

9 Days | Luxury Expedition Cruise | JAPAN with PONANT

Osaka - Tomonoura - Mitarai - Shimokamagari - Moji - Busan - Amakusa
Region - Koshikijima Islands - Kagoshima

From **\$10,800** Typically \$13,500 pp twin share



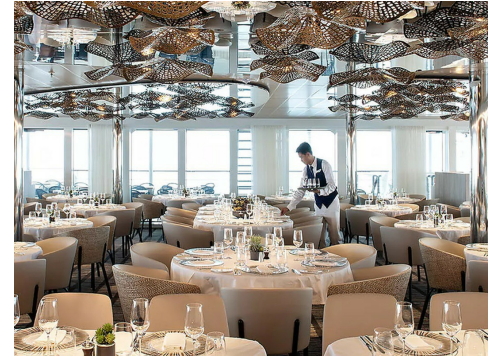
Discover the gems of western Kyushu and, the Seto Inland Sea, including natural wonders, Japanese culture and ancestral traditions

UNESCO sites: “the hidden Christian sites in the Nagasaki region”, in Amakusa

See the varied landscapes along the Seto Inland Sea, offering stunning contrasts between land and sea

Discover the history, cultures, and the incredible diversity of the flora and fauna thanks to our team of naturalist guides with expertise in this destination

Description



Embarking on a luxury cruise with PONANT aboard the remarkable Le Jacques-Cartier promises an unforgettable journey through the treasures of western Kyushu and the Seto Inland Sea.

Over the course of nine magical days, you'll immerse yourself in the natural splendor, cultural richness, and historical significance of this captivating region.

Setting sail from Osaka, the voyage commences with a visit to Tomonoura, a picturesque port town renowned for its serene ambiance and rugged landscapes, immortalized by the renowned director Hayao Miyazaki in the film Ponyo. Here, you'll explore charming fishing villages like Shimokamagari and Mitarai, delving into the authentic maritime life of the area.

Continuing onwards, the journey leads to Moji, a city steeped in maritime history and adorned with well-preserved architectural gems reminiscent of Japan's Meiji era. From the vantage point of the Mojiko Retro Observation Room, panoramic views reveal a tapestry of Shinto sanctuaries and mesmerizing coastal vistas.

Crossing into South Korea, the cruise docks at Busan, a city of captivating contrasts where modernity harmonizes with tradition. Wander through the bustling port and explore the quaint alleys of the old Chalgachi district, immersing yourself in the dynamic ambiance of this vibrant city.

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Returning to Japan, Nagasaki awaits, a city synonymous with resilience and peace, despite its tragic past. Discover the rich tapestry of religious heritage woven into its narrow streets, from the solemn Oura Catholic Church to the exquisite Suwa Shrine, bearing witness to Nagasaki's enduring spirit.

As the voyage unfolds, the enchanting island region of Amakusa beckons, once a sanctuary for persecuted Christians during Japan's Edo period.

Explore the hidden Christian sites nestled amidst its scenic beauty, designated UNESCO World Heritage sites, offering poignant insights into Japan's complex religious history.

Before reaching the journey's end in Kagoshima, Le Jacques Cartier ventures to the Koshikijima Islands, where towering cliffs and ancient rock formations stand as silent witnesses to the passage of time. Embark on Zodiac excursions to delve into the raw and authentic beauty of this remote archipelago, dating back millions of years.

Throughout the cruise, expert naturalist guides accompany you on immersive outings, offering unparalleled insights into the region's diverse flora, fauna, and cultural heritage. From the tranquil shores of the Seto Inland Sea to the dramatic landscapes of western Kyushu, each day unveils new wonders, inviting you to embark on a voyage of discovery and enlightenment aboard Le Jacques-Cartier.



