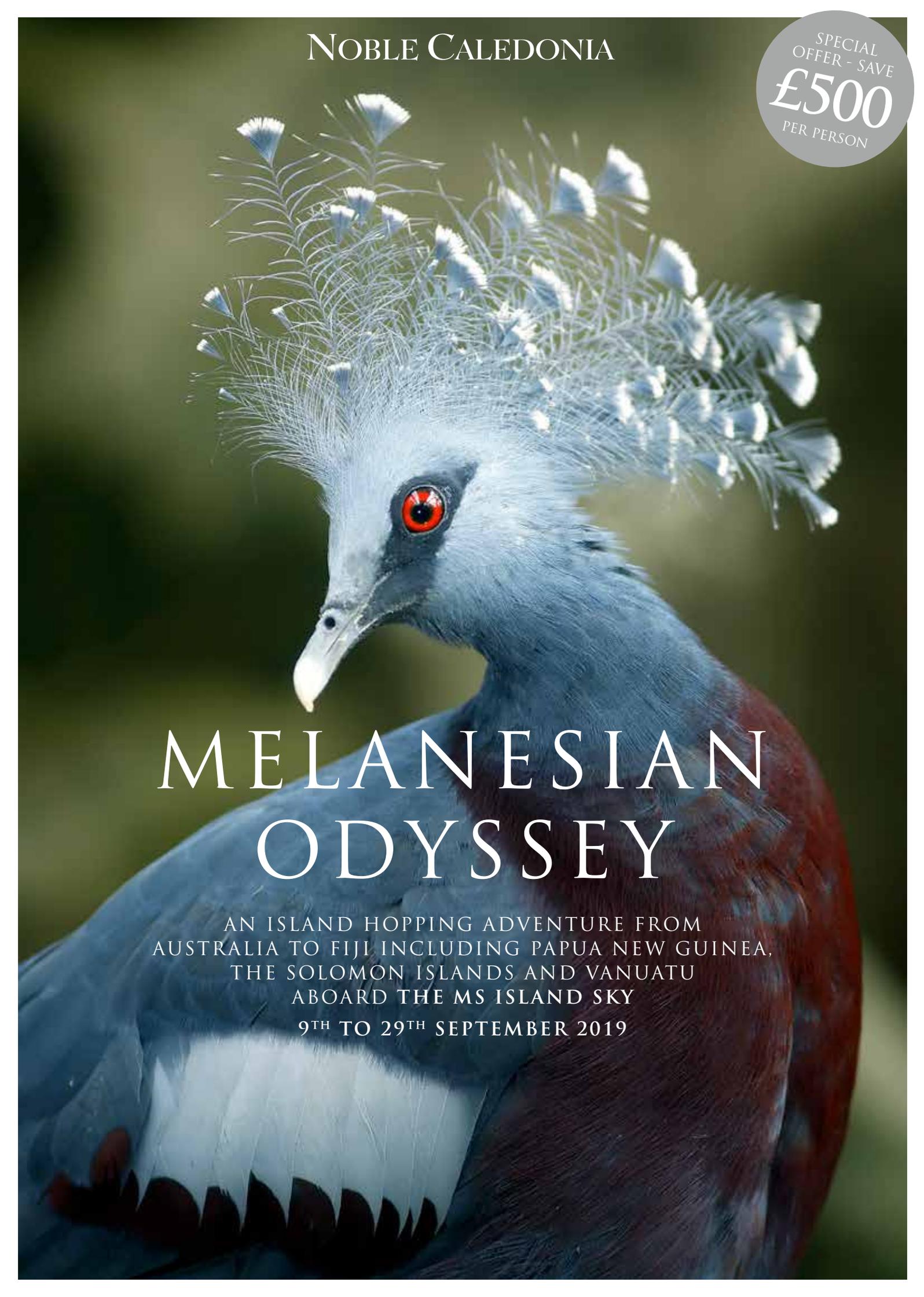


NOBLE CALEDONIA

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



MELANESIAN  
ODYSSEY

AN ISLAND HOPPING ADVENTURE FROM  
AUSTRALIA TO FIJI INCLUDING PAPUA NEW GUINEA,  
THE SOLOMON ISLANDS AND VANUATU  
ABOARD THE MS ISLAND SKY

9<sup>TH</sup> TO 29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019

If you were the owner of a large yacht based in the Pacific, this is exactly the type of itinerary you would plan. A fascinating island hopping adventure from Australia through Melanesia to the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and finally to Fiji. All the islands we will encounter are beautiful in their different ways and all have unique features and cultures. They are certainly not on the mass tourism circuit and their beauty and customs are relatively unscathed by the modern world. The region is ideal for exploring by small ship and particularly one as suitable as the MS Island Sky. Her fleet of Zodiac landing craft provides us with the freedom of spontaneity to explore and land in places where relatively few travellers have been before us.



