

The Small Cruise Ship Collection

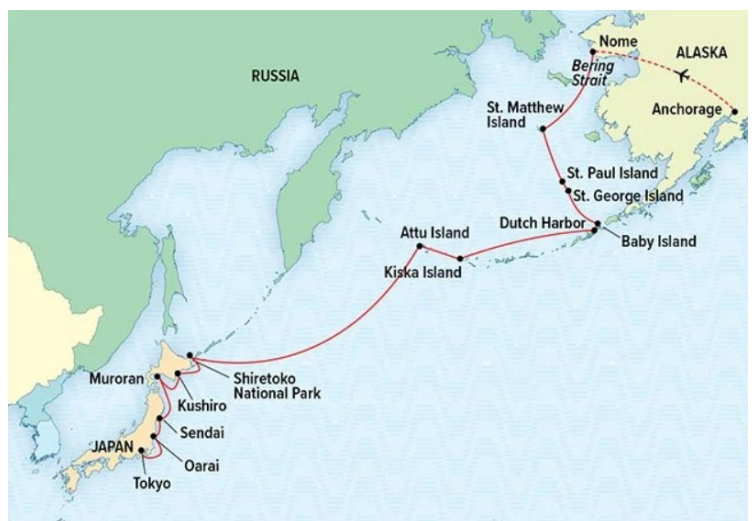
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A JOURNEY FROM NOME TO TOKYO: RING OF FIRE TO AINU CULTURE

Follow the “Ring of Fire” from Alaska’s volcanic Aleutian Islands to the rugged island of Hokkaido, Japan on a voyage that highlights the wildlife and cultures that inhabit the Pacific’s edges. Discover the wild, seldom visited islands of the Bering Sea, encountering millions of seabirds as well as northern fur seals and bears in the Pribilof and Aleutian Islands. Then view towering volcanic cones in the distance as we make our way to the rugged shores of Hokkaido—home to more than 51 volcanoes. Hike amid the mystical lakes and forests of northern Japan’s national parks, explore historic sites along the coast of Honshu, and cap off your voyage in the thriving metropolis of Tokyo.



ITINERARY

DAY 1: Anchorage, Alaska / Nome / Embark

Arrive in Anchorage and fly to Nome, Alaska. Embark National Geographic Resolution in the afternoon. (D)

DAY 2-3: Pribilof Islands / St. Paul & St. George Islands

A naturalist’s paradise, the Pribilof Islands welcome three million seabirds and a million marine mammals each summer during the breeding season. Glide in Zodiacs beneath the cliffs of St. George, rocky outcrops that harbor one of the largest seabird colonies in the Northern Hemisphere. Spot horned and tufted puffins, redlegged kittiwakes, crested auklets, and rare Asian vagrant species seldom seen in North America. Go ashore on St. Paul, home to the majority of the Pribilofs’ more than half a million northern fur seals. (B,L,D)

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DAY 4: Baby Islands / Dutch Harbor

The westernmost tip of the Alaskan mainland gives way to a 1,100-mile-long string of islands that separate the Bering Sea from the northern Pacific: the Aleutian Islands. Begin our exploration of wildlife-rich archipelago at the Baby Islands, east of Unalaska. Here, dynamic tides offer the chance to spot sea otters and fur seals, as well as rare seabirds. Watch from on deck as the ship navigates Baby Pass, and board Zodiacs for a closer look at the islands' wildlife. Arrive at Dutch Harbor, site of a fierce WWII battle and now one of the world's most important fishing ports. (B,L,D)

DAY 5-8: Exploring the Aleutian Islands

With 69 islands, countless islets, and tens of millions of seabirds, the Aleutians offer much to discover. Spend four days exploring these rugged and remote volcanic islands—some of which still harbor active volcanoes. Learn about the culture of the Aleuts, a fishing and hunting people who have inhabited these islands for millennia. Observe marine mammals such as northern fur seals, Steller sea lions, and a variety of whales, as well as prolific birdlife. When conditions permit, venture out by Zodiac or kayak to explore the wild shores of these islands. Among the islands we'll visit are Attu and Kiska, both of which were occupied by the Japanese for nearly a year during World War II. (B,L,D)

DAY 9-12: At Sea

As we set a course for Japan, enjoy discussions with our naturalists as they set the stage for our time exploring the northern shores of Hokkaido. Join our naturalists on deck to identify the seabirds that follow us and the volcanic cones in the distance that make up the "Ring of Fire." There are also an array of shipboard activities to enjoy: attend a photo workshop with

our National Geographic photographer, treat yourself to a massage or a wellness class, or snuggle up in the library and enjoy a good book. As we make our way to Asia, we will lose a day crossing the International Date Line. (B,L,D)

