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AN EQUATORIAL ADVENTURE ACROSS NORTH BORNEO - 17 DAY INDONESIA CRUISE

Join us on our inaugural journey as we traverse the northern coastlines and equatorial waters of Borneo from Manila to Singapore on this 16-night voyage aboard Coral Geographer. Our journey spans the Philippines, Malaysia, the Sultanate of Brunei, Kalimantan and into Singapore. Explore rich traditional culture and customs, discover centres of evolution in ancient rainforests, connect with conservation efforts, and enjoy rarely seen aquatic and geographical wonders. Dive and snorkel at the heart of the Coral Triangle amidst unparalleled marine biodiversity. Explore Culion's historical village and UNESCO-inscribed leprosy archives, then journey to Brunei's Iban longhouses to witness the fusion of tradition and modernity. Explore Bako National Park's diverse ecosystems with an expert birding guide to discover abundant bird species and spot proboscis monkeys in the wild. Meet orangutans at Semenggoh Wildlife and Conservation Centre, unveiling the challenges they face due to habitat loss. Delve into the ancient mysteries of Niah Caves, then immerse yourself in the cultural medley of the five ethnic groups of Sabah, savouring local cuisine in a traditional longhouse set amongst exotic jungle surrounds.



ITINERARY

DAY 1: DEPART MANILA, PHILIPPINES

Board Coral Geographer at 4:00pm and settle into your stateroom to relax as we set sail across the South China Sea. Join the Captain's welcome drinks and meet your crew and fellow guests as the sun sets.

VERDE ISLAND & SILONAY ISLAND, PHILIPPINES

Nestled in the Philippine archipelago that forms part of the Coral Triangle, this morning we arrive at the Verde Island, known as the 'Centre of Marine Biodiversity of the World' and 'the Amazon of the Oceans.' With the highest concentration of marine species in the world, here we will swim, snorkel and dive, exploring this underwater wonderland. There will also be an opportunity to explore the local village, home to a vibrant fishing community, markets, and friendly locals. Enjoy lunch onboard before our afternoon expedition to Silonay Mangrove Ecopark. The community here plant mangrove seedlings around the villages, knowing that these trees form a strong protective barrier

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between them and storm surges. Enjoy a short boardwalk stroll into the heart of the mangrove forest as we learn more about the importance of these mangroves and the direct impacts they have on the livelihoods of the local villagers.

BOAC, MARINDUQUE ISLAND, PHILIPPINES

The province of Marinduque is a heart-shaped island that lies between Tayabas Bay and Sibuyan Sea and considered the geodetic center of the Philippines. Marinduque has an interesting and eclectic past as a site of the first American concentration camp during the Philippine-American War, and an array of architecturally diverse heritage houses and places of worship. As we arrive this morning be greeted with a local 'Putungan Welcome', a tradition in Marinduque where guests are serenaded with songs, pictures, flowers and coins. Following this we will explore this cultural town visiting the century-old Boac Cathedral, ancestral houses, the Marinduque National Museum and Boac Central Market. This afternoon we will travel to a nearby village to learn about the most iconic event in Marinduque, the Mariones Festival. Learn about the skilled Marione (mask) craftsman before visiting a Kalutang (tuned percussion sticks) making village. Browse traditional handicrafts at the islands' central market. Participants in the festival wear a Morione mask, made of wood elaborately adorned with colourful shells, tassels, and crepe papers, as well as coloured vest, cape, and wooden shield. They also carry a pair of softwood bars called Kalutang, banging or beating it as they roam around the town streets to draw attention

CULION ISLAND, PHILIPPINES

Culion Island is surrounded by 41 minor islands, forming the Calamian group of islands. It was a former Leprosarium, starting in 1906 under the American colonial regime until the American

Commonwealth of the Philippines era. Although leprosy on the island-town was abolished in the 1980s, in 2006 it was officially declared a leprosy-free area by the World Health Organization. In 2017 the Philippine National Commission for UNESCO began its initiative to prepare the dossier of Culion's Leprosy documentary heritage. In 2018 the Culion Leprosy Archives were officially inscribed to the Memory of the World Register. Take a guided tour of the island and explore the heritage of Culion, with significant amounts of 1900's and earlier architecture remaining intact on the island. Visit the Culion Museum, Archives and Church, the maintained structures the leper colony had built. The structures, the research and the story of the people remain. After lunch onboard, spend the afternoon at Lusong Island where we will snorkel and dive the Gunboat Wreck and Lusong Coral Garden.

