

Vanuatu

NEW ZEALAND
GEOGRAPHIC
EXPEDITIONS

ISLAND **ESCAPE**
EXPEDITIONS

SEASONS OF ISLAND ESCAPE

VANUATU – SOUTH PACIFIC 2010



LUXURY BOUTIQUE EXPEDITIONS

SHELTERED WATERS, BIG SHIP COMFORT AND EXCEPTIONAL INTIMACY.

Secrets of Vanuatu, luxury escapes

AUTUMN/WINTER – MAY TO SEPTEMBER

New Zealand Geographic and Island Escape Expeditions have formed an alliance to offer luxury expeditions within Vanuatu.

Once known as the New Hebrides, Vanuatu is the South Seas paradise that James Michener wrote about in his book "Tales of the South Pacific. Of all the Pacific island groups, Vanuatu offers the most contrasts: Lofty volcanic mountains and sand-fringed coral islets; dense tropical jungle and serene tracts of farmland; lush fruit orchards and rugged volcanic cliffs; historic European elegance and original Melanesian culture.

On 'Island Passage', our beautifully-appointed small ship, you can explore Vanuatu in a way that combines the graciousness of gourmet travel with the spontaneity and intrepid spirit of an explorer's expedition. Weighing in at almost 500 tonnes, Island Passage is equipped to travel to remote, hardly-visited areas while delivering the highest level of passenger comfort.

During each journey, our eight-person crew – a mixture of New Zealanders and Vanuatuans – are on hand to share their knowledge of the ocean and local landscapes. On selected trips, the learning experience will be enhanced by a New Zealand Geographic scientist, historian, photographer or explorer.

The alliance between Island Escape and New Zealand Geographic is assisting research and exploration projects around the Pacific region. Together we support the New Zealand Geographic Trust with funding for research and conservation in the areas we visit.

Welcome aboard



FACT FILE

COMPLIMENTARY SUBSCRIPTION

Every booking on a Secrets of Vanuatu expedition will receive a complimentary 12 month (six issues) subscription to New Zealand Geographic Magazine. For two decades it has been the definitive journal of record for New Zealand, bringing its readers stories from the deepest oceans to the stars above their heads and all the locations and cultures in between.



Exploring the far reaches of the Western Pacific

You might think you know tropical island scenery like the back of your hand, but if you haven't yet journeyed around the islands of Vanuatu there's much to learn. The landscapes are multi-layered, like somebody's superimposed one tropical paradise over the top of another. The rugged mystery of high volcanic terrain shrouded with jungle tugs at your spirit of adventure, while the sublime turquoise and white of the beaches satisfies your hedonistic urge to find the perfect paradise. Vanuatu presents a world of beauty made more attractive by the irresistible pull of the unknown.



A colourful history

The western world discovered Vanuatu in 1774, when Captain James Cook arrived in the area and named the islands the New Hebrides. In the mid to late 1800s, Vanuatu was settled by both British and French colonists. A shared colonisation arrangement led to two education systems, two police forces and even two currencies – operating side by side. The French dominated the country's culinary heritage (fortunately!), while the British were known for stricter rules but more humane prisons. Both French and English are spoken widely, however Vanuatu's local language is Bislama, a form of pidgin English. World War II brought the Americans and the rise of nationalism, which centred around belief in a mythical messiah named John Frum. Today, John Frum is both a religion and a political party with a member in parliament.



Extreme natural beauty

Vanuatu is an archipelago of mostly volcanic origin and less than 10% of land area is used for agriculture. For you, this means wall-to-wall untouched tropical paradise – but with some surprising differences. Many landscapes have an active volcano in the backdrop, which gives Vanuatu a sense of mystery. World War II relics can be found in the jungles and beneath the waves. Dugout canoe journeys up river lead through green tunnels, where the dense foliage forms a total canopy overhead. 'Blue holes' – underground springs that bubble up the surface – are like oases in the dense jungle. And thatched houses are still the most common form of dwelling.



Fascinating culture

Vanuatu is home to more than 100 population groups. Collectively they're known as the ni-Vanuatu and they descend from the Lapita people, who arrived in the archipelago more than 3000 years ago. Each group has its own languages, cultures and traditions. Music is important – local instruments include the tamtam drum, panpipes and conch shells. Religion is also a big part of life – some groups are staunchly Christian, while others still believe strongly in spirits and demons.



