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DARWIN TO BALI - 19 DAY KIMBERLEY & INDONESIA LUXURY CRUISE

Explore Kimberley's iconic red coast, where towering cliffs cascade to sapphire seas. Sail from Darwin - famous for crocodiles and Aboriginal culture - for Indonesia, to hop between gorgeous snorkel spots like the reefs and glowing waters of Pulau Kital and Pulau Tellang. Rub your eyes in disbelief at the rose-coloured sands on Pink Beach, and come face-to-face with Komodo's legendary residents, before arriving amid Bali's rice paddies.



ITINERARY

Day 1 Pre Cruise

Day 2 Darwin

"Australia's capital of the north is a uniquely tropical city, and a historically isolated outpost of this vast, diverse country. Reaching up towards the equator, a full 2,000 miles from Sydney and Melbourne, the city was named in honour of Charles

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Darwin by the British settlers who established a frontier outpost here. With a unique history, beautiful islands nearby, and a palette of sizzling Pacific flavours, colourful Darwin is an enchanting and exotic Australian destination. Crocodiles patrol the jungled waterways and tropical rainforests around Australia's gateway to the Top End. Explore via airboat to look down on the veiny waterways of the mist-laced Kakadu National Park. The sounds of chattering birdlife and the gentle splash of fountains and waterfalls will fill your ears in George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens. Soak it all in, before kicking back and relaxing with a picnic and a crackling barbecue. The sunshine and famous tropical pink sunsets mean many visitors naturally gravitate to the city's soft sands to relax at spots like pretty Mindil Beach, as evening approaches. The adjoining market is filled with souvenirs and crafts stands and is the perfect great place to enjoy some fiery Asian flavours. Stroll the stalls, grab some food, and crack open an ice-frosted beer as the sunset show begins. It may be remote, but Darwin found itself on the front line during the Pacific War, as the Japanese air force unloaded their bombs onto the city in 1942. This relaxed unassuming city has a deeply resilient backbone, however, and you can explore the museums to learn more of the war's impact on Darwin, as well as the devastating effects of one of Australia's worst natural disasters, Cyclone Tracy in 1973."

Day 3 Koolama Bay

Koolama Bay is found at the mouth of the King George River. Named after the ship that had been beached here after a Japanese aerial attack during World War II, Koolama Bay is the starting point for a Zodiac cruise to reach the King George Falls, one of the Kimberley's most magnificent natural wonders. At 260 feet (80 m), the twin cascades are among the highest in

Australia. Koolama Bay and the river weaving through an amazing landscape of near vertical red rock formations will offer a parade of wildlife —saltwater crocodiles and amazing birdlife, including giant raptors and the Brahminy Kite.

Day 4 Vansittart Bay (Jar Island)

Vansittart Bay is located near the northern tip of Western Australia. The bay was named by Phillip Parker King during one of his four surveys of Northern Australia during the early 19th century. Interesting parts of the bay include Jar Island and the opportunity to view Bradshaw (Gwion Gwion) and Wandjina styles of rock art. For these two different rock art styles there are two sites in close proximity. An area with an example of a more recent history is the Anjo Peninsula. A beach landing and a short hike across a lagoon or -depending on tides- a walk around the lagoon will lead to a World War II site. An almost intact wreck of an old airplane, a C-53, can be seen there.

Day 5 Hunter River Region (Western Australia)

The Hunter River is home to an immense mangrove system surrounded by soaring red sandstone cliffs. Narrow mangrove channels shelter numerous bird species, mudskippers, fiddler crabs and the infamous saltwater crocodile; the most aggressive crocodile species known to man. Naturalist Island at the mouth of the river has a stunning stretch of sandy beach that makes a perfect landing site for small helicopters that can pick up visitors wishing to explore some of the Kimberley's vast interior. The highlight inland is the famous Mitchell Falls where four tiers of waterfalls plunge into deep pools that flow out into the mighty Mitchell River. The headwaters of the falls are cool and a dip in the fresh water is a welcome reprieve from the heat of the heartland.



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Day 6 Freshwater Cove, Kimberley, Western Australia & Montgomery Reef

Adjacent to Montgomery Reef, but on the mainland, Freshwater Cove – locally known as Wijingarra Butt Butt. Aboriginal guides will welcome guests with a traditional ochre welcome on the beach. The rock formations that can be seen along the shore represent spiritual ancestors relating to the great Wandjina battle. Caves with rock art are found in the vicinity, but can only be visited with local guides. Montgomery Reef, which is some 300 square kilometres in size, can show an amazing tidal change of up to 4 metres. When the tide drops, the reef seems to rise out of the water. At low tide a river is exposed that allows access to an amazing semi-submerged world. When the tide continues to ebb, Zodiacs will be used to make the way to the edge of the reef where one is surrounded by cascading waterfalls up to 3 metres high. Continuing up the river one is able to look at the abundance of reef birds and sea creatures including turtles and manta rays. A visit to Montgomery Reef is very much tide-dependent, but truly a once in a lifetime experience.

