

# TOWN & COUNTRY

DECEMBER 2013

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BY BRUCE WEBER

THE PHILANTHROPY ISSUE

## COUSTEAU'S QUEST

The OCEAN KING's Grandchildren Risk  
Their Lives on a Daring New Mission

*Plus*

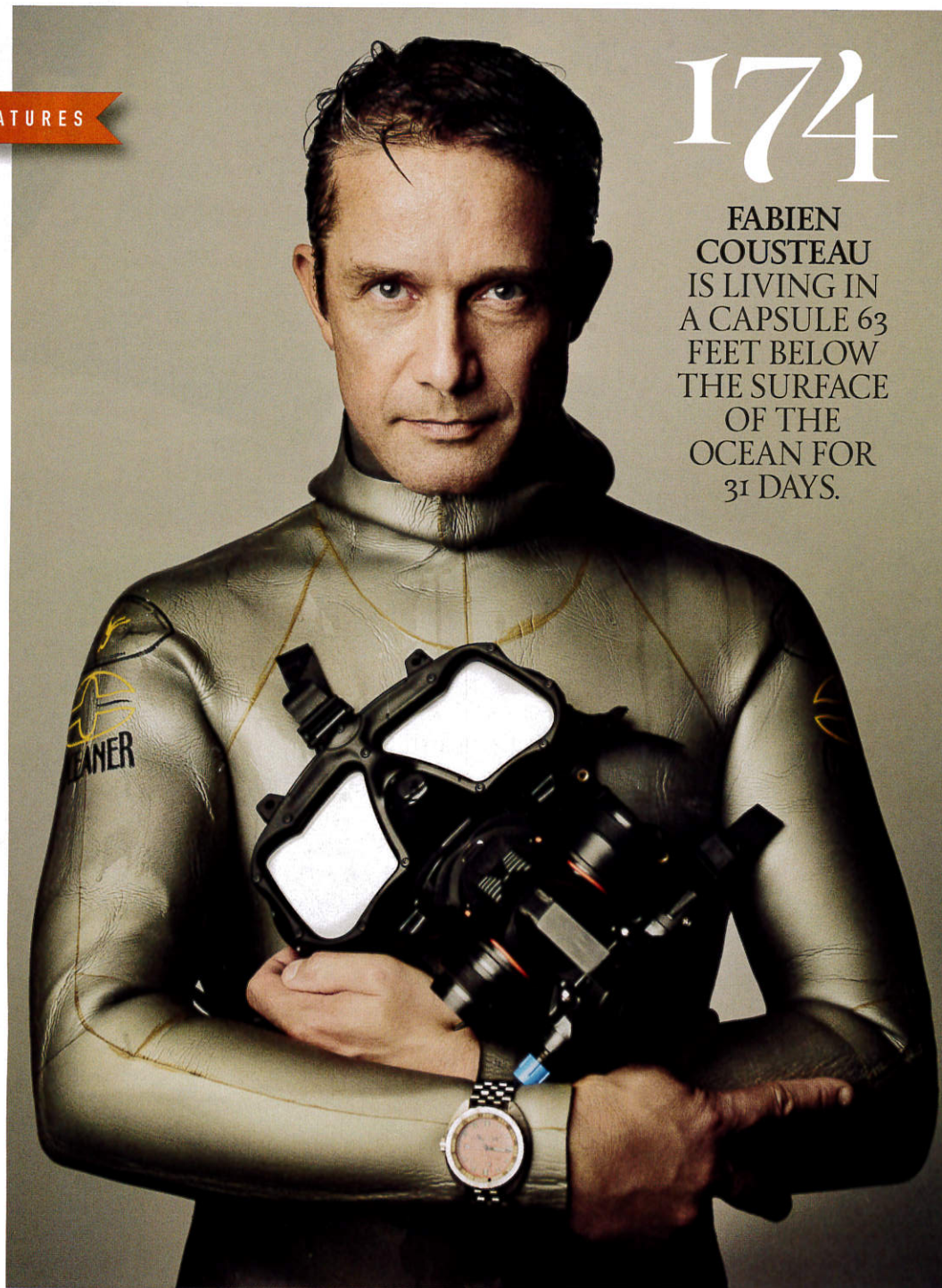
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FEATURES



# 174

**FABIEN  
COUSTEAU  
IS LIVING IN  
A CAPSULE 63  
FEET BELOW  
THE SURFACE  
OF THE  
OCEAN FOR  
31 DAYS.**

## 174 / GOING DEEP

Fabien and Céline Cousteau, grandchildren of the legendary French explorer Jacques, are never far from their grandfather's passion: the water. If all goes according to plan, Fabien will soon be spending 31 days under the sea.

