

SPECIAL
OFFER - SAVE
£500
PER PERSON

PASSAGE TO KAMCHATKA

An expedition cruise from Japan to the
Russian Far East aboard **Le Soleal**

10th to 25th June 2019

NOBLE CALEDONIA



The remote reaches of Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula and the distant and isolated Kuril Islands have fired the imagination of explorers and traders for centuries. Our past travellers have enthused about the spectacular scenery, the incredible array of wildlife and the native cultures known to only a few privileged visitors. Join us on this remarkable voyage of unparalleled exploration along the 'Pacific Ring of Fire'. From Otaru, Japan to Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula, we cruise through a pristine environment that calls to nature lovers, history buffs, photographers and the intrepid explorer within.

Among the Kurils, a necklace-like chain of volcanic islands, we find vast forests and wildflower-dappled tundra, backdropped by soaring steam-breathing volcanoes. Basalt stacks rise from the sea, tailormade resting and nesting spots for an unimaginable number of seabirds. Upon reaching the Kamchatka Peninsula, Russia's remote easternmost province and home to the brown bear, we are greeted with a dramatic landscape of fire and ice. Geysers, hot springs and active volcanoes set amidst towering mountains and fast flowing rivers make this area magnificently unique. Marvel at spouting whales, frolicking seals and huge populations of nesting and migratory seabirds.

Using our fleet of Zodiacs we can explore inlets, bird sanctuaries and land in otherwise inaccessible places and, although we set sail with a set itinerary, it is often the unscheduled events that become the highlight. This is your opportunity to see a seldom visited corner of the world and to witness the timeless processes of nature taking place without the hindrance or help of man. Sailing in June, we will take full advantage of the mid-summer sun, travelling on nature's terms, enjoying dramatic scenery and encountering the region's ancient cultures and fascinating people whose lives are rarely touched by outsiders.



Walrus



Exploring by Zodiac, Listvenichnaya Bay



Local people, Kamchatka



Steller sea eagle, Zhupanova River



Sea otter, Shumshu Island

WHAT TO EXPECT...

We have operated many voyages in this region and below are some extracts from past ships' logs to provide you with an insight into what you can expect from this unique voyage.

Tyulenyi Island: "Approaching the beach we could already see incredible wildlife. Guillemots were all around on the water and in the air and the beach and the shallows near our landing site were dotted with truly enormous Steller sea lion bulls, and smaller (but still rather impressive) fur seals. The barking of the bulls was drowned out by the calls of thousands upon thousands of Kittiwakes and Guillemots on the cliffs behind the beach."



Kuril Islands: "The sun strengthened and the winds died away, and we found ourselves in genuine awe, none of us had

seen seabird numbers like this anywhere else on earth. A handful of sea otters and sea eagles were sighted, and the volcano of Chirpoy island even belched off a little sulphur as a backdrop. The volcano last erupted in 1982."



Kamchatka Peninsula: "As Zodiacs started moving towards a waterfall at the north side of the bay to start the cruise, a bear was spotted almost straight away in one of the valleys. This bear moved off but minutes later a mother and two cubs were seen on the cliffs right above where we were cruising. Moving deeper into the bay we became aware that we were being watched by a pair of Steller sea eagles nesting in a tree at the top of the cliff."

"Three orcas flowed along with us for a while, coming close to

the bow, and no sooner had they moved on than Brent spotted a sperm whale. The captain slowed down and gently manoeuvred the ship close, giving us spectacular views of this huge animal as he breathed for a while then fluked up for a deep dive."

"The river mouth was shallow and fast-flowing, and Sergey saw a bear near the huts when he went in to scout, so we stayed in the Zodiacs for a while to head upstream. After sighting a Steller's sea eagle and dozens of red-throated divers, we rounded a bend and sure enough, there was 'our' bear. For the next half hour or so, we stayed quiet and slowly edged the Zodiacs just a little further up the river until we were all against the bank watching this big bear, as he munched and snuffled in the vegetation."



