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CRUISING THE DALMATIAN COAST AND THE IONIAN SEA: ATHENS TO VENICE – WITH SMITHSONIAN JOURNEYS

In alliance with Smithsonian Journeys. This cruise is part of a collection of PONANT voyages that are specially-tailored for English-speaking travelers who want to engage with the world. In addition to the usual elements of the PONANT experience, the listed price for these voyages includes transfers to and from the ship, talks and discussions aboard ship by world class experts, and a shore excursion or activity in each port of call that encourages guests to embrace the sights, sounds, tastes, and smells of the local environment and culture. The eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea - the Dalmatian Coast - is rich in the culture and art of ancient, medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque worlds and home to some of the most charming and welcoming towns and villages to be found anywhere. Your voyage begins in Venice, the city of canals, from where you will sail the Adriatic Sea south towards the Dalmatian Coast. Call first on the island of Hvar and tour the island's charming principal town. Or you may choose to visit a lavender farm in the countryside and enjoy some of the most beautiful views available along the Croatian coast. The port of Ploče serves as your gateway to the Bosnian city of Mostar, which under the Ottoman Turks became a thriving administrative and cultural center. Severely damaged in the military conflict of the 1990s, the town was declared a World Heritage site and now showcases what the restoration work of UNESCO can accomplish. Set on a rocky peninsula jutting into the Adriatic Sea, Dubrovnik, despite a devastating earthquake in 1667 and the ravages of many wars, is one of Europe's best-preserved medieval cities and a designated UNESCO World Heritage site. Discover Dubrovnik's old city on a guided tour or visit the surrounding countryside before enjoying time at leisure.



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to explore this marvelous city on your own in the evening. Be on deck as Le Bougainville sails into the deep, fjord-like Bay of Kotor to reach the port town of the same name, also a UNESCO World Heritage site, located at the head of the bay beneath towering mountains. This delightful town is the pride of Montenegro, and you will have a full day to explore its richly varied history. Continue down the coast to the Albanian port of Sarande, from which you may travel to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Butrint, whose ruins span 2,500 years and include the remains of a Greek acropolis, Roman theater, and 19th-century fortress. After cruising along the shores of the Ionian Sea, your next call is at the small port town of Itea. You may choose to visit Delphi, home of the oracle of Apollo, whose massive ruins dominate an entire hillside. Or travel to St. Lucas Monastery, which, like Delphi, is a UNESCO World Heritage site -- one of the most important monuments of Middle Byzantine art and architecture in the world. This evening, transit the Corinth Canal, a stunning example of maritime engineering prowess first used in 1893. Your journey comes to an end as your ship sails



into Athens.

ITINERARY

Day 1 VENICE

Proud and eternal, Venice has reigned on its lagoon ever since the 6th century. You may think you know this city before even setting foot here. You will inevitably fall in love with the charm of the innumerable treasures of the Serenissima: Saint Mark's square, the basilica, Doges palace, the Grand Canal and the gondolas. Yet, secret Venice is also waiting for you to explore its little interlacing streets and canals, to ramble through its squares and to push open the doors of its churches. The city's extraordinary heritage shouldn't stop you from enjoying a glass of Spritz and a few tramezzini.

Day 2 HVAR



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Off the coast of Split, Hvar will surprise you by its traditions that have not changed since Antiquity. The country's oldest town, Stari Grad, is here on this Dalmatian Island. The town nestles by a cove on the north-west coast, surrounded by dry stone wall structures on the Stari Grad plains. These have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site because they were built in the time of the Ancient Greeks. From these parcels of land come wines and olive oil manufactured manually. In the upper part of town, it is possible to discover hams and cheeses made by local producers.

Day 3 PLOCE

Ploče is a port that shares with nearby Makarska a reputation for great beaches, upscale seafront promenades, and a vibrant nightlife. Ploče's Rupe Ethnographic Museum and Makarska's intriguing Shell Museum are both worth a visit. Ploče also serves as a gateway to the Bosnian city of Mostar, which under the Ottoman Turks became a thriving administrative and cultural center. Severely damaged in the military conflict of the 1990s, the town was declared a World Heritage site and now showcases the graceful Stari Most ("Old Bridge"), originally built in 1566, and the early 17th-century Turkish Tabacica Mosque, both carefully restored with help from UNESCO.

Day 4 DUBROVNIK

Emblem of the Dalmatian coast, Dubrovnik is magnificently positioned on a rocky spur. History is sovereign here, in this ancient city, now a listed UNESCO World Heritage site. You will perhaps be surprised by the proportions of La Placa, the central drag through the city. The sheer width of it can be explained by the fact that it straddles a former lagoon. The elegant houses along La Placa are built in the legendary travertine stone. At Pile gate, you will be greeted by the statue of the patron saint of

Dubrovnik, and you can admire the coastline as you walk along the ramparts. But what's inside Fort Saint John, adjoining the outer walls? A maritime museum and an aquarium featuring rare fish from the Adriatic.

Day 5 KOTOR

Situated in one of Montenegro's most beautiful bays, the medieval city of Kotor is a small town full of charm, truly imbued with the traditions and stories of another time. Built between the 12th and 14th centuries, this village, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, has preserved many historical monuments from this epoch. During your stop, be sure to admire the impressive castle that dominates the town, and let yourself fall under the charm of its maze of small streets and intimate squares on which folk festivals featuring magnificent colourful costumes are often organised.

Day 6 SARANDA

An historical harbour town on the south-west coast of Albania, Saranda is built on a lush green spur. Its streets lined with palms and maritime pines border the beaches of the Ionian sea at the mouth of Corfu Strait. This very ancient town has archaeological ruins dating from Antiquity, which you can visit as you walk along the waterfront.