*By Guy Martin*

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Two young women making their debut at Paris's Bal des Débutantes pay tribute to Old World glamour in the couture of today.

## 188 / HAPPY CAMPERS

For 30 years Bruce Weber and Nan Bush have found solace and inspiration at Camp Longwood, their Adirondack retreat.

*By Bruce Weber and Nan Bush*

## 200 / CHAIN GANG

A diamond-studded profile and slender arms made of rose gold beg the question of whether jewels really do make the woman.

## 206 / STUDIO 360

David Salle, *T&C*'s art columnist and the subject of an exhibition at New York City's Per Skarstedt gallery, offers a peek inside his East Hampton home.

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## 212 / T&C 50: THE PHILANTHROPISTS

In our inaugural philanthropy issue, we salute the gold standard of givers, along with the powerhouses, crusaders, strategists, and innovators who are bringing charity into the 21st century.

**ON OUR COVER:** Céline and Fabien Cousteau, photographed by JOE PUGLIESE. Styled by David Scoroposki. *On Céline:* Marc Jacobs gown (\$4,800), [marcjacobs.com](http://marcjacobs.com); Tiffany & Co. earrings (\$95,000), 800-843-3269. *On Fabien:* Brunello Cucinelli tuxedo (\$7,395), 212-627-9202; Bottega Veneta shirt (\$700), [bottogaveneta.com](http://bottogaveneta.com); Ralph Lauren Black Label bow tie (\$120), [ralphlauren.com](http://ralphlauren.com); Tiffany & Co. shirt studs (\$125 each) and cuff links (\$250), [tiffany.com](http://tiffany.com). Hair and makeup by AlexaRodulfo.com using La Prairie. For a refined look like Céline's, try Estée Lauder Double Wear Light Stay-in-Place Makeup in Intensity 1.0, Bronze Goddess Powder Bronzer in Light, Pure Color Instant Intense EyeShadow Trio in Amber Alloy, Sumptuous Extreme Lash Multiplying Volume Mascara in Extreme Black, and Pure Color Long Lasting Lipstick in Bois de Rose.





## SCUBA DOER

Fabien Cousteau channels his *grand-père's* elegance and dedication. Brunello Cucinelli tuxedo (\$7,395); Bottega Veneta shirt (\$700); Ralph Lauren Black Label bow tie (\$120); Tiffany & Co. shirt studs (\$125 each).

*Styled by David Scoroposki*



# GOING DEEP

In 1943, Jacques Cousteau strapped on the first Aqua-Lung and dove into a lifelong adventure that would make him the 20th century's ocean king. Now two of his grandchildren are carrying the family trident to unimagined undersea frontiers. *By* GUY MARTIN

**B**EING THE SCIONS OF ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREAT EXPLORERS COMES with very special baggage. In the case of Fabien and Céline Cousteau, grandchildren of the original scuba diver and prolific nature documentary filmmaker Jacques-Yves Cousteau, the baggage is likely to contain a set of tanks, a really nice regulator, and a wetsuit. Their grandfather, a French naval officer and producer of more than 100 television documentaries and 50 books in a career in and on the water that lasted more than half a century, invented, with engineer Emile Gagnan, the Aqua-Lung, the first Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCUBA), for the first extended scuba dives, in 1943. In the middle of World War II he was instrumental in tracking Italian fascists for the French naval resistance. In the 1960s he was the first oceanographer to document how dolphins use echolocation in their navigation. More aquatic than Jacques-Yves Cousteau it does not get.

