

Underwater Explorer Drones Introduced to Expedition & Cruise Ships

Hurtigruten and Blueye Robotics First to Bring New Ocean Technology to Sea Adventurers

Trondheim, Norway and Palo Alto, CA - August 30, 2017 - Ninety percent of the world's oceans remain unexplored. That's about to change as underwater drone creators, Blueye Robotics and Hurtigruten, the Norwegian Expedition Cruise line, plan to introduce underwater drones as part of the guest experience on its worldwide expedition cruises. Recently launched, Blueye Pioneer is an underwater drone that can dive eight times deeper than the average scuba enthusiast -- up to 150 meters deep. This is the first time that expedition cruise ships are offering underwater drone technology to explorers. Initially, Hurtigruten will purchase 60 Pioneer drones for six of its ships.

Passengers on board these unique excursion ships will experience the ocean's depths through eyes of the Blueye Pioneer drone – a remarkable encounter that allows them to view up to 150 meters below the ocean, adding a new and exciting realm of discovery to these ships. Blueye Pioneer not only goes deeper than any other consumer underwater drone, but also its HD wide-angle video camera employs special technologies that work in low-light conditions to stream true-color images live to screens on the Hurtigruten ships, or to personal smart devices (phones, tablets etc.), and even to the digital diving masks worn by guests in smaller explorer boats.

Blueye launched its distinctive Pioneer underwater drone in June of this year, advancing to the market an affordable, high-quality prosumer product with exceptional capabilities that previously were found only in professional equipment used by filmmakers, oceanographers and the military.

"Hurtigruten is building the world's greenest and most advanced expedition ships. With the introduction of underwater drones, we are adding a new dimension for our guests," says Hurtigruten CEO Daniel Skjeldam.

“Blueye’s technology makes it possible to stream live images of whales, ship wrecks and marine wild life – and everything else existing below the surface directly to screens onboard the ships, or to the digital diving masks worn by guests in smaller expedition boats. This collaboration offers exciting opportunities, and a whole new tool for the expedition crew,” says Christine Spiten, Blueye co-founder and Chief global strategist.

Developed in the extreme conditions of the Arctic Ocean where Hurtigruten has sailed for 125 years, the Blueye Pioneer drone uniquely combines its compact size of 15 pounds, the power of four robust thrusters and extreme underwater stability.

Less explored than Mars

Hurtigruten offers voyages to some of the world’s most remote and pristine waters and destinations, such as Antarctica, the Northwest Passage, Arctic Canada, Greenland, The Amazonas, Svalbard and the Norwegian coast.

“With underwater drones on our ships, we can take our guests to areas less explored than the surface of Mars. This provides the opportunity for adventurous guests to become real explorers,” Skjeldam says, adding that all findings and relevant video material will be made available for scientists.

Shared concern for the ocean

This is an incredible opportunity for Hurtigruten’s seafaring guests to become underwater explorers. Hurtigruten and Blueye share a common concern for the oceans, and a will to educate and advocate through inspiration and understanding. The Blueye Pioneer will be a new tool for on-board expedition teams, not only on expedition ships but also on pleasure cruises. The Blueye Pioneer drones will be available to Hurtigruten guests in 2018.

Resources:

Photos and Logos: <https://www.blueyrobotics.com/press>

Customer video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pek-mX3kwL0>

Video of Ghost Shark Chimera, filmed for the first time on consumer underwater camera at depths below 100 meter: <http://tinyurl.com/y77hzdna>

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