DAY 13: Abashiri, Japan / Shiretoko National Park

Arrive in Abashiri on the island of Hokkaido. After our ship's clearance into Japan, visit the Hokkaido Museum of Northern Peoples, dedicated to the cultures of the indigenous tribes of the Earth's subarctic regions. Later, we'll venture to Shiretoko—the "end of the Earth" in the native Ainu dialect. One of Japan's most spectacular national parks, Shiretoko provides a habitat for numerous species of land and marine mammals, such as brown bears, Steller sea lions, and sperm whales. We'll also be on the lookout for white-tailed eagles, Blakiston's fish owls, and Steller's sea eagles, which spend the winters here. (B,L,D)

DAY 14: Kushiro Shitsugen National Park / Akan Mashu National Park

Cruise Hokkaido's northeastern coast to Kushiro and head inland to explore Kushiro Shitsugen National Park, Japan's largest wetland and home to the endangered red-crowned crane, which was thought to be extinct in the early 20th century. Then drive to Akan Mashu National Park, known for its ethereal, mist-shrouded lakes, where we'll delve into forests of Sakhalin spruce and visit a charming Ainu village. (B,L,D)

DAY 15: Muroran

Dock at Muroran and choose to drive to ShikotsuTya National Park, filled with mirror-like lakes and forest-covered hills set against the silhouette of the snowcapped Mount Yotei stratovolcano. Alternatively, drive to the lush town of Shiraoi to visit the newly opened National Ainu Museum and Park, an

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open-air museum where visitors can experience various elements of Ainu culture. (B,L,D)

DAY 16: Sendai

Nestled between mountains and sea, Sendai's lush greenery earned it the nickname of "Forest City". As we tour this beautiful city, we'll wind our way to the hills above town to the site of Sendai castle. Built in 1600 by the powerful feudal lord, Date Masamune, the castle has survived antifeudal warfare, bombings of WWII and the powerful earthquake of 2011. Continue on to Zuihoden, the mausoleum of the Date clan—spectacular grounds and intricate design pay tribute to the powerful Masamune and his descendants. Just outside of the city, explore the secluded bay on the shores of Matsushima. Known as one of Japan's three most scenic views, this gorgeous bay is dotted with pine clad islets. (B,L,D)

DAY 17: Oarai / Mito City

Today long stretches of white sand beaches welcome us to the seaside city of Oarai. Heading inland we visit Mito, a power base during the Edo period and best known today for Kairakuen garden, considered one of Japan's three finest landscape gardens. Originally created in 1841 for the ruling lord, the park was also intended for the enjoyment of all. Paths wind through 3,000 plum trees, cedar woods and a bamboo grove. Learn about the treasures of the Samurai that went beyond swords and armor. The Tokugawa Museum houses exhibits chronicling the life of the powerful Tokugawa family, as well as those who lived under their rule. (B,LD)

DAY 18-19: Tokyo / Disembark

Today we disembark in the vibrant city of Tokyo. For the next two days we'll explore both the ultramodern and storied past of this

amazing city. Visit the serene Meiji Jingu shrine, dedicated to the spirit of Emperor Meiji, who ruled over Japan from 1867 to 1912 and helped transform the country into a modern power. At the Edo-Tokyo Museum, learn about the Tokugawa shogunate, the powerful military government that preceded the Meiji era. Delve into the bustling lanes of the Asakusa district and visit the iconic Sensoji temple, Tokyo's oldest Buddhist temple. (B,L,D)

DAY 20: Tokyo

After breakfast, depart for the airport to connect to your flight home. (B)

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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YOUR SHIP: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC RESOLUTION

YOUR SHIP: National Geographic Resolution

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

A next-generation expedition ship, purpose-built for polar navigation. National Geographic Resolution is a next-generation expedition ship, purpose-built for polar navigation. A twin to National Geographic Endurance, she is a fully stabilized, highly strengthened, ice-class Polar Class 5 (PC5) vessel, it is designed to navigate polar passages year-round, and safely explore uncharted waters, while providing exceptional comfort. Its patented X-BOW® is key to its design; its powerful wave-slicing action provides an extremely smooth ride in even adverse conditions, and even reduces spray on deck, for superior observation. She carries a full suite of expedition tools and offers a variety of experience-enhancing amenities. The luxury of comfort on expedition. National Geographic Resolution comfortably accommodates 126 guests in 69 outside-facing cabins. Cabins are efficiently designed, with sizes range from the 140-square-foot solo cabin to the 430-square-foot category 7 suite. Fifty-three of the 69 cabins, including all 12 of the solo cabins, will feature small balconies with floor-to-ceiling sliding doors that bring in the spectacular views and ample natural light. Comfort & convenience in every room. Every cabin has two portholes, a large window or balcony, and temperature controls.