Ary Kamen and Nikolskoye, Bering Island, Commander Islands: "When we arrived we found a tiny columnar basalt island absolutely covered in seabirds. Thousands of black-legged kittiwakes were joined by hundreds of their smaller, dainty red-legged relatives. Every ledge was packed, clusters of kittiwakes and clusters of common and Brunnich's guillemots, interspersed with glossy black red-faced and pelagic shags. A handful of horned puffins seemed to almost pose for us on some of the ledges, and higher up on the grass we could see auklets."





Bering sea horned puffins



Chirpoy Island



Whiskered auklet



Brown bears, Kamchatka

THE ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Tokyo, Japan. Fly by scheduled flight.

Day 2 Tokyo. Arrive today and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. Take some time to relax and enjoy the hotel facilities.

Day 3 Tokyo to Otaru. After breakfast in the hotel we will transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to Sapporo. On arrival, transfer to Le Soleal which is moored in Otaru and meet your expedition team.

Day 4 Korsakov, Russia. Spend the morning at sea before we arrive in the Russian port of Korsakov in the early afternoon. After clearing customs and immigration formalities we will have the opportunity to visit the city. See Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk's beautiful Cathedral of the Resurrection. The church was only completed in 1995 and the gold on the onion domes has very recently been laid, shining brilliantly. From the church continue to the Sakhalin Regional Museum, which is housed in a beautiful Japanese-style structure, due to the previous ruling of its southern neighbour. The museum covers all the facets of Sakhalin Island, from its flora and fauna, to its geology and history.

Day 5 Tyuleniy Island. Our lecture programme continues this morning as we sail to Tyuleniy Island. Tyuleniy means "seal" in Russian, and during the summer months the island is home to literally tens of thousands of northern fur seals and Steller sea lions. Our visit, at the height of the breeding season is well timed to see not only the seals and sea lions, but also tens of thousands of common guillemots and black-legged kittiwakes that have made their nests in the cliffs above.

Days 6 to 9 Kuril Islands. The Kuril Islands consist of a volcanic archipelago that stretches 1300 kilometres, through the Sea of Okhotsk, from northern Japan to the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia. Our itinerary for these days will be flexible as our Captain and Expedition Leader will plan landings based on weather and sea conditions. However we hope to visit Chirpoy Island. The origin of the names is uncertain: the original Ainu language name of the island was Repunmshiri, a word meaning "place of many small birds". During a Zodiac cruise we search along the coast for the profusion of wildlife that lives in the area including Steller sea lions, fulmars, kittiwakes, puffins and auklets. Yankicha Island is impressive, accessible only by

Zodiac and only during high tide, it is actually a sinking volcanic caldera. Inside the magnificent lagoon with its fumaroles and hot springs, we can still see traces of the tremendous forces that created the island long ago. The number of auklets which breed here is truly incredible. Matua Island is home to one of the Kuril's most active volcanoes, with more than 14 documented eruptions in the past 250 years. We will learn about the Japanese military base that was set up here during World War II and how the Japanese used to capture geothermal heat from the volcano to keep the runway, which normally freezes over during winter, permanently usable. Hikers will be rewarded with good views of the abandoned military positions and will hopefully get a glimpse of the island's population of brown-headed thrush and Siberian rubythroats in the alder thickets. Alaid on Atlasova Island is the highest volcano in the Kurils with a height of over 2000 metres. Together with our expedition staff, we will land by Zodiac on the black lava beach of the island from where we will begin our walk to see the remains of the Taketomi tufa cone. On Shumshu we will use the Zodiacs to search for sea otters and also explore the beaches.

Day 10 Listvenichnaya Bay & Cape Kekurnyy, Kamchatka Peninsula. Arrive this morning at Listvenichnaya Bay on the Kamchatka Peninsula which is a prime location for brown bears. Depending on conditions we will make a landing or use the Zodiacs to scout the coastline. We will also see Steller sea lions, Steller sea eagles and harlequin ducks in the waters. Over lunch we will sail the short distance to Cape Kekurnyy, well known for the population of Steller Sea Lions that haul onto the rocks and where we will take a Zodiac cruise.

