

Duke ALUMNI TRAVELS

# WILD BAJA ESCAPE

## THE WHALES OF MAGDALENA BAY

MARCH 7-12, 2020

*ABOARD NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SEA LION*



[dukealumnitravels.com](http://dukealumnitravels.com)



#### BOCA DE SOLEDAD

"Grand Central" for California gray whales. Together with the savvy local fishermen, we will observe numerous cow-calf pairs.

#### ISLA MAGDALENA

The beaches along the Pacific coast go on for miles and miles, unmarred by any infrastructure. You can hike or run for a mile or ten—it's up to you.

#### SAND DOLLAR BEACH

At this point, the distance across the dunes from the bay to the Pacific is only a few hundred yards. Search for treasures on the aptly named sand dollar beach. These dunes are a great place for sunrise yoga or sunset cocktails.

#### LA ENTRADA

The entrance to Magdalena Bay is dramatic and a great place to view whales from the ship. It's also a place where large pods of dolphins can often be seen.

#### LORETO

The historic, charming town where our expedition begins and ends. Home to Baja's first mission, a lovely museum, and vibrant streets. A perfect place to experience the culture of the region.

## BAJA CALIFORNIA

SAN CARLOS

MAGDALENA BAY



25 MILES

*Pacific Ocean*



## DEAR DUKE ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

Magdalena Bay is well known as one of three lagoons on Baja California's Pacific coast that becomes home to over 20,000 California gray whales each winter. This extraordinary inland water system is absolutely the best place to be to view this remarkable gathering. Mid-January until early April is the season for the whales, and our voyage there aboard the *National Geographic Sea Lion* occurs at peak time for possible encounters with active, curious calves and mothers.

Although never guaranteed, the phenomenon known as "friendly whales" was first documented in 1972. These encounters have increased over the years, becoming quite common. Our visit is timed to provide us with the greatest chance to observe and, if we are fortunate, interact with these overwintering cetaceans.

Explorations of Magdalena Bay traditionally have been a part of longer voyages around Baja California. But now, for the first time, you have an opportunity to focus on this remarkable place, and with a nimble and comfortable expedition ship as your base camp.

Magdalena Bay is so much more than the gray whales. There are untouched beaches that go on for miles, full of shells and sand dollars; sand dunes which are spectacular to explore by day and, if you wish, by night when all kinds of critters emerge; intricate, intimate mangrove channels to explore by expedition landing craft or kayak; and seabirds—large flocks of grebes, pelicans, and frigatebirds. As an added bonus for those shy about being in open ocean, rest assured, you will always be in protected waters.

Magdalena Bay is a jewel of contained natural wonder. I hope this brochure gives you a good sense for what's in store—very close by but as exotic as it gets. As the Duke group grows in size, a Duke representative will be engaged to join the voyage and enhance this already rich educational experience. **To reserve your space, please return the reservation form or call (919) 684-2988.**

Forever Duke,



Beth Ray-Schroeder '83

Director, Duke Alumni Travels, Duke Alumni Association

*Cover photo: An exciting encounter with a gray whale. © Ralph Lee Hopkins.  
Ship's registry: United States*



# WHALES, BEACHES, YOGA, HIKES, AND SERENITY



Treasures from sand dollar beach.

A region as diverse as Baja California means you can choose from a variety of options. If getting up close with the local wildlife is your main priority, the *National Geographic Sea Lion* is the perfect ship for establishing a floating base camp in Magdalena Bay. The ship is ideally sized to enter and anchor in the protected waters of the bay, providing you a unique opportunity to be among the gray whale

mothers and calves drawn to the calm nursery lagoons. Curious, playful, and friendly, they often approach the small expedition landing craft we deploy for close-up views. You can stand on deck and watch diving pelicans and ospreys, and marvel at the scores of leaping dolphins.