Day 7 Lacepedes Islands

Declared an A-class nature reserve in 1970, the Lacapède Islands are a little paradise for bird lovers. Its brown booby colony, possibly the largest on the planet, awaits you with a joyful cacophony. Even if located just off the impressive Kimberley Coast, an expedition to the Lacepedes feels like discovering a wild and remote place. If some might call them 'Australia's Galapagos', they were actually named after French naturalist Bernard Germain de Lacépède, who studied many Australian fish species. Before becoming a protected natural reserve, the Lacepedes also witnessed bleak moments - the islands used to be the place where kidnapped Aborigines were held before being sent to work in the pearl industry. Their unique

location makes the Lacepedes an important breeding centre for many birds and marine life species. Masked Boobies, Australian Pelicans, Lesser Frigate Birds but also the endangered Green Turtle populate the islands. Our Zodiac excursions are the most ideal way to admire the ballet of birds flying in this stunning West Australian scenery. Nature lovers or not, prepare to be amazed.

Day 8 Day at sea

Days at sea are the perfect opportunity to relax, unwind and catch up with what you've been meaning to do. So whether that is going to the gym, visiting the spa, whale watching, catching up on your reading or simply topping up your tan, these blue sea days are the perfect balance to busy days spent exploring shore side.

Day 9 Pulau Semau

The exotic Indonesian island of Pulau Semau is a haven of unspoiled and blissfully deserted beaches nestled among the Lesser Sunda Islands. Separated by a narrow channel from bustling Kupang City, Pulau Semau waits patiently beyond the busy tourist trails and invites you to explore an undeveloped paradise of authentic Indonesian island life. Delve into vast expanses of pristine white sand, where green coconut groves slope lazily towards the crystal-clear turquoise waters, or snap photos of deserted dream-like beaches in the afternoon sun's rays. Taste the island's juiciest riches through splashes of fresh watermelon and mango and savour the refreshment that floods from freshly cracked coconuts. There's a lot to keep you busy, especially incredible swimming and snorkelling opportunities among the gentle offshore waves. Enter a world of flitting tropical fish and coral reefs waiting in the clear waters. Or you can ascend to the heights of Liman Hill - where a stunning

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viewpoint provides a beautiful overview of this tranquil island escape. Soak in a dazzling panorama of blissful shorelines and intense colours.

Day 10 Kalabahi (for Takpala) & Alor

Kalabahi is the capital and main seaport of Alor Island, the largest landmass in the Alor archipelago. Roughly 60,000 inhabitants call Kalabahi home and enjoy a wide variety of goods and services available here. Kalabahi has grown as a town in part because it is situated on some of the only level ground on the volcanic and rugged island of Alor. Inland from Kalabahi is the small traditional village of Takpala. The attractive rustic homes of the village are open and airy, and the Abui people living here harvest, dry, roast and grind their coffee by hand. The traditional dances and welcome ceremonies express a close-knit society cultivated in this tranquil setting. Listen to any experienced photographer or explorer in Indonesia, and they'll whisper of Alor in hushed, reverent tones. Less hyped but no less enchanting than its better-known island cousins like Bali and Lombok, Alor is a true treasure of the Coral Triangle. Leave the crowds behind and explore a land of acute beauty with blissfully deserted beaches, tucked-away coves, and crisp lagoons. Swim and snorkel to your heart's content in thriving marine hotspots, where you might encounter majestic playful dolphins, elegant manta rays and a dazzling array of tropical fish species. The clear, turquoise waters reveal a vivid world filled with colour and captivating movement. On land, you may detect the rhythms of hourglass-shaped Moko drums while visiting local villages. These traditional bronze drums are central to the culture of the Alorese people and have an extraordinary and mysterious history. Venture further to explore hidden waterfalls, hike to panoramic viewpoints, kayak through serene coastal mangroves, or try your luck on fishing trips.

