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FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

## And The Tiwi Islands With Ponant

FROM

**\$5,079<sub>pp</sub>**

Package #268

Journey to the outer edge of the Great Barrier Reef, discovering abundant marine life, ancient cultures, seabirds and solitude!

Covering an area of over 2600 km and encompassing over 900 islands, the Great Barrier Reef is the worlds largest living structure and home to an abundant and thriving array of marine and birdlife species. It holds pride of place as one of the 7 natural worlds wonders of the world and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage area.

Coral Expeditions' yacht-like exploration vessel, Coral Discoverer, is offering unique and immersive 7 night adventures to the remote and untouched Northern reef precinct. You'll explore hidden corners, uninhabited sand cays, small islands and pristine reef systems.

Meet charismatic marine species including the sea turtles surfing the ocean currents, find Nemo nestled amongst the coral gardens and marvel at the magnificent humpback whale migration in the deep blue of the Coral Sea. Share the journey with soaring seabirds and swim, dive and snorkel at far-flung Osprey, Escape and Ribbon Reefs. Learn about ancient indigenous culture and Australian heritage at historic Cooktown. Visit a Turtle Rehabilitation Centre and stretch your legs with a hike to the summit of "Cooks Look". Enjoy a sundowner with the sand beneath your toes and the setting sun at deserted Sudbury Cay.

This isn't your standard fly and flop Great Barrier Reef holiday – this cruise will take you away from the tourists and showcase the Great Barrier Reef in all her glory.

The Coral Discoverer takes just 72 guests, all in ocean-view staterooms, so you can be assured of personal attention. You won't get lost in the crowds here! It's easy to get to know fellow guests in a relaxed and casual atmosphere with personal touches that just aren't possible on larger ships.

You will be accompanied by expert guides aboard purpose designed small ships that are custom built for exploration cruising. With refined steering capabilities, shallow draught and nimble explorer tenders Coral Expeditions will bring you closer to remote sites and natural habitats. You will enjoy freshly prepared small-batch cuisine featuring the best local ingredients and relax and enjoy quality local beers and wines. With an intimate atmosphere and renowned warm Australian hospitality, you will quickly feel at home and make new connections with new friends.

## Package Inclusions

**Your cruise price includes:**

- All excursions and sightseeing with our Expedition Team, including a Great Barrier Reef expert Marine Biologist
- Use of Xplorer, Zodiacs and kayaks
- Snorkelling & Scuba equipment
- Daily lectures and briefings
- Your expedition photos captured throughout the voyage
- All meals, chef-prepared on board
- Selected wines, selected beers and house spirits, juices, and soft drinks served with lunch and dinner
- Captain's Welcome and Farewell Events, and Open Bridge Access with the Captain
- 24 hour Coffee and selection of teas
- All entrance fees to National Parks and Ports
- Tips and gratuities

Prices start from NZ\$5079pp share twin, Main Deck Category B.

**Plus! Ultimate Cruising guests also receive chauffeur driven luxury car transfers to/from your nearest airport (within 35km)**

## Your Ship

**Coral Discoverer**

A 35-year-old Australian pioneering expedition cruise company, Coral Expeditions operate and manage a fleet of four small

expedition ships taking guests to some of the most beautiful, yet undiscovered, regions of Australia, Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Islands. Over 8,000 travellers from all over the world travel with Coral Expeditions every year who are attracted by the relaxed small ship atmosphere and itineraries which larger ships cannot replicate. The bespoke operations may sometimes not be commercially justifiable but result in a more personal product that guests appreciate.

At a time when the cruise industry is moving to larger and less personal ships, Coral Expeditions has limited the size of their ships to maximise the expedition experience. Their small-batch cuisine is freshly prepared onboard with a simplistic and generous approach to quality and freshness, accompanied by quality Australian wine. Coral Expeditions operate to high Australian standards of safety with Australian crew wherever they go. They were the first to offer interpretive programs reflective of the destinations they visit and to employ Expedition Leaders, Guest Lecturers, Marine Biologists, and SCUBA Instructors – a tradition that continues today.

## **Cruise Highlights**

### **FITZROY ISLAND & SUDBURY CAY**

At Fitzroy Island enjoy a walk through the Secret Garden rainforest or for the more adventurous, a walk to the de-commissioned lighthouse rewards hikers with panoramic views of Coral Sea, islands and mainland mountain ranges.

Snorkel over the fringing reef, relax on the beach and lend a hand to the volunteers as we learn about the turtles at the Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre, where sick and injured turtles are cared for before being returned to the wild.

Late in the afternoon, we arrive at Sudbury Cay, a tiny sand cay that barely rises above the Coral Sea. Far removed from the bustle of civilisation, we slip off our shoes and feel the sand between our toes as the tropical waters of the Coral Sea lap gently against the shoreline. Surrounded by glistening sea and bathed in the glow of twilight, we enjoy sundowner drinks and the company of like-minded explorers as we relax and watch the sun gently sink below the horizon, enjoying the Captain's Farewell Drinks at sunset on our own private sand island.