We begin our journey in Cairns before sailing to Papua New Guinea which is a revelation of exquisite wild beauty and exotic cultural wealth. With its incomparable biodiversity, both on land and in the surrounding waters, it also remains one of the most mysterious places on earth. 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. Leaving Papua New Guinea we sail to the Solomon Islands and explore the majestic Morovo Lagoon, the world's largest double barrier lagoon and a truly awe-inspiring place. From here, as we island hop in an easterly direction we sail through one of the most culturally complex regions in the world with hundreds of languages spoken across the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu and a vast spectrum of spiritual beliefs, traditions and artistic craftsmanship.

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.



'Blue Hole', Espiritu Santu



Tanna Island

## What To Expect...

Flexibility is the key to an expedition and each day holds something new. To provide you with an idea of what to expect, below are extracts from the ship's log from when the MS Island Sky's sister ship, the MS Caledonian Sky last visited Vanuatu.

### **Espiritu Santu, Vanuatu:**

*Our first visit today was to a local village where we were lucky witnesses to the unique water music, which involved local ladies slapping the surface of the water with some force and exhausting consistency. The next visit was another highlight, cavorting in the beautiful freshwaters of the local 'Blue Hole'. Meanwhile the more aquatically inclined of us jumped into vans for our visit to the end of the coast to Million Dollar Point. Here, the Americans had pushed huge amounts of military gear into the sea rather than take it home, or let it fall into other hands. It was an abstract mish mash of metallic objects and amongst it all there were many fish, including anemone and their 'nemos'.*

### **Tanna Island, Vanuatu:**

*This spectacular island is home to constantly burping Yassur, a volcano located in the middle of lush tropical rainforest with the occasional small village. We anchored cautiously just outside Resolution Bay. There was a gentle roll filtering into the fairly open bay, forming a slight break on the beach and on arrival the band started up some tropical tunes. The recent wet season rains had turned the jungle even greener than usual and the first section included the flats which were dominated mainly by planted guava and coconut. As we bounced onward and upward, the vegetation developed into simple but beautiful rainforest, dominated by strangler figs. As we drove higher, tall and skinny tree ferns arched over the road. Those with good eyes noticed a number of 'Tanna Fruit-Doves', plump green birds that flicked between trees in the canopy. The great fat lady known as Yassur was smoking continuously as we started to clamber up her rocky slopes. Once at the top we could peer into her belly. Before each explosion of sound and debris, we could see a shock wave expand out in a split second, vibrating all the particles in a wave. After the sudden shock wave, red lava and bombs were flung high into the air.*

## The Itinerary

**Days 1 & 2 London to Cairns, Australia.** Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

**Day 3 Cairns.** Arrive this morning and transfer directly to the MS Island Sky. We have a leisurely day before we enjoy Welcome Dinner and Drinks as we sail this evening.

**Day 4 At Sea.** Today we have a relaxing day at sea. Our lecture programme will start and we will have our snorkel and Zodiac briefings to prepare us for the days ahead.

**Day 5 Bonarua Island, Papua New Guinea.** This morning we arrive at the coastline of Papua New Guinea. Here the peaks of the dramatic Stanley Owens Range come into view as we reach the island of Bonarua in Milne Bay. We will go ashore to view fishing and weaving demonstrations, and

wander through the enchanting village, sampling local delicacies. Birders have the chance to trek into the thicket whilst the warm inviting waters of the Coral Sea offer a first opportunity to explore the underwater world.

**Day 6 Fergusson & Dobu Islands, D'Entrecasteaux Islands.** Our Papua New Guinea adventure continues in the D'Entrecasteaux islands. We will use our Zodiacs to land on Fergusson Island, the largest of the chain, in a small fishing village. From here we will walk to the local hot springs and bubbling mud pools surrounded by lush vegetation; birders can keep a lookout for parrots and cockatoos. A welcome dance will be accompanied by local foods cooked in the hot pools. This afternoon we will cruise through the spectacular Dobu passage and use our Zodiacs to explore and snorkel



Exploring by Zodiac



Yasawa Islands, Fiji



Soft corals, Solomon Islands



Solomon Eclectus Parrot



Traditional dance, Solomon Islands

or alternatively land to meet the villagers and visit the local church.

