



CRUISE EXPLORER

# Slowly and quietly, yachts gain ground



## SHIP OF THE WEEK

### Ayana Lako di'a

**How big:** Nine cabins, 18 guests

**Who would love it:** Anyone wanting to explore Komodo National Park.

**Who would not:** Those looking for nightlife or shopping.

**Point of difference:** A traditional Indonesian phinisi transformed into an all-inclusive sailing experience with marine activities and hiking.

**Don't miss:** Sunset cocktails on the top deck, watching thousands of bats soar across Kalong Island for their nightly migration in search of fruit.

**Price point:** From \$1840 per person, twin-share, for a one-night cruise departing from Ayana Komodo Waecicu Beach.

**Explore more:** [ayana.com](http://ayana.com)



LOUISE GOLDSBURY

SOMETIMES I just want to drift through a destination without the glass-walled insulation of a cruise ship. Sailing cruises may be the answer. This slower, quieter, low-impact form of sea travel is gaining ground, where the wind sets the pace and the route is flexible. Unlike chartering a private yacht, these are scheduled departures with other passengers.

The South Pacific is one of the best places for this style of trip, thanks to the warm weather and calm waters. Indonesia, in particular, has dozens of traditional sailing vessels exploring the Coral Triangle. Mutiara Laut is a two-mast schooner offering voyages from five to 11 days in Komodo National Park. It accommodates a maximum of 14 people, and the atmosphere is more like a wellness retreat than a package holiday. Activities include hiking, diving, snorkelling, swimming with whale sharks or manta rays, Komodo dragon treks, and visits to Pink Beach and Padar Island.

In Europe, Ponant's La Desirade is based



The main deck on Lako di'a (above) Mutiara Laut.

in Corsica and Sardinia until October 2025 and then the Caribbean from December 2025 to April 2026. The four-cabin catamaran is equipped for waterskiing, wing-foiling and stand-up paddleboarding, but other activities can be tailored to your wishes on itineraries up to 14 days.

If only Sail Croatia existed when I was a backpacker. Departing weekly from May to September, Flotilla Week party cruises are

aimed at people aged 18-39. BYO drinks are allowed, and you make your own breakfast. Days are spent swimming, wine-tasting, cycling, sightseeing or learning to sail. Multiple 10-person yachts sail around together, so everyone meets up at the swim spots and ports for overnight stays. Evenings are free to dine out with new friends or go to the beach clubs in Hvar, Split and Dubrovnik.

At the other extreme is the four-cabin Ice-

bird in Antarctica. This aluminium yacht is the sidekick of the 98-passenger St Helena, operated by a new Australian company, Terra Nova Expeditions. St Helena guests can extend their polar adventure by spending six nights on Icebird, while on other voyages it will be used for excursions such as scuba diving. "There are no landing restrictions for the yacht, so you can be ashore with just eight people, and we can literally go anywhere," says CEO Greg Carter.

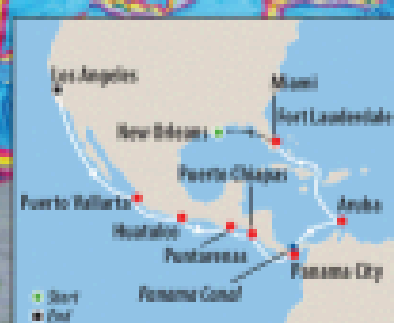
The Senior Newspaper and Travelrite International invite you to join them on these great tours

## PANAMA NEW ORLEANS, CENTRAL AMERICA & PANAMA CANAL

23 DAYS 12 April 2026

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Sail through the Panama Canal onboard Grand Princess
- Welcome dinner cruise on the Mississippi River
- Enjoy the atmosphere of the French Quarter – New Orleans
- Sightseeing tour with a local guide at Puerto Vallarta
- Explore the beautiful beaches of Huatulco
- Aerial Tram ride above the treetops of the rainforest in Costa Rica



## MURRAY RIVER CRUISE AND SOUTH AUSTRALIA EXPLORATION

### AND SOUTH AUSTRALIA EXPLORATION

A choice of two departures

14 DAYS 3 May 2026 or 13 Sep 2026 2026

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Gourmet tour of Kangaroo Island
- Cattle Train from Victor Harbour
- 7 night Murray Princess Cruise
- Ancient Ngaut Ngaut Conservation Park
- Riverland Winery tour
- Wildlife shelter and sheep shearing demonstration



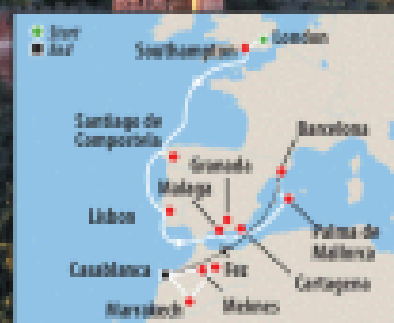
## SPAIN & MOROCCO CRUISE

### ABOARD QUEEN VICTORIA

21 DAYS 22 April 2026

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Exotic city of Marrakech and its bustling souqs, Jemaa el Fna square and the Palace of Bahia.
- Fez, with its World Heritage listed medina
- Granada, and Cartagena visiting the Alhambra Palace and gardens and the Roman Theatre of Carthago Nova
- Luxury cruising onboard Queen Victoria

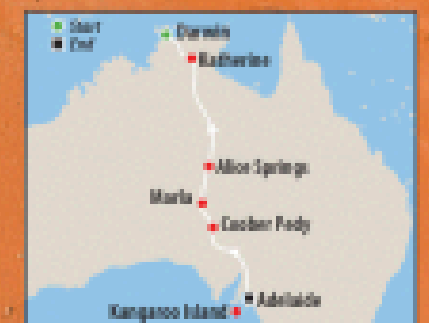


## THE GHAN KANGAROO ISLAND & DARWIN ESCAPE

12 DAYS 28 April 2026

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- Two nights/3 days on the Ghan in Gold Class
- Sightseeing tours in Darwin, Katherine, Alice Springs, Coober Pedy, Adelaide, Kangaroo Island and Victor Harbor
- Gourmet tour of the Kangaroo Island & Flinders Chase National Park
- McLaren Vale winery tasting
- Off train Experiences including a morning experience in Marla



THE Senior

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