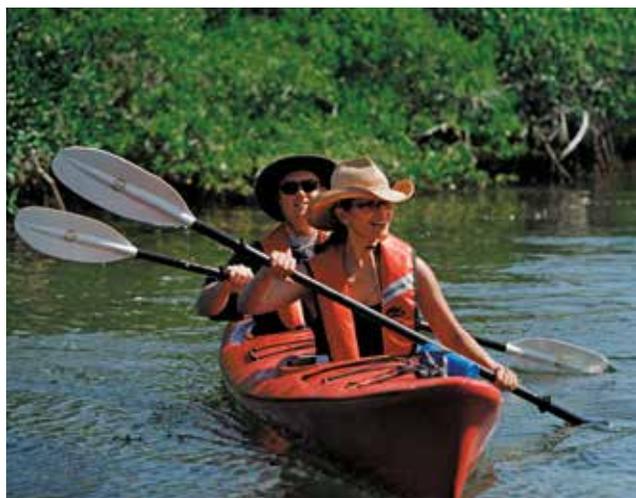
There are also sand dunes to wander, stretches of beach to bike, mangroves to kayak, and many species of birds to spot and add to your life list. For those who want to have a healthy amount of physical activity, you can go paddleboarding on the aquamarine water, stretch out with yoga on deck or on the beach, join a naturalist on a trail walk, or fat-tire bike down seemingly endless remote beaches. Just want to relax and enjoy some delicious food on board ship or a barbecue on shore? The choices are yours to make.

*"The baby is pushing us!  
The baby is literally pushing the boat right now!"*

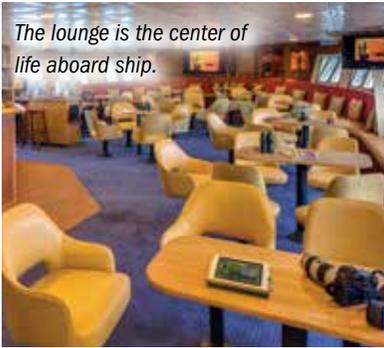
*"When you think about a California gray whale mother, bringing her calf and literally putting it on her body and lifting it up to be touched, to be rubbed along the side of the boat. We aren't just watching whales, we are interacting with them. And they are just as curious about us as we are with them. What in the world is going on? We took these whales to the brink of extinction twice in the last two centuries. These are very sentient beings, these are very intelligent animals, they're mammals after all. They have very large, well-developed brains. Why in the world would these whales now approach the very shaped boats that were hunting them in times past? It's hard to say if they've forgiven or forgotten? ...There are a lot of theories about it, but no one really knows."*

— MICHAEL NOLAN, LINDBLAD-NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CERTIFIED PHOTO INSTRUCTOR

*Opposite page (clockwise from top): Red-billed tropicbird; gray whale; sand dunes at sunrise, Magdalena Island; curious gray whale interaction with guests; yoga on the beach.*



# THE PERFECT PLATFORM TO DISCOVER WHALES AND MORE



*The lounge is the center of life aboard ship.*

The *National Geographic Sea Lion* is purpose-built to explore regions like Baja California. A nimble design allows us to venture into shallow lagoons where whales give birth and to islands unmarred by tourist infrastructure. Since this is an expedition, not a cruise, flexibility is a hallmark. The itinerary draws on the extensive experience in the region of the expedition team and

captain to maximize viewing opportunities. If a pod of dolphins approaches us, the ship will change course to take advantage of the encounter. You'll discover that life aboard is warm and welcoming, with everyone participating equally in the adventure. Evening recaps in the lounge are a chance to swap stories of the day's surprises with family and new friends over hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. And the ship's smartly furnished cabins, lounge, bar, and dining room ensure that it is more than comfortable as our base for exploration.

## TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY FOR EXPLORATION

### **EXPEDITION LANDING CRAFT:**

Experience up-close encounters with whales and dolphins, and land on otherwise inaccessible desert islands.

**KAYAKS:** Paddle along peaceful coastlines in one of the twelve double or eight single kayaks for a water-level look at stunning scenery.

**PADDLEBOARDS:** Get up and out on the fleet of stand-up paddleboards for a personal adventure.

**FAT-TIRE BIKES:** Cover more ground by roaming the seemingly endless beaches on one of the fat-tire bikes.

**UNDERWATER VIDEO CAMERA:** View live footage of the vibrant marine life, shot by an undersea specialist, in the comfort of the lounge.

