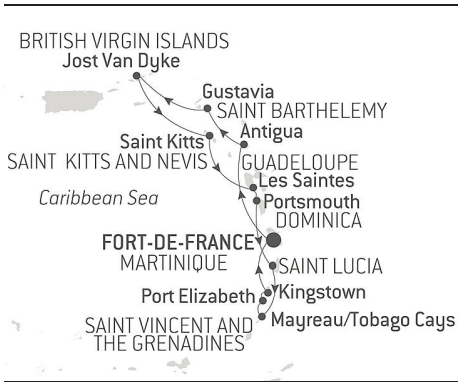
The Essential of the Caribbean

From **8/1/2024** to **20/1/2024**	Ship: ***LE BELLOT***	From **Fort-de-France** to **Fort-de-France**



PONANT invites you on a **13-day cruise** to the heart of the **West Indies**. From Fort-de-France, you will sail the idyllic waters of the **Caribbean Sea** to discover stunning islands, as well as historical and architectural landmarks.

An **experienced diving instructor** is on board for the entire cruise, enabling you to safely enjoy swimming and scuba diving.

First of all, you will venture to **Antigua**, whose blend of British influences and Creole culture gives its picture postcard scenery a unique atmosphere.

Le Bellot will set sail further north to **Saint Barthélemy**, famous for its wild coves and its elegant little shopping streets.

In the **British Virgin Islands**, made up of some 60 islands, most of which are uninhabited, you will have the chance to enjoy the beaches of **Jost van Dyke** for a peaceful swimming break.

You will cruise on to the enchanting **island of Dominica**, known as the Nature Island, before you reach **Saint Lucia** and its two majestic rocky peaks soaring straight from the sea. This unique location is listed as **UNESCO World Heritage site**.

Then, you will head south to the archipelago of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**. The most beautiful coral reef in the West Indies connects this chain of islands and reveals incredible underwater fauna and secret coves.

Then you will return to **Fort-de-France** after a magnificent cruise.



The information in this document is valid as of 28/3/2024

The Essential of the Caribbean

YOUR STOPOVERS :

FORT-DE-FRANCE

Embarkation 8/1/2024 from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Departure 8/1/2024 at 10:00 pm

Located on the western coast of Martinique, Fort-de-France will amaze you by the splendour of its bay, a magnificent cut-out in the coastline, considered as one of the most beautiful in the world. At the harbour mouth, on its strip of land, **fort Saint-Louis** overlooks the capital city of Martinique. If you climb up to it, you can see some breath-taking views. **Saint Louis Cathedral** and the Schoelcher library bear witness to a secular history, intimately linked to the island's story. Why not try some fresh coconut at the colourful Grand Marché. Two really pleasant places you can take a breather in, right in the heart of the city, are the garden of Balata and the Aimé Césaire park.

ANTIGUA

Arrival 9/1/2024 midday
Departure 9/1/2024 early evening

Between white sandy beaches and lush tropical forest, you will discover Antigua, the largest of the two islands that make up **Antigua-and-Barbuda**, a sovereign **Commonwealth** state. From its British colonial heritage, this picture-postcard island has kept English as its official language and a pronounced taste for **cricket!** The steep hillsides of the south of the island offer splendid vistas over **English Harbour** and the **Antigua shipyard**, a building dating from the 17th century and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and over Indian Creek, where the first Awarak Indians settled. To the east, the clear waters of the village of Seatons are the ideal site for **snorkelling alongside the rays.**

GUSTAVIA

Arrival 10/1/2024 early morning
Departure 10/1/2024 late afternoon

Lovers of this island call it **Saint-Barth.** This French island in the Lesser Antilles was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1493. Ever since, this tiny **mountainous volcanic gem** with its **unspoilt nature** has been enchanting visitors. You will enjoy the beauty of its large paradisiacal beaches, plus the charm and refinement of its old wooden houses and its sumptuous **colonial manors.** Although, as you saunter through the rues de **Gustavia** or **Saint-Jean,** you'll come across jewellers, top fashion boutiques and fine restaurants, there is also a simplicity that money can't buy...

JOST VAN DYKE

Arrival 11/1/2024 early morning
Departure 11/1/2024 late afternoon

During your cruise, discover the pearl of the **British Virgin Islands**, said to have been named after a fearsome Dutch

pirate from long ago. he hilly landscape offers travellers beautiful wild expanses lined with immaculate beaches where the breeze gently caresses the coconut palms. In this slice of heaven with crystal-clear waters, you will be able to enjoy the **lively atmosphere of White Bay.** As for the wildlife, iguanas, mongooses, pelicans and blue herons have taken up residence on these islands, much to the delight of our passengers who love a good holiday snap!

SOUTH FRIARS BAY, SAINT KITTS

Arrival 12/1/2024 early morning
Departure 12/1/2024 early evening

Nestling along the **peninsula of Saint-Kitts Island**, South Friars Bay shelters one of the Kittitians' most popular beaches. You will find this gorgeous stretch of golden sand ideal for a spot of sunbathing, or you may prefer to go and discover the history of the island**.** Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, **Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park** is a remarkable example of military architecture from the 17th and 18th centuries. It affords an exceptional view of the island's coast.

