



Two news events for PONANT this summer: The resumption of the company's activity *Le Bellot's* inaugural season in Iceland



PONANT, the reference in Ocean Voyages aboard small cruising yachts, is resuming its activity. From July to August 2020, the company is proposing all-new expedition cruises discovering Iceland. For her inaugural season, *Le Bellot*, the latest ship in the PONANT EXPLORER series, will be sailing around this land of ice and fire with an 8-day itinerary discovering the glaciers, fjords, waterfalls and volcanoes of this mythic country.

On the edge of the Arctic, Iceland boasts majestic and varied landscapes in the heart of a preserved nature far from any civilisation. The programme of this itinerary put together by PONANT's experts includes: the Vatnajökull National Park, a Unesco World Heritage Site, crossing the Arctic Circle, or observation of the whales, orcas, seals and Atlantic puffins that make up the wildlife of this remote region.

As always with PONANT expedition cruises, a team of naturalist guides will be on board to share their knowledge of the fauna and flora of the regions visited. Also on the programme: Zodiac outings, hikes, visits of volcanic beaches, rugged cliffs, glaciers, icebergs and natural warm water springs.

Combining an intimate size (only 92 staterooms and suites, all with a balcony or a private terrace) with cutting-edge technology, respect for the environment and refined design, *Le Bellot* is the symbol of a new generation of cruise ships flying the French flag. Like all those in the PONANT EXPLORER series, she is fitted with a world first: the "Blue Eye". This multi-sensory underwater lounge enables guests to discover and experience the subaquatic universe. Her two portholes shaped like the eye of a cetacean look out onto the seabed. Her non-intrusive underwater projectors, her hydrophones integrated into the keel retransmitting the natural symphony of the ocean depths and her Body Listening sofas offer a unique spectacle.

WILD AND SECRET ICELAND

For her inaugural season, *Le Bellot*, the latest ship in the PONANT EXPLORER series, will depart from Reykjavik and sail around Iceland, a country of contrasts. As demonstrated by the peninsula of the Snæfellsjökull National Park and its rugged coastline overlooked by the magnificent Snæfel volcano, or the majestic fjords of the north-west of the island. During hikes, the Hornstrandir Nature Reserve will unveil its sublime landscapes, from sandy beaches and turquoise waters to vertiginous cliffs and natural warm water pools. The magic will continue in the north of the country, as you cross the Arctic Circle. You may then witness the unforgettable dance of whales, orcas, seals and Atlantic puffins. To the south, in the heart of Iceland's largest ice cap, the show takes place next to the calving glaciers of the Vatnajökull National Park. These give birth to blueish icebergs that the currents carry away to run aground on the black volcanic beaches.



From Reykjavik to Reykjavik - Aboard *Le Bellot*

7 departures, 13 July 2020, 20 July 2020, 27 July 2020, 5 August 2020, 12 August 2020, 19 August 2020 and 26 August 2020, from £3,910

For more information about this cruise, [click here](#)

Itineraries may be modified depending on port authorisations and applicable governmental regulations

Sail with confidence

The small size of its vessels, the medical infrastructure and teams on board and its protocols ensured that there were no cases of Covid-19 contamination in the PONANT fleet. To prepare for the resumption of its activity, the company is collaborating with the IHU (Institut Hospitalo-Universitaire) Méditerranée Infection of Marseilles, one of the world's leading centres in the field of infectious diseases, as well as Bureau Veritas, a world leader in testing, inspection and certification (TIC).

PONANT's reinforced health protocol is based on health standards that exceed international regulations. It relies on the provision and maintenance of a "Covid-Safe" area around its ships, a hermetic sanitary bubble, thanks to the rollout of three layers of shields: stringent on-board access conditions, rigorous sanitary protocols throughout the cruise as well as daily checks (guests, equipment, ships). It includes the implementation of a health check for 100% of the people on board (guests and crew members) and filtering and disinfection at boarding in a guest circuit that has been entirely redesigned for before, during and after the cruise. In addition, upon arrival at the airport in Iceland, all passengers must take a PCR serology test (device set up by the authorities) and obtain a negative result in order to obtain access to the vessel.

To undertake regular tests on board, PONANT has been equipped by the biotech company C4Diagnostics, which is behind the development of a comprehensive and rapid Covid-19 detection solution in confined and difficult-to-access environments. Thanks to a portable system based on PCR-LAMP technology, enabling tests to be carried out in situ and to obtain results in 20 minutes, each PONANT ship has the capacity to independently detect the virus in humans and in the environment. The performance of this technology developed and produced in France is equivalent to the RT-PCR* reference technique.

*With validation from CIBU (the Biological Emergency Response Cell at the Institut Pasteur) for the Rapid Detection of Coronavirus pathogens for humans on 02/06/2020

Moreover, PONANT had already been investing for many years to set up high-level hospitals aboard the ships in its fleet, made up of a state-of-the-art medical infrastructure (radiology, biology and even resuscitation devices, etc.) that goes beyond all current touristic standards. An expert medical team made up of at least one doctor and a nurse, available around the clock, are present in these hospitals.

To find out more about our health protocol*: [click here](#)

* This document may be adjusted depending on medical, sanitary and scientific developments



ABOUT PONANT

Created in 1988, by officers of the French Merchant Navy, PONANT has created a new style of cruising, under the French flag, through a unique conception of sea travel and a commitment to promoting sustainable and responsible tourism. Accessing exceptional territories aboard yachts featuring refined design, on which the art of living and excellent cuisine take pride of place: such is the promise of a unique and authentic PONANT voyage.

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For more information, visit www.ponant.com

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