Itinerary

Day 1

Osaka

Embarkation starts from 4PM to 5PM

Departure will be at 6PM

Like its big sister Tokyo, Osaka is the product of ancestral traditions and amazing technological innovations. And despite its size, its location on the Pacific Ocean give it a sense of serenity. The main historic landmark is the 16th century Osaka Castle, which stands proud in the midst of majestic skyscrapers. The lively streets of Dotomburi and the bizarre Shinsekai district attract thousands of locals and visitors. A multitude of restaurants offer menus full of regional specialities: takoyaki, made with octopus, and other succulent dishes such as kushikatsu kebabs.

Meals: All Meals onboard

Accommodation: *'Le Jacques-Cartier'*

Day 2

Tomonoura

Anchored to the south-eastern end of the Nunakama Peninsula, facing the calm and clear waters of the Seto Inland Sea, Tomonoura is a destination particularly appreciated for its authentic and old-fashioned atmosphere that gives it an incomparable charm. In the past used as a port where boats would moor while waiting for a favourable wind, the charming and picturesque village now serves to inspire many filmmakers and artists. With good reason, since its craggy landscapes, its cherry trees in blossom, its gentle way of life, its traditional wooden houses and its port, preserved since the Edo era, notably enabled the artist Hayao Miyazaki to make the animated film Ponyo.

Meals: All Meals onboard

Accommodation: *'Le Jacques-Cartier'*

Day 3

Mitarai

A charming fishing village nestling in the east of Osaki Shimojima Island, on the edge of the Seto Inland Sea, Mitarai is appreciated for its traditional charm and authentic character. A trip back in time to the Edo Period, where the hustle and bustle of modern cities is replaced by the gentle sound of fishing boats. Thanks to its 19th century wooden dwellings lining the small, narrow streets, its great causeway, its centuries-old sanctuaries and its gangi stairs, a stone structure giving on to the sea, the old town was classed as a Preservation District by the Japanese state in 1994.

Shimokamagari

The island of Shimokamagari stretches into the heart of the Seto Inland Sea, off the coast of the town of Kure, in the Hiroshima prefecture. A historical city during the feudal period, the island was the theatre of major diplomatic missions for the future and the Empire's trade relationships, notably with repeated visits from mainly Korean, but also Chinese and Dutch, emissaries. Registered since 2017 on the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme, documentary heritage of these encounters is conserved in the Shotoen Garden, one of the emblems of this lush islet. A magnificent Japanese garden with perfectly kept grounds, interspersed with raked pebbles and surrounded with majestic trees, it is home to a Rantokaku Museum complex, consisting of four exhibition rooms tracing the island's naval history.

Meals: All Meals onboard

Accommodation: *'Le Jacques-Cartier'*

Day 4

Moji, Kitakyushu

At the mouth of the Kanmon Straits lies Mojiko, the northernmost port of Kyushu, one of Japan's four main islands. For many years, Mojiko was the gateway to the island. Today, the old boats are gone, but as you stroll around the picturesque streets you will discover a well-preserved architectural heritage that evokes traditional Japan from the first Meiji era of the late 19th century. From the heights of the Mojiko Retro Observation Room, you can enjoy the amazing views that take in the Shinto shrine and coastal landscape like a postcard of the Land of the Rising Sun.

Meals: All Meals onboard

Accommodation: *'Le Jacques-Cartier'*

Day 5

Busan

With around four million inhabitants, Busan is the second largest metropolis on South Korea, after Seoul. This dynamic harbour city, located in the south-east, surrounded by the warm waters of the Sea of Japan, benefits from a mild, pleasant climate. You'll find delightful simply to stroll around the lively streets and explore the city's outstanding cultural heritage of art galleries, museums, and Buddhist sites, such as the Haedong Yonggungsa temple, which elegantly sits on the waterfront. Rich too in magnificent beaches and superlative natural landscapes, Busan's peaceful atmosphere will win you over, as will its inhabitants, whom you'll have the pleasure of meeting.