Day 11 Kamenistaya Bay & Chazma River. Continuing our time in Kamchatka we arrive this morning in Kamenistaya Bay located in the Kronotsky State Nature Reserve. The reserve was established in 1934 and is one of the oldest in Russia covering an area of almost 11,000 square kilometres which contains forest, tundra, taiga, mountains, volcanoes and geysers, a hugely diverse habitat for the abundant wildlife. The reserve is home to brown bear as well as caribou, otters, seals and multiple species of birds. If conditions permit we will offer walks with our expedition teams on land or Zodiac cruises to view the wildlife.



Church, Petropavlovsk



Extinct volcano, Kamchatka



Steller sea lion

Day 12 Ariy Kamen & Nikolskoye, Commander Islands.

The Komandorskiye or Commander Islands are named after famed Commander Vitus Bering who had been commissioned by the Russian Tsar to search for a land bridge between Asia and America. After having been to Alaska he was forced to overwinter here. He was buried on the island, but part of the crew managed to return to Petropavlovsk. Our experiences will be determined by weather, wildlife and sea conditions. We intend to visit Nikolskoye, which was established in 1826 by fur traders. This fishing village on Bering Island has a small museum where we will learn about the Aleut people and their culture. During our visit we will enjoy a concert and be entertained by a presentation of local games. In the afternoon, take a Zodiac ride to tiny Ariy Kamen Island a habitat for vast numbers of birds.

Day 13 Zhupanova River, Kamchatka Peninsula.

This morning we will cruise back to Kamchatka and over lunch we anchor in the Zhupanova River. The Zhupanova River Estuary is a scenic maze of moist bogs, serpentine river channels and

ponds against a snowy backdrop. The tall volcanic cone of Kronoskaya Sopka (3528 metres) stands above this predominantly uninhabited land. The river is one of the most productive trout rivers in the world and is home to the richest rainbow trout habitat on Kamchatka. This afternoon we have the opportunity to take a long Zodiac cruise along the river looking for wildlife including Steller's sea eagles, Aleutian terns, seals and of course the iconic Kamchatka brown bears.

Day 14 Petropavlovsk.

Petropavlovsk, town of Peter and Paul, derives its name from the two sailing ships used by Vitus Bering when the great explorer reached Avacha Bay in 1740. It is the only major city on the peninsula and one of the oldest towns in the Russian Far East. It is also the scientific and cultural centre of the region, and today we see just why that is, as our local guides take us on a comprehensive tour of the city's highlights. We will visit the museum of ethnography and natural history, the art school, the gold-domed Orthodox cathedral and the marketplace. We will have almost the entire day to explore the town. As an exciting

alternative, it may be possible to purchase an optional helicopter excursion to the Valley of the Geysers in the Kronotsky Nature Reserve.

Day 15 Petropavlovsk to Seoul, South Korea. Disembark this morning and transfer to the

airport for our chartered flight to Seoul. On arrival transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay.

Day 16 Seoul to London. After breakfast in the hotel transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

| SPECIAL OFFER - SAVE £500 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY | | | |
|--|------|----------------|---------------------|
| Stateroom/Suite Category | Deck | Brochure Price | Special Offer Price |
| Superior Stateroom | 3 | £8495 | £7995 |
| Deluxe Stateroom with balcony | 3 | £9095 | £8595 |
| Prestige Stateroom with balcony | 4 | £9295 | £8795 |
| Prestige Stateroom with balcony | 5 | £9495 | £8995 |
| Prestige Stateroom with balcony | 6 | £9795 | £9295 |
| Deluxe Suite with balcony | 6 | £10295 | £9795 |
| Prestige Suite with balcony | 5 | £10995 | £10495 |
| Prestige Suite with balcony | 6 | £11295 | £10795 |
| Owners Suite with balcony | 6 | £11995 | £11495 |
| Deluxe Stateroom with balcony for sole use | 3 | £10845 | £10345 |
| Prestige Stateroom with balcony for sole use | 4 | £11095 | £10595 |
| Prestige Stateroom with balcony for sole use | 5 | £11295 | £10795 |