**Day 7 At Sea.** Spend a day at sea as we cross to the Solomon Islands.

**Day 8 Marovo Lagoon, Solomon Islands.** 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 beaches, the lagoon waters shimmering in every shade of blue, turquoise and jade green. We have a full day here to explore the villages which produce some of the finest wood carvings in the region. We will also find a suitable spot to snorkel and swim from the beaches as well as enjoying nature walks in the local forests.

**Day 9 Tetepare Island.** 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 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, dugongs and the endemic Tetepare white eye whilst the beaches support three species of turtle including the endangered leatherback. Today we will enjoy guided walks in the rainforest with the local conservationists who will educate us on the work they are doing on the island.

**Day 10 Honiara.** During World War II the British founded Honiara as a military base. The town and 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. After breakfast we will join a city tour of Honiara including the central market, parliament building and National Museum where we get an insight into the history of the Solomon Islands. Enjoy lunch before continuing to the World War II sites including Henderson Field, the Japanese Peace Park and the US Memorial at Skyline Ridge. This evening we will cruise through Iron Bottom Sound, the site of intense naval battles during World War II and so named for the large numbers of Japanese and American ships and aircraft that sank beneath the sea.

**Day 11 Santa Ana.** Spend the morning in Port Mary on Santa Ana Island. We will be welcomed with a stunning dance by the villagers with spears and mud face masks. After the performance we have the opportunity to explore the village further with its plethora of local handicrafts, join a nature walk through the forests or swim from the local beach. Return to the ship for lunch and maybe join a lecture this afternoon as we spend the afternoon at sea.

**Day 12 Vanikoro.** Over lunch we arrive at the island of Vanikoro. Situated in the Temotu Province, Vanikoro was where French explorer Jean-Francois de la Perouse became stranded after both his vessels, La Boussole and the Astrolabe, hit the then unknown reefs of the island in 1788. 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 enjoy a swim or snorkel from the beach.

**Day 13 Mota Lava & Rah Island, Vanuatu.** Our first call in Vanuatu will be the island of Mota Lava and Rah Island in the Banks Island group. These tiny island communities are still off the main tourist routes but the locals are happy to share their culture, stories and ways of life with the visitors that make the journey to their islands. From our anchorage point we will Zodiac ashore and see a traditional snake dance, where the men paint themselves black and white as sea snakes, before being welcomed into the village. We also hope to have the chance to snorkel on the reef.

**Day 14 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. This morning join an island tour including the Nekar Custom Village where we will learn about local traditions and customs, including their unique water music and kava making, before enjoying time to swim in the nearby Riri Blue Hole. Return to the ship for lunch and in the afternoon 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.

**Day 15 Malekula Island.** The second largest of the island group, Malekula is also the most culturally diverse with a small population that speaks over 30 distinct languages. Here we will learn about the ancient tribes the Big Nambas who lived in the north and Small Nambas from the central and southern provinces. Tribal warfare was once very common but today the island is peaceful. We plan to visit one of the tribal groups, learn about their culture including cannibalism, with many ancient sites hidden in the forests, and see some of their important traditions of dance and song. In the afternoon we will relocate and find a suitable spot to enjoy some of the excellent snorkelling found on the coral reefs off the island or to enjoy a nature walk.

**Day 16 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 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 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 17 Tanna.** Our final call in Vanuatu is the island of Tanna,



Marovo Lagoon, Solomon Islands

meaning earth in the local Kwamera language. Captain Cook was the first European to visit the island in 1774, landing at Port Resolution, 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 more adventurous amongst us may wish to join a journey to the crater taking local trucks through the rainforest that covers the mountain before walking to the rim. Alternatively, we hope to have the chance to visit local villages where traditional lifestyles are maintained and the local culture has been largely unaffected by western influences. We will learn of the customs, traditional medicines, crafts and cooking styles.

**Day 18 At Sea.** Find a spot on deck or relax with a book in the library as we cruise towards Fiji.

**Day 19 Yasawa Islands.** This morning we will drop anchor amongst the twenty islands of the Yasawa group during lunch. In 1789 when Captain Bligh was set adrift from the HMS Bounty he passed by the Yasawa Islands from where two war canoes were sent to pursue them. They escaped and the waters are still known as Bligh Water. Today we can expect a friendlier welcome as we find a spot on a secluded beach to relax or enjoy a final opportunity to snorkel and swim.

