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ODYSSEY IN THE HEART OF JAPAN'S SUBTROPICAL ISLANDS 2025

PONANT is the first cruise company to take you to the heart of the sublime landscapes of the tropical islands in southern Japan during an expedition cruise. On this 12-day itinerary aboard Le Jacques-Cartier, from the island of Osaka to Ishigaki, you will discover the rich natural heritage, traditional villages and craft of the Okinawa, Yaeyama and Sakishima Islands, in the Ryukyu archipelago. Leaving from Osaka, you will head towards the island of Amami Oshima, between Kyushu and Okinawa. You will fall in love with this island surrounded by stunning coral reefs, punctuated with verdant peaks, covered in primary forest and monumental mangroves, and boasting strong Okinawan influences. After calling in at Iheyajima, the most northern island from Okinawa, Le Jacques Cartier will set sail south. In the Kerema archipelago, in Zamami, you will enjoy the unspoiled beauty of this pristine island, known the world over for the distinctive blue of the surrounding sea, called "Kerama blue". The sea life in the area is also exceptionally rich and sea turtles can often be spotted swimming among the coral. Facing it, fellow island Kumejima invites you to spend a timeless moment. Famous for its 'Eisa', a form of folk dance performed to the rhythm of traditional drums, this multifaceted island will reveal itself through its natural treasures: the mythical Mifuga rock formation or the idyllic beach of Hatenohama, a point of reference for fans of the underwater world. Following a port of call in the picturesque village of Taketomijima, with its traditional Okinawan dwellings and its idyllic sandy expanses, Le Jacques-Cartier will sail south to the island of Iriomotejima. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, this little corner of paradise will enchant you with its authentic and preserved character, with its

wild beaches lying alongside traditional villages surrounded by luxurious tropical forest: jungle, mangrove, rivers, waterfalls. This unique biodiversity is made up of many endemic species. The landscapes on the remote island of Yonagunijima, the easternmost of the Ryukyu Islands, offer a striking contrast: cliffs, windswept meadows, wild horses. The beauty of its sea-beds and their mysterious rocky formations will delight the most experienced divers. After a final port of call in at Keelung to discover Taipei and the lush island of Taiwan, you will finish this unique journey in Ishigaki, your disembarkation port and the largest island in the Yaeyama



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ITINERARY

Day 1 OSAKA

Like its big sister Tokyo, Osaka is the product of ancestral traditions and amazing technological innovations. And despite its size, its location on the Pacific Ocean give it a sense of serenity. The main historic landmark is the 16th century Osaka Castle, which stands proud in the midst of majestic skyscrapers. The lively streets of Dotomburi and the bizarre Shinsekai district attract thousands of locals and visitors. A multitude of restaurants offer menus full of regional specialities: takoyaki, made with octopus, and other succulent dishes such as kushikatsu kebabs.

Day 2 AT SEA

During your journey at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This journey without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, depending on the activities offered, or to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of

the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

Day 3 AMAMIOSHIMA

Situated in the East China Sea in the Nansei archipelago, a group of islands also known as the Ryuku Islands and lying to the south-west of Japan between Kyushu and Taiwan, Amami Oshima (literally "Amami Big Island") is the largest of the Amami Islands. It is influenced by the culture of the great Okinawa archipelago. Amami Oshima is a world apart, with wild and pristine nature in which you will experience the tranquillity of the place. The old-growth forest covers 95% of the island's surface and can be discovered along hiking trails. Its 700,000 m² of mangrove, the second largest in Japan, are breathtaking.

Day 4 IHEYAJIMA

The northernmost island of the prefecture of Okinawa, Iheyajima is a small territory that will take you back in time. At the heart of preserved natural landscapes that are a reminder of the Okinawa of the past, the inhabitants perpetuate traditional culture, particularly by maintaining ancient rites and ceremonies in honour of the divinities of the Ryukyu Kingdom. The island is home to several historic sites, such as the tomb of the ancestors of King Sho Hashi, the unifier of Okinawa and founder of the

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Ryukyu Kingdom, which was independent from Japan until the end of the 19th century. In this natural setting, whose emblematic Nento-Hiramatsu pine tree is a national monument, perhaps you will enjoy the privilege of seeing a traditional "Eisa" drum performance.

