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SEABIRDS & CETACEANS OF AUSTRALASIA: AN EPIC EAST COAST PELAGIC

Join expedition cruise pioneers Heritage Expeditions on the ultimate voyage of discovery as we sail remote, uncharted waters in the search for rare and elusive pelagic seabirds and cetaceans from Port Vila to Hobart. Specially designed with birders, whale, dolphin and cruise enthusiasts and adventurers in mind this pelagic voyage offers a rare opportunity to sample an extraordinary cross section of the southwestern Pacific and contribute to citizen science. Our 9-day sea journey begins in Port Vila, Vanuatu, from where we will sail immediately offshore, crossing to the north of New Caledonia, past the super remote Chesterfield Reefs and from there towards Australian waters and southbound, far offshore, all the way to Hobart, Tasmania. In areas with promising oceanographic features, or that we feel may be home to particularly desirable species, we will pause along our journey to try and obtain better observations of some of the seabirds which frequent these remote sections of ocean. As we transit far offshore through the deep waters of the Coral Sea south to the edge of the Southern Ocean we will be able to witness an astounding diversity of sea birds and, hopefully, cetaceans as well. Much of our journey will be through waters poorly, or never before surveyed, for seabirds and marine mammals so we expect to make some intriguing discoveries for citizen science. By logging and sharing our sightings we will be able to provide a better understanding of the incredible wildlife that is out there at this time of year. With much of the voyage being in rarely explored Australian waters this expedition is a must-do for any Australian birders and naturalists wishing to visit some of the most far-flung and rarely visited areas of Australia. With such a diversity of species possible, including

many rarely seen ones, it is sure to have wider appeal among anyone with an interest in pelagic birding or cetacean watching. Join us as we chart new waters on an authentic expedition cruise and experience the thrill of sailing through unknown waters observing and recording poorly known birds and



marine mammals.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Port Vila, Vanuatu



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Join Heritage Adventurer this afternoon at Vanuatu's busy capital city of Port Vila where contemporary hotels, restaurants and markets abound. The captain and expedition team will be waiting to greet you on arrival and show you to your cabin. You will have time to settle in and familiarise yourself with the ship; we will also take the opportunity to introduce you to your expedition team and our voyage plans. You are invited to join the expedition team in the Observation Lounge and up on the Observation Deck as we set sail.

Days 2 to 8: At Sea

We have 7 days at sea to explore; in the more tropical waters we will look for the ephemeral feeding flocks which are typically dominated by species like Brown and Black Noddy, White and Sooty Tern, Red-footed, Masked and Brown Booby and Wedge-tailed Shearwater. These feeding frenzies are often attended by marauding Jaegers/Arctic Skua and Frigatebirds. However, a big focus will be on seeking out the low-density petrels that may or may not be associating with these flocks. With the caveat that most of these waters are unstudied, some potential species that we know to be in this general area at this time of the year include a truly heart-pumping selection of names: Vanuatu Petrel, Magnificent Petrel, Polynesian Storm-Petrel and New Caledonian Storm Petrel. The latter was

only very recently recognised as a species and was discovered and named on board a previous pioneering Heritage Expeditions voyage. Indeed, we should be sailing through more or less the entirety of that species' currently known range and it will be very interesting to record how many we can find and where they are. If we are lucky, we may even spot another Heritage Expeditions discovery the Heritage Lava Petrel. As we head south into subtropical seas, the numbers and variety of the much-desired Gadfly Petrels will surely increase and the possibilities among these deep-water specialists include such list birds as Kermadec, Providence, Mottled, White-necked, Black-winged, Gould's, Collared, Gray-faced, Soft-plumaged, White-headed and Tahiti Petrel are all out there, to name only the most likely ones. Days filled with seeking out these species are as exciting as it gets for a seabirder. And if we want to dream big there are surely even rarer prizes lurking out there for those looking for Australian rarities - in such infrequently visited and far flung waters anything seems possible. As we sail south towards our final destination of Tasmania, the water temperature decreases and the seabird diversity increases. Our first albatross will make an appearance in the final days and at least 8 species are possible at this time of year in the waters we are sailing. These may include the mighty Northern and Southern Royals, and Gibson's and Snowy Wandering Albatrosses. Many other new species will also start appearing including the Giant Petrels and Cape and White-chinned Petrel along with various potential species of Prion. It is even harder to anticipate what cetaceans we may encounter, but we can expect to see a good variety of dolphin species as more than a dozen are theoretically possible along the route we travel. We should also have reasonably good opportunities for at least fleeting encounters with some of the very poorly-known Beaked Whale species, along with some of



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the larger whales, especially Sperm Whale.

