

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

# CENTRAL AMERICAN ODYSSEY

A FASCINATING VOYAGE FROM PANAMA TO GUATEMALA  
ABOARD THE LUXURIOUS SILVER EXPLORER

2<sup>ND</sup> TO 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2018

NOBLE CALEDONIA

Lake Nicaragua



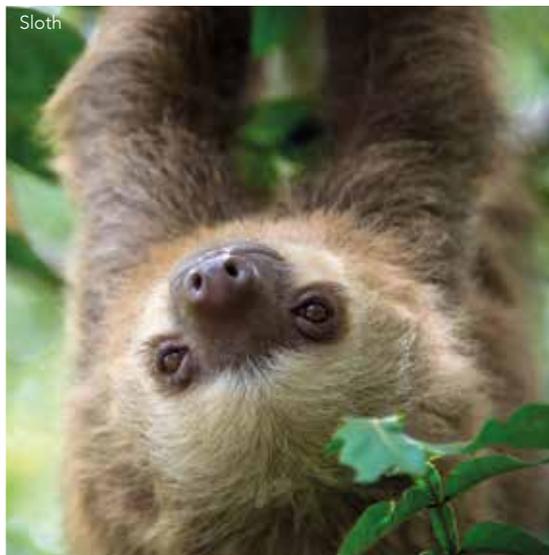
Join us aboard the luxurious Silver Explorer as we explore Central America's Pacific Coastline visiting Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. Such a varied and comprehensive itinerary would be difficult to comprehend or undertake by any other means than a cruise and with the Silver Explorer which we have chartered for this expedition, we have the perfect sized and equipped vessel. We will be able to visit some small islands and ports which the larger cruise vessels simply cannot access and skip the arduous, lengthy land travel which such a trip would usually entail and instead relax on board as we deliver you to a new and exciting destination each day.

If you have been contemplating a visit to Central America, then this fascinating voyage could offer you the perfect opportunity with its mix of cultural and natural wonders. The history of the ancient Mayan civilisation, the colonial years and the more recent events of the region will be brought to life by our onboard team and local guides. There is also much of the natural world to occupy us on our journey including our visits to the Darien Jungle, Costa Rica's Curu National Wildlife Refuge, the Manuel Antonio National Park and the spectacular Corcovado National Park and El Salvador's most important marine ecosystem, the Jiquilisco Bay Biosphere Reserve. The birdlife of the region is magnificent and its home to countless species of endangered birds from tiny hummingbirds to flashy macaws and parrots, toucans and woodpeckers. Add an amazingly rich biodiversity of flora and fauna seen against some of the lushest of landscapes to be found anywhere in the world and you have the recipe for a perfect escape.



## EXPEDITION HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit a remote Embera settlement in the Darien Jungle
- Hike in the Corcovado National Park, one of the richest eco zones in Central America
- Search for howler and spider monkeys in the Curu Wildlife Refuge
- Explore Nicaragua's oldest city Granada and Leon, its former capital
- Discover Mayan sites in El Salvador



## THE ITINERARY

**Day 1 London to Panama City, Panama.** Fly by scheduled indirect flight. Arrive this afternoon and transfer to our hotel for a two night stay. The remainder of the day is free for independent exploration.

**Day 2 Panama City.** Panama City is a combination of the historic old town, declared a UNESCO historical monument, and the ultra-modern new town. We will stroll along the cobblestone streets of the Casco Viejo visiting the colonial mansions and 17th century churches and convents before continuing to Panama Viejo and the original ruins of the city which was founded in 1517 and burnt to the ground by British pirate Henry Morgan. This afternoon is free to explore further before we meet this evening for dinner.

**Day 3 Panama City.** Enjoy a morning at leisure to relax or explore independently. We will meet in the early afternoon for a visit to the Panama Canal observation Centre. Here we will learn about the expansion of the canal before visiting the Miraflores Locks Visitor Centre where we see the history of the canal and watch the ships as they pass through. In the late afternoon we will transfer to the Silver Explorer moored in Panama City for embarkation. Enjoy dinner as we sail out of Panama City when we will be able to see the spectacular scenery of the Bridge of the Americas, the 'Biomuseo', designed by Frank Gehry.