Day 11 Pulau Kital & Pulau Tellang

Pulau Tellang is a tiny island of Indonesia, located just next to Pulau Maopara. Pulau Tellang is part of the small Barat Daya archipelago and stretches less than a mile across. The hilly terrain of the island was created by ancient volcanic activity; it reaches to a modest 600 feet in some places, which makes it a lovely spot to visit and hike to view its fauna and lush vegetation. The island lies on the southern edge of the Banda Sea, where visitors can rest on the pristine, rarely visited beach.

Day 12 Pulau Hoga

Close your eyes and breathe in deep - you can almost hear the gentle lapping of the waves on Hoga Island, a spectacular vision of untouched white sand beaches and reclining coconut groves. The trappings of modern life are instantly lost on this remote island, where roads and WiFi routers are replaced by stilted bungalows, jungle tracks, and glistening waves. Drift through brilliant blue waters, streaked with ribbons of turquoise, on a canoe, spotting fish flitting past just below the crystal-clear surface. Located southeast of Sulawesi Island, Hoga Island is a gateway to some extraordinary underwater delights. Enter the waters with your snorkel gear strapped on, and you'll be astounded by the sheer diversity of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Wakatobi National Park. Look into a world-class underwater universe, viewing habitats teeming with fantastical coral creatures. Clean, clear waters provide a window of startling sharpness as you swim and snorkel above the colourful reefs that conceal elegant seahorses, graceful hawksbill turtles, and stonefish. Back on land, look out for scuttling coconut crabs and enjoy relaxing beach strolls.

Day 13 Bau-Bau

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Buton Island seems to be small compared to its neighbor Sulawesi, but with slightly more than 4,400 square kilometers (just under 1,700 square miles) it is Indonesia's 19th largest island. Much of the lowland consists of uplifted karst and other limestone formations. Due to its hilly topography it still has a considerable amount of forest; most of it is seasonal tropical lowland forest with mangroves in coastal areas. Visitors to Bau-Bau, the main city on Buton Island, may well be welcomed with a mangaru, which is a welcome dance performed by three men to respect guests and to ward off enemies. Overlooking Bau-Bau is Benteng Keraton Buton, known as having been the seat of the sultan. Claiming to be the biggest fort in Indonesia and made of coral blocks, it commands an excellent view over the city and port and the sea beyond.

Day 14 Palopo Sulawesi (Gateway for Tana Toraja)

Palopo is a municipality in the South Sulawesi Province of Indonesia, with a population of approximately 150,000. The city has an ancient history dating back to its founding in the early 1600s. The port has always had a trade link to the highlands of Sulawesi known as Tana Toraja, and a physical link through a twisting mountain pass making it a perfect gateway to Toraja. The land of Toraja is an ancient and mysterious place where residents adorn their homes with the horns of water buffalo killed in funeral ceremonies and ornate carvings painted in bold reds and black. In many ways the Tana Toraja customs of honoring the dead dictate their ways of life. Human remains rest in stone chambers in the hillsides and burial caves high in the cliffs. Elaborate funeral ceremonies which can take months or even years to prepare can go on for days and can draw hundreds of people in a festival-like atmosphere.

Day 15 Day at sea

Days at sea are the perfect opportunity to relax, unwind and catch up with what you've been meaning to do. So whether that is going to the gym, visiting the spa, whale watching, catching up on your reading or simply topping up your tan, these blue sea days are the perfect balance to busy days spent exploring shore side.

Day 16 Komodo Island & Pink Beach, Komodo

Komodo, the volcanic island of giant lizards, lies 320 miles (515 kilometres) east of Bali. Komodo is 25 miles (40 kilometres) long and 12 miles (19 kilometres) wide; its parched hills ascend to a height of 2,410 feet (734 metres). Komodo is home to a community of some 2000 people who make their living primarily from fishing. The island is the centrepiece of the Komodo National Park, where you will find the most tangible legacy left behind from the Jurassic Era. Komodo Island was little-known and the Komodo dragons were only a myth until the giant lizards were scientifically described in 1912. Extinct almost everywhere else, the island attracts thousands of visitors from all over the world who come to see the Komodo dragons in their natural habitat. Komodo National Park has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve. The Komodo dragon's great bulk and weight are its most unique characteristics; even hatchlings average 20 inches (51 centimetres) in length. The adult male can reach 10 feet (3 metres) and weigh up to 330 pounds (150 kilos). Females attain only two-thirds of this size, and lay up to 30 eggs at a time. With their saw-like teeth, these fierce creatures are able to rip apart a deer, goat or wild pig. The animals have an uncanny sense of smell, and are considered among the world's most intelligent reptiles. They are quite agile over short distances, and can move swiftly to capture their prey. The Indonesian

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Directorate of Nature Conservation (PPA) administers Komodo National Park. Park Rangers must escort all visitors; independent exploration of the park is not permitted. Pink Beach earned its name for the way the beach can appear to have a rosy hue in certain lights. The color comes from small flecks of red coral mixed in with the fine white reef sand. With a few trees along the beach for shade, this stretch of coast makes a fine place to relax or enjoy a snorkel or dive in the crystal clear waters. It is possible to spot a striped clown fish nestled among the protective tentacles of its sea anemone host, or to see a grouper lazily swimming by a flamboyant soft coral. The reef here is now protected by law and the maturing corals are a joy to behold.

