Zanzibar, Aldabra & the treasures of the Indian Ocean

From **08/02/2024** to **20/02/2024**	Ship: ***LE BOUGAINVILLE***	From **Victoria, Mahé** to **Zanzibar**



In partnership with LE POINT and with featured guest Christophe Ono-Dit-Biot, deputy editor of LE POINT and Guillaume Nery, a French freediver specialising in constant weight diving.

Embark with **PONANT** aboard *Le Bougainville* for a **13-day expedition cruise** in the **Indian Ocean**. A chance to discover stunning natural environments, exceptional wildlife, and UNESCO World Heritage sites loaded with history.

From Victoria on the island of **Mahé**, you will first sail to **La Digue**, where a veritable picture-postcard of the Seychelles awaits you: palm trees, granite rocks, **white sand and crystal-clear waters**.

Further on, the small islands Astove will be an opportunity to snorkel and dive among bright-coloured sea life, before reaching **Aldabra Atoll**, a largely untouched natural sanctuary **listed as World Heritage by UNESCO**. Edged with mangrove and fine sandy beaches, it is home to the largest colony of land turtles in the world.

After a stop on the sublime **Assumption Island**, your next ports of call will be an opportunity to discover several of the wonders of Tanzania. You will explore the ruins of the 13th-century Swahili trading past of **Kilwa Kisiwani**, the **small coral island of Misali** as well as **Pemba Island** and its clove plantations.

This fabulous trip will draw to an end in **Zanzibar**, a city with superb **UNESCO-listed buildings**, blending African, Arab, Indian and European influences over more than a millennium.

The encounters with the wildlife described above illustrate possible experiences only and cannot be guaranteed.



The information in this document is valid as of 28/03/2024

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

VICTORIA, MAHÉ

Embarkation 08/02/2024 from 16:00 to 17:00
Departure 08/02/2024 at 19:00

Discover **Mahé**, the main island of the Seychelles and also the largest of the archipelago, home to the capital, **Victoria**. Mahé has almost 70 beaches of fine sand, framed by the emblematic **granite rocks**, and whose crystal clear waters are renowned for their rich underwater life. The island is also famous for its **splendid mountain panoramas** accessible on hikes, such as the Morne Seychellois, which is 905 metres high and overlooks the Indian Ocean. Mahé is also an island full of history where fine colonial properties rub shoulders with **Creole houses** - and don't forget the marvellous **Botanical Gardens** in Victoria.

LA DIGUE ISLAND

Arrival 09/02/2024
Departure 09/02/2024

La Digue Island is a veritable concentration of all the beauty of the Seychelles. Located 6 km south-east of Praslin, this small piece of land that looks like paradise is the third-largest island in the Seychelles, despite its modest size (5 km by 3 km)! Turquoise waters just asking you to swim in them, lush vegetation sheltering **giant tortoises**, beaches of fine sand fringed with coconut trees and surrounded with those emblematic **large granite rocks with their pink highlights** like at the famous Anse Source d'Argent: the perfect picture postcard... **Authentic and preserved**, the island follows a peaceful rhythm, with the only means of transport along its little roads being bikes or traditional oxcarts.

AT SEA

Arrival 10/02/2024
Departure 10/02/2024

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.

ASTOVE ISLAND

Arrival 11/02/2024
Departure 11/02/2024

Closer to Madagascar than to Victoria, **Astove** is the **southernmost island** in the Seychelles. It is part of the **Aldabra group** , in the Outer Islands of the Seychelles. Now uninhabited, this **coral island** covered in coconut trees was once home to the employees that worked on the coconut plantations. Renowned for the richness of its seabeds, Astove Atoll is now a top destination for fishing enthusiasts. It also attracts experienced divers, who visit the atoll to explore the "**Astove Wall**", where the sea floor drops to a depth of about 40 metres. The wall is **covered in coral** and many fish and green sea turtles can be found there.

ALDABRA ATOLL

Arrival 12/02/2024
Departure 13/02/2024

Located in the very heart of this faraway archipelago, the **Aldabra Atoll** is considered to be one of the last virtually untouched sanctuaries on earth, where a large population of **sea turtles** has found refuge. Listed as **a UNESCO World Heritage Site**, this vast tract of land is formed by 4 small coral reef islands separated by narrow passes and containing an **emerald-water lagoon** lined with mangrove and fine-sand beaches. As your ship slowly nears the clear, reflective waters along its shoreline, do not miss your chance to discover this natural wonder, which is considered to be the largest atoll in the world and once fired the imagination of many an explorer.

ASSUMPTION ISLAND

Arrival 14/02/2024
Departure 14/02/2024

Assumption Island is part of the **Aldabra group** (Outer Islands), situated in the south-west of the Seychelles. Discovered in the mid-18th century by the French captain Nicolas Morphey, this bean-shaped island covered in **dunes** and **shrubs** is relatively flat. A handful of people live there, in a small village in the island's west. The island's beaches are a **major egg-laying and breeding site for sea turtles**. The surrounding waters are ideal for scuba diving. This is where Jacques-Yves Cousteau filmed some of the scenes for his famous documentary film "The Silent World", released in 1956.

AT SEA

Arrival 15/02/2024
Departure 15/02/2024

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.

KILWA KISIWANI

Arrival 16/02/2024
Departure 16/02/2024

Near the Tanzanian coast, around 300 km south of Dar es Salaam, the island of **Kilwa Kisiwani** is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Occupied from the 9th century to the 11th century, it reached its heights in the 13th and 14th centuries. It was described by the Moroccan explorer Ibn Battouta as “one of the most beautiful cities in the world.” A former Swahili trading city, the island prospered from the trade of gold and ivory from the inland regions. The remains of its former port city cover a large part of the island. Those of its superb Great Mosque, the oldest mosque remaining on the coast of East Africa, are well worth a visit.

PEMBA ISLAND

Arrival 17/02/2024
Departure 17/02/2024

The second-largest island in the Zanzibar Archipelago, **Pemba Island** captivates, surprises and fascinates. You will be enchanted by the songs of the island women, on the beaches of fine sand, as they gather red algae at low tide. A unique sight! Mountainous with hills of fertile land and bearing the nickname “**“the Green Island”**, it is bordered by quiet shores, brimming with authenticity. Banana trees, coconut trees, clove trees, nutmeg trees... its **lush vegetation** ensures the local production of the spices that has made its reputation (primarily cloves but also nutmeg, vanilla, cinnamon, turmeric, pepper, etc.).

MISALI ISLAND

Arrival 18/02/2024
Departure 18/02/2024

Renowned for its underwater world, **Misali** became **a protected conservation area** in 1998. So, it’s possible to admire its sea beds and swim there, but not to fish. If conditions allow, you’ll perhaps have the chance to see **varied underwater fauna.** To the north-east of the island, **a white sandy beach**, bathed in stunningly transparent turquoise water, is an ideal place to relax.

ZANZIBAR

Arrival 19/02/2024
Disembarkation 20/02/2024 at 07:00

Once a mythical post along the legendary **Indian Ocean trade route**, today a certain whiff of adventure still pervades in **Zanzibar**. Located off the coast of Tanzania, this place often referred to as “**spice island**” is brimming with natural treasures, such as Jozani Forest, the last remains of the huge primeval forest that once covered the island, home to a unique ecosystem. This port of call will also be the moment to discover ”Stone Town”, **the historical centre of Zanzibar, a UNESCO World Heritage site**. A veritable labyrinth of narrow streets lined with houses made from coral stone, it is home to sumptuous buildings in a multitude of architectural styles, the result of the blending of African, European and Indian cultures.