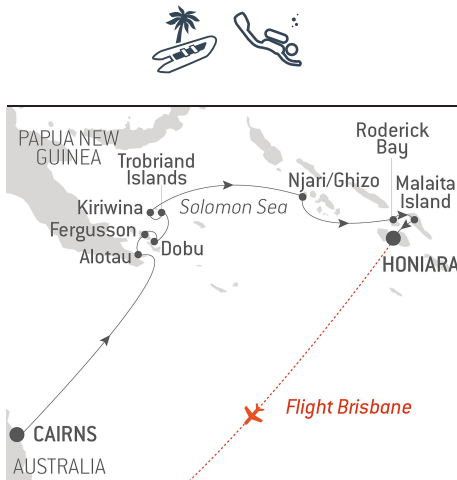


Ancient Cultures of Papua New Guinea

From **1/11/2022**
to **11/11/2022**

Ship: **LE SOLEAL**

From **Cairns**
to **Honiara, Guadalcanal Island**



This exciting tropical expedition on board *Le Soléal* takes you through some of **the most fascinating natural beauty and cultures of Melanesia**.

Starting in **Cairns**, sail up to **Alotau** in Papua New Guinea's Milne Bay Province, and learn about the historical significance of the area with the WWII memorial as well as Japanese and American battlegrounds, and stories of pearl divers, miners and missionaries.

The two volcanically active islands of **Ferguson** and **Dobu** are next on your itinerary. Join your expedition team on a walk to the **DeiDei geothermal hot springs** through spectacular forests, and learn about the Methodist Church of Australia who established a mission station on Dobu Island.

In **Kitava**, in the **Trobriand Islands**, you will be welcomed by spectacular cultural performances and traditional ceremonies by the local islanders, and you will have the opportunity to snorkel and swim in the local clear and pristine waters. Learn about the traditional trading system of the island of **Kiriwina**, '*Kula*', as well as the local village life and more spectacular cultural performances.

In the **Solomon Islands**, **Ghizo** and **Njari** Islands are where you will meet some of the most skilled carvers in the world, enjoy world-class snorkelling and diving, and visit the local traditional markets.

In **Roderick Bay** experience the extraordinary environment featuring white sand beaches and fringing coral reefs before reaching the **Malaita Province** known for the local unique traditions and social aspects of life such as brideprice, as well as traditional music and sacred dances accompanied by traditional panpipers.

Your expedition will finish in **Honiara**, the capital of the Solomon Islands, where *Le Soléal* will be positioned alongside the wharf of Point Cruise.



The information in this document is valid as of 20/5/2022

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

CAIRNS

Embarkation 1/11/2022 from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Departure 1/11/2022 at 5:00 pm

Washed by the Coral Sea, the harbour town of **Cairns** is located on Australia's north-east coast. The seafront esplanade is a popular place for locals and visitors to walk, swim and picnic under the shade of swaying **palm trees**. The hills surrounding Cairns form the gateway to the **Queensland Rainforests**, proclaimed a UNESCO World Heritage site for their fauna and flora from the Gondwana era.

AT SEA

Arrival 2/11/2022

Departure 2/11/2022

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.

ALOTAU

Arrival 3/11/2022

Departure 3/11/2022

Alotau became the provincial capital of Milne Bay in 1969 and today has a population of approximately 16,000. It serves as our port of entry into Papua New Guinea. Missionaries, miners, pearlers, Japanese and American warships have all contributed to the History of Milne Bay. Perhaps the most significant history surrounds the Battle of Milne Bay. It was here that the invading Japanese army suffered their first land defeat in the Pacific War in 1942. A memorial park at the battle site commemorates the event. The local people are warm and welcoming resulting in one of the most relaxed, secure and easy-going towns in Papua New Guinea. Join your expedition team for a tour taking in the town markets and WWII memorials.

FERGUSSON ISLAND

Arrival 4/11/2022

Departure 4/11/2022

Fergusson is the largest island in the D'Entrecasteaux archipelago. Situated to the east of Papua New Guinea, the latter was discovered in the late 18th century by the French navigator Antoine Bruny d'Entrecasteaux. Fergusson's terrain is very mountainous, with the highest peak reaching some 2,000 metres in altitude. At the heart of this island, a tropical rainforest is home to a rich and varied flora as well as beautiful bird species, including parrots and birds of paradise. In the south, the smoke and geysers of the Dei Dei hot springs are a magical sight.

DOBU ISLAND

Arrival 4/11/2022

Departure 4/11/2022

Dobu Island is one of the 5 islands in the D'Entrecasteaux archipelago to the east of Papua New Guinea. It is home to several bird species, including the white cockatoo and the curl-crested manucode. The local tribes are very attached to their ancestral traditions and theirs is a matrilineal social system, dominated by maternal lineage. The Dobu Islanders are also known for practising magic rituals and witchcraft. Their language is spoken on most of the islands in the D'Entrecasteaux archipelago.

