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MALE TO SINGAPORE - 19 DAY MALDIVES, INDIA & INDONESIA LUXURY CRUISE

The Maldives, India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia have long been heralded as some of the most idyllic destinations on Earth. But this voyage is far more than a sun seeker's paradise. Wander off the beaten track in Vangaaru, Minicoy and Hambantota, and submerge yourself in the array of colours and sounds of Cochin and Galle. Relax during the sea days before spending two days in Belawan at the famous Gunung Leuser National Park – one of the richest tropical rainforests in Southeast Asia and one of the few places where Orangutans still live in the wild.



ITINERARY

Day 1 Pre Cruise

Day 2 Male

There are many nations around the world with bragging rights to miles of pristine white coral sand and balmy turquoise seas but few can take it to the same level as the Maldives. Its 1,200 islands are spread out over 26 coral atolls; the combined land of all the islands is little more than 100 square miles. That means you are rarely more than a few steps from the beach. Many of the villas are actually built on stilts out over the



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water, so you may actually have to walk onshore in order to get to the beach. Besides curling your toes in the sand, many people come here to sample the Maldives enviable world-class dive spots. Others simply snorkel among the endless coral reefs. There are so many coral atolls here that our English word derives from the Maldivian name atholhu.

Day 3 Vangaaru & Uligamu Island

One of the northernmost little islands in the Maldives is Vangaaru, which offers picture-perfect white sand beaches, tall coconut trees and barrier reefs rich with underwater life. Visitors who enjoy snorkelling might encounter manta rays or moray eels, or black sea cucumbers that scour the sandy bottom for food alongside myriad species of colourful fish. A stroll onshore will reveal countless hermit crabs and shells, and the occasional shorebirds. This island is a high-end resort destination but is otherwise uninhabited. Uligamu is one of the northernmost inhabited islands of Haa Alif Atoll in the Maldives. Based on its location, the island is visited by many yachts on their way into or out of the Arabian Sea. The island has been selected as the first in the Maldives to use a combination of renewable energies via wind turbines and solar panels in a micro grid, helping the island through more efficient and non-pollutant energy distribution. The sustainably powered community has approximately 300 inhabitants.

Day 4 Minicoy, Lakshadweep Islands

Minicoy Island, forming the SE side of an atoll, is included with the Laccadive Islands for administration, although it lies about 110 miles SSW from the nearest of these. The island lies about 70 miles N of Ihavandhippolhu Atoll, the N atoll of the Maldives Islands. The island offers no suitable anchorage, as the bottom rises steeply toward the reef. Ships may drift safely under power

in fairly calm water close offshore E of the island during the Southwest Monsoon. Minicoy has one of the largest lagoons with a small uninhabited islet Viringili on its southern side. Minicoy is distinct from the northern group of islands in its culture, language dress etc. It has a cluster of 11 villages, which are called "Ava'h" each presided over by an elected village elder called Bodukaka. Traditionally all powers to manage village affairs are vested in him. Each village has a village house beautifully maintained and decorated. Minicoy is renowned for its tradition dance - the Lava performed on festive occasions. Colourful race boats called "Jahadhoni" are a feast to the eye of any tourist. A large number of men from this island are employed as seamen in ships all over the world. Mahl is the spoken language. Minicoy is an important centre for tuna fishing and a tuna-canning factory on the island processes the catch. A 300-foot tall lighthouse built in 1885 by the British is a majestic landmark.

Day 5 Tinnakara, Lakshadweep Islands

Tinnakara Island is referred to as the jewel of the Lakshadweep Islands and part of the Bangaram Atoll off the western coast of the Indian peninsula. The tiny, tear-drop shaped island is idyllically covered in palms, offering white sand beaches on its western side and views of serene, crystal clear emerald waters. Snorkelers can feast their eyes on a diverse array of sea life that dwells in the coral. Tinnakara is uninhabited and visitors in need of respite can relax in the peaceful solitude the island offers.