Price Includes: Economy class scheduled air travel from London to Tokyo, Tokyo to Sapporo and Seoul to London, chartered flight from Petropavlovsk to Seoul, overnight hotel accommodation in Tokyo and Seoul on bed and breakfast basis, 12 nights aboard Le Soleal on a full board basis with open bar, expedition team, shore excursions, gratuities on board the ship and on excursions, group transfers, permits and port taxes, complimentary parka jacket.

Not Included: Travel insurance, Russian visa, optional excursion to Valley of the Geysers on day 14.



LE SOLEAL

We are delighted to have chartered Le Soleal for our cruises to the Russian Far East and Alaska in 2019. Launched in 2012, Le Soleal is a luxury expedition ship with 128 staterooms and suites and an onboard fleet of Zodiacs allowing for ease of exploration. This superb vessel offers a subtle blend of sophistication combined with casual comfort creating the feeling of being on a private yacht. After a day of exploration, you can return to personalised comfort and luxurious surroundings as well as high quality cuisine. Whilst cruising, the vessel benefits from spacious deck areas from where you can watch for passing wildlife and appreciate the dramatic scenery. 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, excellent service, superb cuisine and expert expedition team, makes for an expedition of a lifetime.

Your Stateroom/Suite

Staterooms and suites are spread over four decks and include superior staterooms, measuring 21 square metres, deluxe and prestige staterooms which measure 18 square metres, deluxe suites which

measure 27 square metres, prestige suites which measure 37 square metres and the owner's suite which measures 45 square metres. With the exception of the superior staterooms (which feature a picture window), all staterooms and suites feature a

private balcony ranging in size from 4 to 8 square metres dependent on cabin category. All staterooms and suites feature en-suite facilities including a shower (the owner's suite has a bathtub), individually controlled air-conditioning, desk with stationery, minibar, flat screen satellite television, video on demand, DVD player, CD and I-pod players. A security safe, hairdryer, direct dial telephone, internet access with Wi-Fi, bathrobes and French bath products are also provided. In addition, the larger suites have a

library and internet corner. Outside deck areas are spacious and feature comfortable deck furniture as well as a heated pool and on the top deck you will find the open-air bar. The fitness centre features the latest equipment such as a kinesis wall and running machines. In the beauty centre you can relax and enjoy a massage as well as other treatments. The cuisine on board is worthy of the finest restaurants where discreet, attentive service is standard. The two single-sitting restaurants welcome you for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The Gastronomic Restaurant is situated on Deck 2 and serves French and international cuisine accompanied by fine wine. At the Grill Restaurant, you have the opportunity to eat outside and enjoy buffet lunch and themed dinners. There is also 24-hour room service available.



Stateroom

Your Space

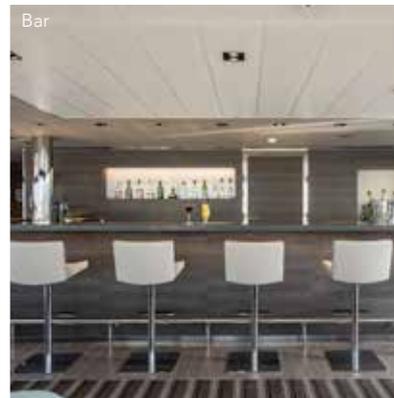
Whether you want to join other guests in the theatre or games area or relax on your own in a quiet corner of the library, Le Soleal has been designed to meet the needs of every guest. There is a large lounge, lecture theatre, a Panoramic Lounge which leads out onto a terrace,



