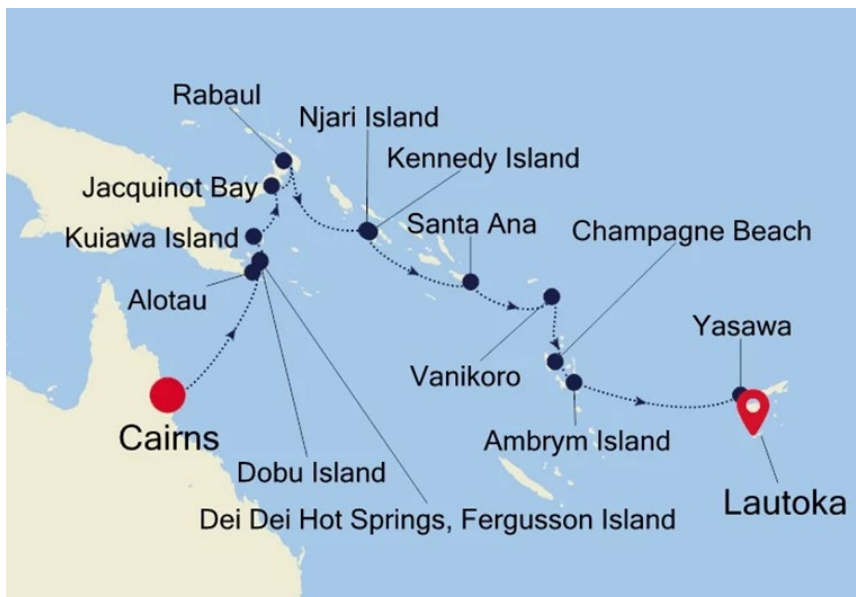


MELANESIA

CAIRNS TO LAUTOKA



Melanesia has been topping wanderlust wish lists for years. Join our team of onboard experts aboard Silver Explorer and explore this lesser known region. From Cairns, travel to hot springs and birds of paradise of Papua New Guinea, exploring the island's remarkable breadth of culture as you go. Sail on to the untouched Solomon Islands for some world class snorkeling and startling scenery. Vanuatu, home of the famous water music and champagne beach is last.



DATES: 2023 – SEP 29

DURATION: 18 DAYS/17 NIGHTS

EMBARK: CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA

DISEMBARK: LAUTOKA, FIJI

SHIP: Silver Explorer

FROM: \$13,900*

*Free Economy or reduced rate Business Class Air, Pre-Cruise transfers and hotel.

\$9,350**

**Cruise Only – 17 Days

ITINERARY

DAY 1 – ARRIVE CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA

Transfer to your included hotel. Warmly welcoming you to the natural wonders of the Great Barrier Reef, Cairns is a treasure trove of rich tropical beauty and incredible sea life.

DAY 2 – EXPLORE CAIRNS, EMBARKATION

Enjoy your free time to explore the city and surrounds. Transfer to the pier for embarkation and departure.

DAY 3 – DAY AT SEA

DAY 4 – ALOTAU, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Alotau is the provincial capital of the Milne Bay Province located in the southeast bay of Papua New Guinea. The town and surrounding area was an important staging ground during World War II and we will see remains and memorials dating back or referring to the war. On a tour of the town, visitors will appreciate lovely vistas of the bay and experience the markets, which are frequented not only by locals, but also by islanders selling their products or looking for produce to take back into Milne Bay. Alotau is an important port facility for the islands and attracts many vendors of handicrafts from different islands.

DAY 5 – DEI DEI HOT SPRINGS, FERGUSSON ISLAND - DOBU ISLAND, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

On Fergusson's south side are the famous Dei Dei geysers — natural hot springs that periodically erupt with vapor steam next to mud pools and a warm stream. The hot springs are still used by locals to cook food in palm frond and pandanus leaf baskets placed into the boiling hot water. Birds in the area include Eclectus Parrots, Yellow-bellied Sunbirds and the endemic Curl-crested Manucode — a bird-of-paradise.

Dobu is a small island formerly feared because of black magic and the local "witch" doctors cursing the healthy or treating the sick. An anthropological study was done by Reo Fortune in the 1930s which resulted in the book "The Island of Sorcerers". A stroll through the main village on the northwestern tip will show the school, church and trails leading along the shore passing traditional thatched houses and gardens.

DAY 6 – KUIAWA ISLAND, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Kuiawa is one of the Trobriand Islands, the northernmost islands in the Milne Bay Province. Kuiawa lies some 200 kilometers from the province's capital and to the southwest of Kiriwina, the largest and best known of the islands. Trobriand Islanders are known for their magic to improve the growth of yam, a highly desired plant for

ceremonial reasons and as food. Houses are strung along the main road through the village and beach almond, casuarina and frangipani trees give shade. Trobriand Islanders are famous carvers and dancers.