PURAO & JOHNSON ISLAND, PHILIPPINES

This morning is our last opportunity to enjoy the remote beaches of the Philippines before heading to Malaysia. Spend the morning swimming or snorkeling off the sandbar at Johnson Island, home to stingray, dugong, coral and seagrass meadows. After our morning expedition spend a relaxing afternoon onboard as we travel to Puerto Princesa.

PUERTO PRINCESA, PALAWAN, PHILIPPINES

Today we travel inland to the UNESCO World Heritage listed Puerto-Princesa Subterranean River National Park, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999 and voted as a New Seven Wonders of Nature in 2012. St. Paul's Underground River Cave is more than 24 kilometers long, featuring a spectacular limestone karst landscape with an underground river. Today we travel across the peninsula by landside transfer to experience this rare natural phenomenon as we join small paddleboats by



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torchlight to travel upstream and explore this underground system. Enjoy the peninsula's vast wide-open skies and blue waters as we bid farewell to the Philippines.

KOTA KINABALU, MALAYSIAN BORNEO – SIGNATURE DINNER

Today we spend a day at sea as we travel to Kota Kinabalu, the capital of Malaysia's Sabah state in the northern part of the island of Borneo. Following our afternoon arrival into the Port of Kota Kinabalu, take a local transfer to the Mari Mari Cultural Village for tonight's cultural feast event. Set amongst the exotic jungle, dine in a traditional longhouse, and experience the cultural traditions of five ethnic groups in Sabah – Rungus, Bajau, Murut, Dusun and Lundayeh. Witness cultural performances, market style interactions, traditional dress and interact with locals in each of these ethnic groups as they showcase their traditions including bamboo fire starting, making of rice wine and tree bark clothing, fire of blowpipes, henna tribal tattoos, and tinkling (also known as bamboo dance).

KOTA KINABALU & PULAU TIGA SABAH, MALAYSIAN BORNEO

Awake this morning and join our Chef for a waterfront market experience in Kota Kinabalu, at the Pasar Besar (Central Market). Explore over free-time the old-world charm of the narrow, quaint lanes that are filled with handicrafts, people, colours, food and so much more. Return to Coral Geographer for a locally inspired lunch onboard as the ship repositions to our afternoon location at Pulau Tiga, which translates to 'three islands' in Malay. These islands were formed in 1897 when an earthquake on Mindanao caused a volcanic eruption near Borneo. Here we will have a range of activities to choose from including easy island walks, swimming, or snorkeling from the beach, and volcanic mud bathing. Depending on the tide, this evening we will transfer to nearby Kalamunian Island to enjoy

the incredible Sabah sunset with sundowners and canapés.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, BRUNEI

Today we enter Bandar Seri Begawan, the capital of Brunei. With the same family line ruling Brunei for over six centuries, the peak of the Sultanate of Brunei's occurred between the 15th and 17th centuries when its control extended over coastal areas of northwest Borneo and the southern Philippines. In 1888, Brunei became a British protectorate. It was offered the opportunity to join Malaysia as a state in 1963, but opted out of the Federation due to a disagreement on the amount of its oil income that would have to be given to the central government in Kuala Lumpur. Brunei's independence was achieved in 1984. On our first day in Brunei, explore the city on a guided tour visiting the Kampung Ayer, a floating coastal water village. We will also explore the Royal Ceremonial Hall, the Parliament House, visit the tomb of the fifth Sultan of Brunei – Sultan Bolkiah (1485 -1524), Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque, the Brunei Museum, Royal Regalia Museum, the Water Village, and the Sultan's Palace (Istana Nurul Iman).

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, BRUNEI

On our second day in Brunei we will discover, in contrast of the Sultanate way of life, the Jungle of Brunei, which is some of the most pristine jungle on the island of Borneo. Due to the oil wealth of Brunei, unlike Sabah and Sarawak, they have not devastated their jungle ecosystems in the production of palm oil. There are an estimated 14,000 Iban living in Brunei, most of them in the Belait and Temburong districts. They migrated to Brunei from Sarawak just before the World War II in search of new land and an opportunity to improve their livelihoods. Not recognised as one of the seven indigenous ethnic groups by the state, the common narrative is that they face challenges of

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incorporation into the sultanate. Today we will travel to the Kampung to experience the Iban Longhouses on the fringes of Labi Forest Reserve. Here we will witness traditional weaving and dances, learn regional environmental knowledge on foraging walks, enjoy a bamboo lunch and participate in conservation opportunities. If time permits, we may also take a short walk to a nearby waterfall for a refreshing swim.

