

NOBLE CALEDONIA

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AUSTRALIAN
COASTAL
ODYSSEY

AN EXPEDITION FROM CAIRNS TO MELBOURNE
EXPLORING AUSTRALIA'S MANY WONDERS
ABOARD THE MS CALEDONIAN SKY

9TH TO 31ST OCTOBER 2018



Cape York



Twelve Apostles

What is the best way to see Australia? To us the answer is simple, by sea. After all the vast majority of interest to see is either on Australia's islands, coast or immediate hinterland, and travelling by sea on a small ship with a fleet of Zodiacs opens up the area in the most perfect way. The next big question, is which itinerary, the country is so large it's impossible to include all points of interest unless you are prepared to invest a number of months. We believe the best option is an itinerary that takes you from the extreme north of Queensland to the far south in the state of Victoria. After this the decisions come a little easier. Do we plan a mixture of the usual cities, towns and tourist haunts or do we concentrate our time on Australia's unique natural world. Our view is most certainly the latter, so much about this fascinating country's wildlife, geology and culture is unique and we have therefore designed this expedition to incorporate remote islands, natural parks and stunning landscapes allowing us to begin to understand what makes this vast New World so endlessly fascinating.

We will travel from the very top of Australia to its bottom. A momentous voyage along the entire length of its Pacific Ocean coast. Just beyond Cape York, the most northerly point of Australia is Thursday Island where our expedition begins. Here in the Torres Strait islands archipelago, Australia's most northern frontier, life moves slowly and centuries old cultures are passed down in song. From Cape York we journey south visiting remote communities each with their own culture, seeing indigenous rock-art and exploring some fascinating national parks.

Our Zodiacs will be so valuable as we explore the off shore islands of the Great Barrier Reef, landing on remote beaches and taking in the sights which have not changed since Captain Cook landed here in the 18th century. There will be so many intriguing places to see as we make our way south, Dunk Island with its spectacular rainforest, the pristine Whitsundays in the heart of the Barrier Reef and Fraser Island, the largest sand island in the world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Leaving the Queensland coast we enter New South Wales, a state with an equally splendid scenery and wildlife as well as some famous vineyards and botanic gardens, and lastly on to the state of Victoria. Here, Wilson's Promontory awaits, Australia's most southerly national park and a drive along the Great Ocean Road, surely Australia's most scenic journey. Our journey ends in the cosmopolitan city of Melbourne, having taken us some 2000 miles by sea. Travelling with our team of experts and being joined by guides and naturalists along the way, will make for a magical and enlightening experience 'Down Under'.

The Itinerary

Days 1 London to Cairns, Australia. Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

Day 2 Cairns. Arrive into Cairns this evening and transfer to our hotel for a two night stay. The remainder of the day is at leisure to relax after our flight.

Day 3 Cairns. This morning we will take the scenic railway to Kuranda, known as the "village in the rainforest". Constructed between 1882 and 1891, even today it is considered an engineering feat to build the 15 hand-made tunnels and 37 bridges. Rising from sea level to 328 metres, the journey to Kuranda passes through World Heritage protected tropical rainforest, past spectacular waterfalls and into the awesome Barron Gorge. Spend some free time in Kuranda, maybe visit the markets or the butterfly sanctuary, home to over 1500 species of tropical butterflies, before we return to the hotel this afternoon. Remainder of the day is at leisure.

Day 4 Cairns to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. After breakfast we will transfer to the airport for our specially chartered flight to Port Moresby. On arrival transfer to the MS Caledonian Sky and embark. Enjoy Welcome Drinks and Dinner as we sail this evening.

Day 5 At Sea. Spend a relaxing day on board, join the lecture programme or find a spot on deck.

Day 6 Thursday Island & Cape York, Australia. Our Australian voyage starts on Thursday Island in the Torres Strait. The island's hidden past will be revealed during our morning coach tour. Step back in time with a visit to Green Hill



Fort, which was built in response to a Russian War scare. Once used as munitions storage space, the fort's underground tunnels and rooms today house the Torres Strait Museum where you can see informative displays on the region's pearling, shipping and military history. Continue to the Gab Titui Cultural Centre where we receive an insight into the Aboriginal art and culture of the Torres Strait islanders which depict myths and legends. Over lunch we will reposition to Cape York and if weather permits land on the northernmost tip of the Australian mainland.

Day 7 Piper Islands, Queensland. Cruising along the Cape York Peninsula we arrive at the Piper Islands National Park. These five islands are owned by the Kuuku Ya'u aboriginal people who have given us permission to visit. The islands are made up of low, vegetated cays and support over



75 species of seabirds, shorebirds and forest birds including terns, pied-imperial pigeons, beach stone-curlews and one of the largest roosting population of black noddy in Queensland. This is also an important nesting area for hawksbill and green turtles have also been spotted in the waters around the island. We will use our Zodiacs to explore the coastline and land for nature walks.

