





WHERE *to* CRUISE IN 2020

Thanks to a new lineup of small, well-appointed ships, adventurous travelers can now cruise to more places that aren't easy to reach by air or land—and get there in style. Find the ship for you, then check out six remote destinations best visited by sea.

the SHIPS



■ National Geographic Endurance

Debuting in April 2020, the hardest ship ever from expedition-cruise pioneer Lindblad will have the highest ice-class rating of any passenger vessel in the industry, allowing it to venture deep into polar regions—including Eastern

Greenland and Norway's Lofoten Islands—in comfort. A glass-walled yoga studio lets passengers practice *Natarajasana* while keeping an eye out for polar bears.

■ **Celebrity Flora**
With sprawling suites, cabanas for deck-top glamping, and



menus designed by Michelin-starred chef Cornelius Gallagher, this 100-passenger yacht from Celebrity Cruises is based in the Galápagos year-round. A dynamic positioning system allows the ship to float near landing sites without dropping anchor, which means it won't disturb the underwater habitat (a first in the Galápagos).

■ Scenic Eclipse

Upscale eateries, a full-service spa, and butler-served mega-suites, plus a helicopter and a submarine for exploring, make this one of the ultimate expedition ships for over-the-top luxury. After a long day of high-class adventure cruising, travelers can head to the Lobby Lounge whiskey bar and choose from more than 100 top-shelf pours.

■ Silver Origin

Also scheduled to sail year-round in the Galápagos, the all-suite, 100-passenger Silversea vessel will bring luxury to a new level. Butlers with every cabin, gourmet cuisine, and the highest crew-to-passenger ratio of any Galápagos ship will await passengers when the *Silver Origin* debuts in July.

■ Ponant Explorer ships

Ponant reinvented underwater exploration in 2018, outfitting its Explorer fleet with signature Blue Eye lounges. Located below the waterline, these multisensory

rooms offer a glimpse of passing sea creatures through giant windows, and photo-luminescent organisms are projected onto surrounding screens. A sub-aquatic soundtrack is pumped in through hydrophones. Two more Blue Eye-equipped Explorer ships debut in 2020.

■ Ultramarine

Launching in late 2020 for polar trips and aimed at serious adventure types, Quark Expeditions' 199-passenger vessel has sea kayaks, gear for snow camping, and two helicopters to deliver passengers to hiking and skiing spots. Outdoor enthusiasts will appreciate optional activities, including cross-country skiing and mountaineering.

■ Crystal Endeavor

White-glove service meets high adventure on Crystal Cruises' first expedition ship. The 200-passenger, all-suite vessel will have helicopters and a seven-person submersible, plus high tea in the Palm Court lounge, cigars and cognac at the Connoisseur Club, and a restaurant created by chef Nobu Matsuhisa. —GENE SLOAN



the DESTINATIONS

■ Greenland, Nunavut, and the Northwest Passage

Ice melt caused by global warming has made Arctic Greenland more accessible to cruise ships and also alerted travelers to the need to visit while they can. Ships take travelers to see whales, giant icebergs, and the remote coastal communities of the Ilulissat Icefjord region. Longer cruises extend to the Canadian Arctic, where passengers might glimpse polar bears and learn about Inuit culture in the Nunavut territory. An even longer journey takes passengers from the Atlantic to the Pacific via the 900-mile

Northwest Passage, which is now frequently ice free. *Most major cruise lines and many smaller lines offer itineraries that include Greenland.*

■ Far Eastern Russia and the Aleutian Islands

A handful of cruises that depart from Japan or Alaska take travelers to the little-known but wildly beautiful landscapes of Russia's Kuril Islands and Kamchatka Peninsula and to Alaska's Aleutian Islands, situated where the Pacific meets the Bering Sea. Wildlife watchers may spot puffins, brown bears, fur seals, Steller's sea

eagles, sea lions, and several types of whales against a backdrop of forests, soaring mountains still being shaped by active volcanoes, and meadows brimming with wildflowers. Cruises to the Aleutians often stop at Dutch Harbor, a fishing port featured in Discovery TV's *Deadliest Catch*. Other itineraries, such as Crystal Cruises' Russian Far East Maiden Expedition on the *Crystal Endeavor*, delve deeper into Russian territory. *Other cruise lines that sail the area include Hurtigruten, Lindblad Expeditions, and Silversea.*

■ Klaipėda, Lithuania

This old Prussian port city has been popping up on Baltic Sea itineraries, many of which also include stops in Scandinavia and St. Petersburg, Russia. The big attraction is across a narrow channel from Klaipėda: On the Curonian Spit, a 61-mile-long

peninsula shared by Russia and Lithuania, shifting sand dunes stand more than 150 feet high, and elk and wild boar stalk dense pine forests. On the Hill of Witches, a path through the forest passes wooden sculptures based on Lithuanian folklore and pagan traditions. Back in Klaipėda, the Švyturys Brewery serves award-winning lager. *Cruise lines that stop at Klaipėda include Holland America, Regent Seven Seas, and Windstar.*



Lithuania

Greenland





Macquarie Island

the DESTINATIONS

■ The Indonesian Archipelago

Expedition ships are taking passengers beyond Indonesia's popular stops in Bali and Komodo National Park. In the Maluku chain, travelers explore ruins from the days of the spice trade; in the Raja Ampat Islands they snorkel and scuba dive with whale sharks near some of the world's most biodiverse coral reefs. Trips combine cultural experiences, such as being greeted by the residents of West Papua in their dugout canoes, with time in the water and on secluded stretches of sand. *Cruise lines that sail the area include Aqua Expeditions and Coral Expeditions.*

■ The Subantarctic Islands of New Zealand and Australia

There are dozens of islands on the way from New Zealand or Australia to Antarctica that are accessible only by water and uninhabited save for a few researchers. The Australian and New Zealand governments operate the islands as nature

reserves and allow a limited number of visitors. Penguins, fur seals, and sea lions rule. During spring and summer, the Snares Islands of New Zealand become breeding grounds for a hundred colonies of crested Snares penguins as well as 2 million shearwater birds. Australia's Macquarie Island, home to sizable royal and king penguin populations, is one of the few places where rocks from

the Earth's mantle are viewable above sea level. Cruise ships also visit New Zealand's Auckland Islands and Campbell Island. *Cruise lines that sail the islands include Ponant and Silversea.*

■ The Seychelles

A cruise lets passengers explore more of the 115-island archipelago in the Indian Ocean than they would by staying at one of the African nation's posh resorts.

Ships visit remote communities as well as uninhabited areas for bird-watching, lounging on pristine white sand, and snorkeling among coral reefs. Travelers may also go to the Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve, which protects a 48-acre palm forest that dates to prehistoric times, and the Aldabra Atoll, home to the world's largest colony of wild giant tortoises. *Cruise lines that sail the Seychelles include Azamara and Crystal Cruises.* —FRAN GOLDEN

The Seychelles