MIRI, SARAWAK, MALAYSIAN BORNEO

Miri is a coastal city in north-eastern Sarawak, Malaysia, located near the border of Brunei, on the island of Borneo. Miri was founded in 1910 when the first oil well was drilled by Royal Dutch Shell and quickly flourished to become the administrative centre of the northern region of Sarawak by 1929. Miri was the first landing point of Japanese troops in Borneo and the subsequent Japanese occupation led Miri to become a target of allied air raids, leading to the destruction of the oil refinery facilities in Miri. Today you will have the option of three expeditions: Lambir Hills National Park: Located around 30km from Miri, Lambir Hills National Park is a chain of steep sandstone hills bound by rugged cliffs. Plant enthusiasts will be interested to know that Lambir Hills National Park is probably the world's most complex and diverse forest ecosystem. Wildlife such as the Borneo gibbon, bearded pig and barking deer can all be found at Lambir Hills. There are also more than a hundred bird species in the park. A 40-meter tree tower provides excellent viewing of the dipterocarp forest and bird watching. Niah Caves: The Niah Caves were once home to the Penan tribe, the original inhabitants of the area and acknowledged to have ancestry going back to more than 60,000 years. The Niah Caves is also regarded as a sacred natural site by the surrounding indigenous communities. Reef Diving at Miri-Sibuti Coral Reef

National Park: The Miri-Sibuti Coral Reefs National Park has on offer some interesting wreck dives. With minimal current and warm water temperatures, snorkel, dive and explore a variety of corals and other marine life on the reefs, said to rival the best in the region and has been compared to those in Papua New Guinea and the Maldives. Over 800 species of hard and soft corals cover the reefs and Gorgonians, sea-whips, anemones, sponges, and crinoids are abundant.

DAY AT SEA

Today we spend a relaxing day at sea as we travel to Kuching. Join our guest lecturers for presentations on the ethnic cultures of Sarawak, palm oil and conservation, and how Borneo became Malaysian.

KUCHING, SARAWAK, MALAYSIAN BORNEO

During World War II, Kuching was occupied by Japanese forces from 1942 to 1945. After the formation of Malaysia in 1963, Kuching retained its status as state capital and was granted city status in 1988. Kuching is now a major food destination and a member of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network under the field of gastronomy. Today we come alongside in Kuching, ready to explore this vibrant city. Join a morning expedition to Semenggoh Nature Reserve, keep a look out for orangutans. All the orangutans at Semenggoh Wildlife Centre have either been saved from the illegal pet industry, are orphaned here because their mothers were killed, or injured in the wild and they unable to survive on their own. We will enjoy an easy walk along forest paths (with slightly uneven ground) to meet rangers at feeding platforms and watch as the orangutans enjoy a variety of food including fruit, sugar cane, sweet potatoes, coconut, and hardboiled eggs. Return to Coral Geographer for lunch, before free time to explore Kuching city this afternoon. Kuching is a

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culturally and architecturally rich city that is easily walkable and very atmospheric. Discover the waterfront shopping, where English is widely spoken and there are handicrafts readily available. Kuching also has some fantastic museums such as the Islamic Heritage Museum and the newly completed Borneo Cultures Museum.

[BAKO NATIONAL PARK, SANTUBONG, SARAWAK, MALAYSIAN BORNEO](#)

Bako is Sarawak's oldest national park, covering an area of 2,742 hectares at the tip of the Muara Tebas peninsula and home to seven different ecosystems and a variety of wildlife such including 264 species of bird, wild boars, snakes, and monkeys. It is one of the smallest national parks in Sarawak, yet one of the most interesting, as it contains almost every type of vegetation found in Borneo. A well-maintained network of trails – from easy forest strolls to longer treks – allows for a range of fitness levels to get the most out of this unique environment.

