

Panama, Colombia & Caribbean Islands

From **17/3/2023**
to **29/3/2023**

Ship: **LE BELLOT**

From **Colón**
to **Fort-de-France**



Join us aboard *Le Bellot* for an exceptional PONANT cruise sailing from **Colón** to **Fort-de-France**. This **13-day itinerary** will give you the opportunity to appreciate the richness and diversity of Afro-Caribbean cultures, an azure blue sky and white-sand beaches.

Your journey in **Central America** will continue with a port of call in the magnificent **Portobelo Bay**, in a region imbued with the traditions of **Congo culture**. The **fortifications** of this former gateway to the New World are a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

First, succumb to the charms of the clear waters of **Panama** and **the San Blas archipelago**, composed of more than 300 islands and cays. The **Kuna** live among the palm trees and pirogues; these people perpetuate, among other things, the **traditional craft of molas**, weaved textiles in sparkling colours.

Then, you will visit the city of **Cartagena de Indias** in Colombia. Its port, fortress and historic monuments, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, offer many noteworthy sites.

Before reaching the Caribbean islands, your ship will head for the magnificent **Bonaire**, renowned for its **coral reefs** protected by a huge marine park and for its **pink flamingos**, emblematic of the island.

After calling at the island of **Grenada**, *Le Bellot* will then sail to the archipelago of **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**, renowned for its idyllic beaches.

You will then sail towards **Saint Lucia** and its two majestic rocky peaks soaring straight from the sea, a unique location listed as UNESCO World Heritage site.

After a last stop at **Les Saintes**, a highly popular anchorage site with crystal-clear waters, you will finally reach **Fort-de-France**. Make sure to visit one of its renowned rum distilleries!



The information in this document is valid as of 6/7/2022

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

COLÓN

Embarkation 17/3/2023 from 9:59 pm to 10:59 pm

Departure 17/3/2023 at 11:59 pm

Colón is the second largest city in **Panama**, at the Caribbean entrance of the **Panama Canal**. Colón is today an important port, and the free trade zone created in 1953 contributed greatly to the development of the city. Colón was founded in 1850 by Americans working on the Panama railroad connecting the Atlantic and Pacific coasts through the isthmus of Panama; the city rapidly overshadowed the older **Caribbean** ports of Panama when the canal opened.

PORTOBELO

Arrival 18/3/2023 midday

Departure 18/3/2023 late afternoon

In the **province of Colón**, along the magnificent Caribbean coast of **Panama**, **Portobelo** is located not far from the famous **canal**. Given its name of “**beautiful port**” by **Christopher Columbus**, who discovered it in 1502, this charming and peaceful bay was one of the most important ports for the shipping of **precious metals** from the **New World** to Spain. Don't miss a visit to its **fortifications**, listed as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. The town has preserved the strong religious and cultural traditions of its colonial past, such as the veneration of the **Black Christ** and a strongly-rooted **Afro-Caribbean culture**. The **Congo** ceremonies retrace the story of **Spanish domination** over black slaves through traditional dances and music.

SAN BLAS ISLANDS

Arrival 19/3/2023 early morning

Departure 19/3/2023 midday

Located on the north-east coast of **Panama**, the **San Blas archipelago** is a string of coral islands in the heart of the Caribbean Sea. More than 300 islands and cays cover an area of 300 square kilometres offering travellers a multitude of treasures. Sheltered behind a long coral reef, **the San Blas Islands** are full of enchanting anchorages. The long sandy white beaches bound by crystal-clear waters will allow you to relax and enjoy incredible marine fauna before engaging with **the Kunas Indian community**. Still subsisting on hunting and fishing, they will welcome you in their villages of bamboo houses gathered near the beaches.

CARTAGENA

Arrival 20/3/2023 early morning

Departure 20/3/2023 evening

A splendid harbour city in the north of Columbia, a source of inspiration for the Columbian writer Gabriel García

Márquez, **Cartagena** will win you over with its well-preserved colonial architecture, and warm friendly atmosphere. You can visit the sumptuous **UNESCO World Heritage** fortified historical centre whose churches and houses have magnificent multi-coloured façades. A witness of Spanish domination, the **San Felipe de Barajas fortress** stands on top of a hill from where you can admire views over the whole city. The **Las Bóvedas** neighbourhood will charm you with its arcades, used as prison cells during the 19th century civil wars.

