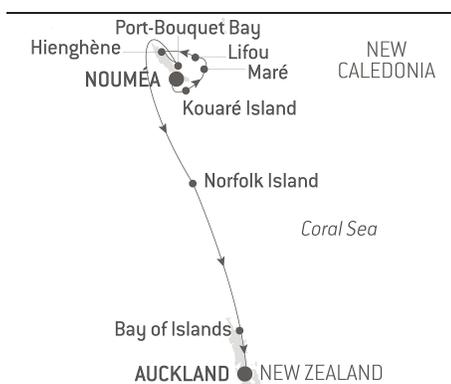


Pacific Islands Discovery - avec National Geographic

From **22/11/2022**
to **2/12/2022**

Ship: **LE SOLEAL**

From **Nouméa**
to **Auckland**



In collaboration with National Geographic Expeditions

On this cruise, PONANT invites you to discover **New Caledonia**, a world's end French territory located right in the middle of the South Pacific. A **11-day expedition cruise**, with an emphasis on the idyllic **lagoons** of the **Kanak culture**.

You will board *Le Soléal* in **Noumea** and your ship will first take you to **Kouaré Island** which will reveal you all its beauty and the richness of its seabed.

You will then be dazzled by the islands of **Maré** and **Lifou** and their picture-postcard landscapes of white-sand beaches and tropical vegetation, before discovering further north **Hienghène**, the cradle of Kanak culture. Its magnificent black limestone cliffs, its steep landscapes and the incredible biodiversity of the coral seabed in its **lagoon, classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site**, make the reputation of this emblematic region of New Caledonia.

You will call at the Australian island of Norfolk whose deserted beaches line the magnificent **Emily Bay Lagoon**.

In the far north of the New Zealand archipelago, you will fall under the charm of the **Bay of Islands**, where you will be able attend a **Maori ceremony**.

Your cruise will end in **Auckland**. This **New Zealand** city bordered by two seas will surprise you with its modernity and its cosmopolitan atmosphere.



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

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

NOUMÉA

Embarkation 22/11/2022 from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Departure 22/11/2022 at 6:00 pm

Perched on a peninsula between bays and hills, on the south-west coast of Grande Terre, **Noumea** enjoys a **magnificent natural setting**. The town shelters some exceptional biodiversity, thanks especially to the coastal mangroves. To feel the town's heartbeat, you can mosey in the **place des Cocotiers**, where Noumeans love to gather. The Tjibaou cultural centre unveils the secrets of the **kanak culture**. As for the Hagen castle or the **maison Célières**, these are precious witnesses of a colonial past. But Noumea is also about sumptuous beaches.

KOUARÉ ISLAND

Arrival 23/11/2022

Departure 23/11/2022

Aboard your Zodiac® dinghy, you will sail along the turquoise waters of New Caledonia's coral reef, the second largest in the world. When you land on Kouare Island, in the heart of the southern lagoon, you will discover an idyllic environment. On this small tract of uninhabited land, in a marine area listed as World Heritage by UNESCO, the animals rule supreme. From the white-sand beaches where marine turtles and sea snakes like to lay their eggs, take off with your mask and snorkel to discover an abundant underwater world that is home to multicoloured fish, beautiful coral, and marine reptiles. Look up to the sky and admire the incessant ballet of terns and black noddies that appear to be jealously guarding their island.

MARÉ, LOYALTY ISLANDS

Arrival 24/11/2022

Departure 24/11/2022

Secluded and wild, **Maré Island**, located in New Caledonia, is the southernmost of the **Loyalty Islands group**. You will see unusual cut-out reliefs sculpted by time: here, old coral reefs transformed into impressive cliffs plunge into the ocean; there, the turquoise waters of peaceful **lagoons** lap on white sand beaches, rimmed with coconut palms and Cook pines. Inland, a central plateau shelters numerous caves and water "holes". Maré Island is also known as "**the market garden of New Caledonia**". Don't forget to eat the island's succulent avocados.

