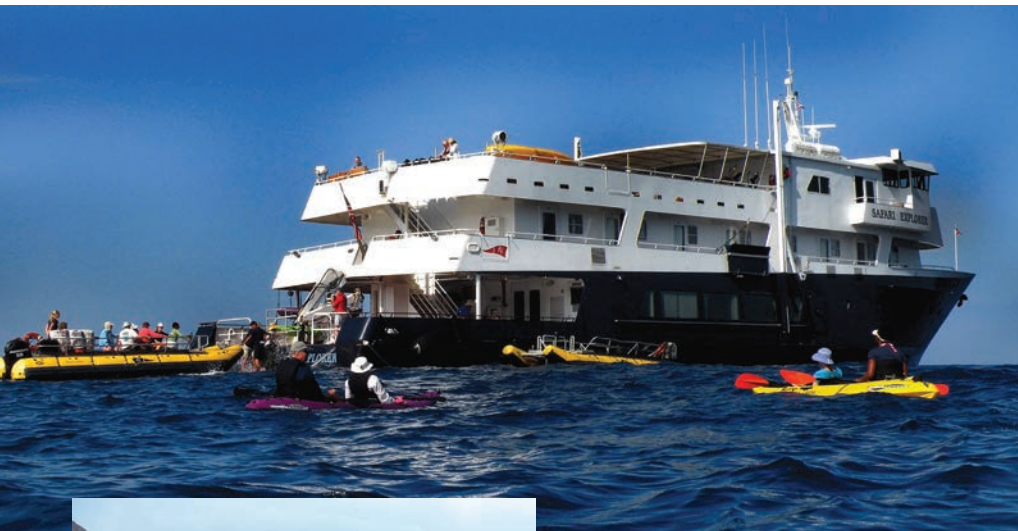


Discover "Aloha" with an Adventure Expedition Cruise



We dug our paddles into the waves carving a turn that put us on course toward the small ship anchored in a cove, our home while exploring Hawaii for the week.

This was not the first time I was enchanted by Hawaii's stunning beauty. Previous trips were all land-based, where I looked out onto the water from the beach enjoying ocean sunsets before walking back to a rental car or hotel room. However, this was the first time I discovered the islands' secret treasures by cruising the waters aboard a small expedition ship. Hesitant at first, I balked at the idea of being stuck on a cruise ship without the freedom to explore the many outdoor options each island offers. But the word "expedition" gave a clue. These ships are built for adventure and exploring remote places where the mega-ships can't go because of their size and because the greater number of passengers could possibly overwhelm sensitive areas and smaller communities.

The water slapped against the kayak while my partner and I paddled the playful waves. We bounced along riding the small rolls laughing and chatting as intermittent puffs of ocean spray wet our faces, providing natural air-conditioning in the hot Hawaiian sun. Our craft, along with a pod of five other kayaks bobbed near the blackened volcanic coastline of the Big Island, where we were treated to close-up views of lava tubes and rocky caves.

Our expedition leader gathered us close, then regaled us with stories of ancient Hawaii, enlightening us on the volcanic history of the islands and explaining how "wai," the Hawaiian word for water, was so instrumental to the people. Was there a better classroom for this enrichment session? Our guide was the Pied Piper—we would have followed him anywhere. After a few hours, he signaled to our group that it was time to get back.

Some of these locations are only accessible by sea, which was the case with most of the water excursions I enjoyed while aboard the *Safari Explorer*, a 36-passenger luxury yacht on the "Hawaii's Traditional Shores" American Safari Cruise. ASC ships feature full-beam swim steps that allow for easy access into the water, so guests can launch kayaks and hop on standup paddleboards directly from the ship. Usually, it is just you and your shipmates enjoying a secluded cove for kayaking, standup paddleboarding, or snorkeling that day.

ASC is the only small-ship expedition company offering adventure cruises in Hawaii. You can take day trips or cruise the islands on a mega-liner, but the ability to travel for a full week, point-to-point by ocean waterways, is a rare thing.



Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Hotel Options

Hand-picked for their selection of outdoor adventure possibilities to get your body moving before or after the cruise

The Fairmont Orchid, Hawaii Luxury Resort Hotel and Spa

A sampling: Pilates, ocean aerobics, seaside yoga, petroglyph hikes, surf lessons, standup paddleboard, snorkeling, canoeing, or kayaking.

WAM Favorite: Floating Yoga "Flo-Yo" is practiced on a standup paddleboard on calm water at a cove, just steps from the hotel's secluded beach. 808-885-2000; fairmont.com/orchid



The Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua, Maui Luxury Resort Hotel and Spa

The highly acclaimed Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ambassadors of the Environment program is offered at The Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua, and is available for guests and the public to enjoy. This program's origins grew in part from Jean-Michel's father, Jacques Cousteau, who said, "People protect what they love." Like father, like son. Jean-Michel realized later: "We can't protect what we don't yet understand." Program excursions enlighten guests by demonstrating how the city of the sea connects to the larger global systems. The tours aim to help people connect with nature.

