

SPECIAL  
OFFER – SAVE  
**£500**  
PER PERSON

# ACROSS THE TROPIC OF CAPRICORN

A VOYAGE FROM NEW ZEALAND TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
ABOARD THE MS CALEDONIAN SKY

7<sup>TH</sup> TO 29<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2020



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Ile des Pins



Tanna

Here is a fascinating expedition from the northernmost reaches of New Zealand to Melanesia, taking in remote, but splendidly sophisticated Norfolk Island and Ile des Pins in the French Collectivity of New Caledonia. From here we follow the chain of Melanesian islands through Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and finally to the northern islands of Papua New Guinea. The region is ideal for exploring by small ship and particularly one as suitable as our MS Caledonian Sky. Her fleet of Zodiac craft will allow us to explore some magnificent places, especially tiny coral islets and lagoons such as the majestic Marovo Lagoon in the Solomon Islands, the world's largest double barrier lagoon and a truly awe-inspiring place.

All the islands we will visit are beautiful in their different ways and all have unique features and cultures. They in fact form one of the most culturally complex regions of the entire world, with 1293 languages spoken across the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia and the islands of New Guinea. It is also a region of great antiquity; New Guinea has been settled for around 45,000 years, the Solomon Islands for 35,000 years, and Vanuatu and New Caledonia for about 4000. The maritime history of the region is also a constant wonder from the early explorers and native migrations to the explorations of Captain James Cook and more recently, the fierce battles of the Second World War.

Afloat and ashore, our exploration will be filled with unforgettable images, remote idyllic islets, tribal villages unchanged for centuries, astonishing ceremonial dances, kaleidoscopic reefs and soaring white-tailed tropic birds. This voyage has something for everyone, whether your interest lies in natural history, military history, bird watching, photography, the undersea world or simply just being one of the privileged few who are able to set foot on islands of astonishing richness and beauty. We hope you can join us in this faraway haven, for an unparalleled opportunity to explore one of the most intriguing places on the map.



## Our View

*“This epic journey takes us 3000 nautical miles from the northern tip of New Zealand to Papua New Guinea. Along the way we have the rare opportunity to follow in the footsteps of explorers like Captain Cook, who traversed these waters in 1774, and experience the beauty of these islands and the natural wonders they hold. Our onboard experts will bring the history of the region to life and there will be opportunities snorkel in clear waters, climb the volcanoes that entranced the explorers and visit small islands which have kept western influences at bay.”*



Auckland

## The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Singapore.** Fly by scheduled flight.

**Day 2 Singapore.** Arrive this afternoon and transfer to our central hotel for an overnight night stay. Remainder of the day and evening is at leisure.

**Day 3 Singapore to Auckland, New Zealand.** Enjoy a relaxing morning before an afternoon city tour of Singapore which will include the 53-hectare Botanical Garden and National Orchid Garden. Continue to the airport for our scheduled flight to Auckland.

**Day 4 Auckland.** Arrive this afternoon and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day is at leisure. This evening we will meet for a welcome dinner.

**Day 5 Auckland.** During our morning guided tour, we will explore the Auckland Domain and Auckland Museum which overlooks picturesque Waitemata Harbour and has an outstanding collection featuring exhibits on the New Zealand and the Pacific Island cultures showcasing an extensive collection of Polynesian artefacts. After lunch in a local restaurant we will transfer to the MS Caledonian Sky and set sail this evening.

**Day 6 Paihia.** Discovered by Captain Cook in 1769, this area is the cradle of European civilisation in New Zealand and has important historical significance for both Maori and Europeans. On a morning tour we will visit the Waitangi Treaty house where, in 1840, the Treaty was signed between the Maori and the British Crown. We then continue



Solomon Eclectus Parrot



Exploring by Zodiac



Tropic Bird, Norfolk Island



Blue hole, Espiritu Santo



Turtle, Moso Island

to Kerikeri where the Maori first welcomed missionaries in 1819 and see the oldest buildings of New Zealand dating from the 1820s. This afternoon enjoy some free time to explore the charming historic town of Russell.

**Day 7 At Sea.** Enjoy a day at sea as we follow in the wake of past navigators sailing north. Maybe learn more at a lecture by the expedition team or find a spot on deck to relax.

**Day 8 Norfolk Island.** This morning we awake for a full day call at Norfolk Island which Captain Cook encountered in 1774 and named after the Duchess of Norfolk. We will have the opportunity to explore on a morning tour visiting the beautiful St Barnabas Chapel. This afternoon a further choice of excursions will be available. Discover more of the historical Georgian settlement of Kingston with its convict settlements or visit the Botanical Gardens with its 40 endemic, or unique species, including 15 plant species considered to be critically endangered. For the more active you may wish to walk in the National Park towards Mount Pitt. The tracks wind through lush palm forests and stands of Norfolk Island pine leading to remarkable views of the island and the surrounding ocean. Keen birders may also spot noddies, tropic birds and parrots.