Day 9: Hobart, Australia

Early this morning we will arrive in Hobart, capital of Australia's Island state of Tasmania and bustling port town rich in culture and colonial history with a renowned foodie scene all wrapped in stunning waterfront surrounds. After a final breakfast we bid farewell to our fellow voyagers and take a complimentary coach transfer to Hobart International Airport. In case of unexpected delays due to weather and/or port operations we ask you not to book any onward travel until after midday. Note: During our voyage, circumstances may make it necessary or desirable to deviate from the proposed itinerary. This can include poor weather and opportunities for making unplanned excursions. Your Expedition Leader will keep you fully informed.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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YOUR SHIP: HERITAGE ADVENTURER

YOUR SHIP: Heritage Adventurer

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Heritage Adventurer is a true pioneering expedition vessel of exceptional pedigree. Often referred to as the 'Grande Dame of Polar Exploration' due to her celebrated history and refined design, she was purpose-built for adventure in 1991 at Finland's Rauma shipyard and specifically designed for Polar exploration. Setting a peerless standard in authentic expedition travel, Heritage Adventurer (formerly known as MS Hanseatic) combines the highest passenger ship ice-class rating (1A Super) with an impressive history of Polar exploration. Having held records for the most northern and southern Arctic and Antarctic navigations, and for traversing both the Northwest and Northeast Passages, makes Heritage Adventurer perfect for pioneering experiential expedition travel. Originally designed to accommodate 184 guests, Heritage Adventurer now welcomes just 140 expeditioners ensuring spacious, stylish and comfortable voyages, while a fleet of 14 Zodiacs ensures all guests are able to maximise their expedition adventure. Heritage Adventurer proudly continues our traditions of exceptional, personalised expedition experiences as Heritage Expeditions flagship. Observation Lounge - One of the most celebrated and best-known features of Heritage Adventurer is the awe-inducing

Observation Lounge, Library and Bar. Located on Deck 7 and perched directly above the Bridge, enjoy sweeping 270-degree views through floor to ceiling windows, perfect for wildlife spotting and quick access to the outer deck. Bring your binoculars to spot wildlife, observe the ever-changing landscape, write in your journal or relax with a book. Observation Deck - Enjoy 360-degree views from the highest point on the ship. The Observation Deck sits above the Observation Lounge and provides exceptional outside viewing options. Stretching the full width of the vessel, this is the perfect spot to take in the surrounding land and seascapes. Perfect on a sunny day, recline in the comfortable sun loungers protected from the wind and elements and watch your voyage unfold. The Bridge - No expedition is complete without visiting Heritage Adventurer's busy nerve centre. Located on Deck 6, Heritage Expeditions' Open Bridge Policy means you are welcome to observe the Captain and crew at work while enjoying some of the ship's best views. It's a fascinating place to learn about navigation and vessel operations, however please note the Bridge will be closed when departing or arriving at port. Dining Room - Indulge in fine international cuisine from our talented chefs in the lavish surrounds of our Dining Room on Deck 4. Sensational 270-degree views provide a stunning backdrop to meals here along with an international wine list featuring many outstanding regional wines. With relaxed seating arrangements, all guests can enjoy dining in a single sitting from hearty breakfasts setting you up for the day's adventure to sumptuous lunches and multi-course evening dining. Bistro - Simple fast and delicious meals and snacks are on offer in our relaxed

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Bistro on Deck 6. Perfect for early risers to enjoy tea, coffee and light breakfast options the Bistro provides great views and opens directly onto a covered and heated teak-deck outdoor dining area. The Bar and Lounge - The social hub of Heritage Adventurer, the Bar and Lounge on Deck 5 features seating for all guests. Enjoy a beverage at the bar, sink into an armchair, relax on one of the many spacious loungers and watch the world go by through the panoramic windows or make new friends at the communal seating. This multi-tasking space also doubles as the location of daily briefings and evening recaps with the expedition team. The Gym - Featuring spectacular ocean views, the well-equipped gym is adjacent to the pool, hot tub and sauna in Deck 7's wellbeing zone. Maintain your routine with an elliptical cross trainer, treadmill, rowing machine, stationary bikes, TRX as well as free weights, yoga mats and fitness balls. Towels are provided with change room and shower amenities nearby. Sauna and Steam Room - True to her Nordic origins, Heritage Adventurer features a dry-heat Finnish sauna and European steam room on Deck 7. Perfect for warming up post Polar plunge or unwinding after a day's adventures, the sauna and steam room include change room facilities, showers and towels. Swimming Pool and Hot Tub - Surrounded by relaxed teak seating including sun loungers, the open-air saltwater pool can be heated or chilled. Encased in glass the hot tub ensures all-weather use, perfect for those who like to relax with a view following a day of exploring. Lectures and Presentations - Enjoy informative and entertaining lectures on history, biology, wildlife, and ecology in the comfort of the Presentation Theatre. With state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment, our world-renowned expedition team will bring your adventure to life through interactive presentations and



discussions.



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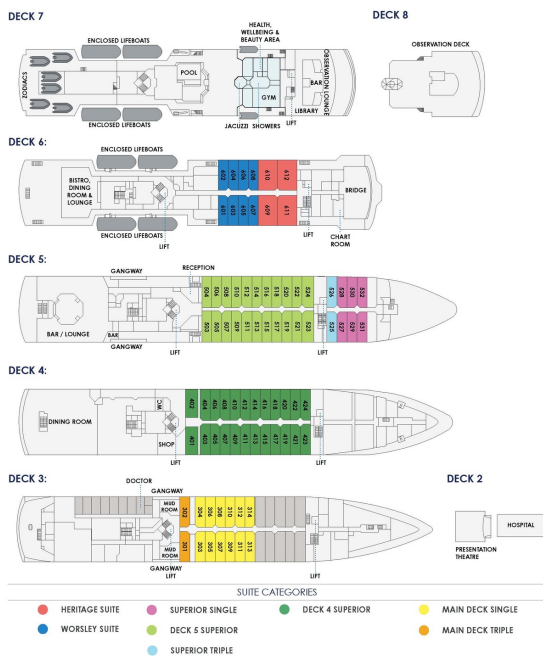
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15-Nov-2024 to 23-Nov-2024

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