**Day 4 Darien.** The remote Darien Jungle has one of the most diverse ecosystems in the world and we will explore this pristine, seldom visited area by Zodiac or local canoe, navigating up the tidal Mogue River. At the conclusion of our river adventure, we hear the sound of

distant drums welcoming us to the remote Embera Village. The Darien Jungle is rarely visited by outsiders (fewer than 1000 tourists visit each year), and the Embera are one of several indigenous groups that live in relative isolation. Local women and children in brightly coloured attire welcome us to their village and introduce us to their way of life and we will visit authentic tribal dwellings built of nearby trees and plants. Villagers will perform a native dance and demonstrate basket weaving and carving techniques. As the Darien Jungle is recognised as one of the world's top ten birding sites, on our way to the village and back we hope to see many different bird species such as the colourful crimson-collared tanager, green and chestnut-fronted macaws, rufous-tailed and snow-bellied hummingbirds, whimbrels, white ibises and egrets, as well as laughing gulls.

**Day 5 Isla Coiba.** This once infamous prison island, now a National Park, has reverted to an island paradise. We will anchor off the ranger station and use our Zodiacs to land on the island. Here, the onboard naturalists will lead some guided walks as we explore the main island, which boasts some 147 species of birds and enjoy a walk up to the observation tower. Just offshore from this nature reserve, a rocky headland provides an ideal spot for snorkelling. Join the onboard Marine Biologist and learn to identify damsel fish, jacks, surgeon fish, trumpet fish, parrot fish, trigger fish and whitetip reef sharks.

**Day 6 Golfo Dulce, Costa Rica.** For our first call in Costa Rica we will visit the famous gardens at Casa Orquideas (Orchid House) where we find a profusion of over 100 varieties of orchids along with heliconias, bromeliads, ornamental and fruit trees. Keen birders can also keep an

eye out for hummingbirds, parrots and colourful toucans attracted by the plants.

**Day 7 Corcovado National Park.** Resting on the northern side of the Osa Peninsula, Drake Bay (Bahía Drake) is our gateway to the Corcovado National Park. We will use the Zodiacs to land on one of the beaches before enjoying a walk through the primary and secondary forest with our naturalist guides locating and explaining the extensive rainforest wildlife and flora. The rich biological diversity of the biological corridor of Corcovado National Park is astounding, and sightings may include as many as four types of monkeys, as well as coatis, sloths, anteaters, and much more. Bird lovers will be enchanted by a wide variety of birds, including tanagers, flycatchers, kingfishers, manakins, trogons, crested guans, and spectacular scarlet macaws and toucans. For an adrenaline-charged experience you may wish to be driven to the north-western border of Corcovado National Park and the village of Los Planes. Here a rainforest canopy zip-line tour, across 11 different cables, will give you a different view of the park.

**Day 8 Curu National Park.** Curu National Wildlife Refuge is located on the southern Nicoya Peninsula of north-western Costa Rica. We will go ashore by Zodiac to explore this area teeming with abundant wildlife and one of the most unspoiled beaches on the Nicoya Peninsula. Curu National Wildlife Refuge is managed sustainably to produce profit and employment through low level cattle grazing and the harvest of tropical fruits, while at the same time protecting otherwise threatened forested habitats such as mangroves, tropical moist and dry forests, and coral reefs. Some 200 species of birds thrive in the area

and during a guided walk we will look for scarlet macaws, rufous-tailed hummingbirds and blue-gray tanagers, as well as capuchin and howler monkeys.

**Day 9 Manuel Antonio National Park.** Today we will go ashore by Zodiac to the port of Quepos which is close to Costa Rica's most popular gem, Manuel Antonio National Park. This is one of the most stunning and bio-diverse areas of the world. Spread out over 683 hectares it is filled with diverse wildlife, has both primary and secondary forests, boasts a stunning shoreline ideal for bird watching or swimming, and is home to a number of endemic species of plants and animals including iguanas, sloths, squirrel monkeys, colourful crabs, and the ceiba tree, which, according to ancient Mayan culture, is the tree of life that links us to the spirit world. Together with our Costa Rican naturalist guides we will stroll through the exotic, bio-diverse tropical rainforests hoping to encounter monkeys and sloths as they traverse the tree canopy, and listen to the songs of the multitude of birds. Alternatively, enjoy a cruise through the mangroves, considered to be an important ecosystem packed with hundreds of species of marine and land animals. We will be taken around shifting sandbanks to reveal the animals, insects and plants that lie hidden from the untrained eye. We will pass through wide lagoons where many species of seabirds can be observed, and round narrow passages, hoping for a chance to encounter white-collared capuchin monkeys.