**Day 9 At Sea.** Cruise the South Pacific as we head towards New Caledonia.

**Day 10 Ile des Pins, New Caledonia.** Arrive at first light in New Caledonia, the islands named by Captain Cook in 1774

during his second voyage to New Zealand. These remote islands are close to paradise and we will use our Zodiacs to land at one of the remote beaches. From here there will be the option to join a nature walk climbing the 262 metres Nga peak for fantastic views over the whole island. Alternatively join one of the snorkelling trips or simply find a spot on one of the beaches to relax before we sail in the afternoon.

**Day 11 Tanna, Vanuatu.** After a morning at sea we arrive in Vanuatu at the island of Tanna, meaning earth in the local Kwamera language. Captain Cook was the first European to visit the island in 1774, landing at Port Resolution and having been attracted by the glowing light of Mount Yasur. This 361 metre active volcano is situated in the South East of the island and dominates the landscape. The adventurous may wish to join a journey to the crater. We will use local trucks to drive through the rainforest that covers the mountain before walking to the rim. Alternatively we may have the chance to visit a local village where traditional lifestyles are maintained and the local culture has been largely unaffected by western influences. Here we will learn of customs and also learn of traditional medicines, crafts and cooking styles.

**Day 12 Port Havannah.** Awake this morning off Port Havannah, situated on the north coast of Efate Island and our base for today's activities. There are a number of outer islands that we may be able to explore depending on weather and sea conditions. Lelepa Island is a 160 acres of unspoilt tropical rainforest and palm fringed beaches. On a

nature walk we will see the herbs used in local medicines before exploring Feles cave thought to be the resting place of the legendary Polynesian Chief, Roi Mata. Meanwhile on Moso Island we can meet the volunteers at the Tasiriki Turtle Sanctuary who will teach us about the rehabilitation of the hawksbill turtles and the attempts to increase their numbers. If time and weather permit we will also set up a snorkelling platform or offer a chance to swim from the beach.

**Day 13 Espiritu Santo Island.** Espiritu Santo is the largest of Vanuatu's islands with some of the most beautiful white sand beaches, amazing blue holes, caves and renowned snorkelling. It was also a huge military base during World War II. We will have a choice of activities this morning. Either choose to snorkel amongst the corals and fish of the region at Million Dollar Point, named after the value of the military equipment dumped into the sea. Alternatively join an island tour including the Nekar Custom Village where we will learn about local traditions and customs, including their unique water music, before enjoying time to swim in one of the nearby blue holes. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at sea.

**Day 14 Vanikoro, Solomon Islands.** After breakfast we land on Vanikoro Island in the Temotu Province of the Solomon Islands, where French Explorer Jean-Francois de la Perouse became stranded in 1788 after both his vessels, La Boussole and the Astrolabe, hit the then unknown reefs of the island. Learn more about the island's history and the mystery of the lost La Perouse

expedition that captured the imagination of the European public. We will be welcomed ashore by the local villagers before choosing to explore the village further, join a nature walk where we can look out for the endemic birds, the Vanikoro monarch and Vanikoro white-eye, or alternatively enjoy a swim or snorkel from the beach. Return to the MS Caledonian Sky for lunch and an afternoon cruising.

**Day 15 Santa Ana.** After a morning at sea, arrive at Port Mary on Santa Ana Island. We are welcomed with a stunning dance by the villagers with spears and mud face masks. Soak in the culture as we set foot on the shores of this lovely island. After the performance we have the opportunity to explore the town further with its plethora of local handicrafts, join a nature walk through the forests, and walk to meet the students at the village school or swim from the local beach.

**Day 16 Honiara.** This morning we cruise through Iron Bottom Sound, the site of intense World War II naval battles, and so named for the large numbers of Japanese and American ships and aircraft that sank beneath the sea, before arriving in Honiara. During World War II the British founded Honiara as a military base. The town and the Mataniko River, which runs through it, were the front for many months during the battle of Guadalcanal. Today, this is a bustling town with lovely hibiscus and palm-tree-lined avenues. We enjoy a morning tour of Honiara including the bustling central market, parliament building and National Museum where we get an insight into Solomon Islands history. Alternatively discover



Vanuatu

Soft Corals, Marovo Lagoon

Warrior, Vanuatu

the World War II sites including Henderson Field, the Japanese Peace Park and the US Memorial at Skyline Ridge. After lunch on board return to the city for some free time or join a snorkel excursion to Bonegi Beach to swim amongst war wrecks now colonised by tropical fish.

