

Aurora Expeditions Launches Second Purpose-Built Expedition Ship

Nov 10, 2022



Aurora Expeditions has launched its second purpose-built small ship, the Sylvia Earle, the company announced. The company recently took delivery of the vessel from SunStone Ships on a long-term charter deal.

According to a press release, the 132-guest vessel will embark on its inaugural voyage from Ushuaia, Argentina to Antarctica on December 10, 2022.

Named after the renowned marine biologist, oceanographer, explorer and conservationist Dr. Sylvia Earle, the expedition ship will be a floating ambassador for the conservation of the planet, Aurora said.

“We are beyond thrilled to announce our newest ship, Sylvia Earle, is in the water and on her way to Antarctica,” said Aurora’s Chief Executive Officer Michael Heath.

“We cannot wait to introduce her to our loyal trade and consumer partners worldwide and, of course, a new generation of global expeditioners in search of adventure, discovery and extraordinary life-changing experiences,” he added.

With a focus on education and conservation, the new Sylvia Earle is designed to accommodate an average 132 passengers per voyage in a what Aurora calls a relaxed, fun and informal onboard setting.

Featuring Ulstein X-BOW, an inverted bow designed for smoother and faster ocean crossings which helps to reduce fuel consumption, the ship offers comfortable staterooms and suites, most with private balconies.

Public spaces include multiple restaurants and bars, social relaxation and wellness areas, an outdoor heated swimming pool and jacuzzis, a gym, spa and sauna, a library lounge, lecture theatre, and expansive decks offering panoramic views of wilderness and wildlife.

Zodiac docks, a changing room and mudroom prepare passengers for off-ship and on-shore activities, while a dedicated Science Centre is the hub for a variety of participative and educational Citizen Science programs.

An experienced Expedition Team guides passengers in small groups on myriad excursions by water and land, with exciting activities ranging from zodiac cruises to walks and hikes, sea kayaking, scuba-diving, snorkelling, paddling, skiing, photography and birdwatching, among others.

“Our goal is to immerse our expeditioners in some of the world’s most remote and fascinating places and, in doing so, create lifelong ambassadors for the planet,” said Chief Marketing Officer, Hayley Peacock-Gower.

“More than 30 years in the making, Aurora Expeditions has a track record for pioneering adventure and discovery – and respectful travel is at the core of our ethos,” she added.

A sister ship to the Greg Mortimer, launched in 2019, the Sylvia Earle is named after one of the world’s leading ocean conservationists, the first female Chief Scientist of the US National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration.

Dr Earle is a National Geographic explorer-in-residence since 1998 and was named by Time magazine as its first ‘Hero of the Planet’. Her own conservation initiative Mission Blue is creating a global network of marine protected areas known as ‘Hope Spots’.

Each of the new ship’s decks is named after six other pioneering female conservationists – Jo Ruxton (MBE), Dr Carden Wallace (AM), Sharon Kwok, Bernadette Demientieff, Dr Asha de Vos and Hanli Prinsloo – with a deck dedicated to Dr Earle herself.

In February 2023, in partnership with Ocean Geographic, Dr Earle will lead a 'Antarctic Climate Expedition' on the new ship to raise public and government awareness of the environmental importance of the Antarctic.

The special voyage aims to deliver resolutions to inspire transformative changes for global net-zero emission by 2035 from an ocean perspective, Aurora said.

"Female scientists are leading the way in global conservation initiatives, and we want to honor these seven extraordinary women who work tirelessly to make the world a better place," said Peacock-Gower.

"We invite you to ignite your curiosity, passion and care for the natural world, and join us on board the new Sylvia Earle for a true Aurora experience of a lifetime - and travel for good," she added.