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ANCIENT CULTURES OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA WITH PONANT

This PONANT 12-day Expedition cruise aboard *Le Soléal* will take you to discover the wonders of Papua New Guinea. Departing from Honiara, embark for an extraordinary adventure to discover very rich local cultures and exceptional underwater life. *Le Soléal* will set sail for Papua New Guinea, a fascinating land that is home to no fewer than 700 ethnic groups within a highly diverse yet mainly unexplored, ecosystem. You will visit the Autonomous region of Bougainville, a unique group of islands that are ecologically and geographically part of the Solomon Islands archipelago but not politically part of the nation of Solomon Islands. Located on the island of New Britain, the port town of Rabaul is famous for its spectacular volcanic setting. From there, you will set off to observe Mount Tavurvur, the region's most active volcano. Your call at Tufi, will undoubtedly be one of the highlights of your voyage. You will fall under the charm of this picturesque region, dubbed the 'Scandinavia of the Tropics' with its deep fiords through volcanic activity. In this unique setting the local Papuan tribes will share their customs, beliefs and artwork with you. After a last call in Samarai Island, your trip aboard *Le Soléal* will end in Cairns.



ITINERARY

Day 1 HONIARA, GUADALCANAL ISLAND

Honiara is the capital city of The Solomon Islands, administered as a provincial town on the north-western coast of Guadalcanal Island. Honiara comes from the local Ghari Language "naho-ni-ara" meaning 'facing the ara', the place where the southeast winds meet the land. Discover this city, its beautiful landscape, and the significant role it played in World War II. Particularly The Battle of Henderson Field, the last of the three major land offensives conducted by the Japanese in 1942.

Day 2 AT SEA

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in



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the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

Days 3 - 4 BOUGAINVILLE

The Autonomous Region of Bougainville, formerly known as the North Solomons Province, has been known for its picture-perfect beaches and bays since French explorer Louis-Antoine de Bougainville first sighted the island and gave it its name in 1768. The region played a significant role in the Pacific theatre of war during WWII. With 685 km of coastline and 240,000ha of coral reefs teeming with life there are many destinations awaiting discovery.

Day 5 RABAUL, BISMARCK ARCHIPELAGO

Set at the eastern end of the island of New Britain, the tropical port town of Rabaul has always been famous for its spectacular setting. Nestled beside Simpson Harbour, the township is surrounded by six volcanoes, one of which, Mt Tavurvur, is still active today. The most recent major volcanic eruption was in September 1994 when Tavurvur and Vulcan covered much of Rabaul and surrounding villages with volcanic ash. This eruption saw the growth of the nearby coastal town of Kokopo which has now become the administrative and tourism centre for Rabaul. Join your expedition team for a tour by local transport to see Mt Tavurvur, the Volcano Observatory and various significant sites

from World War II.

Day 6 AT SEA

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

Day 7 MADANG

Madang Township was once known as the "prettiest town in the South Pacific". Its peninsula setting is a show-place of parks, waterways, luxuriant shade trees and sparkling tropical islands. The diverse geographical nature of Madang province is reflected in the 170 different languages that are spoken. This diversity is showcased in the Madang festival with its colourful displays of "sing sings" performed by numerous cultural groups from across the Madang Province. Today, you will also be treated to a number of cultural performances showcasing the local customs, costume and dance of the coastal, midland and highland communities.

Day 8 TAMI ISLANDS

The Tami Islands (Kalal, Wanam & Idjan) are a small group of uplifted coral atolls, with two main villages on the two larger islands and many smaller reefs and cays. In the centre is a



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beautiful, crystal clear blue lagoon with abundant marine life and stunning coral formations. The islands, located in Morobe Province not far from the town of Finschhafen are seldom-visited. Tami Islanders are renowned artisans and are most famous for their intricately decorated bowls.

Day 9 TUFU

Often described as the “Scandinavia of the tropics”. The spectacular Tufi “fiords” plunge over 90 metres deep and rise over 150 metres vertically above the water making for a spectacular backdrop. The traditional way of life plays an important role amongst the villagers with many living in isolated areas along the coast of Cape Nelson and on the slopes of Mount Trafalgar. The area is known for its production of tapa cloth, made from the bark of the paper mulberry tree and skilfully decorated. Guests will travel into the ancient mangrove forests of the Fiords to witness one of the most colourful traditional performances in all of Papua New Guinea. There is also the opportunity to swim and snorkel in the clear waters of Kamoa Beach.

