



## Melanesia Expedition Cruise

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### General

##### **Does Coral Princess Cruises offer transfers?**

Answer: Pre and Post cruise transfers are not included in the price of your Melanesia cruise. There are however a number of options available for transportation to and from the Wharf.

##### **How do I get from the airport/hotel to the ship and how much will it cost?**

Answer: Most hotels/resorts offer transfers from airport to hotel/resort and hotel/resort to the Wharf. Please note that prices are subject to change. Please contact Coral Princess Cruises for further information.

#### Meals

##### **Are all meals provided onboard and what style of dining is available?**

Answer: Throughout your Coral Princess expedition cruise you will savour three delicious, healthy meals per day as well as tempting morning and afternoon teas. Onboard Oceanic Discoverer, breakfast and lunch are buffet style and dinner is table d'hote. Post mix soft drinks are included in the price of the cruise and a complimentary tea and coffee station is open 24 hours. A selection of Australian and New Zealand wines, beers and spirits are available at additional expense.

\*The galley will attempt to meet special dietary requirements, however a minimum of three weeks notice must be provided prior to departure to allow us to provide this service.

#### Onboard Accommodations

##### **What are the facilities in your stateroom?**

Answer: All staterooms are air-conditioned and equipped with en suite, wardrobe, suitcase cupboard and windows or portholes for expansive ocean views (Main Deck staterooms feature portholes), settee (except Promenade B Staterooms) and desk. Bathrooms feature a hairdryer, shower, toilet and power point (240 volt for Australian plugs.) There is a shaving outlet in each bathroom.

##### **What stateroom categories are available?**

Answer: Onboard Oceanic Discoverer, there are five categories of accommodation including; Main Deck B and Main Deck A Staterooms, Promenade Deck B and Promenade Deck A Staterooms, and Bridge Deck Staterooms.

##### **Can we 'push' two twin beds together to make a double?**

Answer: Onboard Oceanic Discoverer, we are able to change bedding configuration from Twin Beds to Junior King Beds or v.v. in Main Deck A and B, Promenade Deck A and Bridge Deck Staterooms.

#### **What size are the beds in a double stateroom?**

Answer: Oceanic Discoverer has Junior King Beds in Promenade Deck B Staterooms, and Twin Beds or Junior King Beds in all other categories.

### **Children**

#### **Do you cater for children?**

Answer: When joining a Coral Princess Cruises Melanesian expedition, children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Coral Princess Cruises does not provide services of entertainment, supervision or care of children. Melanesian itineraries are quite adventurous and we therefore recommend children aged above 12 years of age will enjoy the challenge and experience the most.

#### **Can we put two adults and two children in one room?**

Answer: Should a family of four guests be travelling together, two separate rooms will be required, two adults in one room and the two children in another. Please ask for the same grades of accommodation to ensure that rooms are located together on the same deck.

#### **Can we put two adults and one child in one room?**

Answer: Yes you can. Onboard Oceanic Discoverer, the third person (child only) will be accommodated on the settee as we do not have Pullman bunks in any staterooms. This is applicable in a Main Deck A or Main Deck B stateroom only.

### **Inclusions**

#### **What extras will we be paying for onboard?**

Answer: During your Melanesian cruise you will find that most activities are included within the price of your cruise. Items incurring additional expense include; all bar and shop charges (with the exception of post mix soft drinks which are included), ship to shore phone/fax calls, laundry facilities, costs associated with SCUBA diving and internet access.

#### **Do we need to bring our own snorkelling or dive equipment?**

Answer: If you wish, you may bring your own equipment with you, however included in the cost of your cruise is the use of full snorkelling and dive equipment. Please remember if you are a certified diver to bring your certification card and logbook with you. Snorkelling is free of charge. An introductory SCUBA experience is complimentary for first time divers. Additional expense is associated with SCUBA Diving.

#### **Do we need to pre book activities or dives prior to boarding?**

Answer: All activities while on your cruise can be arranged on board for your convenience.

### **Diving**

### **How many dive opportunities do we get?**

Answer: There will be approximately seven opportunities to dive on the Melanesian expedition. This is dependent on the number of divers and weather conditions etc.

### **What is the cost for SCUBA diving?**

Answer: A free introductory SCUBA experience is offered for first time Divers. First and second dives for uncertified divers are at a cost of AUD\$95.00 per dive, third and subsequent dives are at a cost of AUD\$80.00 per dive. The cost of diving for Certified Divers who require all equipment is AUD\$80.00 per dive and the cost of dives for Certified Divers who require weight belt & tank only is AUD\$70.00 per dive

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Do we need a visa for Melanesia?**

Answer: A visa is required for Australian/New Zealand passport holders for the Papua New Guinea section of the cruise. For cruises that depart from Cairns, it is possible to obtain your Papua New Guinea visa on Oceanic Discoverer's arrival into Papua New Guinea and the fee will be added to your onboard account. For cruises that depart from a Papua New Guinea Port it is advisable to obtain your visa in sufficient time prior to departure from Australia, the cost is currently 100 PNG Kina. For non-Australian citizens it is advisable to obtain your visa for Papua New Guinea in sufficient time prior to departure from your home port. Please contact your respective embassies for Papua New Guinea visa information. A visa is not required for guests travelling to the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu or New Caledonia. Please check with the appropriate consulate or your travel agent prior to travelling for updated information.