Underwater paradise

The landscapes you can discover beneath the waves are as beautiful as those above, because the reefs that Island Passages takes you to are far from the snorkelling traffic jam around Port Vila. You can snorkel straight off the beach or get one of our tenders to take you to the supreme underwater viewing experiences that can be found further out. Discover live coral, a rainbow of fish and the most breathtaking drop offs.



Lifestyle afloat

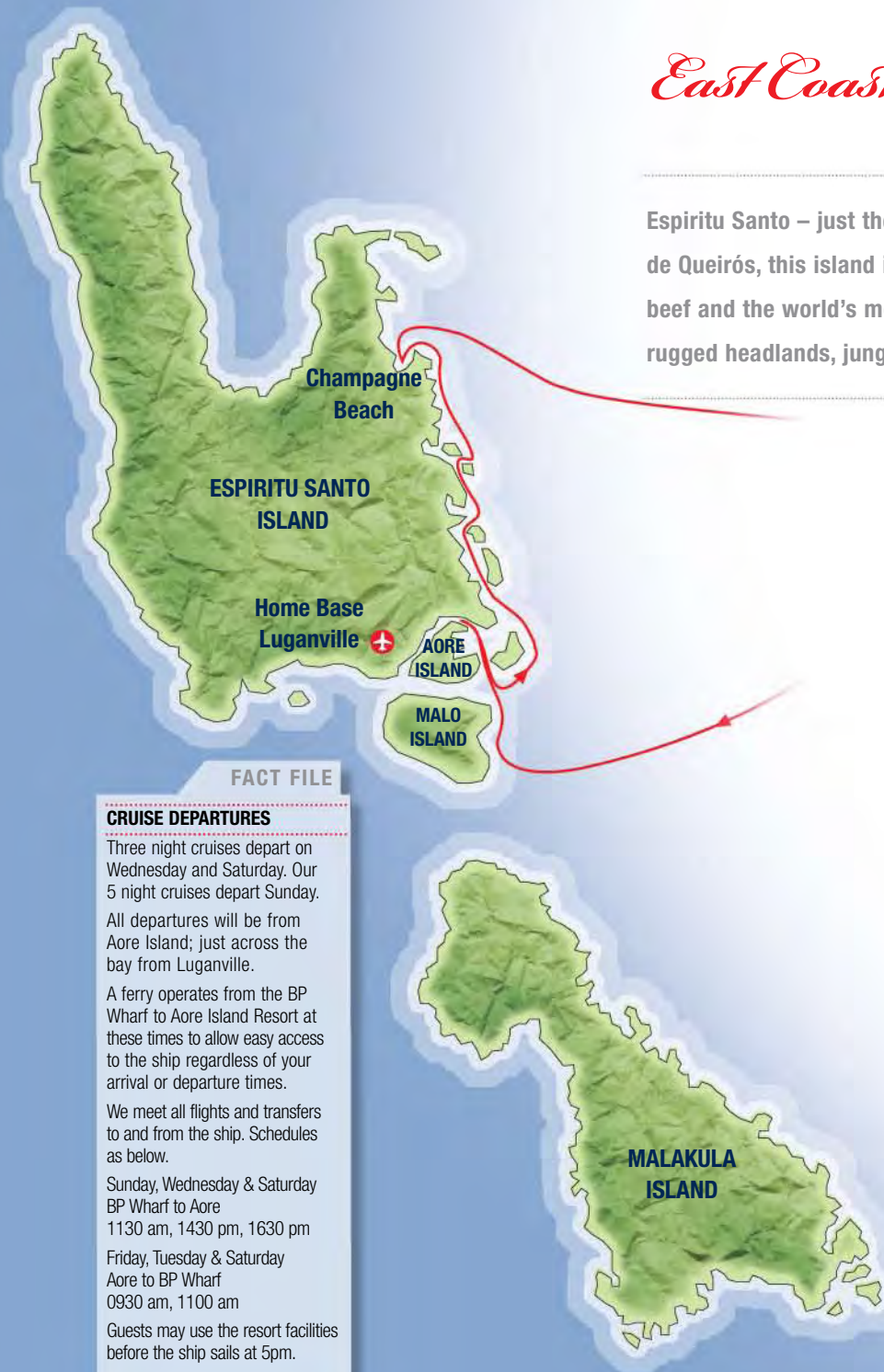
Usually a ship the size of Island Passage would carry 40 or more people for multi-day expeditions; however we limit occupancy to just 20. Accommodated in luxurious cabins, our guests enjoy exceptional service and a consistently high standard of cuisine – our master chef will win your heart at every meal. An extensive wine cellar promises a perfect match with your lunch and dinner choices. When the sun is over the yardarm, the saloon bar is open.



