

Airfare (except flights* when indicated as included); pre- and post-expedition extensions; additional hotel nights (except when indicated as included); crew gratuities; private transfers; laundry, spa treatments, travel protection plans; and passport, visa, and immigration fees.

*Recommended flight costs include flight(s) that take place during the date range of your trip to transport travelers from one itinerary destination to another. This cost also includes ground transportation, luggage transfer, and airport assistance. If you prefer to arrange your own flights privately, have alternate means of transport, or wish to modify at a later time, please contact an Expedition Specialist at 1.833.400.0831

Additional costs associated with medical services outside onboard physician consultation.

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN

We strongly recommend our guests to take advantage of our Travel Protection Plan. This plan offers comprehensive coverage to protect you from cancellation fees, costs incurred due to trip delays/interruption, damage or loss of baggage, medical assistance, and evacuation during your travels. Our Travel Protection Plan is available for U.S. residents only, and may be purchased any time prior to final payment due date, Travel Protection premiums are non- refundable once plan is purchased. Learn more about our Travel Protection "Plus" Plan: https://www.expeditions.com/terms-conditions/travel-protection-plan/

CANCELLATION POLICY

Review our cancellation policy: https://www.expeditions.com/cancellation-policy/