Bathrooms are modern and stocked with botanically inspired hair products, soap, and shower gel, plus a hairdryer. Cabins are equipped with expedition command centers with tablets and USB/mobile device docking, TVs, Wi-Fi connections, and hair dryers. Dining. Food served aboard is fresh, local, and delicious, and sourced from suppliers who share our values of sustainable use whenever possible. Meals aboard are almost always served in the dining room, located aft of the lounge deck. When weather conditions allow, lighter fare may be served on the observation deck. There is no assigned seating and our dining room accommodates the entire expedition community in a single seating. During meals your expedition leader, naturalists, and any guest speakers aboard will join you. Public Areas: Two restaurants, a Chef's Table for small group dining, Observation Lounge with bar, gym, Wellness area, infinity-style outdoor hot tubs, library, main lounge with full service bar, 24-hour beverage, state-of-the-art facilities for films, slideshows and presentations, and a photo workshop area; plus, an expedition base with lockers for expedition gear, and an "open bridge" for access to our captain, officers and the art of navigation. Meals: Two restaurants, featuring local, sustainable choices and unassigned seating for flexible, inclusive dining; plus a Chef's table for intimate, small group dining. Main restaurant has 270° views, and the Observation deck restaurant features lighter, made-to-order fare. Special Features: A full-time doctor, undersea specialist, National Geographic photographer, Lindblad-National Geographic certified photo instructor and video chronicler, an internet cafe and laundry. Wellness: The vessel is staffed by our wellness specialists and features a

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glass-enclosed yoga studio, gym, treatment rooms and spa relax area, and high- and low-heat saunas with ocean views. Expedition Landing Craft. Key to our operation is our fleet of expedition landing craft, which we use to land in places that would otherwise be inaccessible. With 14 of these boats and two loading stations used every time we disembark, we're able to transfer guests off the ship quickly, so you can be out on adventures, not idly waiting. The expedition landing craft we use are 19 feet long, powered by four-stroke outboard engines, and are capable of comfortably carrying 10-12 people. They are widely recognized as the safest and most versatile small boats afloat. Remotely Operated Vehicle. Capable of reaching 1,000 feet, far beyond the range of any Scuba diver, the ROV allows you to literally view parts of the undersea that are as unexplored as the moon. Chances are you, like many of our guests, will be struck by how surprisingly colorful undersea life is in these unlikely places. And this glimpse may fundamentally change how you view the ocean. Kayaks. National Geographic Resolution will be equipped with a fleet of kayaks large enough to ensure everyone who wants to can paddle at every opportunity. Consequently, prior kayaking experience isn't necessary--many of our guests have their first kayaking experience in extraordinary locations. Our custom-designed floating platform lets us deploy kayaks from the ship, or any location we want--including far from shore. Kayakers are usually free to explore where they want within boundaries set by the undersea specialist and officer of the watch. Underwater camera. Our undersea specialist will dive often during your expedition, even in polar regions, with cold-water gear, to shoot high-definition, Cousteau-like footage of the deep. Colorful nudibranchs, swimming, plant-like crinoids, and mysterious fish with antifreeze blood that thrive in the frigid sea will give you an

entirely new appreciation of the marine environment. Video microscope. Naturalists will use the video microscope to help explain all elements of the environment, including tiny organisms that are the building block of the marine ecosystem. Spellbinding live views of krill at 80x magnification fills the high-definition screens in the lounge with vivid detail, and fills every onlooker with a sense of wonder at the importance of otherwise unobservable creatures. Hydrophone. This underwater microphone is deployed to listen to the vocalizations of marine mammals. Real time transmissions of their eerie, haunting sounds can be broadcast through the ship or recorded for later playback. Few experiences in nature are as captivating as watching humpback whales feed close to the ship as their vocalizations play through the ship's PA system. Electronic charts. An electronic chart showing the ship's location, course, and speed is almost always on display in the lounge. Open bridge. You'll find our captains are engaged, knowledgeable members of your expedition who are eager to share their passion with you. National Geographic Resolution's open bridge features comfortable spaces to sit, enjoy the view, drink your morning coffee, or simply chat with the officers. Snorkeling gear & wetsuits. On warm weather itineraries where there will be snorkeling, you'll select a mask, snorkel, fins, and wetsuit that remain yours for the duration of the expedition. There's no need to pack and tote your own gear, although guests who prefer to are welcome to bring

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