*Paradise
Island Escape style!*

East Coast of Espiritu Santo - days 1 to 3

Espiritu Santo – just the name is enough to put a faraway look in your eye. Named by Portuguese explorer Pedro Fernandes de Queirós, this island is the largest in the archipelago. It has Vanuatu's tallest mountains, the South Pacific's most delicious beef and the world's most beautiful beach. We'll show you Santo's magnificent eastern coast – an enchanting interplay of rugged headlands, jungle-edged coves and perfect coral islands.



FACT FILE

CRUISE DEPARTURES

Three night cruises depart on Wednesday and Saturday. Our 5 night cruises depart Sunday. All departures will be from Aore Island; just across the bay from Luganville.

A ferry operates from the BP Wharf to Aore Island Resort at these times to allow easy access to the ship regardless of your arrival or departure times.

We meet all flights and transfers to and from the ship. Schedules as below.

Sunday, Wednesday & Saturday
BP Wharf to Aore
1130 am, 1430 pm, 1630 pm

Friday, Tuesday & Saturday
Aore to BP Wharf
0930 am, 1100 am

Guests may use the resort facilities before the ship sails at 5pm.



Introducing Santo

Mountainous and exotically beautiful, Santo has done much for the mystique of the South Pacific. It embraces two contrasting tropical worlds: the western side of the island is wild and untamed with tall volcanic peaks and thick jungle, while the eastern side is a gentle paradise of lush farmland and coral coast. Santo produces copra, cocoa and coffee. It is also famous for its premium beef.



Day by day on Santo

Your cruise departs at five in the evening. As the ship heads around Million Dollar Point, named for the vast amount of American war machinery under the waves, the coast of Santo beckons. We anchor off Aese Island for a sundown dinner. Next morning there's the opportunity to snorkel over a fabulous coral reef that's only metres from the ship. It's an unforgettable experience - we'll take you up current in the tender, so that you can drift over gardens of coral inhabited by a myriad of tropical fishes. On the same day you'll venture up the Riri River in a dugout canoe to discover the miraculous blue holes – deep, clear freshwater springs that bubble up into the river. You've never seen the colour blue quite like this. A refreshing swim is almost compulsory!



On to Champagne Beach

While the ship moves to Hog Harbour for the night, you can fish for dog tooth tuna, wahoo and mahi mahi. Angling off our fishing boat as the ship moves up the coast has the potential to be extremely exciting, because the local game fish are very lively. Your success will make our chef very happy! On the last day, Champagne Beach (said to be the most beautiful beach in the world) promises the bluest water, whitest sand and greenest jungle – it's just breathtaking. You can sunbathe, snorkel and chat to the local pareu sellers. The day comes to a splendid close with the Captain's Dinner. If you're on a three-night cruise, Island Passage will return to Luganville in the morning. For five-night cruises, we cross the straits to explore Maewo and Ambae.

Maewo and Ambae - days 4 to 6

You'll get more than a taste of Vanuatu, you'll enjoy an absolute feast of 'Tales of the South Pacific' scenery, castaway beaches, authentic culture and amazing true stories. Our ship cruises the eastern coast of Santo, then crosses the Straits to Maewo and Ambae. Underlying your experience is the knowledge that you're voyaging where few travellers have gone before.