**Day 20 Fiji to London.** Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled indirect flight to London. During this journey we will gain a day as we cross the International Date Line.

**Day 21 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
Magellan	Standard	£12295	£11795
Columbus	Superior	£12595	£12095
Marco Polo	Premium	£12795	£12295
Marco Polo	Corner	£12995	£12495
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£13795	£13295
Explorer	Owner's Balcony Suites	£13995	£13495
Explorer	Island Suite	£15495	£14995
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£15495	£14995
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£16495	£15995

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Economy class scheduled air travel • 17 nights aboard the MS Island 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 • Port taxes.  
**Not Included:** Travel insurance, visas.

## Pre-Cruise Cairns Extension

6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019



Before your expedition aboard the MS Island Sky, you may wish to extend your time in Australia with our three night stay in Cairns including a full day to explore the spectacular Great Barrier Reef.

### The Itinerary

**Days 1 & 2 London to Cairns, Australia.** Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

**Day 2 Cairns.** Arrive into Cairns this morning and transfer to our hotel for a three night stay. The remainder of the day is free to relax after the flight.

**Day 3 Cairns.** After breakfast at the hotel enjoy a full day tour exploring the underwater world of the Great Barrier Reef. Local boats will take us to the outer reef where we can enjoy snorkelling, swimming or use of the glass bottom boat in the clear waters. Return to the hotel this afternoon and meet for dinner tonight.

**Day 4 Cairns.** Today is at leisure for independent exploration. Either enjoy the hotel facilities or join one of the many excursions offered at the hotel. Perhaps visit the Daintree Rainforest, or take the Kuranda scenic railway which passes through World Heritage protected tropical rainforest, past spectacular waterfalls and into the awesome Barron Gorge.

**Day 5 Cairns.** Enjoy a free morning at the hotel before transferring to the MS Island Sky for embarkation.

### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£995** Single: **£1295**

**Price Includes:** Three nights in Cairns on a bed and breakfast basis, dinner on day 3, full day tour to Great Barrier Reef on day 3, gratuities, airport to hotel and hotel to ship transfers.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, Australian visa, excursion on day 4.

## Post-Cruise Fiji Extension

28<sup>th</sup> September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019



If you would like to extend your time in Fiji, we are offering a relaxing three night stay at the Lomani Island Resort (or similar). Lomani is located in the Mamanuca group of islands which are offshore west of Fiji's main island, Viti Levu. The Mamanuca islands are famous for their white sand beaches and this boutique hotel features just 24 suites.

### The Itinerary

**Day 1 Fiji.** Disembark this morning and transfer to the Lomani Island Resort for a three night stay.

**Days 2 & 3 Fiji.** Two days at leisure to explore at your own pace.

**Day 4 Fiji to London.** After a free morning we transfer to the airport for our scheduled indirect flight to London. During this journey we will gain a day as we cross the International Date Line.

**Day 5 London.** Arrive this afternoon.

### CATEGORY

Beachfront Bure for double occupancy	<b>£1195</b>
Beachfront Bure for sole occupancy	<b>£1895</b>
Beachfront Pool Bure for double occupancy	<b>£1295</b>
Beachfront Pool Bure for sole occupancy	<b>£1945</b>

**Price Includes:** Three nights accommodation on a half board basis (breakfast and dinner), orientation tour, group transfers to and from the resort using local boats.

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

# MS ISLAND SKY



Friendly Service



Owner's Balcony Suite



The Restaurant

The much loved MS Island Sky is one of our three flag ships and sister vessel to the MS Hebridean Sky and MS Caledonian 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 118, a vessel of her size is capable of carrying many more but instead the MS Island Sky has the benefit of unusually large suites, luxuriously appointed public areas and spacious outside decks.

## Your Suite

On board there are 59 exceptionally spacious and well designed suites. All feature a sitting area and some have private balconies. The feeling of luxury is enhanced by the wood panelling and brass, which predominates throughout the vessel conveying the atmosphere of a private yacht. The passenger accommodation is arranged over five decks and all suites have outside views. Each affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring marble-topped vanity unit with sink and walk-in shower, large wardrobes, dressing table with large mirror and stool and excellent storage. There is a mini-fridge, flat screen television and a telephone in each suite. Bottled water, Egyptian cotton sheets, dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted Molton Brown toiletries and individually controlled air-conditioning and heating. Soft hues and blended tones enhance the traditional maritime style making the passenger accommodation an inviting and relaxing place to be.