Day 6 Cheriya, Lakshadweep Islands

Lakshadweep is a diver's dream, with excellent visibility and a plethora of marine life living on undisturbed coral reefs. Comprising a string of 36 palm-covered, white sand-skirted coral islands 300 km off the coast of Kerala, Lakshadweep is as



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stunning as it is isolated. Only 10 of these islands are inhabited, mostly with Sunni Muslim fishermen, and foreigners are only allowed to stay on a few of these. With fishing and coir coconut fibre production the main sources of income, local life on the islands remains highly traditional, and a caste system divides the islanders between Koya (landowners), Malmi (sailors) and Melachery (farmers). Only 10 islands in the archipelago are populated, almost exclusively by Malayalam-speaking Sunni Muslims who make their living from fishing and harvesting coconut coir. Only Minicoy Island, which is closest to the nearby Maldives, shares aspects of its neighbours' culture, including a Maldivian dialect known as Mahl. Cheriya Island, the N island, is also covered in palm trees. The barrier reef is steep-to and the sea breaks heavily on it. A narrow boat channel leads through the reef into the lagoon. Landing can sometimes be made on the E side of Kalpeni Island. Anchorage has been reported 0.7 miles N of Cheriya Island, in 9m, sand and coral. Cheriya Island is covered with dense groves of coconut palms and has lovely sandy beach. Its crystal clear lagoon is popular with water sports enthusiasts.

Day 7 Cochin

A hodgepodge of cultures collide on the banks of the estuary where Cochin carves out her home. Chinese fishing nets the size of skyscrapers, boxy Dutch architecture and pretty Portuguese palaces point to the blend of influence here, while the Raj era remnants, soaring spires of old-world mosques, and near-abandoned synagogues all add to the dense, varied tapestry of inspirations and imprints. Founded by a prince in the 15th century, Cochin immediately became a favoured anchorage for sailors and traders from every far-flung corner - even taking nearby Kerala's crown as the world's first global port

city. Now, fragrant spice markets cut the hot air with cardamom and clove, while antique stores groan beneath the weight of singing copper. Hit the backstreets of Fort Kochi for a deep and dreamy Ayurvedic massage, marvel at the Krishna murals that adorn the bedchamber walls of the Mattancherry Palace, or admire India's one of the oldest European-built Christian churches - as you duck into the cool hues of St Francis. A day can easily meander past on a backwater cruise, spreading south from Cochin, and gliding down a lacy network of creeks, lagoons, lakes and rivers. Surrounded by swaying palms and rice paddies - you'll experience rural India in her best dress. When daylight dwindles, taste the soft spicy kick of dal roti, followed by Firni - almonds, apricots, and sweet milk crushed with pastel green pistachios for a silky light finish.

Day 8 Day at sea

Days at sea are the perfect opportunity to relax, unwind and catch up with what you've been meaning to do. So whether that is going to the gym, visiting the spa, whale watching, catching up on your reading or simply topping up your tan, these blue sea days are the perfect balance to busy days spent exploring shore side.

Day 9 Galle

Galle is an ancient Muslim port where different political influences from Europe have merged. In fact, the Galle Fort was occupied by the Portuguese, Dutch and British until the late 19th century. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988, it is surrounded by the sea on three sides. The surviving Dutch-colonial architecture and narrow streets exude the historic atmosphere of this living fort. The 18th century Dutch church has a splendid wooden memorial to one of the commanders of Galle, while the Arab quarter has a distinctly Moorish touch.

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Day 10 Hambantota

Far to the south of Sri Lanka is the city of Hambantota with a colorful and storied traditional Ruhuna past and great promise for the future. This gateway to Sri Lanka is rich in resources and since being upset by the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, has put great emphasis on rebuilding and moving progressively into a central role in the development of the southern region of Sri Lanka. Traditionally an agricultural area, the region is also known for having some of the country's most skilled jewelers and crafts people. The bazaar or 'pola' is a popular market place where locals sell produce, goods, and fish.

Days 11 - 12 Day at sea

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Day 13 Port Blair

Rising majestically up from emerald waters, Port Blair in the Andaman Islands has to be seen to be believed. An ex-18th century penal colony, the island is today the capital city in the Andamans as well as being the main entry point for the rest of the archipelago. As with the other islands in the archipelago (86% of the Andamans are covered with forest), wildlife is diverse and plentiful and offers much in the way of amusement: 270 species of birds (including 14 endemic birds) call the islands home. The Asian elephant has been introduced and now thrives in the habitat. Pay a visit to the Mount Harriet National Park to the north of Port Blair for a chance to see these gentle giants undisturbed and unafraid. The jewel in Port Blair's wildlife

crown is of course the underwater life, which is made all the more spectacular by the island's coral reef. Snorkelling and diving are major pastimes here, and nearby spots such as Mahatma Gandhi Marine Reserve, Corbyn's Cove and Ross Island are world famous among the diving community for their psychedelic offerings. The aforementioned penal colony was established in 1789. The Cellular Jail, built by the British when the island was under their reign, is today Port Blair's major attraction. The jail has been dedicated as a shrine to the freedom fighters that were held here during India's struggle for independence. Though only three wings remain of the original six, it still gives a fair impression of the conditions under which the detainees were kept here.