**Day 10 San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua.** After an early breakfast we will leave from the friendly fishing village of San Juan del Sur for a full day tour to Granada and Lake Nicaragua. Founded in 1523, Granada is Nicaragua's oldest



important marine ecosystem with the coastal area being made up of remote islands, mangrove canals and desolate beaches whilst inland we find beautiful forests and cacao plantations. It is an important base for migratory birds as well as a nesting site for four sea turtle species including being one of only two sites in the Pacific for the endangered Hawksbill Turtle. We have a full day to explore the different areas of the Reserve spending time with the environmentalists and scientists who will teach us about the conservation of the turtles. We will enjoy guided walks through the forest on the lookout for spider monkeys before learning about the cultivation of cacao, which creates some of the finest chocolate on one of the local plantations.

Spanish city. This picturesque city has retained much of its Spanish character with colonial churches, narrow streets and colourful Spanish style homes. We will enjoy a walking tour including the cathedral and convent of San Francisco where we find around 30 pre Colombian stone statues dating back to 800 A.D. sculpted by the inhabitants of Zapatera Island on Lake Nicaragua. After a local lunch we continue to Lake Nicaragua and enjoy a relaxing boat ride amongst the 365 small islands created by the volcanic activity of the Mombacho volcano around 20,000 years ago. Whilst some islands are inhabited, most remain unspoiled and are home to the exotic plants, howler monkeys and orchids. This is also the location of the world's only freshwater shark.

**Day 11 Corinto.** Just south of El Salvador's Gulf of Fonseca and west of Lake Xolotlan is the port of Corinto from where we will visit Leon, Nicaragua's second-largest city. Apart from having Central America's second-oldest university, the amount of colonial buildings, including its 18th century cathedral, the many churches and residential houses, rivals those of Granada. The tomb of Ruben Darío, one of Central America's most important poets, is also found in Leon.

**Day 12 La Union, El Salvador.** Entering the Gulf of Fonseca and its sidearm the Bahía de La Unión, we will moor in La Unión, El Salvador's second-most important harbour for the opportunity to visit the volcano Conchagua. From the top of the volcano there are excellent panoramic views of El Salvador and the neighbouring countries of Honduras and Nicaragua.

**Day 13 Bahía de Jiquilisco.** Covering over 400 square kilometres the Jiquilisco Bay Biosphere Reserve is El Salvador's most

**Day 14 Acajutla.** Acajutla is El Salvador's main harbour and an ideal base for our excursions today. We will visit El Salvador's important Mesoamerican sites including Joya de Ceren, a pre-Hispanic farming community that was buried under an eruption of the Laguna Caldera Volcano and declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the important political and religious centres of San Andrés and Tazumal. North of Acajutla is the El Imposible National Park. This area with the highest diversity of wildlife is the largest ecoregion in El Salvador and has been put on the UNESCO World Heritage tentative list. Coffee used to be transported through a perilous gorge, resulting in the name "the impossible". Coffee is still grown in the area and we can visit one of the plantations.

**Day 15 Puerto Quetzal to Antigua, Guatemala.** Disembark after breakfast and drive to Antigua. After lunch we will explore this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built between three magnificent volcanoes in 1542 it is one of the oldest and most beautiful cities in the Americas. The city remained an economic and political heart of Central America until a devastating earthquake in 1773 destroyed much of the city. We explore the city which is a wonder of colonial buildings, beautiful squares, cobblestone streets and Baroque churches. Check into our hotel this afternoon and enjoy some free time before meeting for dinner this evening.

**Day 16 Antigua to London.** Enjoy breakfast in the hotel before transferring to Guatemala City for our scheduled indirect flight to London.

**Day 17 London.** Arrive today.

## Tikal & Lake Atitlan – Post Cruise Extension 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> April 2018



For those who wish to spend some time exploring Guatemala we are offering a two night post-cruise extension which includes full day tours to the Mayan ruins at Tikal, located in the Guatemalan jungle and to the beautiful Lake Atitlan.

### THE ITINERARY

**Day 1 Tikal.** This morning we will depart Antigua early for our short flight (approximately 1 hour) to Flores in the Peten Department. We will visit the Tikal National Park to see the beautiful Maya ruins in the dense sub-tropical humid jungle. Tikal offer temples reaching 70 feet tall and several thousand other monuments, stela and altars. After lunch in a local restaurant we will make our way to the airport for our return flight to Antigua. Return to the hotel and enjoy the rest of the evening at leisure.