Local way of life

We're welcomed into the village of Asanvari, which is situated above a beautiful lagoon at the southern end of Maewo. This intriguing settlement has a charismatic leader known simply as 'Chief Nelson'. We'll say no more about the chief, in case it spoils the surprise! In Asanvari you'll get a look at the ni-Vanuatu way of life. You'll also get to know their sense of humour, because smiling and laughing are major pastimes here. You can watch a custom dance, chat with the locals, learn how to cook lap-lap, walk to the village gardens, visit a beautiful waterfall or snorkel in the protected lagoon. And make sure you check out the Asanvari Yacht Club. When you arrive back on board, it's time for the Captain's Cocktail Party.



Secrets of Bali Hai

After the extensive tropical banquet that we call breakfast, the ship makes her way to Devil's Rock off the island of Ambae. This island was the 'Bali Hai' of James Michener's tales, where women and children were kept safe during the Battle for the Pacific. At the centre of the island is Manaro - a large, active volcano. The anchorage at Devil's Rock is spectacular - vertical volcanic cliffs and deep emerald-green water. You'll enjoy a day of kayaking, swimming and deckchair-lazing before we move to our final anchorage. Dinner is served under the stars while you swap stories of the day's adventures. We visit Pentecost on selected trips during the short land-diving season, so that guests can view this extraordinary spectacle.



One last swim

We cruise through the night to arrive with the sunrise at our Aore anchorage. The idyllic plantation island is a beautiful place for your final swim or snorkel. If you get up early enough, there might even be time for one last snooze in a deckchair. You'll disembark in Luganville before noon.



Discover Life in Paradise with Island Escape

While Pulitzer-winning novelist James Michener was stationed in Vanuatu during WWII, he travelled from island to island learning about local culture and hearing stories from the people. Michener developed an idea for a book of short stories and spent his nights tapping it out on an old typewriter, using the backs of letters, old envelopes and official Navy stationery. *Tales of the South Pacific*, which later became the musical *South Pacific*, was published in 1947.



Hooked on fishing

Think big when you're fishing in Vanuatu. Towing a lure from our fishing tender, you can hope for a catch of dog tooth tuna, yellow fin tuna, wahoo, mahi mahi or GT (giant trevally). From a purely scenic perspective, you might also encounter flying fish, sailfish, dolphins and pilot whales.



Climate

The warm south-east trade winds prevail over the islands of Vanuatu. Island Passage calls Vanuatu her home from May to September each year. Average daily temperature is 27°C. The sea temperature is usually in the mid 20s, making swimming enjoyable all year round.



Food from heaven

Provisioning Island Passage involves visiting local markets and growers to get the very best of Vanuatu's local produce. As you can imagine, our menu features lots of tropical fruit and fresh seafood. You can also look forward to local Santo beef – so good, it's exported to Japan.



Land diving on Pentecost

Pentecost Island is famous for an ages-old ritual called the naghol or land-diving, which inspired the extreme sport of bungy jumping. Between April and June every year, men in the southern part of the island jump from tall towers (around 20 to 30 metres high) with vines tied to their feet. The stretchy vines bring their leap to a sudden stop, just inches from the ground. The ritual has two purposes – to ensure a good yam harvest and to mark the passage of boys to manhood. Land diving was first given international exposure when David Attenborough and a BBC crew filmed the ritual during the 1950s. Island Passage visits Pentecost on selected trips during the short land-diving season, so that guests can view this extraordinary spectacle.



Language

Bislama for beginners

tank yu: thank you

alo: hello

lukim yu: see you

nambawan: the best

sori tumas: very sorry

fulap: filled to capacity

weit smol: a short wait

wanem: what is that?

freswoto: fresh water

mi glad tumas: I am very happy

lukim yu: see you later

hamas: how much?



Island Passage – your relaxing, stylish home on the water

The 'Island Passage' operates with a crew of eight and is registered as a New Zealand vessel under NZ Safe Ship Management. She has a tonnage of 496 GRT. The ship carries a selection of landing craft, tenders and kayaks to allow exploring off the ship into bays, estuaries and islands. The helicopter is available for trips beyond the range of our sea craft.



Bridge Deck Suites

Offering the best views on the ship, the two Cape Class cabins open directly onto the teak bridge deck. Each cabin is individually air-conditioned with SKY TV, DVD/CD, movies on demand, writing desk, easy chair, super king bed and extra-large bathroom.