Day 17 Pulau Satonda

Just when you think you've seen it all, a heavenly halo of an island like Pulau Satonda comes along. Appearing like a mirage from the intense turquoise waters of the Flores Sea, Pulau Satonda is an impossibly aesthetic ring of jungle-clad slopes, embracing a volcanic crater of tranquil water. Snorkel the reefs that encircle the island, or strap your boots on to hike up to the ridge. Trek with monkeys scuttling above and trees sagging under the weight of sleeping bats for the best, elevated views of the still interior lake. Formed by the machinations of underwater volcanic activity, the island's central crater dips to a depth of 86 metres. Shrouded in local legend and tradition, Pulau Satonda has many tales to share. It was a close witness to the unimaginable ferocity of Mount Tambora's wrath, and that ominously beautiful volcano cone is visible from the sandy beaches to the south of the island. Mount Tambora's fury devastated the entire planet, with the largest eruption in recorded history. The catastrophic explosion caused the Year

Without a Summer in 1816, darkening and subduing skies around the world with ash. It's theorised that a tsunami triggered by the eruption washed a wave of salt water to Pulau Satonda's previously fresh-water lake. Dip into the refreshing waters, or make an offering on the shore by hanging a stone on a branch. If your wish comes true, you are obligated to travel back to give thanks - but a return trip to a place as beautiful as this is certainly no burden.

Day 18 Benoa, Bali

Bali. A.k.a. Island of the Gods, Land of a thousand temples or the World's last paradise. As superlative as these monikers may sound, they do not do justice to the actual reality of the island. Bali is as good as everyone says - verdant mountains with terraced rice fields in one direction, black sand beaches in another and captivating people that will leave even the most seasoned traveller humbled. If you're looking for a Garden of Eden that really does have it everything, Bali ticks all the boxes. The rich and diverse culture of the island is what sets Bali apart from Indonesia's (many) other tropical paradises. The country's estimated 10,000 Buddhist-Hindu temples, with their daily offerings of lotus flowers and fruit are testament to the gentleness of the islander's belief. Then there is the vibrant arts and crafts scene, notably in Ubud in the centre of the island, but prolific everywhere. Ideal souvenirs to bring back range from gorgeous silver jewellery to intricate wood carvings. Additionally, do try to see a traditional dance if possible, particularly if accompanied to local gamelan music. No one could mention Bali without mentioning the food. Dishes range from elaborate meals to street food bites, but all are without exception ambrosia. Do not miss out on tasting a succulent chicken satay, betutu (apparently the King's favourite meal) and sambal



matah. But whatever you decide to discover, you can be assured of a taste sensation that will remain with you long after you have returned home.

Day 19 Post Cruise

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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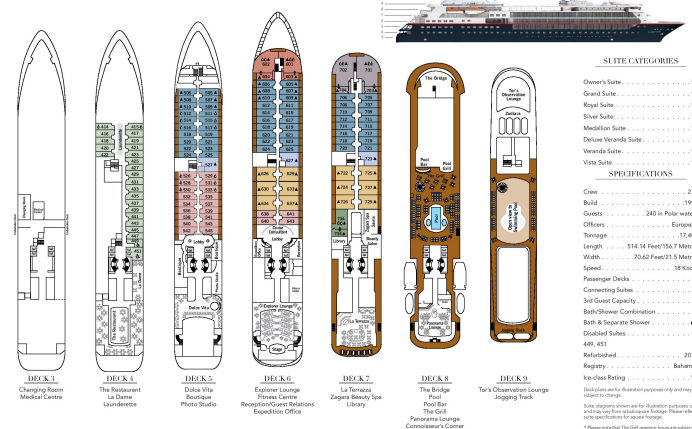
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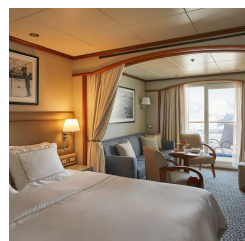
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