*Photographs by*  
JOE PUGLIESE





#### THE FIN CROWD

Fabien and Céline Cousteau wriggle through the depths at the Maritime Aquarium in Norwalk, Connecticut. **Oceaner** wetsuit (from \$380); **Donna Karan New York** gown (\$3,495). Focused solely on one body of water (Long Island Sound), the nonprofit, donor-supported Maritime Aquarium is unique among its peers. "People think there's nothing but empty beer bottles down there, but a lot of marine species live in the sound," aquarium spokesman Dave Sigworth says. Among those creatures are seals, sea turtles, and four native species of shark (including the ones in the 110,000-gallon tank in which the Cousteaus free-dived). Fabien will give a lecture at the aquarium on February 6, 2014. *Information and donations: maritimeaquarium.org*



Early next year his grandson Fabien, 46, will descend 63 feet below the surface to a spare, semihabitable underwater research station about nine miles off Key Largo to engage in much scientific research—including on his own body—and generally to live, eat, and sleep underwater for 31 days, the longest any human being has ever stayed in the Aquarius habitat, as the research station is called. Significantly, the dive is happening on the 50th anniversary of his grandfather's history-making 30-day stay in his underwater "village" in the Red Sea in 1963. (The late astronaut Scott Carpenter spent a month on the ocean floor in 1965.) While in the habitat Fabien Cousteau and five other aquanauts, three of them women, will be under pressure three times as great as that of the surface atmosphere; when they go on deep dives, it's five to six times as great.

It's a fact that the last three letters of the Cousteau family name do portentously spell *water* in French, and, though unproven, it does seem as if every Cousteau ever born has been genetically supplied with an invisible set of gills. Granddad won three Oscars for his groundbreaking undersea documentaries. Both Fabien and his sister Céline romped around as children on his famous research boats, the *Calypso* and the *Alcyon*. Their father Jean-Michel, himself a prodigiously accomplished diver and documentary filmmaker, is currently at work on a movie about the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil platform disaster off the coast of Louisiana.

But even given all that, Fabien's present odyssey seems like an extreme one. It's about putting the legacy, and the new accomplishments, on record in Jacques-Yves's name. Céline, 41, is a filmmaker, diver, Amazon River explorer, conservationist, La Prairie cosmetics spokeswoman, and new mom. During the month of the study, she will spend time topside on Key Largo with her partner, Capkin von Alphen, a diver and cameraman, and their baby, Félix. She'll dive down to the station twice and

will be a guest speaker during two Skype classroom sessions. About Félix there's a bit of jocular sibling disagreement during a recent lunch in Soho. "Fabien wants me to send Félix down in the supply pot," Céline says. "I don't think I'm going to be sending a 21-month-old down to Aquarius in that." She raises an eyebrow.

The "pot" is the small pressurized supply module that will be used by support divers to bring Fabien and his crew food, spare parts, and other such necessities.

"All I meant was that there would be plenty of room for him in

there, if he would like to come down," Fabien says. Since they are both Cousteaus, it doesn't seem wholly in jest.

To be fair, strapping a toddler into a submersible to be hurtled down to his uncle's ocean floor domicile does seem like the ultimate IMAX opener. The Weather Channel will be broadcasting regular updates on the crew's doings, and Cousteau's own production company, Bonnet Rouge (Red Hat, after his grandfather's trademark watch cap), will be shooting a documentary feature. But does that mean that the project will have a Jules Verne-style capsule for all its visitors?

"No, no," Fabien says. "We'll have visitors, but they'll dive down. The module is a perfect fit for Félix."

Fabien and his team anticipate a red carpet procession of visitors throughout the month, including pioneering oceanographer Sylvia Earle (age 78!), TED curator Chris Anderson, Richard Branson, and Jackson Browne. (Early reports had Queen Latifah scheduled to drop by, but she seems to have gotten cold feet.)

So will Browne rip into "The Pretender"? "He's not bringing his guitar," Fabien says, "but if he does sing for us, you can be sure the cameras will be rolling."

