

MEDITERRANEAN ISLAND VOYAGE: SICILY, SARDINIA, CORSICA, AND ELBA – WITH SMITHSONIAN JOURNEYS

In alliance with Smithsonian Journeys. _This cruise is part of a collection of PONANT voyages that are specially-tailored for English-speaking travelers who want to engage with the world. In addition to the usual elements of the PONANT experience, the listed price for these voyages includes transfers to and from the ship, talks and discussions aboard ship by world class experts, and a shore excursion or activity in each port of call that encourages guests to embrace the sights, sounds, tastes, and smells of the local environment and culture._ This voyage in the heart of the Mediterranean explores four islands that, despite their differences, share a history of successive waves of civilizations that have washed over them from prehistoric times to the present. Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Byzantines, French, and Italians--all have left their mark on the language, art, architecture, and cuisine of Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and Elba. From Valletta , Malta, your discovery of these very special islands begins with three days on the largest of them, Sicily, as you visit the cities of Syracuse, Taormina, and Palermo. In Syracuse , which rivalled Athens as one of the most powerful cities of the ancient world, you may choose to explore the Roman Amphitheater of Augustus and the 15,000 seat Greek theater, or join a walking tour of Ortygia, Syracuse's old town. Or you may choose to travel to nearby Noto, a Baroque World Heritage site, now rebuilt following a devastating earthquake in 1990. The beautiful resort town of Taormina, perched high on a cliff overlooking the Ionian Sea, is home to a stunning Greek theater , an Odeon from Roman times , buildings blending Arab and Norman cultures, and villas built by European aristocracy in the 18th and 19th centuries. It is also a gateway



to Mt. Etna and the vineyards that thrive in the rich volcanic soils of its slopes. Palermo , Sicily's capital and your final port of call on the island, was founded by the Phoenicians in 827 BC and became one of Europe's greatest cities in the 12th century, when the Normans took control. Here you may combine Roger II's Cappella Palatina , featuring dazzling mosaics and magnificent inlaid marble floors and walls, with a drive to nearbyMonreale to explore its famed Norman cathedral. Or you may choose to focus on Palermo's famous markets and street food , or decide to travel along the coast to the resort town of Cefal u. Cagliari, Sardinia's capital, is your gateway to the archaeological site of Nora. Founded by Phoenicians in the 8th century BC, it was subsequently taken over by Carthaginians, then by Romans. Explore the remains of Carthaginian warehouses , buildings from the time of the Roman Republic , a Carthaginian-Roman temple, large baths with splendid mosaics , and a theater, almost intact, dating to the time of the Empire. You will want to be on deck as your ship navigates the narrow waterway that leads to Bonifacio , perched high on cliffs on Corsica's southern coast. Board a mini-train to transport you to the oldest part of the city, where you can stroll through winding medieval lanes of brightly colored houses and admire their fine Gothic architecture. Or you may prefer to explore the small archipelago of the Lavezzi Islands, a nature reserve famous for the Grotte du Sdragonatu (Dragon's Cave) accessible only by sea. Portoferraio is the main harbor of the island of Elba, the last of the four islands on your journey. Most famous as the site of Napoleon Bonaparte's exile in 1814-15, Portoferraio was founded by the Medicis in the 16th century. A walking tour of the town includes a visit to Villa San Martino, Napoleon's home during exile, and is followed by a wine tasting and sampling of Tuscan mezze at a local vineyard. Your voyage ends in Nice , France. _Some departures may have slightly modified itineraries. Please confirm the itinerary with an Expedition



Specialist._

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 - 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 3 - 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 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 - Cagliari, Sardinia

The capital of Sardinia, Cagliari, like Rome, is built on seven hills. Its Sardinian name means "castle", in reference to the citadel, its historic centre, which dominates the city. The old ramparts are now pleasant panoramic terraces bordering picturesque streets. The city hosted the Nuragic, Phoenician, Roman and Byzantine civilisations before the rein of the Spanish Hapsburgs and the House of Savoy. The monuments of Cagliari bear the traces of these successive dominations, such as the Bastion of Saint-Remy or the Sainte-Marie Cathedral. On the sea front, Art Nouveau-style public monuments give way to the Poetto beach, a magnificent stretch of sand that is 8 kilometres long.

Day 6 - Bonifacio, Corsica

The spectacular town of Bonifacio located on the very tip of southern Corsica, clings to a narrow promontory of white rock



overhanging the turquoise waters of the Mediterranean. You can admire its limestone cliffs hewn out by the wind, before setting off on a cultural tour of its cultural treasures. From the little paved streets in the ancient Haute Ville, to the promenade on the open-air medieval chemin de ronde, this stunning town will take you on a journey back in time. Frequented or secluded, there are numerous beaches to choose from, all in keeping with the high standards of the "Île de Beaute".