### **MACKAY REEF & CAY**

Relax on picturesque Mackay Cay and enjoy snorkelling the pristine reef that surrounds it. Mackay Reef is a mid-shelf platform reef, with vibrant hard and soft corals abound. The northern side enjoys additional protection from the cay, making it the perfect playground for turtles. A giant clam garden also resides in the area, with some clams growing as big as 1.2m, all with their own unique colours and patterns.

On a clear day, from the cay you can look back at the mainland to see tall mountains covered in UNESCO world heritage Daintree rainforest. You can see Cape Tribulation and Mount Sorrow as named by Captain Cook during his eventful sail through the Great Barrier Reef. The Kuku Yalangi tribe are the traditional owners of this region and have lived in harmony with the environment for over 50,000 years. Dream time stories explain the unique shape of Mount Peter Bot.

### **COOKTOWN**

Come ashore in historic Cooktown and experience a traditional welcome to country ceremony. Share a spiritual connection through storytelling and the traditional smoking ceremony with the Guugu Yimithirr, the first people of this ancient country. Discover recent European history with a visit to the site where Lt. James Cook beached *HMB Endeavour* to effect repairs in 1770. Wander through the rare flora collection at the Botanic Gardens and visit James Cook Museum, where the story of Cook's landing is told from an Aboriginal perspective and where artifacts are on display.

Later, cruise towards Lizard Island, arriving in time for sunset drinks at Turtle Beach. After dinner, look for giant trevally and tawny nurse sharks during a fish feeding exhibition off the aft deck.

### **LIZARD ISLAND**

We spend a whole day at Lizard Island where there is time to hike to the summit of Cook's Look and enjoy the same view Lt. James Cook did when searching for safe passage through the maze of coral reefs. Snorkel over giant clam gardens from the beach at Watson's Bay, relax on the white-sand beach beneath shady she oak trees and learn about the tragic story surrounding Mary Watson.

There may be an opportunity to visit Lizard Island Research Station, operated by the Australian Museum to facilitate coral reef research and education on the Great Barrier Reef.

### **OSPREY REEF**

Osprey Reef is the summit of an undersea 2,000m mountain located beyond the continental shelf with no landmass visible. Enjoy amazing underwater visibility here, and observe magnificent corals, plummeting drop-offs and many fish in the crystalline waters. Osprey Reef is a highly prized tropical dive location amongst scuba divers, called an 'oasis for living creatures of all kinds' by Sir David Attenborough.

Osprey Reef is a true expedition-style destination and our visit is subject to appropriate weather conditions.

### **RIBBON REEF #9 & #3**

The Ribbon Reefs are a narrow line of outer coral reefs on the edge of the continental shelf and are renowned for their prolific marine life and extensive coral species. Enjoy the rare opportunity to snorkel and dive on the Ribbon Reefs which sit on the edge of the

continental shelf.

Due to their location far offshore from the Australian coast, the Ribbon Reefs offer excellent diving and snorkelling opportunities, with Ribbon Reef #9 a favourite for its wide variety of marine life and pinnacles cloaked in coral. Join a guided snorkel tour led by our expert Expedition Team and witness this extraordinary ecosystem up close. These northern reefs are renowned for spotting iconic marine species such as potato cod, wrasse, sharks and turtles.

Steve's Bommie at Ribbon Reef #3 rises from 30 metres deep up to just 5 metres below the water and attracts schools of bigeye trevally, barracuda, yellow-lined snapper, Moses perch, yellow-lined goatfish and many others. The amazing visibility and vibrant colours make it great for underwater photography.

## **Departure Dates & Pricing**

### **2021**

24 November (SOLD OUT)

### **2022**

02 November

09 November

16 November

23 November

30 November

### **2023**

07 November

14 November

21 November

28 November

Pricing starts from NZ\$5,079 per person share twin. All pricing is in NZ dollars and subject to change at any time. Please ask us for best available pricing at time of booking.

### Cruise Category

- Luxury Expedition
- Soft Adventure

### Onboard Features

- Gratuities
- Meals + Wine
- On-Board Lecturer
- Shore Excursions

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### Bonus

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#### trip itinerary

Day 8

Cairns

Day 1

Cairns

Day 2

Fitzroy Island & Sudbury Cay

Day 3

McKay Reef and Cay

Day 4

Cooktown

Day 5

Lizard Island

Day 6

Osprey Reef

Day 7

Ribbon Reef #9 and #3

□ The Vessel

## Technical Details

- Tonnage 1779
- Crew 24
- Capacity 72
- Length 63M

## Cruise Category

- Luxury Expeditions
- Soft Adventures

Coral Discoverer

Fully equipped with latest technology active stabilizers, modern safety and navigation equipment, tender vessel that can seat all 72 passengers, an Australian and New Zealand crew, Coral Discoverer was built to the exacting international SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) standards and specifications in Cairns, Australia, with one aim in mind; to create the ultimate small ship cruising experience. Images courtesy of Coral Expeditions

Vessel Features

- **All meals**
- **Gratuities**
- **On-Board Lecturer**
- **Shore Excursions**
- **Solo Traveller Friendly**

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