

WONDERS OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC: ORANGUTANS, SUN BEARS & THE CORAL TRIANGLE

2023 route: Saigon, Vietnam to Koror, Palau

Expeditions in: Oct |



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DAY 1-2: U.S. / Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Vietnam

Depart on your overnight flight to Saigon. Transfer to our hotel upon arrival and meet your fellow travelers at our welcome reception this evening. (Day 2: D)

DAY 3: Saigon / Embark

Check out of the hotel and set off to discover Ho Chi Minh City. Formerly known as Saigon, the city was officially renamed after the North Vietnamese captured the city in 1975—though the new name hasn't quite caught on. Trace history on a tour of the most important city in southern Vietnam. View the former American Embassy and visit the Reunification Palace and the Saigon Central Post Office, one of the most iconic buildings in the city. At the Vietnam History Museum, browse exhibits that illustrate the evolution of Vietnam's cultures. Then stop at two important pagodas, the Jade Emperor and the 18th-century Giac Lam, where Buddhist monks still live and worship. This afternoon embark the *National Geographic Resolution*. Be out on deck to take on the views of lush deltas and rural villages as we leave the modern city behind. (B,L,D)

DAY 4-5: Con Dao National Park / At Sea

The 16 islands of the Con Dao Archipelago are characterized by jungle-covered mountains and gorgeous beaches—and nearly 80 percent of their land and sea has been declared a national park. Con Son is the largest island and the only one that is inhabited. During the French colonial era, the island served as a political prison and later, the Saigon regime imprisoned dissenters here using the infamous "tiger cages." While its difficult past has earned the islands recognition as a national historical site, they are now celebrated for their natural beauty and biodiversity. We will have opportunity for hikes on the inner island trails, Zodiac cruises and kayaking through the mangroves, photographing the vast array of plant and birdlife, and just soaking up the splendor. (B,L,D)

DAY 6: Sabah, Malaysia

This morning head inland to Mount Kinabalu National Park. Known as a cloud forest, the dense jungle is teeming with rushing streams, orchids, small mammals and the bizarre carnivorous pitcher plants. Deemed a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000, the region is one of the most important ecosystems in the world. We'll head to the park headquarters and then venture out to explore surrounding trails. This beautiful region is home to over 250 species of birds. Be on the lookout for laughing thrushes, babblers and the spectacular Whitehead's broadbill. (B,L,D)

DAY 7-8: Sandakan / At Sea

Sail to the northeast coast of Borneo and the town of Sandakan, our starting point for visiting the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Center. The center opened in 1964 and was the first of its time – created to rehabilitate baby orangutans who were orphaned due to the destruction of their natural habitat. This protected forest reserve is

Sample Airfares:

Economy(round-trip Los Angeles/Saigon, Palau/Los Angeles): from \$2,025
Business(round-trip Los Angeles/Saigon, Palau/Los Angeles): from \$5,056
Airfares are subject to change

Cost Includes:

All accommodations aboard ship or in hotels per itinerary or similar; all meals and alcoholic beverages aboard ship (excepting certain super-premium brands) and tips (including to ship's crew); meals on land as indicated, accompanied by nonalcoholic beverages; shore excursions; sightseeing and entrance fees; special access permits; transfers to and from designated flights; use of snorkeling equipment and wetsuits (where applicable); use of kayaks and/or stand-up paddleboards (where applicable); taxes and service charges; services of a ship physician and services of our expedition staff. Unused services or items included in our programs are non-refundable.

Cost Not Included:

Air transportation (except where specified as included), charter airfare (where applicable), extensions, passport, visa, immigration fees, meals not indicated, travel protection plan, items of a personal nature, such as internet access and laundry.

now home to approximately 70 orangutans. The facility provides medical care for these great apes and helps to get them back into the wild as safely and quickly as possible. Following our time at the center, we'll also visit the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Center. Also created for bears displaced by deforestation, the center also rescues bears that were held in captivity and mistreated and provides them with safe forested environments. (B,L,D)

DAY 9: Bunaken Marine Reserve

Indonesia is known for its amazing biodiversity and undersea life and Bunaken Marine Park does not disappoint. Located off of northern Sulawesi Island within the Coral Triangle, this reserve was one of the first in the country and has been a success story in protecting the natural beauty and wildlife. Snorkel and dive along sea walls that are bursting with healthy coral and hundreds of colorful fish; kayak in the mangroves, keeping a watchful eye out for colorful reptiles like the Pacific bluetail skink or the beautiful Sulawesi hanging parrot. Green and hawksbill sea turtles can also be found in healthy numbers. It will be a day of amazing sights both above and below the sea. (B,L,D)

DAY 10-11: At Sea

Enjoy the *National Geographic Resolution's* many amenities as we spend time at sea. Soak in the ship's infinity-style outdoor hot tubs, take in panoramic views from the rooftop observation deck, and enjoy talks from our onboard experts and learn about the amazing wildlife and geology that we are experiencing on our journey. (B,L,D)

DAY 12: Koror, Palau, Micronesia

A fascinating blend of WWII history and the natural beauty of the Rock Islands, Palau is truly an island paradise. Tour Peleliu Island and walk amongst the ruins of the Japanese camp and explore the gun buildings, tanks and planes left from long ago. Or choose to have an otherworldly and snorkel in Jellyfish Lake—one of the Seven Biological Wonders of the World. The lake is landlocked, and the jellies have lost their ability to sting. After experiencing a significant dip in the population, the jellyfish have made a substantial recovery in recent years. You'll glide through hundreds of golden and moon jellyfish. We'll also have the opportunity to snorkel and dive along the healthy seawalls, reefs and wrecks. Overnight on board the *National Geographic Resolution*. (B,L,D)

DAY 13-14: Koror / Disembark / U.S.

Disembark today and continue exploring the natural beauty of Palau. Following lunch check in to our hotel for an afternoon of relaxation and dinner under the stars. Flights home depart in the early morning hours. (Day 13: B,L,D)



* See our website at <https://www.expeditions.com/> for the most up-to-date pricing, which may vary by departure date. Prices are subject to modification, and are not guaranteed until booking and required deposits are made. For best pricing, book early.

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