Day 5 ZAMAMI

Zamami is an island in the Kerama archipelago, 40 km (25 miles) west of Okinawa Island in the China Sea. Visitors to this 16 km² (6 mi²) quasi-uninhabited isle are enchanted by the many untouched natural treasures they find here. You will discover a tranquil island with lush vegetation, lined with stunning white-sand bays bathing in the glimmering 'Kerama blue' waters around the archipelago. Zamami is also renowned for the beauty of its coral reefs, where multicoloured fish engage in an endless mesmerising ballet. The observation deck on Mount Takatsuki reveals stunning views of the Kerama Islands, granted national park status in 2014. With subtle shifting shades of azure above and all around, this island truly is paradise.

Day 6 KUMEJIMA

Located 90 km (56 miles) to the south-west of Okinawa Honto, Kumejima is a multifaceted island home to natural treasures. Hatenuhama, a stunning 7 km-long (4.3 miles) fine-sand

beach, promises wonderful carefree moments discovering the exceptional underwater worlds off the coast of Kumejima. Mifuga, a rock formation on the north coast of the island with a hole right through its middle, is a great example of the erosion along the coast. The eastern peninsula offers another geological feature, visible at low tide: 1,000 flat rocks each around one metre (3.2 feet) in diameter, formed by the contraction of lava from a nearby eruption a million years ago. They create a rocky plateau resembling a traditional Japanese tatami, hence the name Tatami-ishi.

Day 7 MIYAKOJIMA

Situated between the East China Sea and the Philippine Sea, Miyakojima is the main island of the Miyako Islands, in the Sakishima archipelago. The fourth largest island in the Okinawa prefecture, it is known for its many sugar cane plantations and some of Japan's most beautiful beaches. Myriad multicoloured fish await you during unforgettable swims and snorkelling.

Day 8 TAKETOMIJIMA

Off the coast of the Okinawa Prefecture, Taketomi Island (Taketomijima) is fascinating for its traditional character, preserved in a beautiful, lush setting. Like its big sisters, Ishigaki and Kuroshima, this island in the Yaeyama archipelago is the ideal destination for an immersion in typical landscapes and the

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insular way of life of the former Ryukyu Kingdom. Here, time seems to have stood still. There are very few cars about; bicycles and carriages drawn by imposing oxen remain the only means of transport. This is an ideal opportunity to wander through the picturesque streets lined with traditional dwellings with red-tiled roofs and lion-shaped shisa statues placed in front of the vast majority of houses to keep evil spirits at bay.

Day 9 IRIOMOTEJIMA

Nestled in the very heart of the Yaeyama archipelago, Iriomote Island conjures visions of a hidden paradise. With 90% of the island covered by thick jungle, crossed by rivers and impressive mangrove forests, Iriomote is an ideal destination for fans of large preserved spaces. With exceptional fauna and flora, this lush jewel is home to many endemic species: you may be lucky enough to get to glimpse an Iriomote cat or a crested serpent eagle. During this port of call, you will also have the possibility of admiring the captivating underwater world during a free diving session or contemplating this lush jungle close up on a cruise along the calm waters of the island's rivers.

Day 10 YONAGUNIJIMA

The geographic situation of the island of Yonagunijima, the most remote and western in the Japanese archipelago of Okinawa, makes it a wild and preserved territory. Between cliffs plunging

into the sea and white sandy beaches, lush meadows and palettes of blue, we can admire the last sunset every day here in the Land of the Rising Sun. The island is also renowned for the Yonaguni horses, a small breed standing only a metre high, which graze freely here. If you dive, Yonagunijima will delight you with its sea beds which are as exceptional as they are mysterious.

Day 11 KEELUNG (CHILUNG)

On the north-east tip of Taiwan, the harbour city of Keelung stands on one of the most beautiful coasts on the island. Nearby is the spectacular natural park of Yehliu, famed for its striking rock formations. It's easy to tour the city's historical sites on trails that cross the lush green hills surrounding the harbour from Chung Cheng Park to Fort Ershawan, you can enjoy superb views of Keelung and the coastline. But the main attraction is the Miaokou night market, where you can taste some typically Taiwanese culinary delights.