Day 10 SAMARAI ISLAND

The Samarai islands are located in the China Strait off the south-eastern tip of New Guinea. In its colonial heyday it was said to be one of the most beautiful places in the Pacific. The island was declared a National Historical Heritage Island by the government of Papua New Guinea in 2006. Just 3km west of Samarai, Kwato Island was once an educational centre and home to a thriving boat building industry. Following the old tree-lined road to the top of the island reveals a stonewalled church that was built in 1937 and remains a testimony to the missionaries of a bygone era. Join your expedition team for a guided walk on Samarai and Kwato Islands. You also will enjoy

swimming and snorkelling on nearby Deka Deka island.

Day 11 AT SEA

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Day 12 CAIRNS

Washed by the Coral Sea, the harbour town of Cairns is located on Australia's north-east coast. The seafront esplanade is a popular place for locals and visitors to walk, swim and picnic under the shade of swaying palm trees. The hills surrounding Cairns form the gateway to the Queensland Rainforests, proclaimed a UNESCO World Heritage site for their fauna and flora from the Gondwana era.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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YOUR SHIP: LE LAPEROUSE

YOUR SHIP: Le Laperouse

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Featuring innovative and environmentally-friendly equipment, elegantly designed cabins, spacious suites with large windows, and lounge areas that open onto the outside, this new limited-capacity yacht boasting just 92 cabins and suites will offer you a truly unique cruising experience. Aboard this ship that flies the French flag, you will experience the incomparable pleasure of an intimate cruise, with the possibility of exploring an ever-increasing range of destinations in an ethnic-chic ambiance with luxury service. Experience a luxurious setting where the accent is on authenticity and passion for travel. **RESTAURANTS** As it is an essential part of French culture, gastronomy will naturally have pride of place aboard this new ship. Through its two restaurants, Le Laperouse will invite you on a journey to elegance and epicureanism. In a relaxed atmosphere, a first dining area located on Deck 3 and able to seat 70 will serve grilled meats daily, along with a variety of salads and desserts. To the back of Deck 4, you will find a 260 m² panoramic restaurant which can accommodate all of our passengers in a single sitting. Designed differently to that on our other ships, this dining area, which opens onto the outside, will have a buffet of salads, desserts and cheeses at your disposal.

Our discreet and attentive crew will provide table service for hot meals. **PUBLIC AREAS** Le Laperouse has many common areas that are designed and equipped to meet all of your needs while preserving the intimacy of each passenger. A 140 m² reception area includes: A reception/concierge desk, An excursions desk, The ship's administrative services, The sales office, manned by our Guest Relations Officer, Our 50 m² boutique which sells clothing, jewellery, beauty products, postcards and various accessories, Toilets accessible to passengers with reduced mobility. A new hydraulic platform with adjustable height provides: Easier boarding than on any other cruise ship, Easier Zodiac embarkation and disembarkation for expeditions, Easier access to the sea for swimming and practising various water sports such as kayaking or paddle-boarding. A pool deck offering: A pool with a panoramic view, equipped with a counter-current swimming system, A pleasant solarium, An outdoor bar and lounge with armchairs and sofas. A 200 m² main lounge which can accommodate all of our passengers to share convivial moments and to host activities organised during the day or evening. Lastly, a theatre that seats 188, equipped with: The latest sound and lighting technology, A LED wall as the stage backdrop, for the projection of high-resolution images and videos. Please click the following links to read more about Ponant and the other Ponant



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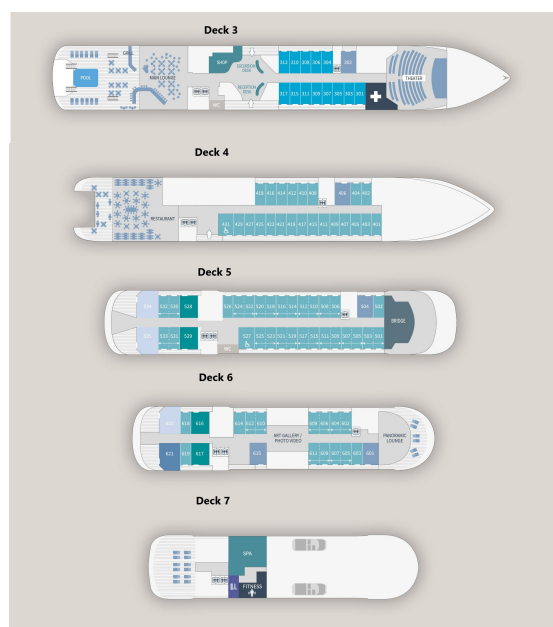
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PRICING

ADDITIONAL CHARGES:

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