Staterooms

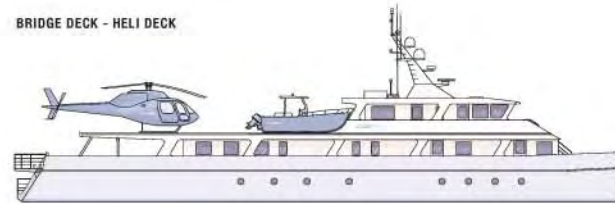
On the same level as the saloon, bar and dining room, Island Class cabins have large picture windows and doors opening directly onto the promenade deck. Each cabin has individual air-conditioning, TV, DVD/CD, movies, writing desk and either queen or twin single beds. One cabin is wheelchair-friendly with access shower and toilet.



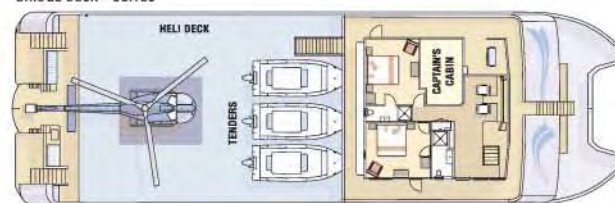
Expedition Cabins

Located on the main deck, our Channel Class cabins give you a choice of a queen-size bed or two singles. Suites with single beds have a pullman berth for a third guest. Individual air conditioning, TV, DVD/CD, movies. Sea view from the portholes.

BRIDGE DECK - HELI DECK



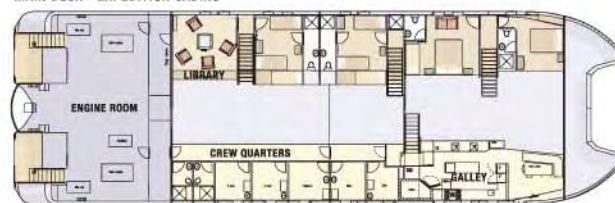
BRIDGE DECK - SUITES



PROMENADE DECK - STATEROOMS



MAIN DECK - EXPEDITION CABINS



FACT FILE

VESSEL SPECIFICATIONS

Length: 42 metres (138 feet)
Beam: 12.8 metres (39 feet)
Gross weight: 496 tonne
Range: 5500 nautical miles
Engines: 2 x Kelvin Marine
Diesel: 48,000 litres
Fresh water: 40,000 litres
Desalinator: 5000 litres/day
Auto pilot: Cetrek
Radar: Northstar x 2

Onboard equipment

1 x 7-metre landing craft
2 x 7-metre sports boats
SOLAS rescue boat
4.2 metre tender
AS355 F1 Squirrel helicopter

Air conditioning: Cruisair
Satellite TV: SeaTel 2498SE
Home theatre: Bose
Televisions: Philips plasma



Schedules may change due to operational requirements.

Vanuatu Cruise Rates and Schedule

MAY 2010 – SEPTEMBER 2010

VANUATU CRUISE RATES IN NEW ZEALAND DOLLARS

The 10 Cabins	Cabin Layout	3-Nights Prices - NZD Double/Twin/Triple	5-Nights Prices - NZD Double/Twin/Triple
Expedition	Triple Beds	\$1,795	\$2,995
Expedition	Twin/Queen	\$2,215	\$3,690
Staterooms	Twin/Queen	\$2,375	\$3,950
Owners	Queen Bed	\$2,495	\$4,195
Bridge Deck	King Bed	\$2,695	\$4,475



VANUATU 5 NIGHT CRUISE SCHEDULE

5 Nights	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Sunday	9-May	6-Jun	4-Jul	1-Aug	12-Sep
Sunday	23-May	20-Jun	18-Jul	15-Aug	19-Sep
Sunday	30-May	27-Jun	25-Jul	22-Aug	26-Sep
Sunday	-	-	-	29-Aug	-

VANUATU 3 NIGHT CRUISE SCHEDULE

3 Nights	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Saturday	15-May	12-Jun	10-Jul	7-Aug	4-Sep
Wednesday	19-May	16-Jun	14-Jul	11-Aug	8-Sep

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