Day 8 Cape Melville National Park. Anchor this morning in Bathurst Bay, our gateway to the Cape Melville National Park. This is one of Australia's more remote national parks and is best accessed by sea. The park mixes rainforest, mangroves, heathlands and woodland and isolation has produced a high proportion of endemic plants not found elsewhere in Australia, including foxtail palms which decorate the boulder strewn from the Melville Range. We will also keep an eye out for wildlife such as Godmans rock wallaby and endemic lizards and frogs, whilst birders can search for beach stone-curlews and red-tailed black cockatoo. Return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon we will find a spot to lower the Zodiacs for a swim or snorkel.

Day 9 Lizard Island. Designated as a National Park in 1937 and a Marine Park in 1974, Lizard Island boasts a wonderful number of natural wonders and is a lovely place to spend a day. The island was first visited by Captain Cook in 1770 and he named it after the large number of lizards he found here. We will use our Zodiacs to land on one of the sandy beaches where our naturalists will lead nature walks along the island's trails. Keen birders can keep an eye out for lesser golden plovers

and pied imperial pigeons whilst we may see the yellow spotted monitor or another of the eleven species of lizard that reside here. Meanwhile the fringing reef offers a chance to snorkel and we may see the "Clam Garden" where we find giant clams up to two metres long living among an array of hard and soft coral. The active may wish to take a strenuous walk to the top of Cook's Look, the highest point on the island at 363 metres offering wonderful views over the island group and reef.

Day 10 Cooktown. Modern day Cooktown is located on the site where, in 1770, Captain Cook brought the Endeavour for repairs after damaging the ship on the offshore reefs. Known as Waymbuurr in the native aboriginal language it was a popular meeting place for the local tribes and when Cook arrived it was the first recorded meaningful meeting between the indigenous Australian population and Europeans. A morning walk will include the James Cook Museum, housed in a 19th century convent and showcasing the history of the town from Cook's arrival to the Palmer gold rush period of the late 19th century as well as an insight into the culture and history of the indigenous Guugu Yimithiir aborigines. Also see the 150 hectare botanical gardens before we return to the ship for lunch and spend the afternoon at sea.

Day 11 Dunk Island. Spend the morning on Dunk Island, a spectacular tropical rainforest island and the largest island in the Family Islands National Park. Known as Coonanglebah which translates as "the island of peace and plenty" it sums up this stunning location. During nature

walks through the eucalypt forest we will keep an eye out for the many species of birds, with over 100 species having been recorded on the island, as well as monitors, tree snakes and the brilliant blue Ulysses butterfly. With their metallic blue wings they are easier to spot against the rainforest backdrop. In the waters, the reefs are home to a plethora of fish and corals whilst the seagrass beds are feeding grounds for turtles and dugong. Over lunch we will set sail and continue our journey along the Australian coast.

Day 12 Whitsundays. Located in the heart of the Great Barrier Reef are the 74 islands of the Whitsundays. Surrounded by warm tropical waters, the majority of the islands are uninhabited and remain pristine and untouched. We will anchor over breakfast in one of the stunning bays and use our Zodiacs to land on a sandy beach. From here our onboard naturalists will lead nature walks through the forests where we may see brush turkeys, goannas and wallabies. Keen snorkellers can enjoy time in the clear waters with thousands of brightly coloured fish and diverse variety of corals.

Day 13 Great Keppel Island. After a morning at sea we arrive during lunch at Great Keppel Island, situated just above the Tropic of Capricorn and one of the 18 islands of the Keppel group. Fringed by turquoise waters, hard coral reefs and sun drenched beaches it looks like a perfect tropical island. On land the island covers over 1500 hectares with 90% of the interior made up of native bushland and winding walking trails which are abundant with wildlife. More than 100 species of bird life have been recorded including kookaburras,

ospreys, beach curlews and rainbow lorikeets and we may also see blue tongued lizards and possums. We will spend the afternoon on nature walks, snorkelling on the reef or maybe choose to relax on one of the sandy beaches.

Day 14 Fraser Island. At over 184,000 hectares, Fraser Island is the largest sand island in the world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Created over hundreds of thousands of years by sand blown from the Australian mainland it is a wonder of freshwater lakes, crystal clear creeks and immense dunes of coloured sands which continue to evolve. It is also the only place in the world where rainforests are found growing on sand dunes whilst the wallum heaths on the island's interior provide magnificent displays of wildflowers in the spring. On shore we can see a profusion of wildlife including the infamous dingo whilst the waters are home to dugong and dolphins. The great sandy strait that divides the island from the mainland is a recognised wetland area with mangrove colonies, seagrass beds and thousands of migratory seabirds. We will anchor in Kingfisher Bay and spend the day exploring this natural wonder on a series of island drives and walks.

