

Zanzibar and the jewels of the Indian Ocean

From **28/12/2021**
to **9/1/2022**

Ship: **LE BELLOT**

From **Zanzibar**
to **Victoria, Mahé**



Embark with **PONANT** aboard *Le Bellot* for a brand-new **13-day expedition cruise** in the **Indian Ocean**. A chance to discover stunning natural environments, exceptional wildlife, and UNESCO World Heritage sites loaded with history.

From **Zanzibar**, a city with superb **UNESCO-listed buildings**, blending African, Arab, Indian and European influences over more than a millennium, you will first reach **Pemba Island** and its clove plantations and fantastic scuba diving.

After visiting of the coral island of **Misali**, your next port of call will be an opportunity to discover the ruins of the 13th-century Swahili trading post of Kilwa Kisiwani

You will then sail towards the **Seychelles** and the stunning **Assumption Island** before exploring **Cosmoledo Atoll**, also known as the **Galapagos of the Indian Ocean**. It will offer you exceptional dives in its aquarium-like lagoon.

The small islands **Alphonse** and **Saint-François** will be an opportunity to snorkel and dive among brightly-coloured sea life. Your land and sea explorations will continue on the stunning **St. François Atoll** and the uninhabited and untouched **Bijoutier Island**.

Before you return to **Mahé**, *Le Bellot* will chart a course for the coral island of **Rémire** and the sublime beaches of **La Digue**, some of the most renowned of the Seychelles.

The encounters with the wildlife described above illustrate possible experiences only and cannot be guaranteed.



The information in this document is valid as of 4/12/2021

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

ZANZIBAR

Embarkation 28/12/2021 from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Departure 28/12/2021 at 8:00 pm

Once a mythical post along the legendary **Indian Ocean trade route**, today a certain whiff of adventure still pervades in **Zanzibar**. Located off the coast of Tanzania, this place often referred to as “**spice island**” is brimming with natural treasures, such as Jozani Forest, the last remains of the huge primeval forest that once covered the island, home to a unique ecosystem. This port of call will also be the moment to discover “Stone Town”, **the historical centre of Zanzibar, a UNESCO World Heritage site**. A veritable labyrinth of narrow streets lined with houses made from coral stone, it is home to sumptuous buildings in a multitude of architectural styles, the result of the blending of African, European and Indian cultures.

PEMBA ISLAND

Arrival 29/12/2021

Departure 29/12/2021

The second-largest island in the Zanzibar Archipelago, edged with fine sand and bathed in a sea in infinite shades of turquoise, **Pemba Island** astounds with the whiteness of its shores and its abundant tropical forest. It is mountainous with hills full of fertile land and has the nickname “**the Green Island.**” You’ll fall in love with its quiet shores, full of authenticity. Banana trees, coconut trees, clove trees, nutmeg trees... its **lush vegetation** ensures the local production of spices that has made its reputation (essentially cloves but also nutmeg, vanilla, cinnamon, turmeric, pepper, etc.).

MISALI ISLAND

Arrival 30/12/2021

Departure 30/12/2021

Renowned for its underwater world, **Misali** became **a protected conservation area** in 1998. So, it’s possible to admire its sea beds and swim there, but not to fish. If conditions allow, you’ll perhaps have the chance to see **varied underwater fauna**. To the north-east of the island, **a white sandy beach**, bathed in stunningly transparent turquoise water, is an ideal place to relax.

KILWA KISIWANI

Arrival 31/12/2021

Departure 31/12/2021

Near the Tanzanian coast, around 300 km south of Dar es Salaam, the island of **Kilwa Kisiwani** is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Occupied from the 9th century to the 11th century, it reached its heights in the 13th and 14th centuries. It

was described by the Moroccan explorer Ibn Battouta as “one of the most beautiful cities in the world.” A former Swahili trading city, the island prospered from the trade of gold and ivory from the inland regions. The remains of its former port city cover a large part of the island. Those of its superb Great Mosque, the oldest mosque remaining on the coast of East Africa, are well worth a visit.

AT SEA

Arrival 1/1/2022

Departure 1/1/2022

During your day 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 day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, 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.

ASSUMPTION ISLAND

Arrival 2/1/2022

Departure 2/1/2022

Assumption Island is part of the **Aldabra group** (Outer Islands), situated in the south-west of the Seychelles. Discovered in the mid-18th century by the French captain Nicolas Morphey, this bean-shaped island covered in **dunes** and **shrubs** is relatively flat. A handful of people live there, in a small village in the island's west. The island's beaches are a **major egg-laying and breeding site for sea turtles**. The surrounding waters are ideal for scuba diving. This is where Jacques-Yves Cousteau filmed some of the scenes for his famous documentary film “The Silent World”, released in 1956.

