

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Limited availability on Orion expeditions to PNG and West Papua

Opportunities for travellers seeking a *path less travelled* to neighbouring Papua New Guinea and West Papua during 2011 will need to move quickly as *Orion* will only be visiting this tropical paradise for one season of cruises during March and April (instead of the usual second season in October as well).

Chris Perkins, General Manager Sales and Marketing for Orion Expedition Cruises, has advised that due to other destination commitments later in the year there will be just three 11 night voyages onboard the expedition cruise ship *Orion* in 2011 to Papua New Guinea.

Two voyages will feature the popular ***PNG Cultural Highlights*** itinerary with the third an exciting all-new ***West Papua & Maluku*** expedition visiting many rarely-visited places across the north of PNG and West Papua even Google struggles to provide in-depth information on.

The two ***Cultural Highlights*** voyages (23 March and 3 April 2011) provide guests with a taste of primitive tribal cultures, unique flora and fauna, the opportunity to purchase superb indigenous artwork, visit isolated villages, enjoy world-class snorkelling and reflect on our recent past at historic World War II sites.

For keen photographers the 3 April voyage is a great opportunity to join the photographic workshop of a lifetime, capturing all the action in one of the world's most photo-opportunistic locations, Papua New Guinea.

In association with *Better Photography* magazine and the *Australian Geographic Society*, and under the knowledgeable guidance of internationally recognised photographer Nick Rains and *Grand Master of Photography* Peter Eastwood, this voyage is designed to appeal to photographers of all levels. Hone photographic skills with the guidance of experts in one of the most photogenic places on earth.

Under the watchful eye of the specialist expedition team, Orion's guests on the ***all-new West Papua & Maluku signature Voyage of Discovery expedition*** departing 14 April will re-define the word 'remote', visiting rarely visited areas across the top of West Papua including Mapia Atoll (just north of the equator) and the marine wonderland of Rajah Ampat, the Bird's Head Peninsula, Kei and Yamdena Islands in the Tanimbars, concluding in Darwin. Parts of this voyage are to places so remote most of the well travelled crew onboard Orion have not yet been there!

If you are an adventurous traveller who enjoys photography, marine biology, bird watching, anthropology, maritime and military history – or just plain curious – then Orion Expedition Cruises' 96 page 2011 brochure details all these and other expeditions in depth.

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For reservations, more information or to obtain a brochure call Orion Expedition Cruises: 61-2 9033 8777 (Sydney callers) 1300 361 012 (regional and interstate) or see your travel agent. Email: info@orionexpeditions.com.au

Further information on Orion Expedition Cruises can be obtained by visiting the website www.orionexpeditions.com

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11-night Papua New Guinea Cultural Highlights: CAIRNS (optional direct charter flight to RABAU (overnight onboard), Sepik River & Watam Village, Madang, Tami Islands, Tufi, Fergusson Island, Samarai and Kwato Islands, Alotau (Milne Bay), CAIRNS. 2011 Departures: 23 March and 3 April (above itinerary in reverse; Australian Geographic photography expedition)

11-night West Papua & Maluku Voyage of Discovery: CAIRNS, (optional charter flight to Rabaul), Rabaul, Wewak, Jayapura, Urbanasi, Mapia Atoll, Raja Ampat, McClure Gulf, Kei Islands, Tanimbars, DARWIN. 2011 Departure: 14 April

Direct access to and from Rabaul in Papua New Guinea has been simplified as Orion has arranged for Australian-operated charter flights between Cairns and Rabaul to assist in convenient non-stop transfers in both directions.

Fares commence from \$8,175 (West Papua & Maluku) or \$ 8,995 (Cultural Highlights) per person for an ocean view (Category B Stateroom). Suites begin from \$ 11,275 (West Papua & Maluku) or \$ 12,410 (Cultural Highlights). Orion's Owners' Suites are \$17,120 (West Papua & Maluku) or \$ 18,840 (Cultural Highlights).

Early booking savings of up to 15% are still available, subject to availability.

Expedition fares include ocean view accommodation, all meals, 24 hour room service, the service of 75 experienced crew members, guest speakers and/or expedition leaders and selected landings & activities ashore.

All departures are guaranteed.

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Note to Editors:

ORION EXPEDITION CRUISES NAMED "BEST RESPONSIBLE CRUISE OPERATOR" AT WORLD TRAVEL MARKET

Orion Expedition Cruises has been named *Best Responsible Cruise Operator* at the internationally acclaimed 2010 Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards which took place as part of World Travel Market in London on Wednesday 10th November 2010 (World Responsible Tourism Day).

Ranked #2 expedition cruise ship in the world in the current Berlitz Cruise Guide, Orion is the world's latest purpose-built luxury expedition cruise ship, featuring an unmatched range of onboard facilities. With 75 crew and a maximum of just 106 passengers Orion offers the highest staff to guest ratio and guest to public space ratio of any ship based in Australian waters.

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