Day 7 - Portoferraio, Elba

In the elbow of a creek on the northern coastline of Elba Island, a small corner of paradise awaits in the form of Portoferraio. As you approach its coastlines, you will make out the powerful and majestic contours of its Medici fortresses. Napoleon Bonaparte spent many of his 300 days in exile here. The Palazzina dei Mulini, his first imperial residence, whose gardens offer outstanding views of the sea, is a must-see. Historical treasures are followed by another kind of treasure, namely white sand beaches, and equally tempting local specialities including gurguglione and rice with cuttlefish ink.

Day 8 - Nice

Capital of the Cote d'Azur, Nice is surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills and mountains that protects it from the wind. You will probably want to explore the Promenade des Anglais, where you can sit on one of the famous blue chairs laid out opposite the baie des Anges. The Chateau hill is also a very pleasent place to walk. This is the entrance to the old city, with its bustling markets and regional products along the main street, the Cours Saleya.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: L'AUSTRAL

YOUR SHIP:	**L'Austral**
VESSEL TYPE:	
	142 metres. Passenger Capacity:
	264 (200 in Antarctica). Built:
LENGTH:	**2011**
PASSENGER CAPACITY:	
BUILT/REFURBISHED:	

Luxury Expedition / Cruise Ship This superb mega-yacht with 132 cabins is the result of the expertise of the Italian Fincantieri shipyard and French sophistication, as interpreted by designer Jean-Philippe Nuel. L'Austral has a unique atmosphere, a subtle blend of luxury, intimacy and well-being. A sleek silhouette softened by elegantly smooth contours and large, arched windows opening up to the sea and the light: so many features come together to give L'Austral her distinctive shape. Precious materials, discreet elegance and a perfect balance between chic and casual, combine to make you feel as if you are on your own private yacht. A design blending tradition and innovation, where a nautical mood has been subtly recreated. Precious materials in smoothing neutral tones are brought to life with splashes of cheerful reds. So many personal touches create the spirit of a "private yacht". Suites and staterooms You can expect magnificent ocean views as 124 staterooms and suites have balconies. Individually-controlled airconditioning · Cabin layout: kingsize bed, or twin beds, communicating cabins available (children welcome) · Minibar · Flat screen satellite TV · IPod™ players · Desk with stationery · Electronic safe · French bath products · Dressing table and hairdryer · Bath robes · Satellite direct line telephone · 110/220 volts · 24hr room service · WiFi · Balcony 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 breakfasts, lunch and dinner. The Gastronomic Restaurant is situated on Le Liberte Deck and serves you French and international cuisine accompagnied by fine wine. On the Grill Restaurant, you have the opportuniny 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, L'Austral 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 Sothys™, 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 Sothys™ brand, the Beauty Centre on L'Austral welcomes you for some unforgettable moments of relaxation and pampering (beauty treatments, hairdresser). Wheelchairs 3 specially adapted wheelchair cabins (Deck 3 = Superior cabin no. 307, no balcony, Deck 4 = Prestige Cabin no. 407 - with

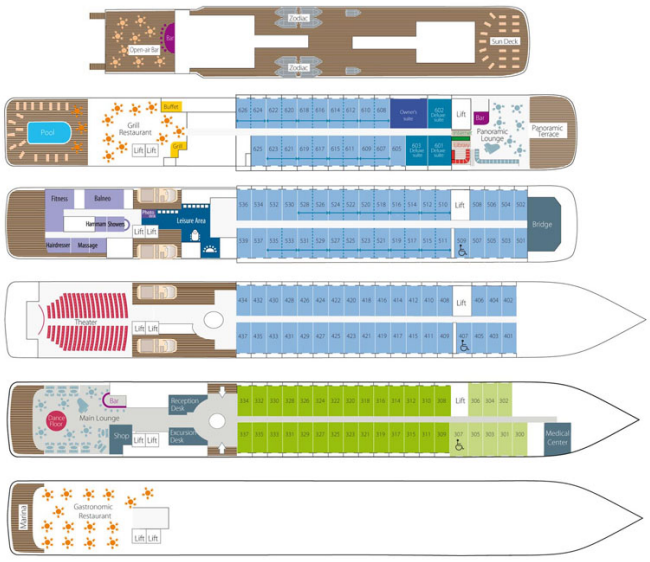
balcony and Deck 5 = Prestige Cabin no 509, with balcony) and lifts to all decks/areas. Details Please click the following links to read more about Ponant and the other Ponant



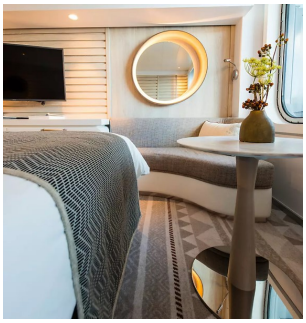
cruise ships.



INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Deluxe Stateroom



Deluxe Suite Deck 3



Deluxe Suite Deck 4



Deluxe Suite Deck 5



Deluxe Suite Deck 6



Grand Deluxe Suite Deck 5





Grand Deluxe Suite Deck 6



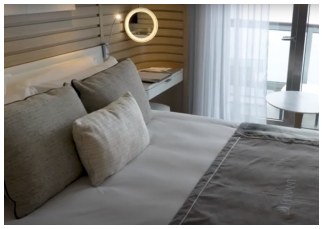
Owner's Suite



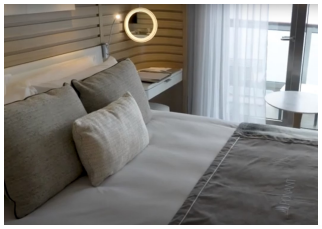
Privilege Suite Deck 6



Prestige Deck 4



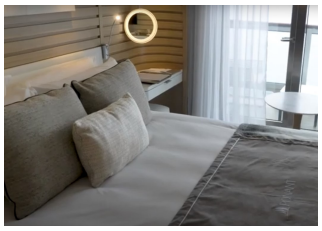
Prestige Deck 5



Prestige Deck 5 Suite



Prestige Deck 6



Prestige Deck 6 Suite



Privilege Suite Deck 5





PRICING

18-May-2027 to 26-May-2027

Prestige Deck 4	£8305 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 5	£12685 GBP pp
Prestige Deck 6 Suite	£17935 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 4	£12685 GBP pp
Deluxe Stateroom	£7515 GBP pp
Privilege Suite Deck 6	£18815 GBP pp
Prestige Deck 6	£9185 GBP pp
Owner's Suite	£24025 GBP pp
Prestige Deck 5 Suite	£17065 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 6	£12685 GBP pp
Prestige Deck 5	£8705 GBP pp
Grand Deluxe Suite Deck 6	£20645 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 3	£12685 GBP pp
Grand Deluxe Suite Deck 5	£15935 GBP pp
Privilege Suite Deck 5	£18815 GBP pp

07-Jun-2027 to 14-Jun-2027

Deluxe Stateroom	£5795 GBP pp
Grand Deluxe Suite Deck 6	£15715 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 6	£9705 GBP pp
Privilege Suite Deck 6	£14335 GBP pp
Prestige Deck 5 Suite	£13005 GBP pp
Prestige Deck 6 Suite	£13675 GBP pp
Privilege Suite Deck 5	£14335 GBP pp
Prestige Deck 5	£6695 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 3	£9705 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 4	£9705 GBP pp
Prestige Deck 4	£6395 GBP pp
Prestige Deck 6	£7055 GBP pp
Owner's Suite	£20485 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 5	£9705 GBP pp
Grand Deluxe Suite Deck 5	£13605 GBP pp



PRICING

04-May-2028 to 11-May-2028

Deluxe Stateroom	£4615 GBP pp
Prestige Stateroom Deck 5	£5315 GBP pp
Prestige Stateroom Deck 6	£5605 GBP pp
Prestige Suite Deck 5	£10265 GBP pp
Prestige Suite Deck 6	£10785 GBP pp
Owner's Suite	£16255 GBP pp
Superior Stateroom	£4285 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite	£7675 GBP pp
Prestige Stateroom Deck 4	£5085 GBP pp

14-May-2028 to 21-May-2028

Prestige Suite Deck 6	£12235 GBP pp
Privilege Suite Deck 5	£12825 GBP pp
Deluxe Stateroom	£5205 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 3	£8695 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 4	£8695 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 5	£8695 GBP pp
Deluxe Suite Deck 6	£8695 GBP pp
Grand Deluxe Suite	£14055 GBP pp
Prestige Stateroom Deck 6	£6325 GBP pp
Prestige Suite Deck 5	£11635 GBP pp
Prestige Stateroom Deck 5	£6005 GBP pp
Privilege Suite Deck 6	£12825 GBP pp
Owner's Suite	£19475 GBP pp
Prestige Stateroom Deck 4	£5745 GBP pp