LES SAINTES

Arrival 13/1/2024 early morning
Departure 13/1/2024 evening

During the feast of All Saints in 1493, **Christopher Columbus** discovered this archipelago of nine islands that he named "The Saints". Today, only two of them are inhabited. Terre de Haut, in the east, is dominated by the Morne Mire hill; at the summit stands **Fort Napoleon**, paying homage to the islands' history. In the heart of the **botanical garden**, shared by iguanas and cacti, there is an exceptional view of the **Baie des Saintes**, one of the most beautiful in the world. The long shady beach of Pompierre, where it is forbidden to drop anchor, is a peaceful place for a swim, while Pain de Sucre Beach offers wonderful opportunities for snorkelling. On the island, don't forget to taste the local speciality, the "tourment d'amour", a cake made with coconut.

PORTSMOUTH

Arrival 14/1/2024 early morning
Departure 14/1/2024 evening

With its mountainous terrain, vast tropical forest, hot springs, rivers and spectacular waterfalls, **Dominica** is undoubtedly **the wildest island** in the Caribbean. Protected by several **national parks**, this little-known land, located in the heart of the Caribbean Sea, between Guadeloupe and Martinique, will inspire adventure and exploration. During your port of call, do not miss out on discovering the enchanting landscapes of the **Indian River**: navigating through this dense mangrove, in which creepers, ferns, forest trees and giant roots are interweaved, is a magical experience, a fascinating voyage into the heart of an almost mystical natural universe.

PIGEON ISLAND BEACH

Arrival 15/1/2024 early morning
Departure 15/1/2024 midday

Linked to **St Lucia** by a sand causeway, **Pigeon Island** has been a designated National Park since 1979. On this wild and pristine land, you will be inspired to take pleasant walks amid the tropical vegetation and through a **magnificent tree-filled garden**

. You will also be irresistibly drawn to the two pretty little sandy beaches nestling on the southern side and bathed by crystal-clear waters. While snorkelling, be sure to explore the underwater world that is teeming with life, along the rocks lining this peninsula's coast. You will thoroughly enjoy the calm and beauty of this place, which is really conducive to simply relaxing.

SOUFRIÈRE

Arrival 15/1/2024 early afternoon
Departure 15/1/2024 evening

Nestled in the crook of a breath-taking bay, the former capital of **St Lucia** is brimming with attractions. **Soufrière** is famous for The **Pitons**, volcanic spires that tower over the entrance to the town. In the vicinity of the lush botanical gardens, you will be able to enjoy the curative powers of the **Diamond Falls mineral baths**. From the beach at the north end of the bay, you can set off to explore the reefs that are home to stunning gardens of sea fans at the foot of the cliffs that plunge into the sea.

MAYREAU ISLAND

Arrival 16/1/2024 early morning
Departure 16/1/2024 late evening

Among the string of paradisiac islands with their sandy beaches that form the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines archipelago, Mayreau is the smallest. Its **peaceful and idyllic atmosphere**, far from the madding crowd, invites you to relax. On shore, enjoy a **shaded and fully equipped beach** from which to go snorkelling if you'd like to observe the colourful fish around the coral sitting at the foot of the rocks that stretch across the bay.

TOBAGO CAYS

Arrival 17/1/2024 early morning
Departure 17/1/2024 late afternoon

Scattered between **St Vincent and Grenada**, the **Tobago Cays** comprises five little islands: Petit Rameau, Petit Bateau, Baradal, Petit Tabac and Jamesby. This rosary of uninhabited cays in the **southern West Indies** is a **marine park** whose turquoise lagoons provide a home and safe haven for some outstanding marine fauna, **including peaceful green turtles** . Girded and united by a coral reef, these secluded islands are a peaceful paradise for divers, swimmers and snorkellers.

PORT ELIZABETH, BEQUIA ISLAND

Arrival 18/1/2024 early morning
Departure 18/1/2024 late evening

In the heart of the **Caribbean**, **Bequia** is the second-largest of 32 islands that make up the country of **St Vincent and the Grenadines**. You will love the lively and picturesque atmosphere of **Port Elizabeth**, the island's main town. From the port, a promenade lined with beautiful traditional houses, landscaped gardens and small restaurants runs along the shoreline. It leads to Princess Margaret Beach, a wild beach where Princess Margaret herself has stayed and which seems to emerge directly from the tropical forest. From rainforest to lush meadows and long stretches of sand,

Bequia will offer you a natural setting that is conducive to lovely walks and to spending time on the beach.

KINGSTOWN

Arrival 19/1/2024 early morning
Departure 19/1/2024 early evening

Kingstown is the capital of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, independent since 1979 but still a member of the British Commonwealth. Some of the 32 islands of the Grenadines are inhabited, like Mustique, some are not, like Tobago Cays. But they are all renowned for **crystal clear, calm waters,** and some of the **best snorkeling and diving in the world**. The **Botanic Garden** in Kingstown is the oldest of its kind in the Western Hemisphere and well worth a visit, as is **Fort Charlotte**, featuring panoramic views of the archipelago. **La Soufrière**, Saint Vincent's active volcano, dominates the northern end of the island, where it periodically erupts (most recently in April 2021), scarring the surrounding land with lava and ash.

FORT-DE-FRANCE

Arrival 20/1/2024 early morning
Disembarkation 20/1/2024 at 7:00 am

Located on the western coast of Martinique, Fort-de-France will amaze you by the splendour of its bay, a magnificent cut-out in the coastline, considered as one of the most beautiful in the world. At the harbour mouth, on its strip of land, **fort Saint-Louis** overlooks the capital city of Martinique. If you climb up to it, you can see some breath-taking views. **Saint Louis Cathedral** and the Schoelcher library bear witness to a secular history, intimately linked to the island’s story. Why not try some fresh coconut at the colourful Grand Marché. Two really pleasant places you can take a breather in, right in the heart of the city, are the garden of Balata and the Aimé Césaire park.