

An Exploration in Nature in Costa Rica & the Panama Canal



Created especially for like-minded travelers. This voyage is about nature – its abundance and variety – and about the challenges facing species of all shapes and sizes as they cope with a rapidly changing environment. On this QUINTESSENTIAL cruise, all excursions are included, and you will benefit from special guest speakers.



DATE 2020: JAN 6

DURATION: 11-DAYS/10-NIGHTS

EMBARK: PUERTO CALDERA, COSTA RICA

DISEMBARK: COLON, PANAMA

SHIP: LE DUMONT-D'URVILLE

FROM: \$5,870

This is a QUINTESSENTIAL PROGRAM with included excursions, special guest speakers, and \$250 per person Shipboard Credit.

Created especially for like-minded travelers.

This voyage is about nature – its abundance and variety – and about the challenges facing species of all shapes and sizes as they cope with a rapidly changing environment. In **Costa Rica**, which has done more than any other Central American country to preserve and protect its natural treasures, we explore three of its world famous nature reserves: the luxuriant tropical vegetation and fascinating fauna of **Curú** and **Manuel Antonio National Parks**, as well as the marvels of **Corcovado National Park**, once described by *National Geographic* “the most biologically intense place on Earth in terms of biodiversity.” In these parks, we will find a variety of ecosystems – ranging from rainforest to mangroves and beaches – that provide habitat for a **mind-boggling variety of wildlife: monkeys, coatimundis, peccaries, toucans, macaws**, and literally hundreds of species of birds. In Panama, we extend our encounter with the rich biodiversity of Central America as we visit the **UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Darien Jungle**. After transiting the **Panama Canal** and admiring its design and construction, we spend two days in the fascinating marine world of the **San Blas Islands**, where we snorkel at **Holandes Cayes** and visit with the **Kuna Indians**, who govern the islands as an autonomous province with minimal interference from the national government.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Lectures and discussions with ecologist Paul Donahue
- Outings and shore visits in Zodiac® inflatables with a team of experienced naturalist guides.
- Lectures and information sessions hosted by our naturalist-guides, covering wildlife, history, climate, environmental protection.
- Hiking and snorkeling opportunities
- Landscapes: pristine beaches, mangroves, rainforests
- Wildlife: Howler monkeys, white collared monkeys, coatimundis, sloths, agoutis, and the tiny Squirrel Monkey; hundreds of species of birds and butterflies, including toucans and the Scarlet Macaw
- Meetings with local peoples, including the Kuna of San Blas Islands

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DAY 1 — PUERTO CALDERA

The port of Puerto Caldera lies on the Pacific coast, in the Puntarenas region, at the mouth of the Gulf of Nicoya. Areas of wilderness stretch along the coast. Further inland, among the countless natural wonders to

be found in the generous rainforest of the Costa Rica’s national parks, Poas and Arena volcanoes towers up in all their majestic glory. In this luxuriant natural setting, Costa Rica protects one of the planet’s richest biodiversity: monkeys, sloths, tropical birds, iguanas, crocodiles, waterfalls, canyons, and more than ten thousand species of tropical plants.

DAY 2 – CURÚ WILDLIFE REFUGE

On the southern part of the Nicoya Peninsula, the small Curú Wildlife Refuge is the oldest protected park in Costa Rica. This refuge is an exemplary site in terms of ecotourism as well as a research center for scientists from all over the world. It has been at the heart of an original conservation and sustainable development project since the 1930s. After a short Zodiac® trip, you will discover, via the paths that criss-cross the tropical forest and lead to magnificent beaches, the most emblematic species of Costa Rica: monkeys, iguanas and over 200 bird species. Since their recent reintroduction, the scarlet macaw and the spider monkey have thrived in this preserved environment.

DAY 3 – MANUEL ANTONIO NATIONAL PARK

You will land in a Zodiac® on the beaches of the Manuel Antonio National Park, one of the jewels of Costa Rica. Protected since the 1970s, this small park, only 16 km² and bordered by the idyllic beaches of the Pacific Ocean, is home to rich biodiversity. Along peaceful paths or during a break on the beach, you will be welcomed by a tropical forest full of life: from the discreet sloth to the noisy howler monkey and the mischievous white-faced capuchin. On the fine sandy beaches rising to lush hills and coconut trees, you will be amused by the dance of the racoons that race down from the trees to tease visitors.

DAY 4 – DRAKE BAY, MARENCO / CORCOVADO



DAY 5 – GOLFITO

The town of Golfito lies on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, in the province of Puntarenas, one of the most

humid regions in the world. It was occupied by the indigenous Brunca tribe during the Pre-Columbian era. Once specialized in the export of bananas, Golfito has today become the starting point for walkers who want to reach the Corcovado National Park, one of the largest primary tropical rainforests in Central America. Meanwhile, the beaches of Golfo Dulce are some of the most beautiful in Costa Rica, with the Piedras Blancas National Park as their backdrop, along with the Vida Silvestre refuge, home to many tropical birds and monkeys as well as a variety of rare species of plants.



DAY 6 – CÉBACO ISLAND

Off the Pacific coast of Panama, at the entrance to the Gulf of Montijo, Cebaco Island conjures visions of paradise lost. Covered in tropical rainforest, edged by white sandy beaches, home to exceptionally rich plant and wildlife, the island offers a number of hiking routes along which to discover its pristine natural environment. Its magnificent coral reefs, located in the outlying regions of the Coiba National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, are the refuge for many marine species and offer stunning underwater landscapes.

