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SECRETS OF THE RED SEA - 11 DAYS FROM JEDDAH TO AQABA

Sailing up the Red Sea and leaving in one's wake the memories of a lifetime: the Arabian Desert and its ochre hues that stop suddenly before the clear waters of the sea, the intriguing cities and their typical souks whose colourful stalls fill the air in the alleys with their fragrances, and the archaeological sites that recount the mysteries of a secular history and ancient civilisations. Over 11 days, take a unique and unforgettable journey aboard Le Laperouse to discover the East and its secrets. Throughout your journey, you will benefit from an excursion included per person per port of call, chosen with care by PONANT. During this cruise, take your place aboard an off-road vehicle in Safaga for an excursion in the desert to discover a Bedouin camp, visit the magnificent Masada fortress from Eilat and swim in the Dead Sea, or enjoy a boat trip around Baridi Island, combining relaxation, snorkelling and swimming. The diversity of experiences on offer promises you intense and varied moments (to discover the full range of excursions, go to the itinerary tab). Past and future coexist along the shores of Saudi Arabia. For the first time with PONANT, you will penetrate the fascinating Jeddah. Behind its apparent modernity hides the long history of a port established in the 7th century at the crossroads of key trade routes, and of an essential stopping point on the way to Mecca. From this past, the city has retained a multicultural architecture blending traditional constructions in coral from this coastal region and know-how borrowed along the ancient routes, affording it status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Yanbu also stands out for its history linked to trade, since it was once a major port along the spice route between Yemen and Egypt. Like in Jeddah, the Hejazi architecture can be

discovered by visiting the old town. On the little-known island of Baridi, enjoy some water-based activities in the crystal-clear waters of the Red Sea: snorkelling or simply swimming will be a pleasure for the senses. Between Africa and the Middle East, the Red Sea connected people and civilisations and it continues to do so today. Along its shores or a little further inland, discover some of its legendary archaeological sites. Egypt opens its doors to you and takes you to explore its most enigmatic treasures. From Safaga, you will have the opportunity to visit the ancient city of Thebes and the Valley of the Kings that faces it on the other side of the Nile. From Eilat, another no less fascinating tale from ancient times will be revealed in the Judean Desert. Sitting atop its limestone perch, the Masada fortress has been an impressive sight since the 1st century BC due to its position overlooking the Dead Sea. This true wonder is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This arid region is home to desert after desert, but each landscape is unique. In Wadi Rum, the elements have formed canyons and cliffs, arches and caves whose sandstone and granite rocks emerge from the orange-coloured sand. You will reach these surreal landscapes



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travellers with the regional traditions of construction using coral, it reflects ancestral and magnificent know-how. You will also have the chance to discover the Beit Nassif museum and cultural centre in what was once the house of Nassif, built in the late 19th century.

Day 3 BARIDI ISLAND

On Baridi Island, Saudi Arabia reveals an unexpected facet. The fine sand of the Red Sea and the crystal-clear water try to outdo each other with their beauty and offer an idyllic setting where time stands still. Spend some time relaxing or enjoy the water-based activities on offer. Swimming and snorkelling are two of the options available at this port of call.

Day 4 YANBU

Yanbu was established more than 2,500 years ago, when the city was a stopping point on the spice and incense route between Yemen and Egypt. In the city's historic district, the Hejazi architecture that is typical of the Red Sea coastal areas will reveal itself during a walking tour that will also take you to discover the former residence of the famous Lawrence of Arabia. Admire the copper, the spices, and explore a variety of shops selling local arts and crafts as you wander through Souq Al Lail, the city's night market. Yanbu also stands out for its exceptional aquatic environment featuring a coral reef and a rich biodiversity, making it an ideal spot for scuba diving and snorkelling enthusiasts.

Day 5 AT SEA

from Aqaba.

