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CULTURES AND NATURE IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA & LE LAPÉROUSE

This PONANT 13-day Expedition cruise aboard Le Lapérouse will take you to discover the wonders and ancestral tribes of Papua New Guinea. You will board your ship in Cairns. With its many colonial buildings, its picturesque port and its exceptional panorama of the surrounding natural environment, this city in the north-east of Australia is sure to win you over. Sail up to Alotau in Papua New Guinea's Milne Bay Province and learn about the historical significance of the area with the WWII memorial as well as Japanese and American battlegrounds, and stories of pearlers, miners and missionaries. The two volcanically active islands of Ferguson and Dobu are next on your itinerary. Join your expedition team on a walk to the DeiDei geothermal hot springs through spectacular forests, and learn about the Methodist Church of Australia, which established a mission station on Dobu Island. 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 or locally known 'rias' formed through volcanic activity. In this unique setting the local Papuan tribes will share their customs, beliefs and artwork with you. After a stopover in Tami Islands, you will head north along the coast to Madang, nicknamed the most beautiful city in the South Pacific. This captivating province features great geographical diversity and 170 different languages are spoken here. Madang's festival showcases the rich, colourful traditional performances or 'sing sings' by many of the cultural groups of the province. These include the mysterious Asaro Mudmen, who re-enact a warrior episode from their history, wearing masks of mud, their bodies coated in clay. For the first time ever, Le

Lapérouse will set sail for Dregherhafen, at the eastern end of the Huon Peninsula. You will have the chance to experience the local hospitality during discussions about their customs and traditions. In Kitava, in the Trobriand Islands, you will be welcomed by spectacular cultural performances and traditional ceremonies by the local islanders, and you will have the opportunity to snorkel and swim in the local clear and pristine waters. Learn about the traditional 'Kula' trading system on the island of Kiriwina, as well as local village life, through their spectacular cultural performances. Then you will head back to Cairns, your port of



disembarkation.



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ITINERARY

Day 1 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.

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 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 3 ALOTAU

Alotau became the provincial capital of Milne Bay in 1969 and today has a population of approximately 16,000. It serves as our port of entry into Papua New Guinea. Missionaries, miners, pearlers, Japanese and American warships have all contributed to the History of Milne Bay. Perhaps the most significant history surrounds the Battle of Milne Bay. It was here that the invading Japanese army suffered their first land defeat in the Pacific War

in 1942. A memorial park at the battle site commemorates the event. The local people are warm and welcoming resulting in one of the most relaxed, secure and easy-going towns in Papua New Guinea. Join your expedition team for a tour taking in the town markets and WWII memorials.

Day 4 FERGUSSON ISLAND & DOBU ISLAND

Fergusson is the largest island in the D'Entrecasteaux archipelago. Situated to the east of Papua New Guinea, the latter was discovered in the late 18th century by the French navigator Antoine Bruny d'Entrecasteaux. Fergusson's terrain is very mountainous, with the highest peak reaching some 2,000 metres in altitude. At the heart of this island, a tropical rainforest is home to a rich and varied flora as well as beautiful bird species, including parrots and birds of paradise. In the south, the smoke and geysers of the Dei Dei hot springs are a magical sight. Dobu Island is one of the 5 islands in the D'Entrecasteaux archipelago to the east of Papua New Guinea. It is home to several bird species, including the white cockatoo and the curl-crested manucode. The local tribes are very attached to their ancestral traditions and theirs is a matrilineal social system, dominated by maternal lineage. The Dobu Islanders are also known for practising magic rituals and witchcraft. Their language is spoken on most of the islands in the D'Entrecasteaux archipelago.

Day 5 TUFI

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



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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 6 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 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 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 DREGERHAFEN

Nestled on the Eastern edge of the Huon Peninsula the Scenic Finschhafen district was first charted by the British navigator Captain John Moresby in 1873-1874. It was the German scientist and explorer Otto Finsch who gave his name to the town in 1884. It became a colonial station with a Lutheran mission as part of the Colony of German New Guinea up until its abandonment in 1901. During the Second World War, Dragerhafen (Dreger Harbour) was used by Allied forces after the capture of Finschhafen in October 1943, becoming the main U.S. Navy PT Boat base in New Guinea until June 15, 1944. Today the villages of the Dregerhafen mainland are home to many resettled Tami Islanders, along with a mixture of local Yabim people and immigrants from the Siassi Islands and Markham Valley. Today guests will be treated to a traditional welcome and cultural performance.

Day 9 LUSANCAY ISLANDS

A Solomon Sea archipelago situated in the Milne Bay province in Papua New Guinea, the Lusancay Islands were named after the French navigator Pierre Carré de Lusancay, who participated in the D'Entrecasteaux expedition at the end of the 18th century. Protected from human impact, the Lusancay Islands are considered to be a real paradise of coral reefs and white-sand beaches, offering visitors magnificent panoramas. You will have the opportunity to swim and snorkel in the warm, tropical waters.

Day 10 TROBRIAND ISLANDS

The Trobriand Islands remain one of the most culturally intact places in the Pacific. Their unique social system is dominated by hereditary chiefs who wield tremendous power, although inheritances and lines of power are matrilineal. The Trobriands are often referred to as the 'islands of love'. A reference to the



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customs and sexual practices of the islanders during the Yam harvesting festival of Milamala. Dance and celebration continue to play an important role in society with the rhythm of the dances retaining their sensuality, despite the best efforts of missionaries. Today you will be welcomed ashore to watch an energetic cultural performance, after which you can walk to the village or swim and snorkel in the clear warm waters.

Day 11 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 center 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 12 AT SEA

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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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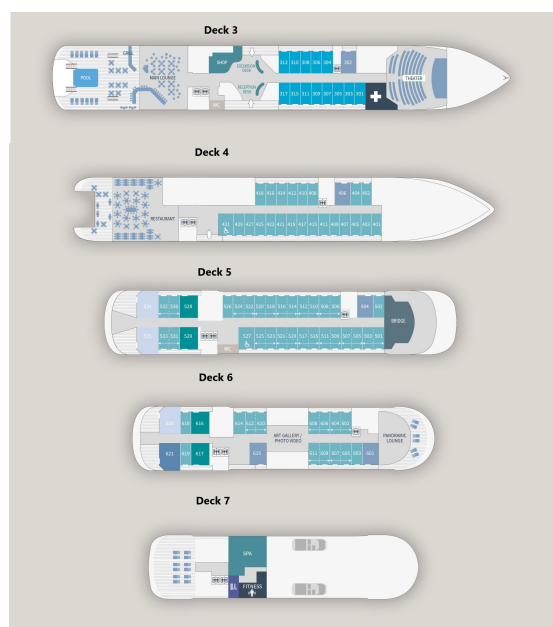
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