Meals: All Meals onboard

Accommodation: *'Le Jacques-Cartier'*

Day 6

Nagasaki

Located on the north-west coast of Kyushu, Nagasaki will impress you by its rich heritage. Despite the destruction in 1945, you can visit several ancient sites, including the beautiful 19th-century Catholic Church of Oura and its garden, the sanctuary of Suwa Shrine or several Buddhist temples. A visit to the Atomic Bomb Museum gives you insight into the extent of the damage caused by the nuclear attack. Close by, a walk in the Memorial Peace Park leads you to a collection of objets d'art offered as a gift from Japan to the world.

Meals: All Meals onboard

Accommodation: *'Le Jacques-Cartier'*

Day 7

Amakusa Region

Facing the mythical island of Kyushu, between the Yatsushiro and Ariake seas, the island region of Amakusa both surprises and captivates. Composed of some one hundred verdant islets surrounded by stunning seabeds, the Japanese archipelago was once a refuge for many Christians fleeing the ban on Catholicism in the 17th century during the Edo period. Christian heritage can be found in every village in the region. In Sakitsu, a charming fishing port, immerse yourself in this Christian heritage, particularly when you visit the emblematic church listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Meals: All Meals onboard

Accommodation: *'Le Jacques-Cartier'*

Day 8

Koshikijima Islands

Off the western coastlines of Kagoshima Prefecture, the rocky and green islets called the Koshikijima Islands rise like a mirage from the East China Sea. Aboard our Zodiac dinghies, you will reach the three islands that make up the archipelago: Kamikoshikishima, Nakakoshikishima and Shimokoshikishima. You will be captivated by the raw and authentic beauty of this environment, featuring monumental cliffs and huge rock formations that date back to the Cretaceous period or nearly 80 million years. During hikes, you will be lucky enough to discover these unique and striking landscapes. An interlude where time may stand still.

Meals: All Meals onboard

Accommodation: *'Le Jacques-Cartier'*

Day 9

Kagoshima

The ship will arrive early morning.

Disembarkation will commence at 8AM.

The seaside city of Kagoshima, at the south of Kyushu Island, is best known for Sakurajima, an active volcano that faces Kinko Bay. A visit to this busy metropolis will remind you just how much the volcano is part of the inhabitants' everyday life: in the wake of the almost daily eruptions, a delicate layer of ash settles on everything. The top of a buried torii (traditional Japanese gate) measuring three metres that was 'swallowed up' by a giant lava flow in 1914 can still be seen. The power of nature will send a shiver down your spine.

Meals: Breakfast

Inclusions & Exclusions

Inclusions

- 8 Night Cruise on 'Le Jacques-Cartier' in a Deluxe Stateroom, including all meals, most drinks, and daily shore excursion

About your ship 'Le Jacques-Cartier': In keeping with the philosophy of PONANT and the PONANT EXPLORERS, Le Jacques-Cartier is a modern ship with slender, tapered lines, it is environmentally friendly and equipped with innovative technology.

Tastefully decorated, Le Jacques-Cartier reflects the universe so dear to PONANT, with its light tones and open-to-the-sea design providing soft light and luminosity at every instant of the day. Its ethnic chic ambiance pays homage to the destinations we visit.

Located below the waterline, the Blue Eye, the first ever multisensorial lounge, offers a unique experience: the opportunity to enjoy undersea views and the sounds of the marine world whilst sharing a glass together.

About your Cabin: The cabin onboard is a Deluxe Stateroom (Deck 3). Upgrades are available but subject to availability.

Images courtesy of Ponant.

Exclusions

- Anything not mentioned in the itinerary
- Personal expenses
- Flights
- Travel insurance

ID: A Passport with 6 months validity is required to be taken with you to board the cruise ship.

Currency: on board is Euros

Insurance: All guests must have travel insurance to participate on this tour and will be required to show this prior to departure. (including Remote Area Evacuation). We recommend Covermore travel insurance. To quote and book, please click [HERE](#).

Level of fitness: All participants should be in good general health, able to walk reasonable distances over sometimes uneven terrain, and stand during excursions.

All guests must be able to make their own way up and down stairs in case of emergency.

Travelling on your own? Why not join the [Traveldream Solo Travellers Facebook group](#) where you can interact with other travellers.