DAY 7 – JACQUINOT BAY, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Jacquinet Bay is a large open bay on the eastern coast of the island of New Britain. It is a tranquil place with white sandy beaches and tropical palm trees. There is also a beautiful waterfall that flows out of the mountainside with cold water right onto the beach. During WWII it was not a quiet place. It was an important base for the Australian Army who liberated it in November 1944.

DAY 8 – RABAUL, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Located on the north-eastern tip of New Britain Island, Rabaul, the former provincial capital, is inside the flooded caldera of a giant volcano and several sub-vents are still quite active today! The lively city was almost entirely devastated by Mount Tavurvur in 1994, covering the city in ashfall, but thankfully costing no lives. Rabaul's remote location together with the volcano still being one of the most active and dangerous in Papua New Guinea means tourism is not rife. Rabaul has an impressive WWII history which includes a 300-mile network of tunnels dug by Japanese POW designed to conceal munitions and stores. After the Pearl Harbor bombings, the Japanese used Rabaul as their South Pacific base for the last four years of WWII, and by 1943 there were about 110,000 Japanese troops based in Rabaul. Post war, the island was returned to Australia, before it was granted independence in 1975.

DAYS 9 – DAY AT SEA

DAY 10 – NJARI ISLAND; KENNEDY ISLAND, SOLOMON ISLANDS

Njari is a small island almost entirely covered in trees with just a small sand spit at its eastern end. A labyrinth of reefs and coral heads make an approach quite difficult. Two hundred and seventy-nine different fish species have been seen during a single dive; the fourth-highest fish count ever recorded. An indication of why this island is considered a top spot for snorkeling in the Solomon Islands.

DAY 11 – DAY AT SEA

DAY 12 – SANTA ANA, SOLOMON ISLANDS

Port Mary is the name of the bay adjacent to Ghupuna, the main village in Santa Ana. A bright white sand beach with huge shade-giving trees runs along the shoreline in front of the tidy village. The houses here are made with local materials and most are built on stilts. Islanders

welcome visitors with traditional songs and dances performed by members of the three different villages on Santa Ana. The Solomons are best known for strings of traditional shell money and elegant carvings based on local stories and legends.

DAY 13 - VANIKORO, SOLOMON ISLANDS

Although Vanikoro is usually considered as one entity, there are two major inhabited and several smaller uninhabited islands almost entirely surrounded by a reef. Vanikoro's population has two distinct origins: the majority is Melanesian and lives mainly on Teanu and Banie's northern shore, the Polynesian inhabitants live along Banie's south coast. One of the most famous French expeditions in the Pacific saw its two ships wrecked on the southwestern reef of Vanikoro in 1788 and a cenotaph has been erected in Manevai Bay to honor La Perouse and his team of officers, sailors and scientists.



DAY 14 - CHAMPAGNE BEACH, VANUATU

As world famous beaches go, Champagne Beach is one of the big hitters. It's one of the world's greatest natural beauties: white sand, turquoise water and nothing around – save for the occasional cow or curious turtle. With only coconut plantations and a few friendly locals to keep you company, this might just be the island of your dreams. The glorious name “Champagne Beach” was given to the island in the 17th century, when Pedro de Quirós believed he had reached the famous unknown southern land or the “Tierra Australis Incognita” (Australia, as we now know it). He believed the effervescent bubbles of volcanic origin that bubble up from the crystal clear waters were reminiscent of the bubbles of Champagne. The beach is located on the largest yet least populated island in the 40-island Vanuatu archipelago, near the village of Hog Harbor on Espiritu Santo Island. If you want to venture beyond the beach, then Espiritu Santo is also famed for its blue holes. The island is home to some

of the clearest waters on Earth, benefiting from natural filtering from underground limestone caves.

DAY 15 – AMBRYM ISLAND, VANUATU

Unlike Espiritu Santo with its raised coral reefs and white sand, Ambrym is a volcanically active island with dark sand beaches. Ambrym is known as the island of magic and is the source of five local languages that all evolved on Ambrym. This handful of languages contributes to the well over 100 languages of Vanuatu. Some of Ambrym's magic takes place in the lush greenery of the local community of Ranon. Here the people perform a very special and traditional 'Rom' dance. Participants prepare their masks and costumes in secrecy and the dance is reserved for special occasions.