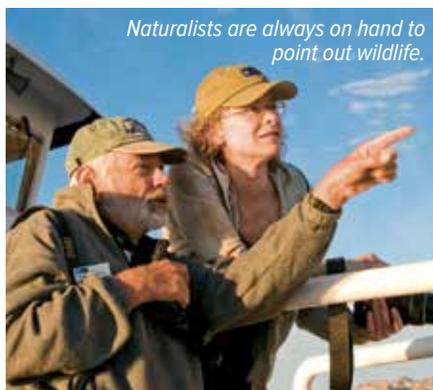
**HYDROPHONE:** Listen to the awe-inspiring sounds of whales and dolphins in the surrounding waters.

**VIDEO MICROSCOPE:** Examine the intricacies of seldom-seen marine life.

*Opposite page (clockwise from top): Enjoy opportunities to paddleboard; kayakers have an up-close experience with wildness; Baja is a paradise for birders; a sunset expedition landing craft cruise, Isla Magdalena.*



# DOING WHATEVER IT TAKES TO MAKE YOUR EXPERIENCE EXTRAORDINARY



*Naturalists are always on hand to point out wildlife.*

Whether it means staying up until the wee hours to scan for rare sightings, taking advantage of an opportunity to view a pod of leaping dolphins, or holding an impromptu stargazing on a beach at night, the expedition team is dedicated to revealing Baja and making sure your experience is exceptional.

Benefit from the personalities and knowledge of an expedition leader, naturalists, an undersea specialist, a Lindblad-National Geographic certified photo instructor, and a video chronicler, plus a wellness specialist to enhance the revitalizing effects of life in Baja.

## IN A LAND WITH PERFECT LIGHT, BENEFIT FROM EXPEDITION PHOTOGRAPHY

Make the most of unrivaled photo opportunities of Baja California's wild islands, whales, dolphins, seabirds, and peerless light with the Expedition Photography program. Your voyage features a Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic certified photo instructor who offers assistance, instructions, and shooting tips in the field. His or her expertise will inspire you and help you improve your skills—no matter your current ability or interest level—and ensure you return home with incredible photos.

*Opposite page (clockwise from top): Photo instructor helps you take the perfect shot; beach BBQ ashore; playing among Baja's vast sand dunes; smartphone photographer.*

# WILD BAJA ESCAPE: THE WHALES OF MAGDALENA BAY

6 DAYS/5 NIGHTS—ABOARD NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SEA LION



*The gray whales winter in Bahía Magdalena before migrating north to the Bering and Chukchi Seas.*

Spend several extraordinary days in the company of majestic gray whales in Mexico's Bahía Magdalena, one of the best places in the world to witness interactions between gray whale mothers and their curious calves. On this compact trip, we'll navigate the length of the bay aboard a nimble expedition ship, and set out by expedition landing craft for thrilling, up-close encounters. Kayak through mangrove forests and hike desert islands, watch pelicans and ospreys soar overhead, and soak up the sun on some of the Pacific's most pristine beaches. Beachcomb endless crescents of sand, studded with thousands of sand dollars. And revel in the vastness and serenity as you view the many species of birds in this world-renowned region.

## **DAY 1:** LORETO/SAN CARLOS/EMBARK

Arrive in Loreto and transfer to the port town of San Carlos, where we embark the *National Geographic Sea Lion*. Tonight, unwind under a star-studded sky as we anchor in calm waters off the coast of Isla Santa Margarita. (D)

## **DAY 2:** BAHÍA ALMEJAS/ REHUSA CHANNEL/ISLA MAGDALENA

Awake anchored in Bahía Almejas, the southernmost part of the Bay. We'll make a special stop to view a large frigatebird colony on Isla Santa Margarita before heading out on our first whale watching trip of the voyage. The whales in Bahía Almejas tend to be very active, seemingly oblivious to our presence, so settle

in for some great experiences. As we explore this bay and the Rehusa Channel via local panga, the expedition team will do whatever it takes to provide you with memorable and meaningful experiences. During lunch, the ship will reposition to Isla Magdalena where we'll head to shore to explore the ever-shifting sand dunes, on a cross-island walk to one of the most pristine beaches in the Pacific. Take a dip or tally the treasure found on what we affectionately call sand dollar beach. (B,L,D)