ITINERARY

Days 1 - 2 JEDDAH

Situated on the eastern shore of the Red Sea, from the 7th century Jeddah became a major port along the Indian Ocean trade routes. Its strategic position, particularly for travellers and goods bound for Mecca, enabled it to play a central role in the Saudi economy. Today still, the city cleverly blends its heritage derived from its ancient history with its current modernism. In Al-Balad, Jeddah's old town listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, take a deep-dive into this glorious past by admiring the fine details of the Hejazi architecture. The result of combining multiple influences borrowed from merchants and



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Day 8 HURGHADA

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.

Days 6 - 7 SAFAGA

A former fishing and mining village, Safaga is now a charming seaside resort with much to offer. Located on the western coast of the Red Sea and preserved from mass tourism, the town will really plunge you into the heart of authentic Egypt and is an ideal departure point for an excursion into the desert in search of the Bedouin. The site is also renowned for the beauty of its underwater world, perfect for scuba diving and snorkelling. Above all, though, this stop in Safaga provides the opportunity to discover Luxor, the ancient Egyptian city of Thebes, considered to be one of the world's greatest open-air museums thanks to its exceptional Pharaonic heritage.

Once a small fishing village nestling in the entrance of the Gulf of Suez, Hurghada is now an important Red Sea resort. The city, which developed exponentially over the 20th century, is home to magnificent buildings, such as the Mosque El Mina Masjid: located near the port, it has different characteristics of Islamic architecture to be admired. However, the city is particularly renowned for its exceptional underwater world that you will be able to discover snorkelling. Unless you prefer to take an excursion in a glass-bottomed boat: a perfect opportunity to admire superb coral reefs and countless colourful fish without getting wet!

Day 9 EILAT

Situated in the far south of the State of Israel, on the banks of the Gulf of Eilat, on the edge of the Negev Desert between Egypt and Jordan, Eilat is internationally renowned as a high-end seaside resort and spa town, as well as for its magnificent natural sites. The first references to this place date back to the time of King Solomon. His legendary mines are said to be located not far from the now-modern city. It is the departure point for visiting the Masada fortress and for the incredible experience of swimming in the Dead Sea.

Days 10 - 11 AQABA

Located in the Red Sea within the eponymous gulf, Aqaba offers Jordan its only access to the sea. At the crossroads of the land

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and sea routes that linked Asia, Africa and Europe, the town is rich with more than 5,000 years of history. The warm waters of the Red Sea attract holidaymakers and divers to this seaside destination; the underwater sites home to coral and fishes are some of the most beautiful in the world. Aqaba is also the gateway to the magnificent desert of Wadi Rum and the marvellous site of Petra.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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YOUR SHIP: LE DUMONT D'URVILLE

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Featuring innovative and environmentally-friendly equipment, elegantly designed staterooms, spacious suites with large windows, and lounge areas that open onto the outside, this new limited-capacity yacht boasting just 92 staterooms 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 Dumont d'Urville 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 Dumont d'Urville 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 Dumont d'Urville 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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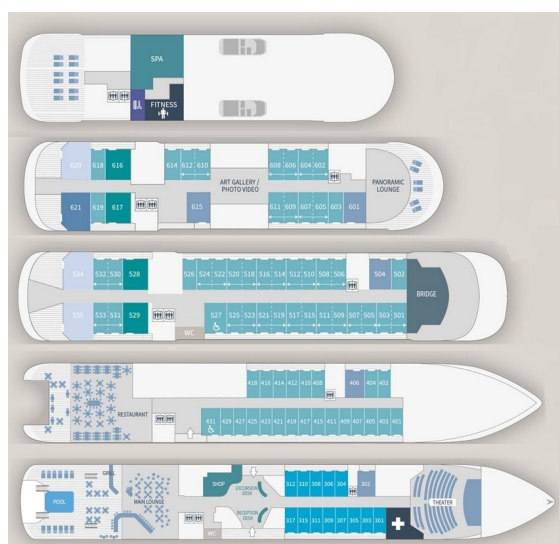
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- Prestige Suites
Deck 5-6
- Deluxe Suites
Deck 5-6
- Prestige Cabins
Deck 4-5-6
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