**Day 2 Lake Atitlan.** After breakfast we embark on our full day tour to Lake Atitlan, described by Aldous Huxley as the most beautiful lake in the world. Surrounded by 12 post-Maya villages, all bearing the names of Catholic saints and surrounded by three majestic volcanoes, the experience is unique. We will visit the main town of Panajachel where the quaint streets are home to many bohemian artists selling their crafts and there will be some time to explore at leisure and browse the local shops. After lunch at a local restaurant we will head back to the comforts of our hotel in Antigua. The remainder of the evening will be at leisure.

**Day 3 Lake Atitlan to Guatemala City to London.** Enjoy breakfast in the hotel before transferring to Guatemala City for our scheduled indirect flight to London.

**Day 4 London.** Arrive today.

### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£795**; Single: **£995**

**Price includes:** Two nights hotel accommodation in Antigua, Guatemala on a bed and breakfast basis, Tikal excursion by air, Lake Atitlan excursion, lunch on days 1 & 2, gratuities.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, meals other than those stated.

**N.B.** Wildlife sightings cannot be guaranteed.

### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £500 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY			
Suite Description	Deck	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Adventurer Suite	3	£6995	£6495
Explorer Suite	4	£7495	£6995
View Suite	3	£7895	£7395
Vista Suite	4	£8295	£7795
Veranda Suite	5	£8995	£8495
Expedition Suite	3/4	£9995	£9495
Medallion Suite	7	£10995	£10495
Silver Suite	5	£11495	£10995
Grand Suite	7	£11995	£11495
Owner Suite	7	£13495	£12995
Adventurer Suite for sole use	3	£9495	£8995
Explorer Suite for sole use	4	£9795	£9295
View Suite for sole use	3	£9995	£9495

**Price Includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel, two nights hotel accommodation in Panama City and overnight accommodation in Antigua on a bed & breakfast basis, dinner on days 2 & 15, 12 nights aboard the Silver Explorer on a full board basis including all drinks, shore excursions, onboard team with lecture programme, gratuities, transfers, port taxes.

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

**NB.** Flights schedules are yet to be released at the time of going to print and the itinerary may change on their release.



# SILVER EXPLORER

For this fascinating voyage in Central America, we are delighted to have chartered the luxurious, 132 guest Silver Explorer, a purpose built luxury expedition vessel. The atmosphere on board is relaxed and informal with the focus on the wonders of the destination you are visiting, which combined with the luxury surroundings, five star service, superb cuisine, a thoroughly all-inclusive offering and expert onboard team of lecturers makes for voyage of a lifetime.

## Your Suite

Accommodation on board is arranged over four decks. Each suite affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom and outside views. The 66 ocean view suites range in size from 157 to 728 square feet. Select suites feature private French balconies or large private verandas and all suites feature butler service and a refrigerator and bar stocked with your preferred beverages including wines and spirits which your butler will replenish upon request. Amenities in the suites include luxury Pratesi bed linen, choice of pillow and bath amenities, iPod docking station, flat screen television with DVD and on-demand movies, music and satellite news programming, direct-dial telephone, sitting area with writing desk and personalised stationery, personal safe, plush robe and slippers, hairdryer and Wi-Fi internet access (charges apply). The beds in each suite can be configured as double or twin.



Explorer Suite

## Suite Categories

- **Adventurer Suites** measure 157-167 square feet and feature two portholes.
- **Explorer Suites** measure 175-190 square feet and feature a view window.
- **View Suites** measure 192 square feet with a view window.
- **Vista Suites** measure 192 square feet with a large picture window.
- **Veranda Suites** measure 206-216 square feet and feature a French balcony.
- **Expedition Suites** measure 388-397 square feet and feature a living room with two view windows or two large picture windows, two televisions and laundry service.
- **Medallion Suites** measure 400 square feet including a private balcony. Guests occupying these suites also benefit from afternoon canapes on request and laundry service.
- **Silver Suites** measure 422 square feet including a sitting area and two French balconies. Guests occupying these suites also benefit from afternoon canapes on request and laundry service.
- **Grand Suites** measure 618 square feet including a private balcony. Guests occupying these suites also benefit from afternoon canapes on request and laundry service.
- **Owners Suite** features a living room with sitting area and measures 728 square feet including the private veranda. Guests occupying this suite also benefit from afternoon canapes on request, laundry service, four hours of complimentary internet service and a walk in wardrobe.