Day 15 At Sea. Spend a leisurely day at sea as we sail towards New South Wales.

Day 16 Yamba. Over breakfast we arrive at the mouth of the Clarence River and the popular holiday resort town of Yamba famed for its spectacular beaches and local seafood. This morning we will retrace the steps of the explorer Mathew Flinders who visited Yamba in 1799, as we explore

Wilsons Promontory National Park



Ulysses butterfly, Dunk Island



Barron falls, Kuranda



the historical highlights and landmarks such as the Flinders Well, Yamba Lighthouse, and the Yamba Historical Museum which showcases the importance of the River Clarence to the area. Alternatively take a walk in the nearby Iluka Nature Reserve, part of the Gondwana rainforests and home to numerous bird species. We will make our way through the canopy of trees to Iluka Bluff to enjoy the views along the rocky coastline and glorious beaches. Enjoy lunch on board as we continue our journey south this afternoon.

Day 17 Newcastle for Hunter Valley. Founded in 1804, Newcastle grew as a major centre for exporting coal which was delivered along the Hunter River to the port. Today it is not only renowned for its historical heritage, but also as a popular gateway to the Hunter Valley, one of the finest wine regions in New South Wales and one of Australia's oldest wine producing areas. James Busby is credited for starting the wine industry here way back in 1824 and today the region boasts a wide variety of winemaking styles from traditional to modern. After a scenic drive we will visit a couple of the region's vineyards where we will enjoy tastings of the famed Hunter Valley Semillon. Alternatively spend time in Newcastle and see the Christ Church Cathedral, Nobby's Headland and Lighthouse, Honeysuckle Harbour and the Art Deco Civic Centre.

Day 18 Batemans Bay. This morning we cruise up the Clyde River into Batemans Bay. The expansive waterway at the mouth of the Clyde River was named by Cook on his voyage of discovery

along this coast in 1770. However it was not until well into the 19th century that the township of Batemans Bay appeared. While Batemans Bay is the largest on the coast south of Nowra, it maintains its small town atmosphere. We have the chance to explore the region known for native kangaroos, wallabies, possums, bandicoots, sea eagles and brilliantly coloured parrots. We will visit the Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens and historic Mogo where the rustic atmosphere has been preserved resulting in a quaint village in which you can find a wide variety of unusual and attractive craft and antique items. Meanwhile in Mogo State Forest we can walk in the bush for sightings of kookaburras, rosellas and black cockatoos. Alternatively a full day tour to Canberra will cross the Great Dividing Range to the Australian Capital Territory. Here we will visit the Australian Parliament buildings and have some free time to explore the capital city.

Day 19 Eden. Cruise this morning into the port of Eden situated in magnificent Twofold Bay, the third deepest natural harbour in the Southern Hemisphere. A morning excursion will take us to the Ben Boyd National Park, a stunning coastal park of sheltered inlets, Aboriginal middens, historic buildings and wildlife. There will be a choice of walks for all levels and the chance to visit Boyd's Tower with views over the Pacific Ocean where, at this time of year, we may see humpback whales on their migration back to Antarctica or watch for white bellied sea eagles in the skies. We will also have some free time in Eden where you may visit the Killer Whale Museum to learn more

about the whaling history of the region and the unique relationship between whalers and the wild killer whales. Alternatively find a spot to try some of the region's famous oysters.

Day 20 Wilsons Promontory. After a morning at sea we arrive in the Gippsland area of Victoria. Wilson's Promontory is mainland Australia's southernmost National Park, an isolated area of granite headlands, with unique vegetation and geology. The park is affectionately known as "The Prom", and is famous for its abundance of native animals, birds, reptiles and plants, magnificent beaches and thick coastal forest. After using the Zodiacs to land on one of the beaches our onboard naturalists will lead a series of nature walks.

Day 21 Melbourne. Disembark after breakfast in the port of

Geelong as we embark on a full day tour of the Great Ocean Road. On this glorious coastal drive we will visit Bells Beach, spot koalas in the wild, enjoy a guided tour of the Otways rainforest and marvel at the amazing rock formations of the Port Campbell National Park, including the Twelve Apostles and Loch Ard Gorge. Along the way we see pristine beaches and rugged rocky outcrops of the Great Ocean Road. We arrive in Melbourne this afternoon and will check into our hotel for an overnight stay. The evening is free to enjoy independently.