LIFOU

Arrival 25/11/2022

Departure 25/11/2022

You'll land around 100km east of **Grande-Terre**. An ancient coral atoll atop a collapsed volcano, Lifou is today the largest and highest of the **Loyalty Islands**. This is an outstanding natural site, waiting to be explored: to the north, the coastline ends abruptly in sheer cliffs, while to the south lie expanses of long white sand beaches. Lovers of wild plantlife may well be tempted by a walk further inland, where the rich and authentic **Kanak culture** is proudly upheld by the local community.

HIENGHÈNE

Arrival 26/11/2022

Departure 26/11/2022

The cradle of the Kanak culture, Hienghène is one of New Caledonia's most emblematic communes. Located on the country's east coast on the edge of the lagoon listed as World Heritage by UNESCO, it offers visitors magnificent landscapes including black limestone rocks, spectacular waterfalls, and prolific vegetation. In the ocean, fans of scuba diving will marvel at the unique biodiversity to be found on the Caledonian seabed. On land there is plenty to see too, including the surprising Linderalique cliffs that rise majestically from the water, as well as the must-see rock formations known as the "Poule Couveuse" (brooding hen) and the Sphinx, at the entrance to Hienghène Bay.

PORT BOUQUET BAY

Arrival 27/11/2022

Departure 27/11/2022

Port-Bouquet Bay is located to the south-east of the main island of New Caledonia, a remote region more well-known as the "Lost Coast". Let yourself fall under the spell of this wild coast with its exceptional panoramas. Its chiselled coast, between ochre rocks and lush vegetation, appears alongside the subtle tones offered by the Coral Sea. You'll be able to visit the small village of **Saint-Roch**, perched on the side of deep ravine overlooking the **islands of Nemou** and **Toupeti**, where you will be welcomed in the traditional manner by the inhabitants. You'll also be able to make the most of the beach to relax, swim or snorkel among the coral reefs of the island of Nemou.

AT SEA

Arrival 28/11/2022

Departure 28/11/2022

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.

NORFOLK ISLAND

Arrival 29/11/2022

Departure 29/11/2022

This unspoilt South Pacific island lies off Australia's east coast. The choice is yours: relax on its deserted beaches or dive among the multi-coloured fish and corals of **Emily Bay lagoon**. **Norfolk Island National Park** is the place to see parrots hidden under the araucaria branches and tree-ferns. The lookout perched at the top of Mount Pitt offers you a 360-degree panorama of sparkling coastline. Discover more about the island's turbulent history at the Norfolk Island Museum in **Kingston**, one of Australia's oldest towns.

AT SEA

Arrival 30/11/2022

Departure 30/11/2022

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.

BAY OF ISLANDS, WAITANGI

Arrival 1/12/2022

Departure 1/12/2022

On the east coast of the North Island, **the Bay of Islands** promises an incredible journey into the origins of the land of the long white cloud. **Russell**, the first harbour city founded in New Zealand by Europeans, is your entry-point into this corner of paradise. Among whitewashed houses and gorgeous gardens, Russell offers a gentle, romantic atmosphere. A few traces of its past remain, such as **Christ Church**, the oldest church in the country. Shimmering waters highly prized by local fishermen, beautiful beaches and wild nature make visiting this New Zealand town a picture postcard experience.

AUCKLAND

Arrival 2/12/2022 early morning

Disembarkation 2/12/2022 at 7:00 am

Auckland is New Zealand's largest, most populated and busiest city. Located on an isthmus linking the peninsula of Northland to the expansive North Island, it seems to float between land and sea. It is one of the few cities in the world to have two separate harbours : Manukau Harbour on the Tasman Sea and Waitemata Harbour on the Pacific Ocean. You will understand why Auckland is known as "**the City of Sails**" when you see the forest of masts in the marina. The 328 metre-high Sky Tower offers splendid views of the city. Surrounded by dormant volcanoes such as **Mt Eden**, Auckland is noted for its abundant nature and magnificent black-sand beaches. A blend of Maori, European and

Asian cultures give the city a vibrant atmosphere.