### **DAY 3: TRANSIT THE HULL CANAL/ BOCA DE SOLEDAD**

Spend the morning transiting the scenic winding Hull Canal. Within its narrow channels, bordered by mangroves and sand dunes, and filled with abundant wildlife, we'll hang out on deck with our keen-eyed naturalists to spot species and hear expert commentary. Weather permitting, we'll explore the vast mangrove system via kayak and expedition landing craft. Birdwatching here can be excellent. Among the species we might see are diving pelicans, wheeling cormorants, terns, great blue herons, ibis, whimbrels, and willets; it's not unusual to see forty species of birds in just one day along these fertile shorelines where they refuel for their destinations ahead. This afternoon, we'll head out to explore the breeding grounds of Boca de Soledad. (B,L,D)

### **DAYS 4 & 5: BOCA DE SOLEDAD**

Each winter, during their long migration, gray whales travel south from their Arctic feeding grounds to breed and give birth to their calves in these sheltered waters. "Grand Central" for California gray whales, we'll spend two full days observing, and with luck, interacting with these majestic creatures. Together with savvy local Mexican fishermen, we'll venture out in expedition landing craft to view the numerous mother-calf pairs that thrive in this sheltered region. We'll also have an opportunity to get out to the beaches to explore; if you're feeling up to it, grab one of our fat-tire bikes to roam the seemingly endless beaches. (B,L,D)

### **DAY 6: LOPEZ MATEOS/DISEMBARK/LORETO**

After breakfast, disembark the ship and transfer to Loreto's city center. Choose to visit the first mission in Baja California, as well as the nearby museum to learn more about what makes this town so special. Enjoy free time to explore the quaint shops and vibrant side streets. After lunch, transfer to Loreto Airport for flights home. (B,L)



*Guests kayaking under mangroves.*



## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SEA LION

**CAPACITY:** 31 outside cabins accommodating 62 guests.

**REGISTRY:** United States. **OVERALL LENGTH:** 152 feet.

**PUBLIC AREAS:** The ship features a library; global market; lounge with full-service bar and facilities for films, slide shows, and presentations; observation deck; partially covered sundeck with chairs and tables. The “open bridge” provides guests an opportunity to meet the officers and captain and learn about navigation.

**MEALS:** Served in single seatings with unassigned tables for an informal atmosphere and easy mingling. Breakfast is a wide selection buffet and lunch is often served family style. Menu emphasizes local flair.

**CABINS:** All face outside with windows, private facilities, and climate controls.

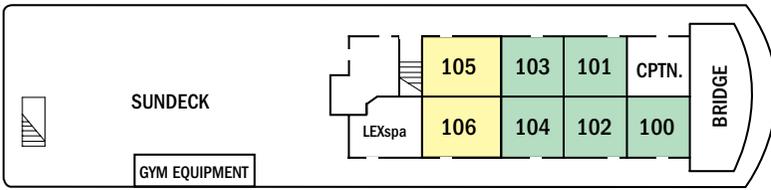
**EXPEDITION EQUIPMENT:** Expedition landing craft, kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, fat-tire bikes, bow camera, hydrophone, splash-cam, underwater video camera, and video microscope.

**SPECIAL FEATURES:** Guest Wi-Fi access. A video chronicler, Lindblad-National Geographic certified photo instructor, undersea specialist, and ship's doctor are on board.

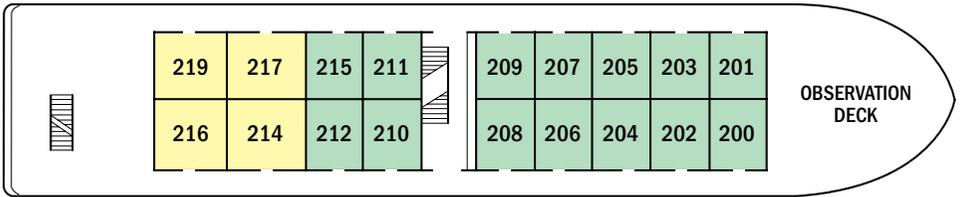
**WELLNESS:** The ship is staffed by a wellness specialist and features exercise equipment, LEXspa, and outdoor stretching area.