Day 14 Day at sea

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Days 15 - 16 Belawan, Sumatra

Sumatra is the fourth largest island in the world. Although not known for the rich archaeological sites that distinguish Java, Sumatra offers magnificent natural landscapes. The port serves as our gateway for Medan and Lake Toba, Southeast Asia's largest lake, which lies about 120 miles from Belawan. Sumatra is also vital to Indonesia's economy, with over 60% of the country's total production coming from the island. Belawan is one of the busiest ports in Indonesia. Exports include minerals, oil, palm oil, rubber, tea and tobacco. It is located 15 miles from Medan, the capital and largest city of North Sumatra.

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Day 17 Day at sea

Days at sea are the perfect opportunity to relax, unwind and catch up with what you've been meaning to do. So whether that is going to the gym, visiting the spa, whale watching, catching up on your reading or simply topping up your tan, these blue sea days are the perfect balance to busy days spent exploring shore side.

Day 18 Singapore

Advanced, airy and elevated, Singapore is a spectacular, futuristic vision of utopian city life. A healthy population of almost six million call it home, but this is a city designed with space to breathe, and gorgeous outdoor parks, massive indoor greenhouses and beautiful recreational spaces spread between the City of Gardens' skyscrapers and soaring structures. Once a quiet fishing village, now a glistening island city-state and an international beacon of science, education and technology. Singapore is almost intimidatingly clean - and the hyper-efficient public transport system whips residents and visitors across the city's neighbourhoods in a heartbeat. Glorious fountains and audacious skyscrapers loom up - nodding to traditional feng shui beliefs - and putting on dazzling illuminated displays after dark. The lush green botanical gardens are a spectacular UNESCO World Heritage Site, covering 52 hectares and decorated with impressive colourful orchids. Or breathe in more of the freshest air by heading up to wander the canopy strung bridges of MacRitchie Reservoir Park. Head for the iconic Marina Bay - a landmark of the city crowned by three interconnected towers, which watch out over island sprinkled waters. Jaunt between Little India and the atmospheric Chinatown in minutes, where beautiful temples - like the Chinese Thian Hock Keng Temple and Hindu Sri Mariamman Temple add rich cultural intrigue. Singapore's cuisine is a

mouthwatering fusion of its Indian, Chinese, Indonesian, and Malay influences, taking and enhancing the best of each. Enjoy dishes in towering restaurants, or toast the glowing skyline with the city's eponymous gin-soaked cocktail - a Singapore Sling.

Day 19 Post Cruise

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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With 18-brand new Zodiacs, four superlative restaurants in Antarctica and a pole to pole expedition itinerary, Silver Cloud really does break the ice between expedition and luxury. Spacious yet intimate, designed to cross oceans and yet able to slip up rivers and into hidden harbours with ease, the yacht-like Silver Cloud carries just 296 guests in incomparable comfort and style. Combining spacious ocean-view suites and private verandas with stunning dining and entertainment options, Silver Cloud provides world-class cruise accommodations, service and amenities. After extensive refurbishment, Silver Cloud is the most spacious and comfortable ice class vessel in expedition cruising. Her large suites, her destination itineraries and her unparalleled service make her truly special. Her four dining options will tantalise your taste buds and as 80% of her suites include a veranda, watching a breaching whale or a few cavorting penguins has never been so personal. She carries a limited number of guests in polar waters, meaning that Silver Cloud has the highest space to guest and crew to guest ratios in expedition cruising. With her 18 zodiacs, 10 kayaks, possibilities are almost limitless with ship-wide simultaneous explorations.



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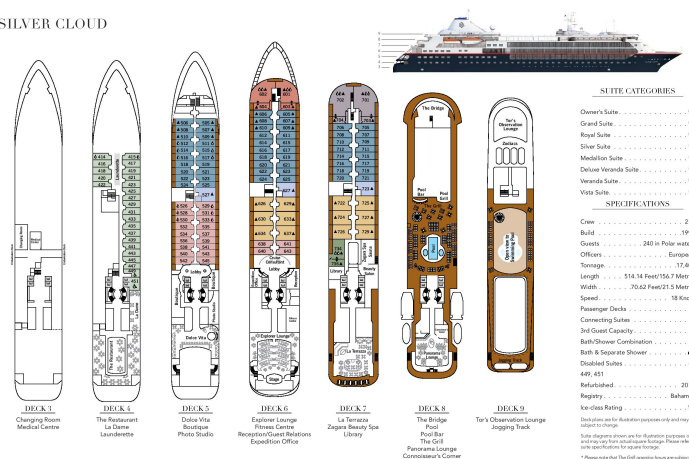
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