MYSTERIES OF INDONESIA & PAPUA NEW GUINEA
DARWIN TO CAIRNS
ON LE SOLÉAL
SEP 19– OCT 7, 2025
PROGRAM SCHEDULE

ITINERARY HIGHLIGHTS: Colombo, Australia / Maluku Islands / Kitikiti Waterfall / Cenderawasih Bay / Jayapura, Papua / Kopar / Madang / Tami Islands / Tufi / Alotau / Cairns

• Comprehensive 16-night cruise aboard the deluxe Le Soléal
• One hotel pre-night on September 20, 2025, with welcome cocktail reception and ½ day of touring prior to embarkation
• One PONANT Tour Manager to accompany the group from the Pre-Night on September 20, 2025, through the end of the voyage/disembarkation on October 7, 2025.
• Two exclusive HAA lectures onboard and two HAA lectures open to the ship
• Complete program of tours and excursions as noted in itinerary
• Welcome cocktail reception aboard ship for HAA guests only
• Captain’s gala dinner
• All meals aboard ship including early riser’s coffee & pastry, breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner
• Open bar aboard ship, including select wines with lunch and dinner
• 24-hour complimentary room service
• Comprehensive pre-departure materials and a dedicated Guest Services Specialist
• Unlimited Wi-Fi (as available via satellite)
• Airport/Hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage on official arrival & departure days
• Port taxes and charges
• Gratuities to shipboard personnel, porters, guides, and drivers

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Level 3

SCHEDULE BY DAY
B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19
DEPART FROM HOME CITY

The program begins on Thursday, September 20 in Darwin, Australia.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20
ARRIVE DARWIN / PRE-NIGHT

Arrive in Darwin, where you will be met and transferred to a hotel for one night. The balance of the day is at leisure.

Overnight: Hotel (R)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
DARWIN / EMBARK

Darwin is located in Australia’s Northern Territory which is also known as the “Top End”. It is the capital city and the most populated town of the Northern Territory. Darwin is a beautiful tropical city, a melting pot of people and cultures, over 50 different cultures live and work side by side that prides itself in its unique and friendly laid-back lifestyle. Come discover the town’s still recent history through its emblematic buildings such as the new Parliament House opened in 1994, a magnificent example of tropical architecture or Admiralty House declared heritage place, a tropical-style home elevated on stilts that has survived two cyclones and numerous air raids.
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22
AT SEA

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.

OVERNIGHT ON LE SOLÉAL (B, L, D)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23
KEI ISLANDS, MALUKU ISLANDS

The Kei Islands are blessed with kilometers of stunning, yet almost entirely empty, white-sand beaches and a deeply hospitable population. Beneath the mostly Christian facade, Kei culture is fascinatingly distinctive. Local history holds that ancestors of contemporary Kei islanders came from Bali, part of the expanding Hindu Majapahit kingdom from the western archipelago. Enjoy a day of swimming and snorkeling on an idyllic uninhabited picture postcard tropical island.

OVERNIGHT ON LE SOLÉAL (B, L, D)

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24
BANDA NEIRA, MALUKU ISLANDS

From age-old traditional cultures and ancient vestiges, to coral reefs and lush green jungle... The attractions of the remote Banda archipelago seem endless. Better known as the legendary “Spice Islands” of the Ancient World, these small volcanic landmasses were the fabled prize of colonial powers for more than four centuries. Every colonial power of significance fought for control of these ten small islands that today have become largely forgotten. Walking the streets of Banda Neira is a surreal experience as your eyes are drawn to the eclectic mix of Portuguese, Dutch and British architecture, the remnants of a rich and tumultuous history. It is without doubt the most historically significant and interesting of all the “Spice Islands”.

OVERNIGHT ON LE SOLÉAL (B, L, D)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25
KITIKITI WATERFALL, MOMMON

North of Triton Bay, in the Indonesian province of West Papua, lie the Bomberai Peninsula and Sebakor Bay. A real paradise for divers, this protected, authentic and very wild area boasts an exceptional biodiversity. Here, you will be able to admire the superb Kitikiti Waterfall where you could enjoy a swim or snorkel surrounded by lush nature, both on land and under water.

