



Sharks, Easter Island, polar bears – **Sadie Whitelocks** offers some...

# ADVENTURES ON THE HIGH SEAS

Remote locations, Sir David Attenborough-style wildlife encounters and helicopter rides. Welcome to the world of expedition cruising, where high-seas adventure is guaranteed. Here's our pick of the best trips on the horizon that will make the hairs on the back of your neck stand up.

● Norway's Hurtigruten has a 26-day itinerary sailing through the Northwest Passage, connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, through the Canadian Arctic Archipelago.

The voyage, from Alaska to Greenland and on to Halifax in Nova Scotia, follows in the footsteps of many explorers, including Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen – the first person to navigate the stretch from Greenland to Alaska by boat in 1906.

A stop off at Beechey Island serves as a poignant reminder of how harsh the weather conditions in the area can be, with three wind-whipped graves from Sir John Franklin's ill-fated 1845 British North West Passage expedition, dramatised in the recent BBC drama *The Terror*, still visible on the beach.

You are almost guaranteed a polar bear sighting and Zodiac boats will be at the ready so you can see the bruins at a close but safe distance in their natural habitat.

Departing August 2023 on the Roald Amundsen, it costs from £17,273pp. [global.hurtigruten.com](http://global.hurtigruten.com).

● One of the few lines offering Russian itineraries is New Zealand-based Heritage Expeditions. One of the company's standout tours for 2021 is a 14-day voyage around the far-flung Kamchatka peninsula, a prime spot for orcas, brown bears and more than 390 bird species, including the majestic Steller's sea eagle.

The landscape is a photographer's dream with volcanic peaks, mirror-like lagoons, fjords and a sweeping tundra peppered with tiny flowers



**GO WILD:** Hurtigruten's ship in the Arctic, top. An Easter Island Moai statue and, above, sharks off the coast of Fiji

and soft mosses. A complimentary helicopter excursion takes you to Kurile Lake, in the extreme south of Kamchatka. This is home to one of the largest red salmon spawning sites in Eurasia, which attracts sleuths of bears from all corners of the peninsula.

The voyage departs on August 30 and costs from £5,182pp. [heritage-expeditions.com](http://heritage-expeditions.com).

● For those wanting balmy sailing conditions, upscale adventure travel company Pelorus has an adrenaline-pumping small

group expedition cruise geared around diving in the jewel-hued waters of Fiji. Passengers on the Manta Ray Cyclone Feeding trip (departing September, pricing upon request) will be able to swim with squadrons of manta rays as they feed and swirl around in a balletic fashion.

Diving down a little deeper, there will also be the chance during the expedition to explore some fascinating stretches of water first encountered by Captain Bligh after the Mutiny on the Bounty and, for those who dare, the shark diving in Fiji is incredible with as many as 12 different species possibly making an appearance. On land, guests will be invited to join a traditional Fijian celebration and present village elders with kava, a mildly narcotic drink made from the powdered roots of the pepper plant. With land-based activities, Pelorus says the 'options are endless'.

The UK-based firm offers a taste of the things in store, with jungle biking, cave kayaking and white-water rafting served up as some of the highlights.

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

● Sticking to the tropical-island theme, luxury cruise company Silversea has a 22-night voyage snaking from Tahiti in French Polynesia to the port of Valparaiso in Chile.

The expedition calls at some hard-to-reach places, including the Austral Islands, Pitcairn – which, having no airport, is dubbed the world's most isolated inhabited island – and Easter Island, famed for its huge Moai stone statues. At each of the 12 ports of call, there is everything from snorkelling to hiking to biking, or guests can choose to go at their own pace and soak up the sublime scenery.

Silversea's 144-passenger Silver Explorer makes for a very comfortable base camp with well-appointed suites, two restaurants, a fitness centre and a spa.

Departing October 7, it costs from £13,811pp. [silversea.com](http://silversea.com).