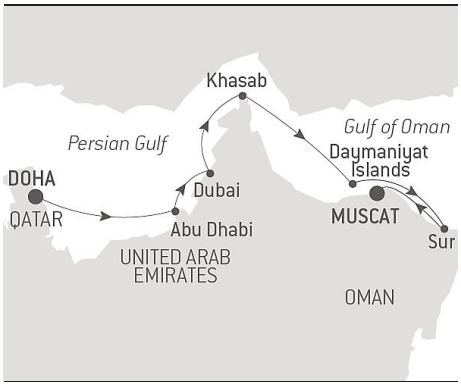
Treasures of the Arabian Gulf

From **29/12/2023** to **05/01/2024**	Ship: ***LE BOUGAINVILLE***	From **Doha** to **Muscat**



Experience an exceptional New Year's Eve with PONANT off the coast of the Persian Gulf.

In the **Persian Gulf**, cities spring up on the horizon like mirages in the huge and arid Arabian Desert. The contrasts between territories here are as dramatic as the turquoise sea that washes up on the golden rocky coastline. Set sail aboard *Le Bougainville* for **an 8-day cruise**, taking in **prodigious metropolises**, **former trading cities** and a **natural environment** that has been shaped by the stunning sun of the desert.

There are countless words to describe the Emirati cities: extravagant, modern and luxurious are just some of them. These masterpieces of **futuristic architecture** will immerse you in a fantastic and surprising universe. **Dubai** is awe-inspiring with its skyscrapers almost touching the stars, including the **Burj Khalifa,** the world's tallest building, or its artificial islands in the form of a palm tree. As for the remarkable **Abu Dhabi,** it has chosen to focus on culture, which can be discovered in its splendid **Louvre Museum** or by visiting its **Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque**, straight out the Arabian Nights.

The **Sultanate of Oman** is as discreet as its Emirati neighbours are bold. The sea maintains a special place in the kingdom of the legendary Sinbad the Sailor. The fishermen here perpetuate millennial traditions while the shipyards are still in operation. Between the sea and the desert, you will sail through the **carved fjords of Musandam** from **Khasab** and, leaving from **Sour**, you will experience the enchantment procured by the shade and cool of a **wadi -** lush oases planted with palm trees. On the **Daymaniyat Islands**, you can snorkel in an exceptional natural sanctuary where turtles come to nest. In the capital, **Muscat**, the fragrances of the Orient and of incense will intoxicate you, the sparkling colours of the markets will captivate you, and the vibrant bustle of the souk will enchant you. The Near East evokes its incredible poetry.



The information in this document is valid as of 29/03/2024

Treasures of the Arabian Gulf

YOUR STOPOVERS :

DOHA

Embarkation 29/12/2023 from 16:00 to 17:00
Departure 29/12/2023 at 18:00

On the banks of the **Persian Gulf,** discover **Doha**, the capital of **Qatar**. Rising out of the desert, the city has managed to maintain its traditions in spite of a frantic race for modernity. The cliff bordering Doha Bay has magnificent views over the city centre's enormous constructions. The silhouette of the **Museum of Islamic Art** rises up near the quays, where the region's typical sailboats, known as *dhows*, are docked. This "fortress", designed by **Ming Pei**, the architect of the Louvre pyramid, is home to the finest collections of Islamic art in the world. Not far, the lively district of **Souq Waqif** and its colourful stalls are also an unmissable visit.

ABU DHABI

Arrival 30/12/2023 midday
Departure 31/12/2023 late evening

The political capital of the United Arab Emirates, **Abu Dhabi** stands out thanks to its exceptional cultural offering. In the Saadiyat Island district, **the Louvre Abu Dhabi**, designed by **Jean Nouvel** as a museum town inspired by traditional Arab architecture, creates a dialogue between objects and works from civilisations from all over the world around the great universal questions. A little further, the **Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque** boasts a sumptuous decor of marble, gold and glass. Abu Dhabi is also the gateway to the **Al Ain oasis** and its 150,000 date palms, a remarkable testimony to the settling of nomads in the region since Neolithic times, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

DUBAI

Arrival 01/01/2024 early morning
Departure 01/01/2024 evening

Vertiginous, excessive, immoderate... **Dubai**, the largest city in the United Arab Emirates, stands out for its architectural follies. Home to the world's tallest skyscraper, the **Burj Khalifa**, with a total height of 828 metres, almost three times that of the Eiffel Tower, the city is also famous for the gigantic scale of the Palm Islands, its artificial islands in the form of a palm tree. You can explore more traditional districts not far away, with visits of the souks of **Deira** or the Gold Souk. Or perhaps you would prefer to discover Dubai Museum: located in an 18th-century fort, it tells the city's history from Antiquity to the present day.

KHASAB

Arrival 02/01/2024 early morning
Departure 02/01/2024 early afternoon

Located in the country's north, on the **Musandam Peninsula**, **Khasab** is a city in the **Sultanate of Oman**. In the **Strait of Hormuz**, which connects the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman, this small port built by the Portuguese in the 16th century and surrounded by a chain of rocky mountains was established at the mouth of **Wadi Khasab**. You will love its authentic scenery and particularly its **fjords**, which cut through the landscapes in a spectacular fashion and have earned it the moniker "Norway of Arabia". In the city, **Khasab Castle** and its atypical architecture are well worth a visit to discover the history and culture of Oman.

DAYMANIYAT ISLANDS

Arrival 03/01/2024 early morning
Departure 03/01/2024 late afternoon

Set atop the turquoise waters of the Gulf of Oman, the **Daymaniyat Islands** have been a **nature reserve** since the 1980s. Some forty kilometres (25 miles) off the coast from Muscat, the Omani capital, their craggy coastlines form natural pools home to an **incredible biodiversity**. The different types of coral reefs that dot this ecosystem, the turtles that nest there, and the numerous species of fish make this an ideal destination for snorkelling. This rocky landscape is also the favourite spot of many birds, both endemic and migratory.

SUR

Arrival 04/01/2024 early morning
Departure 04/01/2024 early evening

Built on either side of a lagoon, **Sur** is a city and seaport in the **north-east of the Sultanate of Oman**, on the coast of the **Gulf of Oman**. Connected to the sea by a channel, the port was very active for a long time, having regular dealings with Africa and India since the 6th century. Sur is renowned for being the only Omani city to have retained its **traditional boatyards,** where **dhows** (wooden sailing ships) are hand-crafted. The city's charm stems from its immaculate white houses dotting the seafront and from its fort erected on a hill along the **road to Muscat**.

MUSCAT

Arrival 05/01/2024 early morning
Disembarkation 05/01/2024 at 07:00

Unlike neighbouring metropolises, the capital of the **Sultanate of Oman** has chosen to ban towers and skyscrapers and to cultivate the peninsula's traditional and refined architectural style: low houses, domes, moucharaby windows, and wooden balconies. This authenticity adds to the charm of this small former maritime city protected by mountains and the forts constructed by the Portuguese in the 16th century. There is no doubt that you will fall under the charm of the treasures of Omani craftsmanship: the souk in the old district of **Mutrah** is a perfect example of this, as is the **Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque**.