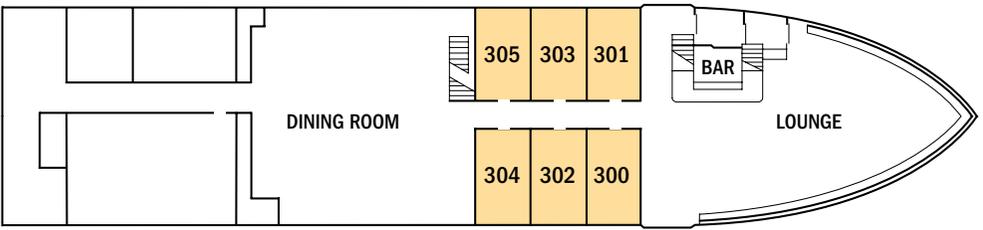
*Clockwise from top: National Geographic Sea Lion can access hard-to-reach locations; twin beds can be pushed together to form a double bed in Category 3 cabins on the Upper Deck; a comfortable Category 2 cabin; the casual dining room accommodates all guests in a single seating.*



**BRIDGE DECK**



**UPPER DECK**



**MAIN DECK**

**CATEGORY 1:**

Main Deck #300-305 — Conveniently positioned between the dining room and lounge, these cabins feature two lower single beds and a large view window.

**CATEGORY 2:**

Bridge Deck #100-104; Upper Deck #200-212, 215 — These well-located cabins include two lower single beds and a window.

**CATEGORY 3:**

Bridge Deck #105, 106; Upper Deck #214, 216, 217, 219 — These cabins feature a seating unit with table and two large view windows. Upper Deck cabins include two lower single beds which can convert to a double bed and a pull-out single bed for a third person; Bridge Deck cabins include two lower single beds only.

NOTE: Solo occupancy cabins are available in Categories 1 and 2 only. Third person rates are available in certain categories at one half the double occupancy rate.

SHARED ACCOMMODATIONS: Shares can be arranged at the double occupancy rate in Categories 1 and 2 only.

Prices are per person, double occupancy unless indicated as solo.

ITINERARY	CAT. 1	CAT. 2	CAT. 3	CAT. 1 SOLO	CAT. 2 SOLO	ADVANCE PAYMENT	SAMPLE AIRFARES
Wild Baja Escape: The Whales of Magdalena Bay	\$3,740	\$4,370	\$4,930	\$5,620	\$6,550	\$750	Round-trip Los Angeles/Loreto: Economy from \$475; Business from \$1,140.

# INCLUSIVE PRICING

## ABOARD SHIP

- ✓ All meals & nonalcoholic beverages
- ✓ 24-hour coffee, tea & soda on demand
- ✓ Hors d'oeuvres & snacks during nightly recap
- ✓ Environmentally friendly refillable water bottle
- ✓ Fully stocked library
- ✓ Exercise equipment
- ✓ The guidance & company of the expedition staff
- ✓ Access to the bridge to learn about navigation

## ASHORE

- ✓ Special access permits, park fees, port taxes
- ✓ Transfers to & from group flights
- ✓ The expertise of the expedition staff

## ACTIVITIES

- ✓ All shore activities
- ✓ Expedition landing craft explorations
- ✓ Kayaking & stand-up paddleboarding
- ✓ Fat-tire biking
- ✓ Lectures & presentations in the lounge
- ✓ Photo instruction
- ✓ Morning stretch classes with wellness specialist

**BRING THE KIDS:** Sharing an expedition with your kids or grandkids is a life-enhancing experience. So, take \$500 off the double occupancy price for travelers under 18.

# TERMS AND CONDITIONS

**COSTS INCLUDE:** Accommodations aboard ship; all meals and nonalcoholic beverages aboard ship; shore excursions, sightseeing, special access permits, and entrance fees; transfers to/from airport if traveling on group flights; use of kayaks, paddleboards, and fat-tire bikes; taxes, service charges, and gratuities (except to ship's crew); services of Lindblad Expeditions' natural history staff and a ship physician. Unused services or items included in the program are non-refundable.

