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Real-Life Adventurer Fabien Cousteau Talks Exploration & Saving Our Oceans

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by Leslie Good · April 27, 2016



Aquanaut, oceanographic explorer, conservationist, and documentary filmmaker. Fabien Cousteau, the first grandson of Jacques-Yves Cousteau, continues to fulfill his family's legacy to protect and preserve the beautiful blue parts of the our planet. With the launch of his [new non-profit](#), Fabien is setting out to educate the public about the misconceptions of the ocean and marine life.

He wants to spread his philosophy about appreciating the subtle things that make our planet special in a fun, non-traditional way. We caught up with Fabien (at the fitting Maritime Hotel) to get some insight into his undersea adventures, his love for this planet and how he thinks it is more fun to get wet and dirty while learning.

[Photos by Wendy Ploger]

The Guest List



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[<](#) 3 of 8 [>](#)



What are your main hopes for your new non-profit, the Fabien Cousteau Ocean Learning Center?

To create human-ocean connections through educational experiences and sharing. Whenever I hear the word 'education,' it brings up ideas of traditional educational platforms. But the Ocean Learning Center fuses hard factual science and an educational type curriculum with experiential learning. I hope this structure engages young people and some of the young at heart with different parts of the world.

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What is the most important thing you've learned from your family's dedication to their work?

Several things. This first is a quote from my grandpa: "People protect what they love, they love what they understand, and they understand what they are taught." Nothing is impossible. The word impossible should just be stricken from the dictionary, it is just an excuse not to do something. If people are put to a task, it can be a miracle and awards come from those challenges. Philosophies that run through the expeditions are about exploring where no person has gone before. It is all a part of the journey, really showing that nothing is impossible. All risks and challenges and the reward - on a personal, business and environmental conservation level - are all worth it when they come together as one.



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< 5 of 8 >

As quite the voyager/adventurer/traveler, what are some of the most memorable spots you've visited?

We forget that beauty is in the alien, the different, the curious. We get so wrapped up in our lives that we forget to look outside our own box. The beauty of being on this planet is reveling in the miracle in us existing. As much of a tech freak as I am, if we just stop and just absorb how miraculous life is, whether it is city or a forest or the ocean, you realize how many subtle things make us possible.



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What are the best and worst things about heading out on a month long undersea expedition?

Leaving family and friends is always difficult. It is easier now with Facetime and technology, but we still disconnect out there. It is hard to be away from loved ones. There are definitely risks in our career that need to be mitigated, like something goes wrong, someone gets hurt or there is a major problem. I'm an adventurer, and those things are temporarily considered as negatives, but those things get erased when we go home. You get rewarded when you head off because of the experience is the ultimate reward.



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[<](#) *7 of 8* [>](#)



Living in a world where climate change and global warming are just the start of our environmental problems, what are the top issues people should be paying far more attention to?

I think if we keep in mind the big topics, like climate change, as a background and then focus on the things we can do. We can tackle the local problems. Making our efforts attainable in our daily lives so that in doing so we fill that buck of making changes one drop at a time. That will make a big difference in the global scheme of global warming.

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< 8 of 8 >

What are you most excited for next?

This generation in the last 10 to 15 years is very hopeful. They have tools now we just didn't, more intuitive with the environment and are able to communicate globally in real time. This is really exciting for me because it is a great time to make big changes, and I do believe that the challenges are larger now but we now know what is going on and what we have to do. We have a new generation of motivated young people that have the advanced tools available to them who are really motivating the public at large with their experiences, challenges and innovations. Personally, I am ready for the next adventure with other like minded people and giving back a planet in better shape than we got it. I am ready to give back what we've taken for granted.