Day 22 Melbourne to London. After breakfast in the hotel spend 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 £1000 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY			
Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Castle	Standard	£11995	£10995
Caledonian	Superior	£12395	£11395
Promenade	Premium	£12995	£11995
Bridge	Deluxe Balcony	£13995	£12995
Promenade	Premium Balcony	£14595	£13595
Promenade	Owners Corner Suite with balcony	£15595	£14595
Castle	Standard for sole use	£15295	£14295
Caledonian	Superior for sole use	£15695	£14695

Price Includes: Economy class scheduled air travel between London and Cairns and Melbourne to London, specially chartered flight from Cairns to Port Moresby, two nights hotel accommodation in Cairns and overnight accommodation in Melbourne on bed and breakfast basis, 17 nights aboard the MS Caledonian Sky on a full board basis, house wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, Noble Caledonia expedition team, shore excursions, gratuities, group transfers, permits and port taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance, visas.



MS Caledonian Sky

Formerly known as Hebridean Spirit, this 114-passenger vessel began her new life with Noble Caledonia in May 2012. Built in the same ship yard as both MS Island Sky and MS Hebridean Sky, she shares the same attributes as her sister vessels, joining them as one of the finest small ships in the world.

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 room area and some have private balconies. Each affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring a country style wash basin, hot towel rack and vanity unit with sink 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 toiletries, air-conditioning and heating. Bottled water, towelling dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort.

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 Club Lounge on the Panorama Deck which features a bar. The onboard travel library is the perfect place to relax with a book and is stocked with reference books pertaining to the places the vessel is visiting along with a selection of games and two computers with internet access. 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 gymnasium on board and hairdressers with appointments made on request.

consistent superior quality. Where possible and when it meets his high standards, our accomplished chef will obtain local produce in markets. Such purchases enhance the well stocked larders and bring a local touch to the varied menus. In the main elegant dining room, breakfast is served buffet-style, with certain items cooked to order and lunch and dinner is à la carte. To enhance your dining experience even further a selection of wines are included with lunch and dinner.



Premium Balcony Suite

Your Dining

With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the cuisine will be of a



Restaurant



Sun Deck



Standard Suite



Panorama Lounge

Your Day to Day Life On Board
On board the MS Caledonian Sky, you will not find endless entertainment, round the clock buffets and the people management which is so much a part of today's big ship style. Instead the atmosphere on board is warm and peaceful and more akin to a private yacht or country hotel in which you can learn more about the wonders of nature, culture and ancient civilisations in the company of like-minded people. A little music in the lounge or bar after dinner, guest speakers and informative port briefings from our expedition leader, all contribute to make any voyage aboard the

MS Caledonian Sky a memorable and joyful experience. Dress on board is casual and relaxed and there will be no 'black tie' evenings.

Exploring Ashore

One of the joys of expedition cruising aboard a small vessel is the flexibility it allows. Although we set sail with a set itinerary it is the unscheduled events that often become the highlight of the journey and with our fleet of Zodiac landing craft, we can explore inlets, fjords, bird sanctuaries, land in otherwise inaccessible places and be footloose in a way that would be totally impractical for larger groups of passengers.



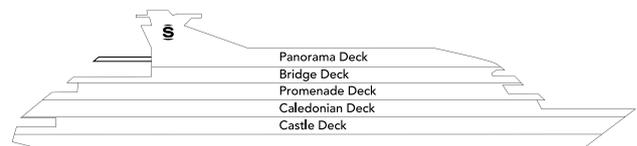
Dining on deck

Your Comfort, Safety & Security
Our vessel is equipped with the latest safety, navigation and communications equipment along with roll stabilisers to minimise the ship's motion. During your voyage you will have 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.

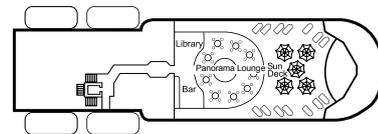


This cruise visits out of the way destinations. You will be accompanied by an expedition team and some landings ashore will be made by Zodiac landing craft. Cruises such as this will appeal to the more adventurous and those who enjoy the natural world.

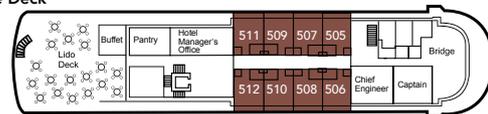
Deck Plan



Panorama Deck



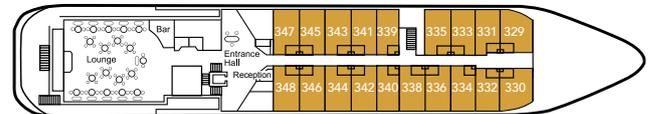
Bridge Deck



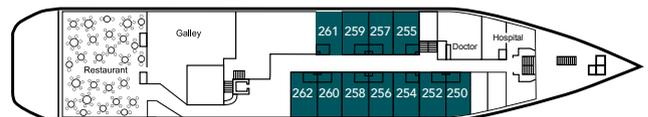
Promenade Deck



Caledonian Deck



Castle Deck



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

NB. All Suites on Castle Deck feature a minimum of two portholes.

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All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.

Cover image: Crimson Rosella, Wilsons Promontory National Park