### **What do we pack?**

Answer: There is no formal dress code in place during your cruise; however we recommend smart-casual attire for the evenings on board and comfortable active wear during your days of exploration. We recommend that you bring shorts, swimwear, T-shirts, collared and long sleeve shirts to avoid sunburn and a light jacket or windcheater and long pants for cooler evenings whilst at sea. A good pair of hiking boots is recommended, along with some shoes that you don't mind getting wet, such as river walkers or aqua soles. Don't forget to bring a sun hat, sunglasses, sun block and all necessary toiletries.

### **What are river walkers/aqua soles and do we need to wear them?**

Answer: River walkers/aqua soles or reef shoes are thick-soled mesh socks for wet landings (a wet landing is when you arrive to the shore by the Xplorer/Zodiac and may get your feet wet). Sturdy rubber sandals which are strapped around your ankles and toes are also suitable for this purpose.

### **Do you supply beach towels?**

Answer: Yes, towels are provided as there are many opportunities for swimming, snorkelling, SCUBA diving or relaxing in the spa during the cruise.

### **Are there laundry facilities onboard?**

Answer: There is a limited laundry service onboard the vessels, although drip dry, wash and wear clothing is recommended. A small fee applies for the laundering of garments.

#### **Do we need spending money onboard?**

Answer: All purchases onboard will be charged to your room account, which must be settled with the purser prior to disembarking. Payment of your onboard account may be made by Cash, Credit Card or Australian Dollars Travellers Cheque.

#### **Will my mobile telephone work? What communications are available?**

Answer: Given the remote nature of the cruise, mobile telephone service will not be available. Oceanic Discoverer is equipped with a new state-of-the-art onboard communications system, making it easy to remain in contact with your friends and relatives at home during your cruise. Phone calls home from the ship are cost effective, and guests also have the opportunity to access high quality wireless internet.

Guests are able to purchase a pre-paid internet card aboard the ship and then connect to the internet through either a laptop computer, a PDA or the ship's onboard computer. In addition, to help you keep in touch with news from home and abroad during your cruise, we subscribe to a daily news service and copies of this publication are made available to guests each day.

Should your family need to contact you during your cruise our Helpful Hints booklet supplied in your documentation will provide direct dialing contact telephone number for Oceanic Discoverer.

#### **Where does the ship depart from?**

Answer: In Rabaul Oceanic Discoverer departs from the Rabaul Wharf. Oceanic Discoverer departs Noumea from the Rue de Ferry Wharf however ports are subject to change. Notification will be provided of the exact detail on guest documentation.

#### **What Time Can We Board The Vessel?**

Answer: For cruises that depart in Noumea boarding commences at 0900 for a 1000 departure, in Alotau board at 1400 for a 1500 departure and from Cairns board at 1200 for a 1330 departure.

#### **Do we need to take out Travel Insurance?**

Answer: It is highly recommended that all passengers purchase appropriate travel insurance prior to departure. In addition to cancellation, curtailment and baggage protection please ensure that your policy provides coverage for remote area evacuation.

#### **What if we have a special occasion whilst onboard?**

Answer: Should you be celebrating a birthday, wedding anniversary or any other special occasion during your cruise please let us know at the time of booking.

#### **Do you have any packages deals?**

Answer: For our current Melanesian special deals please contact us on [reservations@coralprincess.com.au](mailto:reservations@coralprincess.com.au)

#### **What will the weather be like on the cruise?**

Answer: Our expeditions are scheduled to operate when temperatures will be most pleasant. The average daily temperature during our cruises is approximately 27-35 Degrees Celsius (81-96 Degrees Fahrenheit). There may be high humidity and some shower activity during certain times of the year.

**Will the weather/seas be rough?**

Answer: Every effort is made to ensure that we travel at times and in areas where it will be most pleasant although this can not always be guaranteed. For the majority of your cruise, we will be cruising close to shore or coastline where waters are generally relatively calm.

**What is the Xplorer and how does it work?**

Answer: Oceanic Discoverer is equipped with an 'Xplorer' - a unique, specially designed aluminium excursion vessel used for the majority of our excursions. This vessel has high horsepower engines and will accommodate all passengers at one time. The 'Xplorer' will be used for landings and for extensive exploration of rivers and tributaries. For your added convenience and comfort, the 'Xplorer' is equipped with an awning and toilet. These excursion vessels sit on a hydraulic lift at the rear of the ship (Main Deck). Following boarding, the unique hydraulic lift gently lowers the excursion vessel into the water, negating the need to clamber aboard unstable tenders. The ship is also equipped with a glass bottom boat and a fleet of inflatable Zodiacs which are also accessible by the hydraulic lift at the rear of the ship.

**What is a wet landing?**

Answer: Many shore excursions and activities aboard the excursion vessels require a 'wet landing', and this is part of our expedition adventure. Your feet may get wet in this instance, therefore we recommend wearing aqua soles/river walkers or reef shoes/sandals for these excursions. Hiking boots or sturdy footwear may be carried separately and worn once dry land has been reached.

**Is there an Elevator or Lift aboard the Ship?**

Answer: Oceanic Discoverer does not have elevators to move between the various decks. The ship does feature internal and external staircases. When booking your cruise, if you do not wish to move around too much between decks we recommend booking your accommodation on the Main Deck as the dining room is located on these decks and they are also the main departure point for all of the activities and shore excursions utilising the 'Xplorer'.