Lounge



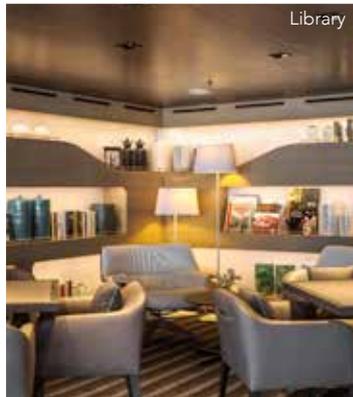
Theatre



Bar



Restaurant



Library



Suite

Life On Board

Aboard Le Soleal, the atmosphere is akin to being on your own private yacht. The independence and space of each guest has been considered in the design of the vessel and therefore you will find plenty of places to sit and relax in solitude, as well as areas for social gatherings and to meet fellow guests. The Captain, his officers and the hotel management are European and all crew members are fully bilingual.

For your Comfort, Safety and Security

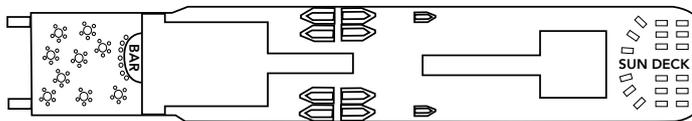
With a 1C ice class and stabilisers, Le Soleal meets the highest safety specifications. The ship is equipped with a GMDSS emergency communication system and a satellite weather system, receiving real-time satellite images of weather and ice conditions in the area. A crew of 140 will ensure the best possible service. There is also a doctor on board and a lift that serves all decks.



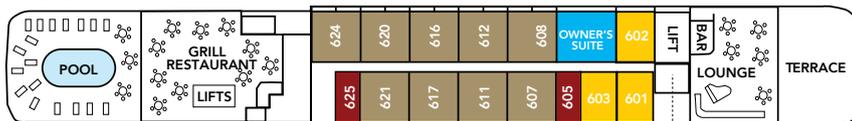
This cruise visits out of the way destinations. You will be accompanied by an expedition team and some landings ashore will be made by Zodiac landing craft. Cruises such as this will appeal to the more adventurous and those who enjoy the natural world.

DECK PLAN

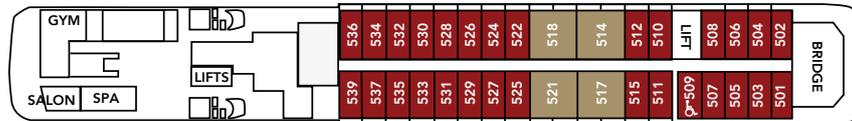
DECK 7



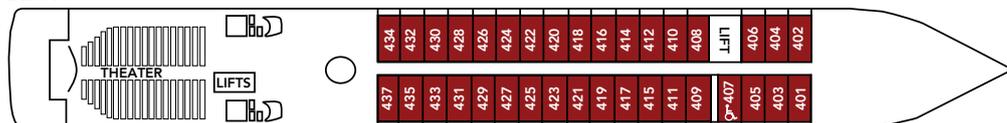
DECK 6



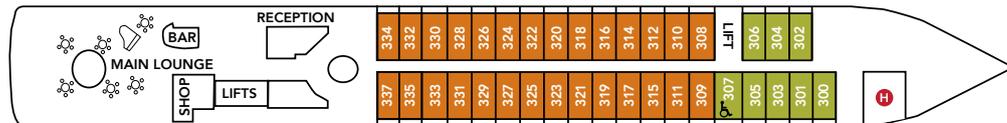
DECK 5



DECK 4



DECK 3



DECK 2



- SUPERIOR STATEROOM
- DELUXE STATEROOM
- PRESTIGE STATEROOM
- DELUXE SUITE
- PRESTIGE SUITE
- OWNER'S SUITE



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All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request. Ports subject to change.
Cover image: Kronotsky Volcano