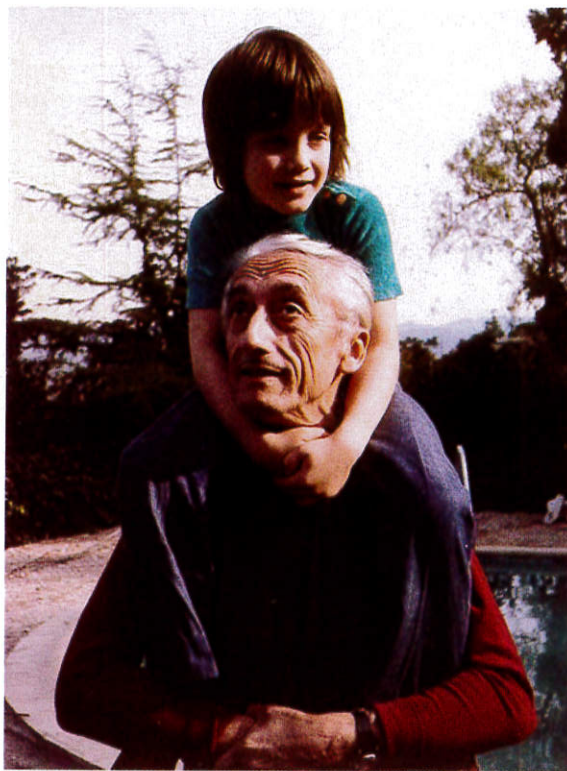
There will be regular Skype sessions with classrooms around the world, and, of course, Twitter and Facebook updates. Fabien and his merry band haven't quite figured out how—or if—a French Sunday dinner might work on the sea floor. Presumably the supply module would up its shuttle service to increase the flow of *viandes*. Although the station has instant hot water and even a shower, there's not a lot of open-flame cooking in the habitat.

**THE EXTREME LOGISTICS** of Fabien's Mission 31, as it is called, deserve study. First, the habitat: Aquarius is a very seaworthy research capsule that has been in place on the ocean floor off Key West for nigh on 20 years—so long that it has become a barnacle-encrusted part of the Conch Reef, near which it rests. It began life as a research station belonging to the

National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration and is now maintained by Florida International University.

It's a very spare, funky, heavy riveted steel tube structure on stilts—approximately 40 by 20 feet—composed of two basic chambers. One, called the "wet porch," is open at the bottom, with cabin pressure holding the sea at bay, like an inverted Dixie cup. Divers enter by swimming up into the chamber. The other, slightly more kitted-out chamber is for living and lab work. According to Fabien, there is just an estimated 300 square feet of [CONTINUED ON PAGE 220]

## THE LAST THREE LETTERS OF *Cousteau* SPELL WATER, AND IT DOES SEEM AS IF EVERY COUSTEAU HAS BEEN BORN WITH AN INVISIBLE SET OF GILLS.



**SHOULDERS OF A GIANT**  
Fabien, age three, with Jacques-Yves in 1970.





**SECOND SKINS**

Les Cousteaux dive in style. Marc Jacobs gown (\$4,800); Stephen Russell earrings (price on request); Gilan ring (\$29,000). Oceaner wetsuit (from \$380); DOXA watch (\$2,890). For details see page 221.

*Hair and makeup  
by AlexaRodulfo.com  
using La Prairie.*



## Going Deep

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 178] living space for the six mission participants, which is one reason the station was never inhabited for longer than 14 days by any of the researchers or academics who have used it in the past. It's tethered with lifelines (literally—they provide power and air) to a topside buoy. (When he isn't underwater Fabien lives in Brooklyn, where he trained for the mission at the local YMCA. Céline, evidently the more sensible one, lives in Provence.)

The larger point of Mission 31 is to catalog and explore the decimation of the coral in the great reef of the Florida National Marine Sanctuary, which Fabien and the crew will do on daily research dives of seven to nine hours, as they film. Aquarius was set down on the lip of this great reef in 1993 precisely because of the sanctuary's teeming sea life. Much has changed, Fabien notes.

When they are out on their dives, Fabien and his crew will be "saturation diving," as it's called—diving while saturated with nitrogen as a result of beginning the dive already at depth. In other words, you're not coming from the surface, and you're not returning to the surface, so your blood doesn't boil with bubbles of gas, a condition known as the bends. Staying saturated with nitrogen for a month has rarely been done—except, of course, by Fabien's fabulous grandfather, 50 years ago.

"We will be studying the effects of full-on nitrogen for more than a month on the body. We're hoping to collect some good data on all that," Fabien says. "Should anything go really wrong, we have a decompression chamber at hand. This helps a diver in the event that he or she must surface more rapidly than usual. Normally it takes 18 hours."

