

# VIRTUOSO LIFE

## CALLING ON CHINA

Take the Kids (Yes, Really!)

省心樓

**GO LIKE A PRO**  
**GAME-CHANGING TIPS**  
**FOR BETTER TRAVEL**

**PLUS**

Napa Valley  
New Zealand  
Vancouver  
Dubai

Exploring Xi'an's  
Great Mosque.





#### PERSON OF INTEREST

## Jean-Michel Cousteau

### Explorer, Conservationist

Jean-Michel Cousteau first saw the Amazon in 1982, entering its Brazilian delta on *Calypso* with his famous father and family, and cruising to Iquitos, Peru, where they left the ship and traced the river to its source on the slopes of Mount Mismi. Next year, Cousteau will return to join select four-, five-, and eight-day **Aqua Expeditions** sailings from Iquitos to lead talks and excursions, offer videography tips, and screen documentaries on some of the same stretches he filmed with his own children in *Return to the Amazon*, decades after his first trip.

**THE BIGGEST IMPRESSION FROM YOUR INITIAL AMAZON EXPEDITION:** I'm an ocean guy, and I was amazed to see dolphins and turtles all the way to Iquitos. I scuba dived when the water was clear enough, and of course there were all kinds of freshwater fish and some very, very big snakes. These creatures could see me, but they never had any intention of touching me. I felt much more comfortable than when above water or walking in the jungle.

**VERY, VERY BIG SNAKES, PSHH. WHAT ABOUT PIRANHAS?** Those little fish just swim away. Being underwater was a great privilege. I hope we will be able to snorkel in a few places.

**WHY SHOULD TRAVELERS CRUISE THE AMAZON?** To connect with the environment and understand what's going on. The Amazon represents 20 percent of the planet's fresh water flowing into the ocean – we need to protect this water system to protect ourselves.

**THOUGHTS ON RETURNING:** It's great to visit a place I have been many times and share with passengers the information that we were able to collect and see how things have changed – to share what's different, what we are learning, and how we can behave to make sure that from cultural and environmental points of view, we preserve diversity, which is synonymous with stability.

**RIVER WILDLIFE THAT MOST FILLS YOU WITH JOY:** I love the pink river dolphin – it's unique to the Amazon. They have the ability to swim in rain forests during and after the rains. Other dolphins would get trapped, but pink dolphins can disconnect their bone structures to swim around a tree. It takes a bit of luck to see them – they're not waiting for you to show up – but I know they're there.

*Cousteau joins sailings on the 32-passenger Aria Amazon February 9 through 16 and October 5 through 12, 2018; from \$4,350. He'll cruise the Mekong River with Aqua on select 2017 and 2018 departures as well.*