



Victories in the Pacific

Aboard Oceanic Discoverer

In March 2012 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the World War II *Battle of the Pacific* Coral Princess Cruises is proud to present a special expedition discovering the legends and major battlefields of the South Pacific. Discover how Allied forces withstood the Japanese onslaught and ultimately turned the tide of war.

A unique itinerary has been developed for this special cruise, visiting many of the key locations synonymous with the *Battle of the Pacific*. We will tour historic Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands where the Battle of Guadalcanal, codenamed Operation Watchtower, was waged by Allied forces between 7 August 1942 and 9 February 1943. Amongst several other key battlefields we also discover tiny Kennedy Island, which was named in honour of John F. Kennedy who swam ashore with his crew after his torpedo boat PT-109 was struck by a Japanese destroyer, Kennedy's heroism ultimately resulting in him being awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal. In Vanuatu we visit Million Dollar Point on Espiritu Santo, site of one of the largest US bases in the South Pacific. At the end of the war, US forces dumped their military equipment into the sea, and you will have the opportunity to snorkel over the jeeps, boats and other supplies left behind. Certified divers will also have the opportunity to dive the SS President Coolidge, a glamorous cruise liner which was converted into a troop carrier during the war before being sunk by friendly mines off Espiritu Santo.

This 13 night expedition departs Noumea, New Caledonia on 4 March 2012. Throughout the voyage you will discover four countries; New Caledonia, Vanuatu, The Solomon islands and Papua New Guinea, discovering not only the fascinating WWII history of this remarkable region, but also enjoying the rare opportunity to meet the friendly locals in their island villages, where their Melanesian traditions and lifestyles remain intact and untouched by modern 21st Century development.



Your Guest Lecturers: Richard Frank and Mat McLachlan
 Throughout this special cruise you will share in the extensive knowledge of two outstanding guest lecturers, each selected for their unmatched knowledge of the Pacific War. Richard Frank is a renowned US military historian, having authored a number of books on the topic, whilst Australia's own military expert Mat McLachlan will explain Australia's involvement in the battle and share the legends of the Australian soldiers who upheld the legend of the ANZACs.

Experience:

- New Caledonia
- Vanuatu
- The Solomon Islands
- Papua New Guinea

Victories in the Pacific Expedition Cruise 13 Nights - Departs Noumea 4 March 2012	MAIN DECK (Cat. B)	MAIN DECK (Cat. A)	PROMENADE DECK (Cat. B)	PROMENADE DECK (Cat. A)	BRIDGE DECK
Twin Share, per person	\$10,990	\$11,390	\$11,890	\$12,390	\$12,990 C

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Prices are per person, twin share. Enquire for single traveller prices. Price is cruise only in Australian dollars.



Day 1: New Caledonia, Noumea

Boarding commences at 9:00am for a 10:00am departure. This afternoon our historian Richard Frank will present a briefing about the Pacific War and the pivotal events that occurred at the destinations we will be visiting in the coming days. We will also have the opportunity to enjoy a beach walk on beautiful Casey Island and perhaps enjoy a snorkel over the colourful corals. Tonight, join the Captain and crew for Welcome Cocktails.

Day 2: Lifou Island Tour

Lifou Island's impressive beaches are amongst the best in the world, backed by sparkling lagoons and pine covered landscapes. Join the Expedition Leader on a walk to the island's churches and beautiful bays. Lifou is sensational for snorkelling, a panorama of sea-life unsullied by man.

Day 3: Tanna Island Volcano

As we approach Tanna Island we see our first signs of volcanic activity; hot springs bubbling beneath the surface. Travel ashore and land on the black volcanic beach of Port Resolution. Join our Expedition Leader on a drive, local style, through the forest and up the slopes of Mount Yasur to view this active volcano that still regularly spews rocks and ash. Tonight, Richard Frank will present a briefing about Vanuatu's role in the war and in particular the vital Allied base at our next port of call, Espiritu Santo.

Day 4: Million Dollar Point

Espiritu Santo was one of the main US air bases in the South Pacific for much of the war. By 1945 there were four airfields and a seaplane base on the island and more than 40,000 US troops were stationed there. James Michener wrote his Pulitzer Prize-winning *Tales of the South Pacific* after being stationed on Santo during the war. At the end of the war the US had tons of equipment and vehicles on Santo that would be too expensive to ship back to the US. After failing to negotiate the sale of the equipment to locals, most of it - from bulldozers to crates of Coca-Cola - was dumped in the sea. Today Million Dollar Point is a popular dive and snorkel site, and certified divers may also wish to join the Dive Instructor on a dive to the SS President Coolidge, a glamorous ship that was seconded by the US Military and converted into a US troop ship during the war. The Coolidge was struck by a friendly mine off Espiritu Santo on October 26 1942 and today is the world's largest WWII wreck accessible to SCUBA divers.