Theatre

## Your Space

The spacious and luxuriously appointed public areas on board include the Panorama Lounge which is specially designed to provide an uninterrupted view of the day's destination from the comfort of the ship's interior. This is an ideal place to unwind, listen to the pianist and enjoy a nightcap with new friends. Located on Deck 6 high atop the ship, the Observation Lounge also offers panoramic views and here you will find comfortable seats to enjoy a beverage and watch the ever-changing view throughout your cruise. The daily briefings, the recaps and lectures take place in the Theatre by the knowledgeable onboard team. Other facilities include the Library with an extensive collection of hardcover books, magazines, reference materials and newspapers, the internet café where you can access the web for a nominal fee with complimentary printing and the Connoisseur's Corner which offers exceptional cognacs along with a premium selection of cigars for purchase. The onboard



The Restaurant



Veranda Suite



Observation Lounge

boutique offers a selection of gift items as well as toiletries and convenience items and there is also complimentary self-service laundry facilities on board. When not enjoying one of the onboard lectures or exploring ashore there is a fitness centre which includes a treadmill, elliptical trainer, bike and weight machine, two outdoor whirlpools and the Spa features a sauna and steam room as well as a wide range of treatments which can be booked on board.

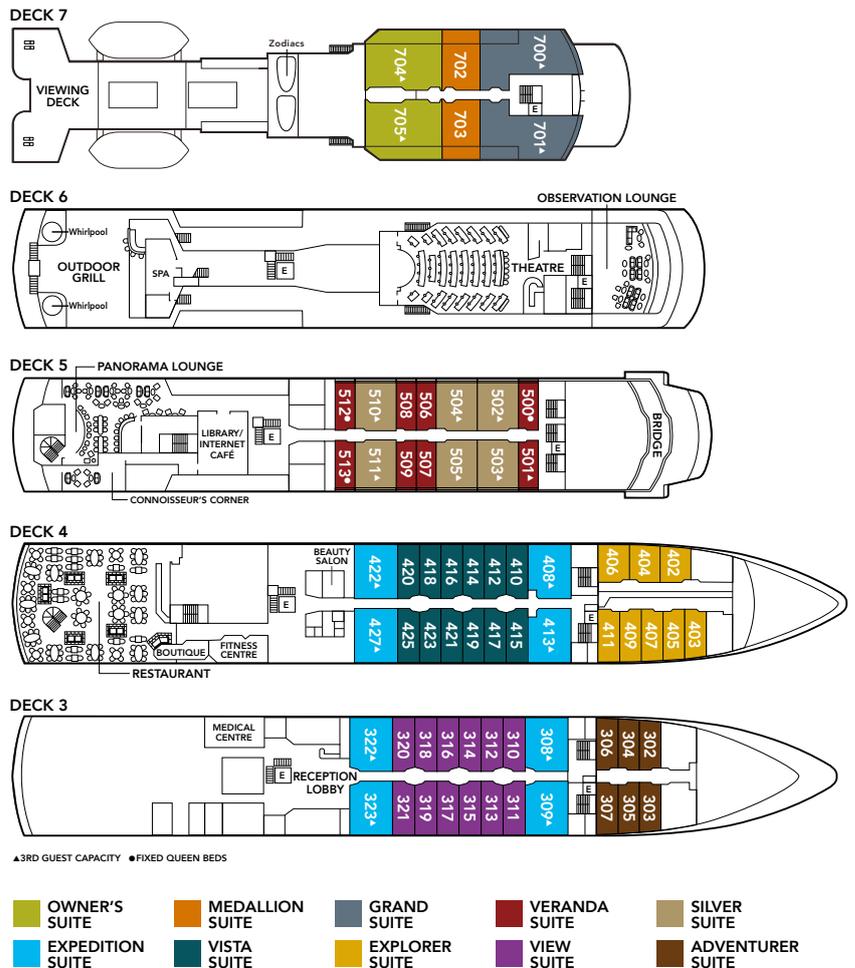
### Your Dining

The Restaurant serves contemporary, international cuisine with sophisticated elegance and impeccable service. During days at sea, choose something from La Collection du Monde, a series of signature dishes created exclusively by the Grands Chefs of Relais & Châteaux. The Restaurant offers open-seating dining, which means there are no assigned times, no assigned tables. You are free to dine when, where and with whom you please. Select wines, premium spirits and speciality coffees, as well as juices and soft drinks are complimentary in all bars and lounges. In addition there is the convenience of the outdoor Grill for lunch and dinner. Alternatively you can enjoy breakfast delivered to your suite or a formal dinner ordered from The Restaurant menu. Lighter fare is always available from the room service menu from 6am to 11pm.

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.



## DECK PLAN



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