SANTA MARTA

Arrival 21/3/2023 early morning

Departure 21/3/2023 evening

Santa Marta, located in the north of the **Caribbean coast** of **Colombia**, is a seaside town dominated by the majestic **Sierra Nevada**. The highest coastal chain of mountains in the world, it is listed as a **Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO** for the diversity of its fauna and flora. At the heart of the **first Spanish colony**, you will discover the heritage of the **Tairona**, the largest **indigenous civilisation** in Colombia. The eponymous **national park** offers you sumptuous landscapes, combining lush tropical forest and beautiful fine sandy beaches edged with crystal-clear water. The **archaeological heritage** and the **Pre-Columbian treasures** of the region are a source of endless enchantment.

AT SEA

Arrival 22/3/2023

Departure 22/3/2023

During your day 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 day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, 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.

BONAIRE

Arrival 23/3/2023 mid morning

Departure 23/3/2023 late afternoon

Surrounded by a barrier reef and a marine sanctuary, Bonaire is a true **paradise for divers**. This peaceful and preserved little island is renowned all over the world for **its coral reefs, which are directly accessible from the beach**, providing a unique sensation of freedom. Discover magnificent marine fauna and flora while snorkelling or diving in its turquoise waters. The Washington Slagbaai **National Park** in the north of the island is home to many birds. It is the most important breeding site in the **south Caribbean** for the **pink flamingo**, the island's emblematic animal.

AT SEA

Arrival 24/3/2023

Departure 24/3/2023

During your day 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 day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, 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.

SAINT GEORGE'S, GRENADA

Arrival 25/3/2023 early morning

Departure 25/3/2023 evening

Delicately set in the curve of a bay on the west coast of Grenada, **Saint George's** lively commercial fishing harbour is especially colourful when the boats are being loaded with fruit and vegetables destined for neighbouring islands and when all the little fishing boats return from their day out at sea. This "**spice island**" capital is an excellent base for visiting the surrounding natural sites: its picturesque coast or the artisanal producers of chocolate and nutmeg, Grenada's gold. Five kilometres (3 miles) to the south, you will be able to visit Grande Anse and Morne Rouge, two long sandy beaches.

MAYREAU ISLAND

Arrival 26/3/2023 mid morning

Departure 26/3/2023 late afternoon

Among the string of paradisiac islands with their sandy beaches that form the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines archipelago, Mayreau is the smallest. Its **peaceful and idyllic atmosphere**, far from the madding crowd, invites you to relax. On shore, enjoy a **shaded and fully equipped beach** from which to go snorkelling if you'd like to observe the colourful fish around the coral sitting at the foot of the rocks that stretch across the bay.

SOUFRIÈRE

Arrival 27/3/2023 early morning

Departure 27/3/2023 early evening

Nestled in the crook of a breath-taking bay, the former capital of **St Lucia** is brimming with attractions. **Soufrière** is famous for The **Pitons**, volcanic spires that tower over the entrance to the town. In the vicinity of the lush botanical gardens, you will be able to enjoy the curative powers of the **Diamond Falls mineral baths**. From the beach at the north end of the bay, you can set off to explore the reefs that are home to stunning gardens of sea fans at the foot of the cliffs that plunge into the sea.

LES SAINTES

Arrival 28/3/2023 early morning

Departure 28/3/2023 evening

During the feast of All Saints in 1493, **Christopher Columbus** discovered this archipelago of nine islands that he named

"The Saints". Today, only two of them are inhabited. Terre de Haut, in the east, is dominated by the Morne Mire hill; at the summit stands **Fort Napoleon**, paying homage to the islands' history. In the heart of the **botanical garden**, shared by iguanas and cacti, there is an exceptional view of the **Baie des Saintes**, one of the most beautiful in the world. The long shady beach of Pompierre, where it is forbidden to drop anchor, is a peaceful place for a swim, while Pain de Sucre Beach offers wonderful opportunities for snorkelling. On the island, don't forget to taste the local speciality, the "tourment d'amour", a cake made with coconut.

FORT-DE-FRANCE

Arrival 29/3/2023 early morning

Disembarkation 29/3/2023 at 7:00 am

Located on the western coast of Martinique, Fort-de-France will amaze you by the splendour of its bay, a magnificent cut-out in the coastline, considered as one of the most beautiful in the world. At the harbour mouth, on its strip of land, **fort Saint-Louis** overlooks the capital city of Martinique. If you climb up to it, you can see some breath-taking views. **Saint Louis Cathedral** and the Schoelcher library bear witness to a secular history, intimately linked to the island's story. Why not try some fresh coconut at the colourful Grand Marché. Two really pleasant places you can take a breather in, right in the heart of the city, are the garden of Balata and the Aimé Césaire park.