OVERNIGHT ON LE SOLÉAL (B, L, D)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26
AT SEA

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OVERNIGHT ON LE SOLÉAL (B, L, D)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 – FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28
CENDERAWASHI BAY

Cenderawasih Bay is located at the western end of New Guinea Island, south-east of the Bird’s Head Peninsula. Covering more than 1.4 million hectares the bay is home to an abundant array of uninhabited islands, pristine coral reefs and the world’s largest fish, the Whale Shark. Over the years the whale sharks have learnt the habits of local fishermen who...
catch baitfish at night in nets lowered from fishing vessels known as "Bagans". The Whale Sharks are now regular visitors feeding on the baitfish that spill from the nets at the surface. Cenderawasih Bay is part of the Bird’s Head seascape, the centre of marine biodiversity at the heart of the coral triangle. Do not miss the chance to discover these multicolored reefs and extraordinary marine fauna. Depending on the conditions, you may also have the opportunity to snorkel and swim with Whale Sharks.

Overnight on Le Soléal (B, L, D)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29
AT SEA

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Overnight on Le Soléal (B, L, D)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30
JAYAPURA, PAPUA

Jayapura City is the provincial capital of Papua province, Indonesia. It is a modern industrial city contrasting markedly with the surrounding hinterland where Papuan tribes live a subsistence lifestyle. The vast majority of Jayapurans are transmigrants from western Indonesia who control most of the industry and economics of the region. Leaving the city behind, guest will travel to the traditional village of Asai on Lake Sentani. Here you can enjoy a cultural performance and witness life in a traditional Papuan village. Asai is famous for its production of Tapa cloth.

Overnight on Le Soléal (B, L, D)

MONDAY, OCTOBER 1
KOPAR

The people of the Sepik region speak more than 250 languages and are knitted together in systems of trade and cultural interaction. Kopar village’s location at the mouth of the Sepik river makes it an important trading point for surrounding villages. Here the crocodile is worshiped as the water spirit. As is custom in all Sepik societies, the men’s house is the place where important decisions regarding the village are made, where boys are initiated and become men and ceremonies to please the spirits are performed. Guests will be welcomed ashore with a ceremony and cultural performance, including the famous “dragon dance.” There will be an opportunity to walk around the village of Kopar to experience traditional life in the lower Sepik.

Overnight on Le Soléal (B, L, D)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2
MADANG

Madang Township was once known as the "prettiest town in the South Pacific". Its peninsula setting is a show-place of parks, waterways, luxuriant shade trees and sparkling tropical islands. The diverse geographical nature of Madang province is reflected in the 170 different languages that are spoken. This diversity is showcased in the Madang festival with its colourful displays of “sing sings” performed by numerous cultural groups from across the Madang Province. Today, you will also be treated to a number of cultural performances showcasing the local customs, costume and dance of the coastal, midland and highland communities.

Overnight on Le Soléal (B, L, D)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3
TAMI ISLANDS

The Tami Islands (Kalal, Wanam & Idjan) are a small group of uplifted coral atolls, with two main villages on the two larger islands and many smaller reefs and cays. In the centre is a beautiful, crystal clear blue lagoon with abundant marine life and stunning coral formations. The islands, located in Morobe Province not far from the town of Finschaffen are seldom-visited. Tami Islanders are renowned artisans and are most famous for their intricately decorated bowls.
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4
TUFI

Often described as the “Scandinavia of the tropics”.
The spectacular Tufi “fiords” plunge over 90 metres
depth and rise over 150 metres vertically above the
water making for a spectacular backdrop. The
traditional way of life plays an important role
amongst the villagers with many living in isolated
areas along the coast of Cape Nelson and on the
slopes of Mount Trafalgar. The area is known for its
production of tapa cloth, made from the bark of the
paper mulberry tree and skillfully decorated. Guests
will travel into the ancient mangrove forests of the
Fiords to witness one of the most colourful
traditional performances in all of Papua New Guinea.
There is also the opportunity to swim and snorkel in
the clear waters of Kamo Beach.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7
CAIRNS / DISEMBARK / DEPART FOR U.S.

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.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5
ALOTAU

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.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6
AT SEA

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many services and activities on board. Treat yourself
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departure_14_2.Tales_of_Le_Soleal/Shows_proposed_on_board, depending on the
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