DAY 16 – DAY AT SEA

DAY 17 - YASAWA, FIJI

Nabukeru is the largest village on Yasawa, located within the grouping of the roughly 20 volcanic islands that make up the Yasawa Islands in Fiji. With their clear, aquamarine waters and ecologically diverse tropical, mountainous landscapes, these islands were the location for the filming of the romantic adventure film *The Blue Lagoon* (both the 1949 and 1980 versions). Opposite Nabukeru is Sawa-i-Lau, an island famous for the limestone caves of the same name. The Sawa-i-Lau caves can only be accessed by climbing stairs from the beach, passing a small door and then jumping into the larger cave's pool. The second cave and pool can only be reached by swimming at low tide through an underwater tunnel. Nabukeru villagers assert that the cave is the heart of the Yasawas.

DAY 18 – LAUTOKA, FIJI - DISEMBARKATION

Fiji's second-biggest settlement opens up a world of blissful beaches and turquoise seascapes, while its dense jungle lures the adventurous deep into its embrace. Experience rich Fijian life, and see dramatic displays like warrior dances, and remarkable local practices like firewalks, which kick up burning embers into the night's sky. Legend says the city took its name after two chiefs faced each other in a duel. Sugar is Lautoka's main trade, but its botanical gardens are a sweet insight into the tropical plant life that thrives here - from pearl white lilies to tall, fragrant orchids. Remote, wild and unspoiled, these are some of the best tropical beaches in the world.

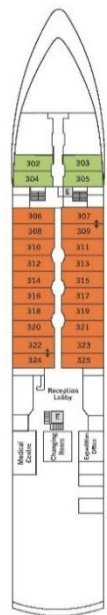
Transfer to airport or hotel.

Depart for home, plan to stay a day or two, or travel on to other areas of Fiji, or South Pacific.

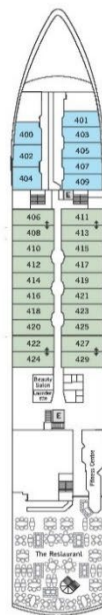
Pre- and post-cruise programs are available.



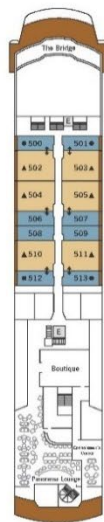
SILVER EXPLORER – Deck Plans



DECK 3
Reception Desk
Medical Centre
Changing Room
Expedition Office



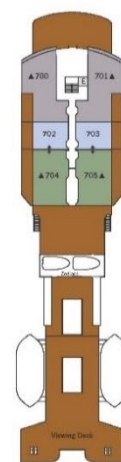
DECK 4
Beauty Salon
Launderette
Fitness Centre
The Restaurant



DECK 5
The Bridge
Boutique
Connoisseur's Corner
Panorama Lounge



DECK 6
Tor's Observation Library
Explorer Lounge
Zagara Spa
The Grill



DECK 7
Viewing Deck



SUITE CATEGORIES

- Owner's Suite
- Grand Suite
- Silver Suite
- Medallion Suite
- Veranda Suite
- Vista Suite
- View Suite
- Explorer Suite
- Adventurer Suite

SPECIFICATIONS

- I loyd's register
 - Ice-class rating .1A
 - Crew 118
 - Officers International 144
 - Guests 144
 - Tonnage 6,072
 - Length 354 Feet/107.9 Metres
 - Width 52 Feet/15.8 Metres
 - Speed 14 Knots
 - Passenger Decks 5
 - 3rd Guest Capacity 2017
 - Queen beds
 - Connecting suites 702/704, 703/705, 500/502, 501/503, 504/506, 505/507, 510/512, 511/513, 307/309, 324/322, 406/408, 411/413, 427/424, 427/429
 - Refurbished 2017
 - Registry Bahamas
- Suite diagrams shown are for illustration purposes only and may vary from actual square footage. Please refer to suite specifications for square footage.

2023 RATES: PER PERSON – DOUBLE – ALL INCLUSIVE - Port fees and taxes; gratuities to crew; open bar throughout ship; all excursions; team of Expedition leaders, and guided zodiac, sea and land tours. ***Included Economy air fare, or \$1500 per person credit; one night hotel before the cruise; transfers. 75% refundable up to 90 days. **Cruise Only, 50% refundable up to 90 days.**

SUITE	FULL FARE*	PORT-PORT**
Adventure – Deck 3	\$13,900	\$9,350
Explorer – Deck 4	\$14,900	\$10,850
View – Deck 3	\$15,800	\$11,650
Vista – Deck 4	\$16,700	\$12,450
Veranda – Deck 5	\$23,200	-
Medallion – Deck 7	WL	-
Silver – Deck 5	\$30,900	-
Grand – Deck 7	\$34,500	-
Owner's – Deck 7	\$38,100	-



Reservations & Information
1-855-EXPLOR1 (397-5671)
Email - info@explorcruises.com

www.explorcruises.com