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AUTHENTIC SHORES OF SICILY - LUXURY CRUISE FROM VALETTA

Majestic volcanoes, fertile valleys, emblematic ancient sites, enchanting islands... Set off to discover the treasures of the eastern coast of Sicily and the Maltese shores. During these 8 days of travel , Le Boréal will take you to discover mythical sites at the crossroads of eastern and western civilisations. Throughout your journey, you will benefit from an excursion included per person per port of call, to choose from a selection offered by PONANT. During this cruise, discover the Greco-Roman theatre of Taormina and its spectacular views over Mount Etna; dive into Sicilian baroque architecture with a visit to the village of Noto from Syracuse ; or admire Reggio Calabria and the famous Riace bronzes during a visit to its prestigious National Museum of Magna Graecia. The diversity of experiences on offer promises you intense and varied moments (to discover the full range of excursions, go to the itinerary tab). You will begin your cruise in Valletta. This capital, a UNESCO World Heritage Site , is home to many historical sites: St John's Cathedral, the Grandmaster's Palace and the churches of Our Lady of Victory, Saint Catherine and il Gesu. Setting sail from Malta, your next stop is Taormina , overlooking Etna 's blanket of snow. Its streets will lead you to its famed ancient Greek theatre , where the quality of the acoustics is exceptional. Le Boréal will set sail north-east, to the tip of the Italian boot, for Reggio de Calabre. Fall under the spell of the fragrance of bergamot, the citrus fruit that dominates the region, in this charming city with its Art Nouveau and Belle Époque influences, as well as the outstanding panoramas provided by the lungomare , the sea front promenade, of the Sicilian coastline and Etna. A cultural jewel of Sicily , Palermo is a splendid witness to three thousand

years of history where you will be able to visit emblematic landmarks such as the 12th-century cathedral and Teatro Massimo , one of the largest theatres in Europe. A little further north, you will discover the Aeolian islands. Lipari is the capital of the Aeolian volcanic archipelago and is renowned for its many natural and architectural gems. Then, you will set sail for Syracuse , one of the most prestigious Sicilian cities, whose monuments are listed as a UNESCO World Heritage. Then you will head for Malta and Gozo , an unspoiled island that is home to a megalithic site listed with UNESCO. On foot, kayak or bike, explore the island and its spectacular scenery, from the endless turquoise sea to the dreamlike decor of the salt marshes. Do not miss your chance to taste the local wines. Your cruise will come to an end in Valletta , former stronghold of the Knights of the





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Order of Malta.

ITINERARY

Day 1 - Valletta

The whole of the Maltese capital Valletta is UNESCO World Heritage listed and occupies a peninsula in the north-east of the island. From the fountain of Tritons to Saint-Elme fort, there are as many majestic streets as there are narrow staircase vennels to explore. The painted loggia and carved corbels on the tall houses will accompany you in your explorations, and you'll rarely be bothered by traffic. You can visit the Grandmasters palace decorated with coats of arms and frescoes. Saint-John's cathedral and the ramparts which have guarded the city since the 16th century are also among the most emblematic sites of the city. Arranged in terraces, the Barrakka Gardens will punctuate your promenade with a green and floral experience.

Day 2 - Taormina, Sicily

Located on Sicily's eastern coast, in the province of Messina, the seaside town of Taormina is Sicily's Saint-Tropez, boasting heritage sites, secluded beaches and luxury shopping. You can visit its medieval centre, suspended 300 metres above sea level, where terraces offer a spectacular view of the Mediterranean Sea. Another vestige from its past are the ruins of the Greco-Roman theatre. This extremely well-preserved site attracts visitors who are fascinated by the natural beauty of the area which overlooks a turquoise bay.

Day 3 - Reggio di Calabria

At the southern tip of the Italian boot, Reggio di Calabria guards the eastern shore of the Strait of Messina. From the lungomare, the sea front promenade, there are magnificent views over Sicily, a little over 3 km away, and Etna. Rebuilt after the 1908 earthquake, Reggio is set out in a grid pattern and has Art Nouveau and Belle Époque architecture that add to its charm. And the fragrance of bergamot, the citrus fruit that dominates the region's confectionery and perfumery. A visit to the National Archaeological Museum is a must. It is one of the most important in Italy and among its collections are the famous Riace Bronzes, the stunning Greek statues dating from the 5th century BC that were found off the coast in 1972.