## Your Dining

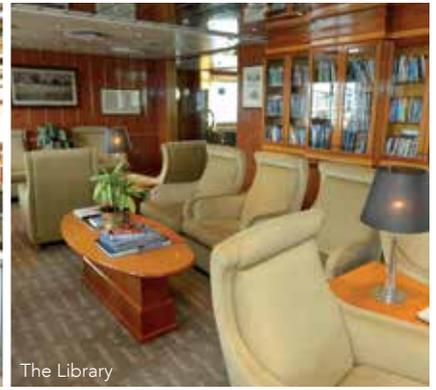
With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the cuisine on board the MS Island Sky is of a consistent superior quality that befits such a vessel. In keeping with the informal atmosphere on board, when dining you are able to choose your seating arrangements and choice of restaurants 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



The Club



The Library

## Your Space

The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large Lounge on the Columbus Deck featuring a selection of seating options from individual armchairs and sofas to side cushioned benches. Daily briefings given by the Cruise Director and talks from Guest Speakers and expedition staff take place in the Lounge. In addition to the main Lounge, there is also The Club, located on the Marco Polo Deck which features the main bar where the onboard pianist plays periodically throughout the day. The Club also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. Towards the aft of the ship on the Columbus Deck is the Library. Well stocked with reference books pertaining to the destinations the vessel is visiting and a selection of essential reads, you will not find yourself short of excellent literature on board. A selection of games and two computers offering complimentary internet access can also be found in the Library. The main Restaurant, which can seat all guests at one sitting, is located on the Magellan Deck, and outside there is a rear Lido Deck located on the Erikson Deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade. Further to this on the top Explorer Deck there is an observation area ideal for spotting wildlife, complete with sun loungers for sunbathing, relaxing with a book or catching up with fellow travellers. The Promenade Deck wraps around the whole ship giving outstanding views. There is also a small beauty salon on board with appointments made on request. Throughout the vessel carefully chosen artwork and photos reflect the destinations we sail to.

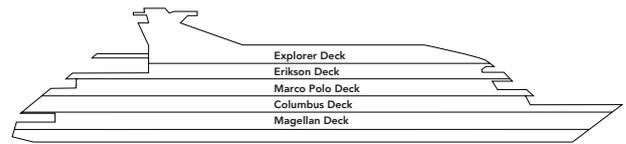
## Your Comfort

The MS Island 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.

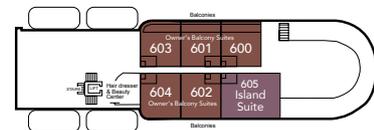
## Your Life On Board

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 wonderful destinations you are visiting in the company of like-minded people. There is a high ratio of crew to passengers and 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 and of course good food, all contribute to make any voyage aboard this wonderful vessel a memorable and joyful experience.

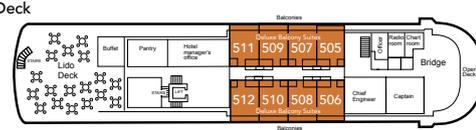
## MS ISLAND SKY DECK PLAN



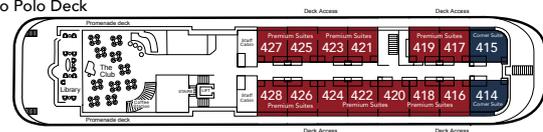
### Explorer Deck



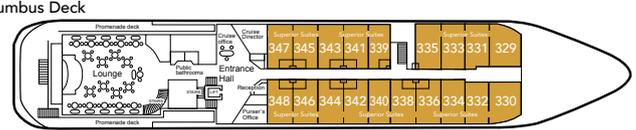
### Erikson Deck



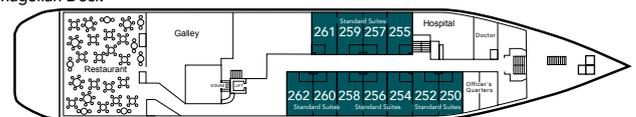
### Marco Polo Deck



### Columbus Deck



### Magellan Deck



- Standard Suites
- Corner Suites with Deck Access
- Owner's Balcony Suites
- Superior Suites
- Deluxe Balcony Suites
- Island Suite
- Premium Suites with Deck Access



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