COSMOLEDO ATOLL

Arrival 3/1/2022

Departure 3/1/2022

The Cosmoledo Atoll owes its nickname, the **Galapagos of the Indian Ocean**, to the beauty of its underwater world, which attracts the most experienced divers: parrotfish, giant rays and clams inhabit the reefs of its crystal waters. The fascinating marine life comes alive as the multi-coloured fish, making the most of the protection of the extraordinary **coral reef**, come together to feed in the currents formed by the sweeping movements of the tides. Exploited in the past for coconut and agave, the atoll is now uninhabited, apart from an eco-resort in the heart of the **nature reserve**, which shelters green turtles and significant colonies of sooty terns and red-footed boobies.

ASTOVE ISLAND

Arrival 4/1/2022

Departure 4/1/2022

Closer to Madagascar than to Victoria, **Astove** is the **southernmost island** in the Seychelles. It is part of the **Aldabra group**

, in the Outer Islands of the Seychelles. Now uninhabited, this **coral island** covered in coconut trees was once home to the employees that worked on the coconut plantations. Renowned for the richness of its seabeds, Astove Atoll is now a top destination for fishing enthusiasts. It also attracts experienced divers, who visit the atoll to explore the “**Astove Wall**”, where the sea floor drops to a depth of about 40 metres. The wall is **covered in coral** and many fish and green sea turtles can be found there.

AT SEA

Arrival 5/1/2022

Departure 5/1/2022

During your day 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 day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, 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.

SAINT FRANÇOIS ISLAND

Arrival 6/1/2022

Departure 6/1/2022

In the heart of the Outer Islands of the Seychelles, St. François paints the Indian Ocean in an infinite palette of blues. This coral atoll covered in coconut trees is exactly what people imagine when they think of the Seychelles. With its distinctive crescent-shaped silhouette, it welcomes you to its immaculate, deserted beaches for a rare experience. Here, the population is composed of myriad birds on land and of sea turtles and a multitude of fish in the water, making this the ideal place for hiking or snorkelling.

BIJOUTIER ISLAND

Arrival 6/1/2022

Departure 6/1/2022

Bijoutier Island is one of the three idyllic islands of the Alphonse Atoll, considered the most intact and unspoiled group of islands in the **Outer Islands of the Seychelles**. Formed around volcanos having vanished into the abyssal depths of the Indian Ocean, they are protected by **splendid and fragile coral reefs**. The jewel of the Alphonse Atoll, the Bijoutier lagoon is set with **beaches of coconut trees** bordering this 2-hectare setting, a haven of peace for herons, colonies of frigate birds, tortoises and giant crabs. Since 2007, the natural treasures of this desert island have been preserved by the atoll's conservation centre, which is dedicated to restoring the biodiversity of the island ecosystems.

RÉMIRE ISLAND

Arrival 7/1/2022

Departure 7/1/2022

Remire Island is like a piece of confetti in the Indian Ocean and is a captivating place to visit. Located in the Outer Islands of the Seychelles, it is prized for its unique biodiversity, including its exceptionally rich underwater life. The rare inhabitants of this tropical islet watch over its preservation, and a walk amidst its lush vegetation, home to delightful birds, will delight fans of unspoilt areas. For those who love snorkelling, myriad colourful fish live among the coral reefs that border the island.

LA DIGUE ISLAND

Arrival 8/1/2022

Departure 8/1/2022

La Digue Island is a veritable concentration of all the beauty of the Seychelles. Located 6 km south-east of Praslin, this small piece of land that looks like paradise is the third-largest island in the Seychelles, despite its modest size (5 km by 3 km)! Turquoise waters just asking you to swim in them, lush vegetation sheltering **giant tortoises**, beaches of fine sand fringed with coconut trees and surrounded with those emblematic **large granite rocks with their pink highlights** like at the famous Anse Source d'Argent: the perfect picture postcard... **Authentic and preserved**, the island follows a peaceful rhythm, with the only means of transport along its little roads being bikes or traditional oxcarts.

VICTORIA, MAHÉ

Arrival 9/1/2022

Disembarkation 9/1/2022 at 7:00 am

Discover **Mahé**, the main island of the Seychelles and also the largest of the archipelago, home to the capital, **Victoria**. Mahé has almost 70 beaches of fine sand, framed by the emblematic **granite rocks**, and whose crystal clear waters are renowned for their rich underwater life. The island is also famous for its **splendid mountain panoramas** accessible on hikes, such as the Morne Seychellois, which is 905 metres high and overlooks the Indian Ocean. Mahé is also an island full of history where fine colonial properties rub shoulders with **Creole houses** - and don't forget the marvellous **Botanical Gardens** in Victoria.