



AQUA EXPEDITIONS

Press Release

AQUA EXPEDITIONS UNVEILS SIXTH VESSEL: AQUA LARES

Aqua Lares marks the brand's expansion into East Africa, offering once-in-a-lifetime voyages to biodiversity hotspots in the Seychelles, Aldabra Atoll, Zanzibar, and Tanzania.



7 August 2025 – Award-winning global leader in small-ship expeditions, Aqua Expeditions — part of the PONANT EXPLORATIONS GROUP — proudly announces its sixth vessel, **Aqua Lares**. Launching in February 2026, the **15-suite Aqua Lares will be the first ultra-luxe expedition yacht available to book by the cabin in the Seychelles**. Supported by financing from the International Finance Corporation (IFC), this expansion reinforces Aqua's leadership in luxury exploration and its commitment to delivering immersive voyages, cultural discovery, and sustainable tourism to the world's most pristine destinations. Guests can expect a superyacht experience in line with Aqua's signature standards: personalized service, a 1:1 crew-to-guest ratio, cuisine by world-renowned chefs, and expert-led excursions in small groups that reveal the best of each destination.

"The launch of Aqua Lares marks an exciting new chapter for Aqua Expeditions—uniting our commitment to luxury exploration with the thrill of discovering uncharted frontiers. East Africa has held a special place in my heart since my first safari at age seven, and it's surreal to now return with our own expedition yacht. From the wild beauty of the Seychelles to Aldabra Atoll's 150,000 giant tortoises, this region offers a rare kind of adventure—one that perfectly complements our voyages in the Galapagos and Indonesia," shares Founder and CEO Francesco Galli Zugaro.

Introducing Aqua Lares: Luxury Small-Ship Expeditions in East Africa

Spanning six decks, the **77.4-meter Aqua Lares hosts just 30 guests across 12 beautifully appointed design suites and 3 twin cabins**. Suites range from 13 to 66 sqm (140–710 sqft), including **three generous Owner's Suites**. With a gross tonnage (GT) of 2,400—by far the highest GT-to-guest ratio in the Aqua Expeditions fleet—she offers an intimate and elevated way to explore East Africa's most remote waters.



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Aqua Lares carries five private tenders—three 6.5-meter Zodiacs and two 8.5-meter Rafnar Tenders—offering flexibility for off-ship exploration. She's also outfitted with paddle boards, kayaks, snorkeling and diving gear, and mountain bikes, ideal for reaching remote beaches, lagoons, and forest trails. A dedicated crew of 33—including three naturalist guides—ensures world-class service and experience-rich adventures on land and underwater. Social spaces include a panoramic sun deck with bar and lounge, a cinema, boutique, gym, saloon, indoor dining room, and a shaded outdoor dining area. Wellness offerings feature two Jacuzzis, a sauna, massage room, and spa—designed for relaxation after a day of discovery.

As the sixth vessel in Aqua's award-winning fleet, Aqua Lares continues the brand's legacy of delivering once-in-a-lifetime adventures to the world's most remote and biodiverse destinations. The interiors blend luxurious elegance with a strong sense of place—creating a refined, welcoming sanctuary at sea. This vision is being brought to life through an extensive interior refit led by Aqua Design Director Birgit Galli Zugaro in collaboration with Milan-based HOTLAB, ahead of Aqua Lares' launch in the Indian Ocean next February.

Aqua Lares Itineraries: Expeditions Across the Seychelles, Aldabra Atoll, Zanzibar, and Tanzania

Aqua Lares offers 5-, 9-, 10-, and 11-night voyages through the Seychelles, Aldabra Atoll and Zanzibar, Tanzania—crafted for those drawn to remote wilderness. Hosting a maximum of 30 guests, this elegant expedition yacht accesses islands and coastlines inaccessible to larger vessels. Her adventure-ready build enables immersive, twice-daily small-group excursions into uncharted territory—an experience that's uniquely Aqua.

The 5-night itinerary explores the Seychelles' inner islands, including Praslin and La Digue. On La Digue, guests can bike forest paths and encounter the Coco de Mer—a rare palm identified as one of the few true examples of island gigantism. On Praslin, observe the critically endangered Seychelles paradise flycatcher in its natural habitat. These islands also offer hiking, snorkeling, and landings on some of the Indian Ocean's most striking white-sand beaches.

The 9-night expedition ventures into the Seychelles' Outer Islands—a secluded chain accessible only by sea. This is where Aqua excels: no crowds, no fixed schedules, just immersive access to one of the region's most untouched marine environments. At its heart is Aldabra Atoll, a UNESCO World Heritage site and the world's largest sanctuary for giant tortoises, home to over 150,000 individuals. Guests will also spot sea turtles, tropical fish, manta rays, reef sharks, and—on rare occasions—blue whales as they



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kayak, snorkel, or dive in pristine lagoons and coral reefs. Flyfishing, beach walks, and hikes round out the experience—each moment shaped by nature.

Extended 10- and 11-night itineraries link the Seychelles with the Zanzibar Archipelago and Tanzania, offering wider access to this diverse region. Sailing between Mahé and Zanzibar, these Indian Ocean voyages include stops at Aldabra, Remire, Farquhar, and Astove—home to the four-mile-long Astove Wall, often described as an underwater Grand Canyon teeming with reef sharks, rays, and marine life. Guests will explore ancient trade routes and Swahili-Arabian heritage on islands like Pemba and Kilwa Kisiwani and enjoy birdwatching for rare species including red-footed boobies. Inaugural sailings set sail from Madagascar in early 2026.

*Aqua Lares will sail the Seychelles, Aldabra Atoll, Zanzibar, and Tanzania annually from November to April. **Offline bookings are open for 2026 and 2027, with inaugural sailings beginning February 8, 2026. Online bookings open September 1.** Rates start at USD 9,000 per person for a 5-night itinerary, based on double occupancy. Private charters for up to 30 guests start at USD 385,000 for 5 nights.*

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For media enquiries, please contact Global PR & Communications Manager, Emilie Cunningham - ecunnington@aquaexpeditions.com

About Aqua Expeditions:

A recognized global leader in luxury small-ship expeditions, Aqua Expeditions explores the world's most biodiverse and culturally significant destinations aboard best-in-class vessels of stylish contemporary design. Expect tailored five-star itineraries, a highly exclusive 1:1 crew- to-guest ratio with personalized service, world-class dining, and small group expert-guided activities and excursions, with a maximum of 16-40 guests per ship. Aqua Expeditions currently operates river explorations in the Peruvian Amazon and the Mekong Delta (Cambodia and Vietnam), and coastal yacht voyages in East Indonesia — Komodo National Park, Ambon and the Spice Islands, Raja Ampat, and Asmat — and the Galapagos Islands.

Aqua Expeditions is proud to be a part of PONANT EXPLORATIONS GROUP, a portfolio of brands renowned for their expertise and destination-focused exploration cruises.