Day 12 ISHIGAKI

Located to the south of the main island of the Yaeyama archipelago, Ishigaki boasts all the aspects of an authentic piece of paradise. You have guessed it, you do not come here for its skyscrapers but for its pure emerald waters and idyllic beaches. The waters off Shiraho, on the island's south-west

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coast, have one of the largest areas of blue coral in the world.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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YOUR SHIP: LE JACQUES CARTIER

YOUR SHIP: Le Jacques Cartier

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Featuring innovative and environmentally-friendly equipment, elegantly designed staterooms, spacious suites with large windows, and lounge areas that open onto the outside, this new limited-capacity yacht boasting just 92 staterooms and suites will offer you a truly unique cruising experience. Le Jacques Cartier will embody refinement, intimacy and comfort. Aboard this ship that flies the French flag, you will experience the incomparable pleasure of an intimate cruise, with the possibility of exploring an ever-increasing range of destinations in an ethnic-chic ambiance with luxury service. Experience a luxurious setting where the accent is on authenticity and passion for travel. RESTAURANTS As it is an essential part of French culture, gastronomy will naturally have pride of place aboard this new ship. To the back of Deck 4, you will find a 260 m² panoramic restaurant which can accommodate all of our passengers in a single sitting. Designed differently to that on our other ships, this dining area, which opens onto the outside, will have a buffet of salads, desserts and cheeses at your disposal. Our discreet and attentive crew will provide table service for hot meals. In a relaxed atmosphere, an outdoor grill on Deck 3 will serve grilled meats with a variety of salads and desserts. PUBLIC AREAS Le

Jacques Cartier has many common areas that are designed and equipped to meet all of your needs while preserving the intimacy of each passenger. A 140 m² reception area includes: A reception/concierge desk, An excursions desk, The ship's administrative services, The sales office, manned by our Guest Relations Officer, Our 50 m² boutique which sells clothing, jewellery, beauty products, postcards and various accessories, Toilets accessible to passengers with reduced mobility. A new hydraulic platform with adjustable height provides: Easier boarding than on any other cruise ship, Easier Zodiac embarkation and disembarkation for expeditions, Easier access to the sea for swimming and practising various water sports such as kayaking or paddle-boarding. A pool deck offering: A pool with a panoramic view, equipped with a counter-current swimming system, A pleasant solarium, An outdoor bar and lounge with armchairs and sofas. A 200 m² main lounge which can accommodate all of our passengers to share convivial moments and to host activities organised during the day or evening. Lastly, a theatre that seats 188, equipped with: The latest sound and lighting technology, A LED wall as the stage backdrop, for the projection of high-resolution images and videos. Please click the following links to read more about Ponant and the other Ponant

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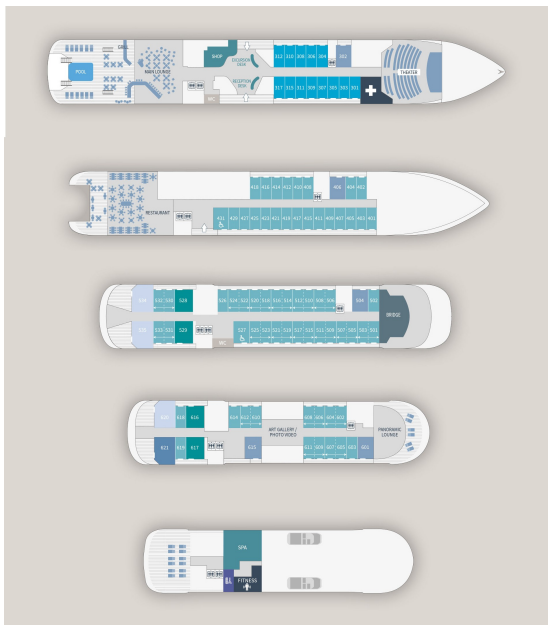
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