Day 7 ITEA & CROSSING THE CORINTH CANAL

Tucked away in the Gulf of Corinth, this little port is situated in continental Greece, north-west of Athens. Take an easy stroll along the old cobblestone quays, while gazing at the summits encircling the Bay of Itea. We wouldn't be surprised if you are tempted by a visit to the Delphi Sanctuary. The sanctuary is located on a plateau on the slope of Mount Parnassus, just ten kilometres from Itea. A listed UNESCO World Heritage site, this



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is a once-in-a-lifetime experience whose ancient ruins are surrounded by steep mountains. The Corinth Canal cuts through the Isthmus of Corinth, turning the Peloponnese into an island as it separates the region from the Greek mainland. Inaugurated in 1893, the canal is a little over six kilometres long and enables merchant vessels and passenger to avoid a long 400-km detour around the peninsula. The two sides of the canal reach a height of approximately fifty metres. From the exterior decks, don't miss this unique opportunity to watch the ship as it navigates along the narrow strip of water encased between tall, ochre cliffs. What an experience!

Day 8 ATHENS

The Greek capital city is located on the edge of the Saronic gulf, in the east of the country. It bears a plural name in reference to the first villages that surround the Acropolis. You will be enchanted by the rocky plateau presided by its monuments listed as UNESCO World Heritage. In the city below, you can visit some of the liveliest districts in Athens: Plaka, with its maze of colourful streets, and where, in the evenings the drifting aroma of moussaka and garlic prawns will tickle your taste buds. The National Archaeological museum and the Cycladic Art Museum are also some of the city's key attractions and allow visitors to discover Athens' cultural past.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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YOUR SHIP: L'AUSTRAL

YOUR SHIP: **L'Austral**

VESSEL TYPE:

142 metres. Passenger Capacity:

264 (200 in Antarctica). Built:

LENGTH: **2011**

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Luxury Expedition / Cruise Ship This superb mega-yacht with 132 cabins is the result of the expertise of the Italian Fincantieri shipyard and French sophistication, as interpreted by designer Jean-Philippe Nuel. L'Austral has a unique atmosphere, a subtle blend of luxury, intimacy and well-being. A sleek silhouette softened by elegantly smooth contours and large, arched windows opening up to the sea and the light: so many features come together to give L'Austral her distinctive shape. Precious materials, discreet elegance and a perfect balance between chic and casual, combine to make you feel as if you are on your own private yacht. A design blending tradition and innovation, where a nautical mood has been subtly recreated. Precious materials in smoothing neutral tones are brought to life with splashes of cheerful reds. So many personal touches create the spirit of a "private yacht". Suites and staterooms You can expect magnificent ocean views as 124 staterooms and suites have balconies. Individually-controlled airconditioning · Cabin layout: kingsize bed, or twin beds, communicating cabins available (children welcome) · Minibar · Flat screen satellite TV · iPod™

players · Desk with stationery · Electronic safe · French bath products · Dressing table and hairdryer · Bath robes · Satellite direct line telephone · 110/220 volts · 24hr room service · WiFi · Balcony Cuisine Loyal to the great French tradition, the haute cuisine on board is worthy of the finest restaurants, where discreet, attentive service is the hallmark. Choose from two restaurants for breakfasts, lunch and dinner. The Gastronomic Restaurant is situated on Le Liberte Deck and serves you French and international cuisine accompanied by fine wine. On the Grill Restaurant, you have the opportunity to eat outside and enjoy buffet lunch and themed dinner. Life On Board Whether you want to join other guests in the theatre or games area (Wii™ consoles, etc), or relax on your own in a quiet corner of the library, L'Austral has been designed to meet the needs of every guest. Everything has been done to preserve the independence of each guest to suit their personal tastes: lounges for lectures and shows, a spa in partnership with Sothys™, but also more intimate spaces such as the library and internet corner. Comfortable cabins, nearly all with private balcony, are available for families either as triples or as communicating cabins. There is also a games area with Wii™ consoles, children's menus, and a baby-sitting service. Just as if you were on a private yacht, your time is your own to do as you please. Fitted with the latest equipment (Kinesis Wall, running machine) and in partnership with the famous Sothys™ brand, the Beauty Centre on L'Austral welcomes you for some unforgettable moments of relaxation and pampering (beauty treatments, hairdresser). Wheelchairs 3 specially adapted wheelchair cabins (Deck 3 = Superior cabin no. 307, no balcony, Deck 4 = Prestige Cabin no. 407 - with



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balcony and Deck 5 = Prestige Cabin no 509, with balcony) and lifts to all decks/areas. Details Please click the following links to read more about Ponant and the other Ponant

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INSIDE YOUR SHIP

Deluxe Stateroom Deluxe Suite

Prestige Deck 4 Prestige Deck 5

Prestige Deck 5 Suite Prestige Deck 6

Prestige Deck 6 Suite Superior Stateroom



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PRICING

18-Jun-2026 to 25-Jun-2026

| | |
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| Prestige Deck 5 | £5595 GBP pp |
| Prestige Deck 4 | £5345 GBP pp |
| Prestige Deck 6 Suite | £11435 GBP pp |
| Prestige Deck 5 Suite | £10885 GBP pp |
| Prestige Deck 6 | £5899 GBP pp |
| Superior Stateroom | £4489 GBP pp |
| Deluxe Suite | £8115 GBP pp |
| Deluxe Stateroom | £4845 GBP pp |

ADDITIONAL CHARGES: **Port Taxes & Fees 520 AUD pp**



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