[KUCHING WETLANDS, SANTUBONG, SARAWAK, MALAYSIAN BORNEO](#)

Spend our last morning in Malaysian Borneo with a cruise through the Kuching Wetlands. Located just 15km from Kuching, Malaysia designated the park as a RAMSAR site, a wetland of international importance. Most of the park is a saline mangrove system that includes an extensive network of marine waterways and tidal creeks interconnecting the two major rivers on its borders. Enjoy morning tea while we hope to spot a wide diversity of wildlife, including proboscis monkeys, long tailed macaque monkeys, silver-leaf monkeys, monitor lizards, estuarine crocodiles, and a range of birdlife, including kingfishers, white-bellied sea eagles and shore birds. After our morning expedition, Coral Geographer will steam towards our final destination of Singapore.

[DAY AT SEA](#)

Relax and spend time reflecting on your epic voyage as we prepare to disembark in Singapore. Enjoy the hospitality onboard with Captain's Farewell Drinks.

[DAY 17: ARRIVE SINGAPORE, SINGAPORE](#)

Arrive in Singapore ready to disembark Coral Geographer at 8:00am. Bid farewell to new-found friends, the Master and crew.

[Please Note:](#)

This itinerary is an indication of the destinations we visit and activities on offer. Throughout the expedition we may make changes to the itinerary as necessary to maximise your expeditionary experience. Allowances may be made for seasonal variations, weather, tidal conditions, and any other event that may affect the operation of the vessel. Coral Expeditions suggests that you do not arrive on the day of embarkation or depart on the day of disembarkation due to any changes that may occur in scheduling.

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YOUR SHIP: CORAL GEOGRAPHER

YOUR SHIP: Coral Geographer

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

As a sister ship to Coral Adventurer, the Coral Geographer will be another authentic expedition ship. Designed as a 'next generation expedition ship', she is small enough to go to untouched places, focusing on bringing small numbers of like-minded guests closer to nature and cultures with personal attention and professional service. Coral Geographer will have 6 bridge deck suites with horizon bathtubs amongst her 60 cabins. The Coral Geographer features the trademark dual 'Xplorer' tenders cradled on a hydraulic platform slung off the back of the ship, enabling guests to go ashore in comfort and ease. The shallow draft of the ship enables us to go closer to shore than larger ships. Together with a renowned expedition team, this ship will offer the most advanced expedition capabilities of any small ship afloat. Comfort State of the art stabilisers will dampen any sea motion, mostly balcony cabins, and interiors designed with the colours and textures of tropical Queensland, the Coral Adventurer is a comfortable ship. She features promenade decks, generous communal areas, a passenger elevator, and an open kitchen where you can observe the chefs whip up small batch cuisine from locally sourced ingredients. Expedition capabilities > Two trademark Xplorer

tenders seat all passengers and facilitate comfortable shore excursions > Six zodiacs for more intrepid exploration > Lecture lounge for daily expedition briefings and expert presentations > Small onboard library featuring books on destinations and wildlife > Shallow draft and advanced navigation and propulsion systems allowing access to locations closed to large cruise ships Marine immersion > Navigator lounge in the bridge > Over 1000 square metres of open deck space including a wrap-around promenade deck with panoramic views > Engine room tours and a high level of crew interaction with guests Food and wine features > Single seating dining with communal table serves buffet breakfast and lunch, and multi-course table d'hôte dinners > Showcase galley with viewing window creating fresh small-batch cuisine featuring Australian and local produce > Multiple indoor and outdoor bars, including our Explorer bar on the sundeck for sunset drinks > Curated wine cellar featuring boutique wines and exceptional vintage Australian reds Guest comfort > All outside-facing guest cabins with en-suite bathrooms; the majority have a private balcony > Active stabilisers to dampen sea motion > Well-equipped gym > Passenger elevator > Wi-Fi available in all



guest areas

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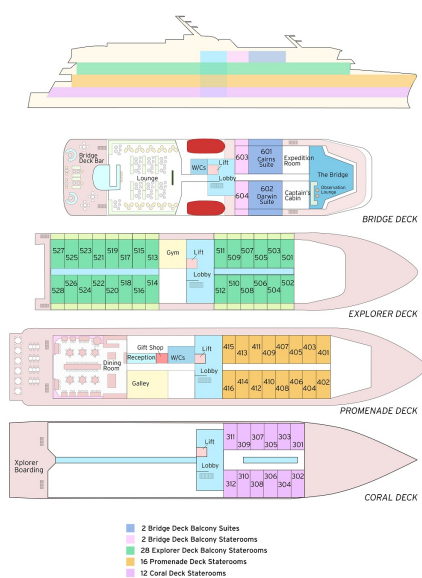
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PRICING



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