Day 4 - Palermo, Sicily

Palermo is the guardian of the Sicilian soul. Many have been attracted to this city, the largest capital of the Italian islands. Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans... Palermo is a rich culmination of so many cultural influences as seen in the Moorish designs on the cathedral, and the Byzantine mosaics of the Palatine chapel, which is itself housed within the precincts of the Norman palace. You will fall under the spell of the palaces, baroque splendours that grace the town with their obsolete beauty. It is thrilling to stumble upon one of those fabulous markets, high in colour, and headily picturesque.

Day 5 - Lipari, Aeolian Islands

Of the seven Aeolian islands, this is the largest and the most populated. Lying off the north coast of Sicily, in the Tyrrhenian



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sea, Lipari is one of UNESCO's marvellous World Heritage sites. Its lava stone quarries and obsidian flow of Rocce Rosse are indications of its volcanic nature. The town, the largest urban area in the whole archipelago, proudly houses its citadel and its castle, both rooted in Antiquity. If you head further into the centre, you'll be surprised to come across a Norman cathedral, complete with a magnificent baroque façade.

is now listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site: the megalithic temples of Ggantija near the town of Xaghra. An archaeological museum adjoining the site presents a number of objects that were found there. Red-sand beaches and a crystal-clear sea add to the calm and serenity of Gozo.

Day 8 - Valletta

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Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

Day 6 - Syracuse, Sicily

Its undulating rocky coastline, the endless sandy beaches, the menacing form of Mount Etna which surveys its island like a patriarch, the flowery gardens on the hillside... Sicily lays out its varied landscapes like a shopkeeper displays his wares. Described by Cicero as "the most beautiful city in the world", Syracuse was one of the most prestigious cities in Sicily and at her height was even a rival for Athens. A central city of Ancient Greece, it was home to a succession of civilisations, each of which has left their mark. The blend of Arabic, Roman, Norman, Byzantine and Spanish cultures makes Syracuse a town that is extraordinarily rich in fragrances, colours and flavours.

Day 7 - Mgarr, Gozo Island

Located to the north of Malta, a lot less urbanised than its larger sibling and protected from mass tourism, the small island of Gozo has managed to remain natural and authentic. Lush hills and valleys alternate with a mosaic of cultivated fields. The buildings, some of which are medieval, are built from honey-coloured limestone and blend in perfectly with the surrounding scenery. Gozo also boasts a unique historic site that



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YOUR SHIP: LE BOREAL

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VESSEL TYPE:

142 metres. Passenger Capacity:

**264 (in twin cabins, just 200 in
Antarctica). Built: 2011**

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Luxury Expedition / Cruise Ship A superb mega-yacht with 132 cabins, she is the fruit of the expertise of the Italian Fincantieri shipyard and French sophistication, as interpreted by designer Jean-Philippe Nuel. Le Boreal creates a unique atmosphere, a subtle blend of luxury, intimacy and well-being. The best materials, discreet elegance and a tasteful decor combined with exterior and interior lines to reflect a nautical mood. On board, soothing neutral tones are enlivened by splashes of red, our signature theme linking tradition and innovation to create personal touches in the spirit of a "private yacht". Cuisine Loyal to the great French tradition, the haute cuisine on board is worthy of the finest restaurants, where discreet, attentive service is the hallmark. Choose from two restaurants for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The Gastronomic Restaurant is situated on Le Liberte Deck and serves you French and international cuisine accompanied by fine wine. In the Grill Restaurant, you have the opportunity to eat outside and enjoy buffet lunch and themed dinner. Life On Board Whether you want to join other guests in the theatre or games area (Wii™ consoles, etc), or relax on your

own in a quiet corner of the library, Le Boreal has been designed to meet the needs of every guest. Everything has been done to preserve the independence of each guest to suit their personal tastes: lounges for lectures and shows, a spa in partnership with Carita™, but also more intimate spaces such as the library and internet corner. Comfortable cabins, nearly all with private balcony, are available for families either as triples or as communicating cabins. There is also a games area with Wii™ consoles, children's menus, and a baby-sitting service. Just as if you were on a private yacht, your time is your own to do as you please. Fitted with the latest equipment (Kinesis Wall, running machine) and in partnership with the famous Carita™ brand, the Beauty Centre on Le Boreal welcomes you for some relaxation and pampering (beauty treatments, hairdresser, hammam, balneotherapy). Wheelchairs 3 specially adapted wheelchair cabins (Deck 3 = Superior cabin no. 307, no balcony, Deck 4 = Prestige Cabin no. 407 - with balcony and Deck 5 = Prestige Cabin no 509, with balcony) and lifts to all decks/areas. Please click the following links to read more about Ponant and the other Ponant



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