**NOT INCLUDED:** Airfare; meals not indicated; passport and visa fees; travel protection plan; items of a personal nature such as Wi-Fi access, voyage DVD; gratuities to ship's crew at your discretion.

**AIRFARE:** Airfare is an additional cost. Sample airfares are subject to change. Lindblad Expeditions will assist in making your air arrangements for a \$50 per person service charge.

**RESERVATIONS:** To confirm your place, an advance payment of US\$750 per person is required at the time of reservation and is payable by Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover, or check.

**FINAL PAYMENT:** Payment is due no later than 90 days prior to departure.

**TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN:** Travel and medical insurance are available at an additional cost. Information will be sent to you by Duke Alumni Association upon registration.

**ENTRY AND VISA REQUIREMENTS:** Guests are advised to verify travel documents (passport/transit visa/entry visa) for the country through which they are transiting and/or entering. Reliable and most current information regarding international travel can be found by contacting

the consulate/embassy of the country(s) you are visiting or transiting through. We will not be responsible if you are denied entry or transit into a country, if you are unable to provide valid documents as per the country's requirement.

**SMOKING POLICY:** Allowed only in designated outdoor areas.

## RESPONSIBILITY AND OTHER TERMS & CONDITIONS:

Certain provisions concerning, among other things, limitations of Lindblad Expeditions' and the National Geographic Society's liability for loss of property, injury, illness or death during the voyage will be provided to all guests on the ship's ticket sent prior to departure, and are also available on our website at [www.expeditions.com/terms](http://www.expeditions.com/terms), or upon request. By registering for a trip, the guest agrees to all such terms and conditions.

**Note:** Itinerary and prices listed in this brochure are as of publication date and are subject to change. Under normal conditions the total expedition price is guaranteed at the time of booking. However, the expedition pricing is determined far in advance of initial departure on the basis of then-existing projections of fuel and other costs. In the event of increases in those costs, including but not limited to increases in the price of fuel, currency fluctuations, increases in government taxes or levies, or increased security costs, the right is reserved to adjust the price of your expedition or add a surcharge to cover such unexpected increases. We will always provide an explanation of the reason for increase in costs.

CANCELLATION POLICY	
Number of Days Prior to Expedition Start	Per Person Cancellation Fee
120 or more days	\$350
119–90 days	Advance payment cost
89–60 days	25% of trip cost
59–45 days	50% of trip cost
44–0 days	No refund
<i>We strongly recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan.</i>	

Photo Credits: John Bodner, Rab Cummings, Ralph Lee Hopkins, Sven-Olof Lindblad, Michael S. Nolan, Rich Reid, Marco Ricca, Max Seigal, Rikki Swenson

Please send reservation to:  
Duke Alumni Travels  
Box 90572  
Durham, NC 27708  
Phone: (919) 684-2988  
Secure Fax: (919) 660-0148  
Email: travel@daa.duke.edu

## RESERVATION FORM: WILD BAJA ESCAPE: THE WHALES OF MAGDALENA BAY

ABOARD NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SEA LION • MARCH 7-12, 2020

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ place(s).

Name 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(As it appears on passport)*

Name 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Preferred name for name badge)*

Name 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(As it appears on passport)*

Name 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Preferred name for name badge)*

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Accommodations:  Double  Single  Twin share w/friend

Share with roommate assigned by tour operator

Please indicate choice of cabin category in order of preference:

1st choice: \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my advance payment of \_\_\_\_\_ (US\$750 per person).

Check made payable to **Lindblad Maritime Enterprises, Ltd.**

Charge my advance payment of \_\_\_\_\_ (US\$750 per person)

to my  Visa  MasterCard  American Express  Discover

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## EXPEDITION HIGHLIGHTS

- » Live among gigantic gray whale mothers and their calves in the nursery waters of Bahía Magdalena and enjoy up-close encounters.
- » Kayak and paddleboard stunning mangroves, or beachcomb along endless beaches.
- » Hike through diverse island landscapes, from windswept sand dunes to cactus groves.
- » Grab a fat tire bike from the onboard fleet and ride down remote Pacific beaches.
- » Learn about desert ecosystems, seabird migrations, and whale behavior from the experienced naturalists.



# Duke A L U M N I

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Durham, NC 27708

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