



Japan 2024: hidden treasures on the Japanese archipelago



The world's first cruise line to resume voyages to Japan in 2023, PONANT is also launching sales of 10 departures for summer 2024. Two brand new itineraries and 11 exclusive ports of call are on the agenda.

Japan is a land that attracts and fascinates the world. After two and a half years of almost total closure, the legendary archipelago is finally reopening to tourism. This summer, PONANT will be the first maritime company in the world to call there again and this time, it's to new ports of call.

For those who have not planned to travel this summer, it is time to prepare your trip for 2024! PONANT has crafted 9 exclusive itineraries and 9 expedition journeys aboard *Le Soléal* and *Le Jacques-Cartier*. With an exclusive program, as PONANT zodiacs are the only ones allowed to access a selection of Japan most remote sites. A unique opportunity to discover the Land of the Rising Sun in a different light.

"Thanks to its small ships, PONANT can create the conditions for guests to approach protected ecosystems with the greatest respect for the places and cultures. It is a new order in terms of exploration, experience and Japanese tourism," explains Ryo Ijichi, PONANT's Japanese Expedition Leader and an expert in the region, adding: *"Some ports of call, like the Ryukyu Islands for example, where small fishing villages have been spared the country's hyper-modernisation, are like time capsules, right off the beaten track".* Drawing on his expertise and months of location scouting, Ryo Ijichi has drawn up rich and varied programmes that include UNESCO World Heritage sites, national parks and nature sanctuaries, idyllic beaches, encounters with local communities and discovering ancestral and unknown cultures.

On the Orient's frontier, travellers will embark from Ha Long to Naha. Their wanderings will take them to the wild unspoiled island of **Iriomote**, 90% of which is covered in dense semi-tropical jungle, encircled by a magnificent coral reef, or to Okinawa where a visit to a traditional village and local distillery ends with an *Eisa* folk dance show. The same care has been taken to ensure exclusivity on the legendary **Kitamae**. This time explorers aboard *Le Soléal* will be retracing the posts on this maritime trading route, which created both fortunes and shipwrecks. To new ports of call at **Wajima**, **Shimonoseki**, the **Uradome Coast** and **Miyazu** add another fascinating digression at **Tottori**. This ancient fortified city is home to Japan's largest sand dunes all featured in lithography, before heading for the **Straits of Kanmon** and **Kurushima**, so emblematic of the **Kitamae** route. The expedition on *Le Jacques-Cartier* to the secret island of Kyushu promises another voyage like no other into the very heart of the unspoiled **Koshikishima Islands**, **Kamigoto**, **Iki**, **Jeju** and the island region of Amakusa. As many preserved stopovers as unknown jewels in the heart of the Land of the Rising Sun.

Focus on two unique itineraries:

Odyssey in the heart of Japan's subtropical islands

With this unique 13-day expedition aboard *Le Jacques-Cartier*, embarking from Ha Long in Naha, PONANT is the first cruise company to bear you away to the sublime subtropical islands of southern Japan. A team of naturalist-guides will be by your side as you discover the wealth of nature sites, villages and traditions, like the islands of Okinawa Yaeyama and Sakishima in the Ryukyu archipelago.

Ha Long – Naha, Okinawa, on Le Jacques-Cartier. 4 to 16 March 2024, 13 days – 12 nights.

From €8,640 – [Find more about this voyage](#)

Kyushu's secret islands and ancestral heritage

Le Jacques-Cartier bears you away to discover a Japan that is far from any clichés. With every port of call the veil is lifted on enchanting nature and an unexpected Christian heritage at a crossroads between Western and Japanese traditions. From the lively city of Kagoshima, nestled between ancient forests and majestic volcanoes, the ship heads south to the mountainous island of Yakushima, a UNESCO World Heritage site. This well protected island is home to endemic species such as the Yaku monkey and Yakushima deer, and an exceptional natural environment from ancient cedar forests to magical waterfalls. Other new ports of call are to the islands of Koshikishima, Kamigoto, Iki, Jeju and the island region of Amakusa.

Kagoshima – Fukuoka, on Le Jacques-Cartier. Two sailings from 20 and 27 April 2024, 8 days – 7 nights.

From €5,290 – [Find more about this voyage](#)

ABOUT PONANT

Explore to Inspire: explore to better understand, learn, share and protect. For 35 years, PONANT has been committed to more responsible tourism and voyages of exploration which have meaning. The French-flagged fleet comprises 13 small ships equipped with state of the art environmentally friendly equipment. With PONANT, exploration is refined, authentic and a source of inspiration. For more information www.ponant.com

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