Days inside Aquarius will be tightly regimented. Dinner and bedtime happen early, since living underwater tends to make people sleepy. Quarters are tight, with the six aquanauts sleeping in bunks. Clothes, I ask?

"Some shorts?" Fabien jokes. "Fleece. Garments will be technical—we're spending most of our time diving. Calories are important. We need more than 3,000 calories a day in this environment because it will be so cold. Your body ramps up the calorie burn to stay warm. So the main thing will be food."

Which I'm assuming will include some succulent mountaineering and space food, I say.

"Yes," Fabien says brightly. "I think the

diet is going to be quite rough, but we're all able to do it. I'm looking forward to the aquanaut's ice cream."

The conditions of such an extended stay at depth affect, of course, everything that an aquanaut does. One inevitable thing about the human body processing 3,000 or more calories a day, I say, is that it also needs to process them out.

"Well, yes, the...ahhh... 'toilet' for the mission is a ways away, and also open," Fabien says diplomatically.

Open?

"Some of the fish, the sergeants major in particular, have gotten quite aggressive," Fabien says, "so the scientists that were using the toilet created a bubble curtain. It's a constant supply of bubbles around the toilet that shields you in your intimate moments from attack. The fish won't go through the bubbles. Well, some of them do, because they've been

SPENDING TIME  
WITH THE  
COUSTEAUS, YOU  
WIND UP  
THINKING ABOUT  
LAND IN A  
DIFFERENT WAY:  
THE PLACE WE  
JUMP OFF FROM,  
INTO THE *world*  
OF WATER.

trained by now, after 20 years, to know that food lies beyond the curtain. But not as many get through to attack as before the bubbles were there."

"Attack?" I ask.

"Well, yes," Fabien smiles. "Apparently it's a real problem."

"So," I say, "it's not really a toilet so much as it is an area."

"Right," he says, "but it's kind of a designated area that you have to swim to."

"Okay, so you're strapping on scuba gear to get to the toilet," I say.

"That's right," says the aquaman.

This is the moment when we can really begin to grasp the space station level of commitment at which the Cousteaus operate under the ocean. It's apt, I suppose, for the grandchildren of the co-inventor of scuba diving

itself to be relieving themselves amid schools of ravenous flesh-nibbling fish. Why not? For them it's just as easy as walking through a fully oxygenated environment to the loo.

Among the major tenets of all the Cousteau expeditions in the last half century have been conservation and sustainability, exemplified by Céline, through her work in the Amazon, and Fabien, who is striving through his foundation, Plant a Fish, and his educational efforts to reverse deterioration of the great coral reefs around the world. (Their cousin Alexandra Cousteau founded Blue Legacy, an organization dedicated to protecting marine life and freshwater, and consults for the non-profit Oceana.)

"I can tell you that in my early life I saw much, much more robust populations than we see on dives now," Fabien says. "It almost doesn't matter where. We cannot tell if we are doing the damage or whether we're watching the dying out of a species. People think that coral is a bone, that it's dried out, it's dead. They don't understand that it's a living organism that feeds so many others. The Great Florida Reef is so very reduced from what it was. We're hoping to catalog at least some of that loss."

To mangle Tolstoy, different families express their energies in different ways. We could say that we might have predicted that these particular people would be as passionate and as engaged with the ocean in their day as their famous *grand-père* was in his. But it's not an automatic thing, a dynasty, and they often fail. In everything from department store empires to football franchises to entertainment families (Frank Sinatra Jr. comes to mind), the scions often can't seem to muster the energy or force of the founder.

In the instance of the Cousteaus, it's the conservation of the waterworld—the ecosystem in which we live, not some external product or service for sale—that is the central family passion. This is one of the keys to their success. When you sit with Céline and Fabien as they discuss Mission 31—or any of their other myriad oceanographic, philanthropic, or ecological efforts—you wind up thinking about land in a different way. Land is the place we jump off from, into the world of water.

"I never thought that I would be leading expeditions up into the Amazon, as I'll do in 2014," Céline says. "But here I am, married to a diver, taking a film crew, heading up the big river I traveled with my grandfather as a child."

Precisely. What's interesting and energetic and so very much fun about the Cousteaus is that they always seem to be swimming upstream, toward home. ●