TROBRIAND ISLANDS

Arrival 5/11/2022

Departure 5/11/2022

The Trobriand Islands remain one of the most culturally intact places in the Pacific. Their unique social system is dominated by hereditary chiefs who wield tremendous power, although inheritances and lines of power are matrilineal. The Trobriands are often referred to as the 'islands of love'. A reference to the customs and sexual practices of the islanders during the Yam harvesting festival of Milamala. Dance and celebration continue to play an important role in society with the rhythm of the dances retaining their sensuality, despite the best efforts of missionaries. Today you will be welcomed ashore to watch an energetic cultural performance, after which you can walk to the village or swim and snorkel in the clear warm waters.

KIRIWINA ISLAND

Arrival 6/11/2022

Departure 6/11/2022

Kiriwina is the largest of the Trobriand Islands and is home to the district capital Losuia. It is a picture postcard island surrounded by turquoise warm tropical waters home to coral reefs teeming with life. Like the rest of the Trobriand Islands, culture and tradition remain strong. Central to Trobriand culture is Kula, a traditional exchange system that spans more than 18 island communities. All Kula valuables are non-use items traded purely for purposes of enhancing one's social status and prestige. The exchanges establish strong, lifelong relationships between the exchange parties. You will be welcomed ashore with a ceremony and cultural performances followed by the opportunity to witness traditional village life.

AT SEA

Arrival 7/11/2022

Departure 7/11/2022

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.

GHIZO ISLAND

Arrival 8/11/2022

Departure 8/11/2022

Gizo is situated on Ghizo Island and is the second largest town in the Solomon Islands, after the capital, Honiara. The people of the Western Province are regarded as amongst the most skilled carvers in the world. They produce carvings from various woods including ebony and rosewood. These amazingly intricate carvings can take months to make and accordingly command a high price. There are plenty of opportunities for world class snorkelling, diving and underwater photography throughout the Western province and the Islands around Ghizo are considered among the most popular. You will have the opportunity to visit the traditional markets of Gizo.

NJARI ISLAND

Arrival 8/11/2022

Departure 8/11/2022

There are plenty of opportunities for world class snorkelling, diving and underwater photography throughout the Solomon Islands with sites in the Western and Central Provinces considered among the most popular. The underwater realm is home to more than 1000 species of reef fish, along with dolphins, rays, sharks, and six of the world's seven species of marine turtles. Almost 500 species of corals have been identified amongst the 5,750km² of reefs found in the Solomon Islands. **Njari Island** is an uninhabited picture postcard island located 15nm from the town of Gizo. Enjoy swimming and snorkelling from its idyllic shores.

AT SEA

Arrival 9/11/2022

Departure 9/11/2022

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.

RODERICK BAY, FLORIDA ISLANDS

Arrival 9/11/2022

Departure 9/11/2022

Part of the Florida Islands, **Roderick bay** is surrounded by beautiful white sand beaches and fringing coral reefs. These clear warm tropical waters give rise to a myriad of colourful corals only metres from the shore. To add to this stunning environment, nosed up onto a nearby beach, listing heavily to its starboard side is the wreck of the World Discoverer; an expedition cruise ship beached here in 2001 after striking a charted rock at the Northern entrance to Sandfly Passage. Venture ashore for a welcome ceremony, take a walk through the village or snorkel around the wreck to witness the marine environment attempting to reclaim this invader.

MALAITA ISLAND

Arrival 10/11/2022

Departure 10/11/2022

Malaita is the largest and most populous island of the Solomon Islands, with an estimated population of 140,000, more than a third of the entire national population. Bride price is a tradition unique to Malaitans within the Solomon Islands. The groom's parents present customary shell-money and food to the bride's parents. Previously the money was also manufactured on Makira and Guadalcanal. It is still produced on Malaita, but much is inherited, from father to son, and the old traditional strings are now rare. Malaitans are also famous for their music and sacred dances often associated with rituals. Guests will be welcomed ashore with a ceremony and cultural performances followed by the opportunity to witness traditional village life.

HONIARA, GUADALCANAL ISLAND

Arrival 11/11/2022 early morning

Disembarkation 11/11/2022 at 7:00 am

Honiara is the capital city of The Solomon Islands, administered as a provincial town on the north-western coast of Guadalcanal Island. **Honiara** comes from the local Ghari Language "naho-ni-ara" meaning 'facing the ara', the place where the southeast winds meet the land. Discover this city, its beautiful landscape, and the significant role it played in **World War II**. Particularly The Battle of Henderson Field, the last of the three major land offensives conducted by the Japanese in 1942.