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Environmentalism and Filmmaker Jean-Michel Cousteau Joins October Departure of Wilderness Travel Cruise to South Pacific's Society Islands

BERKELEY, CALIF. – Travelers can scuba dive with one of the world's great ocean environmentalists on the Oct. 25 departure of [Wilderness Travel](#)'s 15-day [Marquesas, Tuamotus and Society Islands](#) cruise to the South Pacific. Jean-Michel Cousteau, son of famous ocean explorer Jacques Cousteau who's been diving since age 7, will join the adventure travel company on its cruise of these remote yet fantastically beautiful islands, offering lectures and videos of his work and accompanying several dives.

The cruise features a variety of talks on wildlife, the environment and history, along with visits to a black pearl farm, the burial plot of artist Paul Gauguin, seaside villages and a huge Vatican-built Catholic church. Guests will also trek to the largest stone sculptures of the Marquesas, which are linked to the moai of Easter Island, and literally spend days taking in the crystal clear waters, white sand beaches and gorgeous tropical scenery. The trip also includes plentiful diving and snorkeling through coral reefs, the crystalline lagoon of Huahine with its 450 species of fish, Bora Bora's lagoon and Moorea's barrier reef where guests can swim with rays, moray eels and even barracuda.

The cruise embarks on the Paul Gauguin, a five-star ship designed specifically for cruising the South Pacific. Carrying 332 guests in all oceanfront staterooms, 70% of which have private balconies, the ship has two luxury open-air restaurants, a spa as well as a water sports platform for launching kayaks, windsurfers and more. The Paul Gauguin has been named one of the "World's Top-Rated Small Ships" by *Condé Nast Traveler* since 1998.

Jean-Michel Cousteau is the founder of the Ocean Futures Society, a non-profit marine conservation and education organization that serves as a "Voice for the Ocean" by communicating in all media the critical bond between people and the sea and the importance of wise environmental policy. He serves as the organization's spokesperson and advocate and helped inspire President Bush to declare the Northwest Hawaiian Islands a Marine National Monument in 2006 and was instrumental in returning Keiko, the orca whale from "Free Willy," back to the wild. Cousteau has produced more than 80 films on marine conservation and has received numerous awards for his efforts.

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn from – and travel with – such a passionate advocate for the ocean environment," says Barbara Banks, director of marketing and new trip development for Wilderness Travel. "Guests of this cruise will not just enjoy the utter magnificence of these remote islands but learn how they can help preserve them, as well."

There 15-day cruise leaves from Tahiti on October 25, 2014 with prices starting at \$6533 per person double occupancy, including all meals. Additional departures, without Cousteau, leave August 29, 2014 and November 21, 2014. For more information about the [Marquesas, Tuamotus and Society Islands](#) cruise, call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 or visit www.wildernesstravel.com.

About Wilderness Travel

Wilderness Travel, founded in 1978 and still run by Bill Abbott, a consummate traveler, offers some 200 trips every year to more than 75 destinations around the world. The company is known for its one-of-a-kind detailed itineraries that take travelers deep into an area's culture. There are four ways to travel with Wilderness Travel: [Small Group Adventures](#); [Private Journeys](#); [WT Expeditions: Rare Journeys and Exploratories](#); and [Small Ship Cruises](#), for which the company doubled its offerings in 2014. Constantly on the look-out for new adventures and ways to improve existing journeys, the company focuses on quality, design and the uniqueness of its trips. Almost 70% of individuals who travel with Wilderness Travel are repeat guests or direct referrals from past travelers. For more information, visit www.wildernesstravel.com or call 800-368-2794.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Photos and detailed itineraries available upon request.