**Day 17 Marovo Lagoon.** Marovo Lagoon is the largest double barrier lagoon in the world. Thousands of islands scatter the lagoon, from tiny coral islets on the fringing reef to massive 1600 metre volcanic islands. Inside the lagoon, the islands are surrounded by spectacular coral formations and white sand beach, the lagoon waters shimmering in every shade of blue, turquoise and jade green. We have a full day here to explore and will visit one of the outlying villages which produce some of the finest wood carvings in the region. We will also find a suitable spot to snorkel and swim as well as Zodiac cruises to look for local wildlife.

**Day 18 Tetepare.** Tetepare is the largest uninhabited tropical island in the Southern Hemisphere and home to one of the Solomon Islands leading conservation projects. Managed by the Tetepare Descendants Association, they have ensured the island was saved from

the threat of loggers and many areas remain untouched. A wide variety of plants and animals now live in the 120 square kilometres of lowland rainforest that blankets the island. A total of 76 bird species, 25 reptile and 13 mammal species have been recorded here including skinks, dugong and the endemic Tetepare white eye whilst the beaches support three species of turtle including the endangered leatherback. Enjoy guided walk in the forest with the local conservationists who will explain the work they are doing on the island.

**Day 19 At Sea.**

**Day 20 Rabaul, Papua New Guinea.** Arrive this morning at Rabaul's dramatic harbour which is ringed by six cone-shaped volcanoes. Our morning tour will include a visit to the Volcanic Observatory, which monitors 14 active and 23 dormant volcanoes in Papua New Guinea, and from where we will enjoy magnificent views over the bay and the volcanoes. Our next stop will be Mount Tavurvur, which violently erupted in 1937 and 1994, and where we will witness the Hot Springs. This afternoon will be at leisure to explore independently before we meet tonight to attend an astonishing performance of the

Baining tribe's fire dance. Tribe members in huge, magnificently crafted masks leap and dance over crackling, red-hot coals in a centuries-old ritual to honour the local deity-spirits.

**Day 21 Rabaul to Cairns.** After breakfast we will make our way to the airport for our flight to Cairns. Arrive in Cairns this afternoon

and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay.

**Day 22 Cairns to London.** After breakfast in the hotel enjoy a morning at leisure before we transfer to the airport for our scheduled indirect flight to London.

**Day 23 London.** Arrive this morning.

**PRICES PER PERSON**

Based on double occupancy

**SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £500 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY**

Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Castle	Standard	£10995	£10495
Caledonian	Superior	£11295	£10795
Promenade	Premium	£11795	£11295
Bridge	Deluxe Balcony	£12495	£11995
Promenade	Premium Balcony	£12995	£12495
Promenade	Owners Corner Suite with balcony	£13495	£12995
Castle	Standard for sole use	£13795	£13295
Caledonian	Superior for sole use	£13995	£13495

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Economy class scheduled air travel (specially chartered flight between Rabaul and Cairns) • Overnight hotel accommodation in Singapore, Auckland and Cairns on bed & breakfast basis • Dinner on Day 4 & lunch on Day 5 • 16 nights aboard the MS Caledonian Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch & dinner • Noble Caledonia expedition team • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Group transfers • Port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, visas.

*NB Flight schedules are yet to be released at time of going to print and dates and timings may change on their release.*

# MS CALEDONIAN SKY



Deluxe Balcony Suite



On Deck



The Restaurant

The MS Caledonian Sky is one of our three flag ships and sister vessel to the MS Island Sky and MS Hebridean Sky. All three vessels were built in the same ship yard in Italy at similar times and share the same excellent attributes that make them three of the finest small ships in the world. With a maximum passenger capacity of only 114, a vessel of her size is capable of carrying many more but instead the MS Caledonian Sky has the benefit of unusually large suites, luxuriously appointed public areas and spacious outside decks.



## Your Suite

On board there are 57 exceptionally spacious and well designed suites. The passenger accommodation is arranged over four decks and all suites have outside views. All feature a sitting area and some have private balconies. Each affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring a country style wash basin, heated towel rail, vanity unit and walk-in shower and/or bath tub. Facilities in the suites also include walk-in or spacious wardrobes, dressing table

with large mirror and stool or desk, mini-fridge, flat screen television, telephone, programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted Molton Brown toiletries, air-conditioning and heating. Bottled water, dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort.

## Your Dining

With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the cuisine on board the MS Caledonian Sky is of a consistent superior quality that befits such a vessel. In keeping with the informal atmosphere on board, when dining you are able to choose your seating arrangements and choice of restaurants at your leisure; whether that be joining a table of four to six other passengers in the elegant à la carte Restaurant or outside buffet-style on the Lido Deck in the evening sunshine. In the main Restaurant, breakfast is served buffet-style, with certain items cooked to order on request. Lunch and dinner menus offer plenty of choice, often reflecting the daily catch and local delicacies. The Welcome and Farewell dinners are a sumptuous five course affair. To enhance your dining experience further a selection of wines is included with both meals. Afternoon tea and pre-dinner canapés take place in either the comfort of the Lounge or out on the Lido Deck when the weather is favourable. Tea and coffee are also available 24 hours a day. Special diets can be catered for with sufficient notice.



