



AQUA EXPEDITIONS

Press Release

AQUA EXPEDITIONS AWARDED LATA CRUISE OPERATOR OF THE YEAR FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR



11 June 2026 - Aqua Expeditions has been named [Cruise Operator of the Year](#) at the 2026 Latin American Travel Association (LATA) Excellence Awards, marking the second consecutive year the luxury small-ship expedition company has received the accolade.

The award celebrates Aqua Expeditions' continued leadership in delivering immersive, high-end experiences in two of South America's most biodiverse destinations: the Peruvian Amazon and the Galápagos Islands. Through its vessels Aqua Nera, Aria Amazon, and Aqua Mare, Aqua combines expert-led exploration, world-class hospitality, and a deep commitment to sustainability, setting a benchmark for luxury expedition travel in the region.

The award also reflects Aqua's continued commitment to responsible tourism across Latin America. Throughout the year, the company strengthened its support for conservation initiatives in the Peruvian Amazon and Galápagos, expanded community partnerships, and continued its collaboration with organisations including 4Ocean, the Charles Darwin Foundation, and SERNANP to help protect biodiversity and support local communities.

"We are honoured to receive Cruise Operator of the Year from LATA," said Francesco Galli Zugaro, Founder and CEO of Aqua Expeditions. "Latin America has been at the heart of our story since the launch of Aria Amazon in 2011. This recognition is a testament to the dedication of our crew, guides, shoreside teams, and travel advisor partners who help us showcase the extraordinary biodiversity, cultures, and communities of the Peruvian Amazon and Galápagos to guests from around the world."

The LATA Excellence Awards celebrate outstanding achievement across the Latin American travel industry, recognising organisations that demonstrate innovation, excellence, and a commitment to promoting travel throughout the region.

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LUXURY RIVER & YACHT CRUISES

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 contemporary design. Guests can expect tailored five-star itineraries, a highly exclusive 1:1 crew-to-guest ratio with personalized service, world-class dining, and expert-guided excursions, with a maximum of 16–40 guests per ship. Aqua Expeditions operates river explorations in the Peruvian Amazon and the Mekong Delta, and coastal yacht voyages in East Indonesia — including Komodo National Park, Raja Ampat and the Spice Islands — as well as the Galapagos Islands. Launching in February 2026, Aqua Lares will become the brand's sixth vessel, sailing East Africa from November to April and Svalbard and the Arctic Circle from June to September.

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.