A sampling: snorkel/under-water photography, tide pool exploration, rainforest hike, whale watch excursions. ritzcarlton.com/kapalua



One of the most special offerings is a visit to Moloka'i and into the breathtakingly beautiful Halawa Valley, to hike with locals. On the Big Island near Kona, another eye-popping experience offered is a chance to snorkel at night with giant manta rays gracefully gliding below you in search of their evening meal. Don't worry, mantas munch on plankton, not people. And they don't bite or have stingers.

The adventures are not always discovered off the ship though. One especially balmy evening while anchored at sea, with a full canopy of stars overhead, a female Hawaiian voyager discussed celestial navigation and spun bedtime tales of Hawaiian mythology. Another night, hula



dancers performed special dances, explaining their meaning and traditions.

The crew aboard the *Safari Explorer* does a great job in communicating and sharing the attributes of such a special place like Hawaii. For those who

have actively traveled much of the islands of Hawaii, cruising aboard the *Safari Explorer* will enhance your repertoire of experiences tremendously. And, for those who have never been, taking a small-ship adventure cruise is a great way to start. ■

An expedition cruise is for you if you like...

- Small boats sized for small groups.
- No big shows, no big productions, no casinos.
- A support staff of expedition leaders, naturalists, guest lecturers.
- Classes with titles like "Fish identification sessions before and after snorkeling."
- Small ships that might change course due to weather or wildlife (whale & dolphin) sightings.
- Group activities divided into ability levels, like moderate and advanced hikes onshore or varied-length kayaking outings.
- A skiff "wet landing" (meaning you jump over the side and into the water then wade to shore).
- You like nature and being outdoors more than you like shopping.
- Dressing up to you means changing out of your swimsuit and into jeans and a blouse.
- Preparing for an excursion means you put on sunscreen instead of makeup.

Thinking of taking a small-ship expedition cruise?

We recommend:

American Safari Cruises/InnerSea Discoveries.

Destinations: Alaska, Columbia & Snake Rivers, Hawaiian Islands, Mexico's Sea of Cortés, Washington & British Columbia. innerseadiscoveries.com

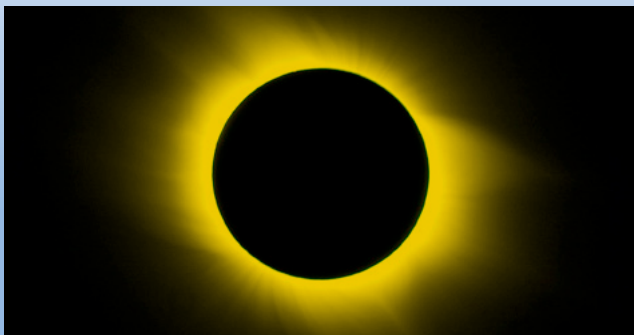
EcoVentura Cruises. **Destination:** The Galapagos Islands. ecoventura.com

International Expeditions. **Destinations:** Amazon River, Nile River. ietravel.com

Orion Expedition Cruises. **Destinations:** Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Antarctica, Borneo. orionexpeditions.com

Adventuresmith Explorations Expedition Cruises and Wilderness Adventures. **Destinations:** North America, South America, Central America, Polar Regions, Europe, Asia-Pacific. adventuresmithexplorations.com

Solar Eclipse Marathon/Half Marathon



November 8 - 19, 2012

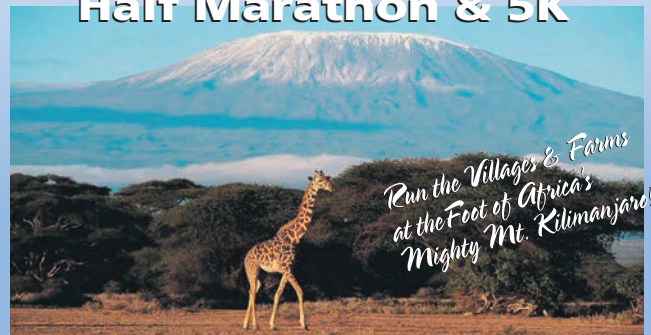
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Sydney 3 Night Accommodations in the Rocks Area with views of the Sydney Bridge & Opera House • 1st Class Hotels, Daily Breakfast, Special Meals as Noted in Itinerary, Awards Dinner, Event Entry Fee.

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Optional 6-day trekking extension to the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro

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