Standard Suite



Panorama Lounge



The Lounge

### Your Space

The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large Lounge where daily briefings and talks will be provided throughout the voyage and an elegant bar where a pianist plays periodically throughout the day. The bar also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. In addition there is the Lounge on the Panorama Deck which has a bar, library with two computers offering complimentary internet access and further seating ideal for watching the world go by. Outside there is a rear Lido Deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade. On the top deck there is a further observation and Sun Deck with bar service and comfortable deck furniture for sun bathing or relaxing with a book. There is also a small beauty salon with appointments made on request. Throughout the vessel carefully chosen artwork and photos reflect the destinations we sail to.

### Your Comfort

The MS Caledonian Sky is equipped with the latest safety, navigation and communications equipment along with roll stabilisers to minimise the ship's motion. During your voyage we hope to offer you the opportunity to visit the Captain and Officers on the Bridge to check the vessel's progress by charts and learn more about your journey. On board you will also find a clinic and Doctor and a lift that serves all decks. When at anchor our nimble Zodiacs will ferry you ashore or, on select cruises, enjoy Zodiac cruises getting you closer to the natural world.

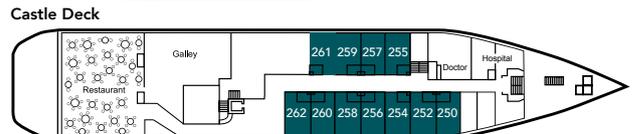
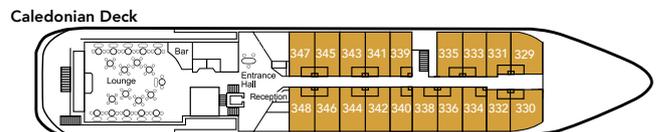
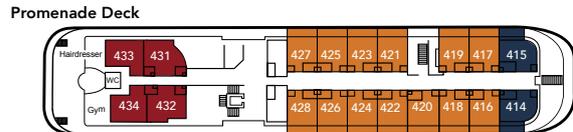
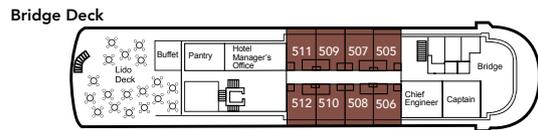
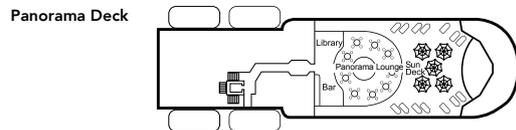
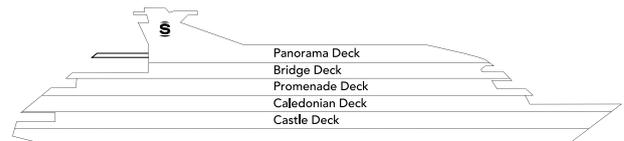
### Your Life On Board

The atmosphere on board is warm and convivial and more akin to a private yacht or country hotel in which you can learn more about the wonderful destinations you are visiting in the company of like-minded people. Dress on board is casual and relaxed and there will be no "black tie" evenings. On board there is a high ratio of crew to passengers. Our friendly crew of 75 are mainly Filipino and Eastern European and our Scandinavian Captains are experienced mariners. After a day ashore you will return to the comfort and peace of a well-run and exceedingly comfortable ship



where peace, high quality of service and attention to detail are the order of the day. A little music in the Lounge after dinner, Guest Speakers and informative port briefings from our Expedition Leader or Cruise Director and of course good food, all contribute to make any voyage aboard this wonderful vessel a memorable and joyful experience.

### MS CALEDONIAN SKY DECK PLAN



- Standard Suites
- Premium Suites
- Premium Balcony Suites
- Superior Suites
- Deluxe Balcony Suites
- Owner's Corner Suites with Balcony

Please note that all suites on Castle Deck feature a minimum of two portholes.



During this voyage you will be visiting out of the way destinations and will be accompanied by an expedition team. Landings and excursions will be made by Zodiac landing craft. This cruise will appeal to the more adventurous and those who enjoy the natural world.



# NOBLE CALEDONIA

2 Chester Close, Belgravia, London, SW1X 7BE  
 +44 (0)20 7752 0000 | info@noble-caledonia.co.uk | noble-caledonia.co.uk