Day 5: Ureparapara Island

Imagine cruising into the cone of a volcano surrounded on three sides by thousand-

foot cliffs. Ureparapara is one of the most spectacular islands in Vanuatu. The only way to experience this island is by sea and visits from ships are rare. Be entertained by the local people with dancing and join a guided walk to the top of the caldera.

Day 6: Nendo Island

Our welcome to the Solomon Islands, Nendo Island is an excellent location to view and purchase quality artefacts. We enjoy a cultural performance and the opportunity to snorkel.

Day 7: Santa Ana

The locals of Santa Ana, a small island southeast of San Cristobal, welcome us ashore with village warriors bearing swords and blowing on conch shell horns. Back on board, Richard Frank will present a briefing on the highlight of our WW2 cruise, our visit to Guadalcanal and Tulagi.

Day 8: Guadalcanal

On August 7, 1942, America launched its first offensive operation of the war when the 1st Marine Division landed on the north coast of Guadalcanal. The Marines quickly secured the airfield but over the next six months became entangled in some of the fiercest battles of the Pacific War, as the Japanese desperately tried to recover the airfield. By the time the Japanese gave up their attempts to recapture Guadalcanal in February 1943, almost 8000 American marines, soldiers, sailors and airmen had been killed. Today we will explore this iconic World War Two battlefield, the 'Gettysburg of the Pacific'. Accompanied by Richard Frank, we will visit the US Memorial, the Japanese Memorial, Alligator Creek, Bloody Ridge, Red Beach and much more. We will also see the remains of US and Japanese planes, armour and guns at the outdoor museum at Vilu. A highlight of our day will be meeting local islanders who served as scouts for the American forces during the battle.

Day 9: Tulagi

Tulagi is a small island just north of Guadalcanal that bears the distinction of being the first place American forces landed during the Pacific War. After lunch we will reboard *Xplorer* and explore Tulagi Harbor, a former PT-boat base where John F. Kennedy was stationed in 1943 on *PT-109*. We will also cruise past the islands of Gavutu and Tanambogo, scenes of fierce fighting during the US landings, and the wrecks of several Japanese 'Mavis' flying boats.

Day 10: Arnavon Islands

The Arnavon Islands are the only marine reserve in the Solomon Islands where, except for subsistence gathering, all marine life is protected and fishing is banned. The islands are home to endangered wildlife

including the beautiful Hawksbill Turtle. Travel ashore to see how the conservation efforts are helping rejuvenate the island before enjoying snorkelling and glass bottom boat tours.

Day 11: Ghizo and Kennedy Island

Discover tiny Kennedy Island, named in honor of John F. Kennedy who swam ashore with his crew after his patrol boat *PT-109* was sunk by a Japanese destroyer in August 1943. We explore the sandy beaches and snorkel or dive over the coral reef. In the afternoon we visit the small provincial capital on Ghizo Island. Wander through the open air markets, showcasing crafts by legendary wood carvers. Richard Frank will deliver a briefing on the Bougainville Campaign, the next chapter of World War Two history we will explore.

Day 12: Papua New Guinea - Bougainville

Today we farewell the Solomon Islands with our arrival on the New Guinean island of Bougainville. Bougainville was occupied by Japanese troops in mid-1942 and was intended to form an important forward outpost of the Japanese Empire. We will travel ashore at Torokina, the site of the main US and Australian base. We will have the opportunity to meet the local villagers and see the remains of an Allied airstrip built on Cape Torokina. We will also visit Puruata, an idyllic uninhabited island in nearby Empress Augusta Bay that has a beautiful beach and relics from the war.

Day 13: Buka Island

Travelling in the wake of 18th century French explorer Louis-Antoine de Bougainville we sail the coast of Bougainville and embark on an expedition at the island of Buka. Richard Frank will present a briefing on the New Britain Campaign, the final chapter in our tour of the Second World War battlefields.

Day 14: New Britain/Rabaul and Farewell

Rabaul was the provincial capital of the island of New Britain. In January 1942 Rabaul was occupied by Australian troops when it came under attack. An invasion force landed on January 23 and within hours Rabaul was in Japanese hands. Rabaul has many reminders of its wartime history and makes for a fascinating visit. We will arrive in the morning and enjoy a half-day tour of the town's Second World War landmarks. The conclusion of the tour marks the end of our voyage through the Pacific battlefields of World War Two.

This itinerary is an indication of the destinations we visit and activities on offer. We reserve the right to make changes due to weather, tidal conditions or any other event affecting the operation of the vessel.