DAY 7 – PLAYA MUERTO, DARIEN NATIONAL PARK

The most remote and least developed region of Panama, the province of Darien is an unspoiled land with an extremely rich variety of flora and fauna. Listed by UNESCO as World Heritage, Darien National Park offers its extraordinary scenery of rocky coastlines, mountain ranges, mangroves, rivers and creeks. Discover Playa Muerto, a tiny coastal village home to the Emberas Amerindian community. You will visit the village, attend traditional songs and dances of the locals, and admire beautiful local craft.



DAY 8 – CROSSING THE PANAMA CANAL

Aboard your ship, experience something unique, that has inspired the imagination of numerous adventurers in the 20th century: sailing the Panama Canal. Its construction started in 1880 under the direction of Ferdinand De Lesseps. Abandoned then resumed, this marvel of engineering was completed by the United States in 1887 and opened in 1914. The canal crosses the Isthmus of Panama and links the Atlantic to the Pacific. Including three levels of locks and by raising ships to the level of Lake Gatun, almost as if the water was a lift, it allows them to avoid having to round Cape Horn.

DAY 9 – ACUATUPO, SAN BLAS & DOG ISLAND, SAN BLAS

DAY 10 – HOLANDES CAYES

Holandes Cayes is among the islands of the San Blas archipelago, a string of coral islands that graces the heart of the Caribbean Sea. Some 378 islands and cays covering an area of 260 square kilometers offer travelers a multitude of natural and cultural treasures. Holandes Cayes, which is nicknamed "the swimming pool", is popular with the cruise-yachting community for its white sand beaches and diving and snorkeling opportunities.

Day 11 - Colón

Colón is the second largest city in Panama, at the Caribbean entrance of the Panama Canal. Colón is today an important port, and the free trade zone created in 1953 contributed greatly to the development of the city. Colón was founded in 1850 by Americans working on the Panama railroad connecting the Atlantic and Pacific coasts through the isthmus of Panama; the city rapidly overshadowed the older Caribbean ports of Panama when the canal opened.

NOTE- Pre- and post-cruise activities can be added – let us know what you would like to do and see!



ALL SUITES HAVE PRIVATE BALCONIES

Rates are per person, Double Occupancy

Pre- and Post-Cruise tours are available to suit your interests.

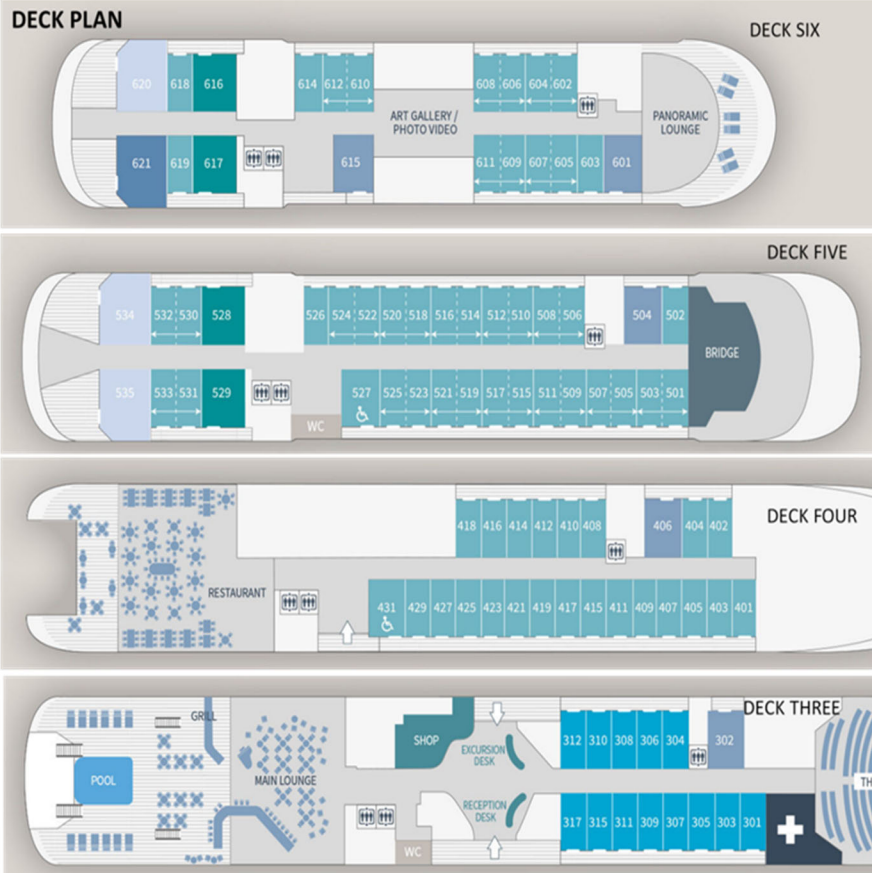
Included features:

- All accommodations, meals, and excursion described above
- Gratuities to guides and drivers on included excursions
- Comprehensive 8-night cruise aboard the deluxe Le Dumont D'Urville, with all the amenities for which Ponant ships are famous.

Not included:

- Meals and beverages other than those specified above
- Optional excursions
- Personal expenses (such as laundry, telephone, Internet, etc.)

RECEIVE \$250 PER PERSON SHIPBOARD CREDIT ON THIS CRUISE!



SUITE –	2020 Rates
Deluxe – Deck 3	\$5,870
Prestige – Deck 4	\$6,150
Prestige – Deck 5	\$6,300
Presitige – Deck 6	\$6,460
Deluxe – Suite	\$8,310
Prestige Ste – Deck 5	\$11,450
Prestige Ste – Deck 6	\$11,760
Priviledge – Deck 5 & 6	\$12,080
Grand Deluxe – Deck 5	\$12,410
Owners Suite	\$16,520



Reservations & Information
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