



DESERT & CITIES OF THE PERSIAN GULF - 8 DAYS IN SAUDI ARABIA, BAHREIN, QATAR & UAE

Let yourself be distracted, accept the improbable and respect the frivolity - like in the tales from the Arabian Nights. This is the attitude to adopt during this outstanding 8-day cruise aboard Le Bougainville. Escape into the surprising history of Arabia, an arid peninsula that has been tamed by construction, along the southern coast of the Persian Gulf, the new Arab cities that feature the desert as their backdrop. Throughout your journey, you will benefit from an excursion included per person per port of call, chosen with care by PONANT. During this cruise, visit the surprising Ithra Cultural Centre in Dammam, discover the Museum of Islamic Art and the Souq Waqif in Doha, or enjoy taking in the works of art at the Louvre Abu Dhabi Museum. The diversity of experiences on offer promises you intense and varied moments (to discover the full range of excursions, go to the itinerary tab). In this region of the world, ancient cities rub shoulders with the futuristic towns designed and shaped by the greatest contemporary architects. Dubai and its skyscrapers that are among the tallest in the world; Abu Dhabi with its Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque and its new Louvre Museum; Doha and its bay offering a panorama of its fascinating skyline: each location offers a breath-taking experience. You will discover the capital of Bahrain, Manama, which while less famous is no less exciting. As a crossroads for trade routes since ancient times, today it is also more avant-garde than its Emirate sisters. The colourful souk and the Bahrain National Museum are among its must-see sites. For the first time, you will have the opportunity to explore the Saudi city of Dammam. This modern metropolis is renowned for its pleasant waterfront and white sandy beaches; above all, though, it is the gateway to the Al Hasa oasis, a UNESCO World

Heritage Site. In the endless desert, imagine the largest oasis in the world, its fragrant gardens crossed by canals, springs and palm trees... palm trees as far as the eye can see. The Near East exudes an



incredible poetry.

ITINERARY

Day 1 DUBAI

Vertiginous, excessive, immoderate... Dubai, the largest city in the United Arab Emirates, stands out for its architectural follies. Home to the world's tallest skyscraper, the Burj Kahlifa, with a



total height of 828 metres, almost three times that of the Eiffel Tower, the city is also famous for the gigantic scale of the Palm Islands, its artificial islands in the form of a palm tree. You can explore more traditional districts not far away, with visits of the souks of Deira or the Gold Souk. Or perhaps you would prefer to discover Dubai Museum: located in an 18th-century fort, it tells the city's history from Antiquity to the present day.

Day 2 AT SEA

During your journey 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 journey without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, depending on the activities offered, or 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 DAMMAM

On the Saudi shores of the Persian Gulf, Dammam reveals its winding coastline, home to fine-sand beaches and pleasant seafront. The capital of the Eastern Province of Ash-Sharqiyah boasts a prime position along the calm waters of the Arabian Gulf. Edged with rows of palm trees facing the sea, this modern

city is also the gateway to the beautiful Al-Ahsa Oasis. Take an optional excursion into the world's largest oasis to see verdant gardens planted with countless palm trees, a sophisticated irrigation system, and archaeological sites attesting to human presence since the Neolithic period. The extraordinary landscape is listed as World Heritage by UNESCO.

Day 4 MANAMA

At the crossroads of trade routes since ancient times, Manama, the capital of Bahrain, still bears traces of what were, for centuries, the pillars of the economy in the Persian Gulf: pearl harvesting, and the construction of traditional sailing vessels called dhows. But the major draw of this small island in Bahrain is undeniably the vestiges of human presence dating back nearly 5,000 years. The ancient harbour and capital of Dilmun, Qal'at al-Bahrain, is, along with the Dilmun Burial Mounds scattered across the island, an essential relic of this Mesopotamian civilisation. Both are listed as UNESCO World Heritage. Ancient colonisations would come later, by the Assyrians, the Achaemenids, the Macedonians, then the Arabs in the Middle Ages, before the more contemporary invasions by the Portuguese, the Persians and the Ottomans. This tumultuous history now gives this small territory rich influences.

Days 5 - 6 DOHA

On the banks of the Persian Gulf, discover Doha, the capital of Qatar. Rising out of the desert, the city has managed to maintain its traditions in spite of a frantic race for modernity. The cliff bordering Doha Bay has magnificent views over the city



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centre's enormous constructions. The silhouette of the Museum of Islamic Art rises up near the quays, where the region's typical sailboats, known as dhows, are docked. This "fortress", designed by Ming Pei, the architect of the Louvre pyramid, is home to the finest collections of Islamic art in the world. Not far, the lively district of Souq Waqif and its colourful stalls are also an unmissable visit.

Day 7 ABU DHABI

The political capital of the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi stands out thanks to its exceptional cultural offering. In the Saadiyat Island district, the Louvre Abu Dhabi, designed by Jean Nouvel as a museum town inspired by traditional Arab architecture, creates a dialogue between objects and works from civilisations from all over the world around the great universal questions. A little further, the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque boasts a sumptuous decor of marble, gold and glass. Abu Dhabi is also the gateway to the Al Ain oasis and its 150,000 date palms, a remarkable testimony to the settling of nomads in the region since Neolithic times, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Day 8 DUBAI

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Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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YOUR SHIP: LE BOUGAINVILLE

YOUR SHIP:

Le Bougainville

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. As the first ship in a new series that remains true to the Ponant spirit, Le Bougainville will embody the unique atmosphere that is the cruise line's hallmark: a subtle blend of refinement, intimacy and comfort. 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 Bougainville 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** Like Le Boreal and its sisterships, Le Bougainville 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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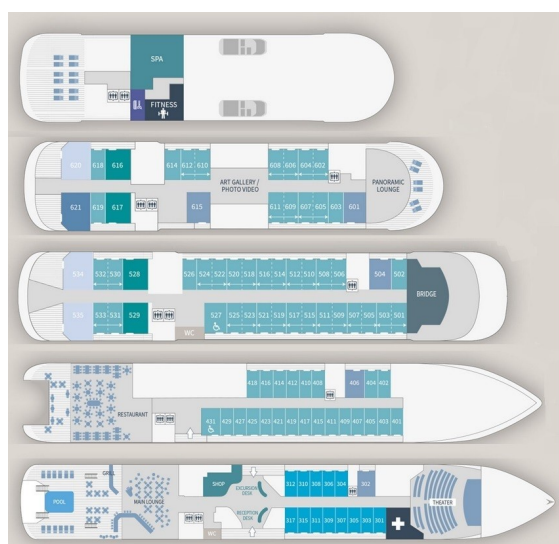
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