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Orion 2010 Calendar of Sailings

28 May, 2009

[New expeditions and destinations feature in Orion's 2010 itineraries](#)

29 May 2009. Sydney:

Sarina Bratton, Managing Director of Orion Expedition Cruises, today announced the 2010 itineraries for the Australian-based 5 star expedition cruise ship *Orion*.

"Our 2010 itineraries continue to build on our core promise to take guests on 'paths less travelled' and we are very excited to be providing expeditionary voyages to explore more Australian coastal marine parks, nature reserves, National Parks and world Heritage areas than ever before.

Our popular expeditions including the Antarctic, Kimberley, Arnhem Land, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand continue – but we have added a range of 7 night East Coast, South Australian and Tasmanian explorations stretching from Cairns to Hobart.

New South East Australian itineraries take us to Melbourne, coastal Victoria and South Australia for the first time, providing plenty of opportunities to explore by sea and land, revelling in fine food and wine, and discovering the hidden treasures of the Limestone Coast, Kangaroo Island and the Eyre and Fleurieu Peninsulas.

This now means that Orion has expeditions to every state in Australia in 2010!

Building on guest feedback from successful expeditions to date I am pleased to announce we will be expanding our itineraries in Papua New Guinea to include 6 new destinations. We are also visiting new parts of the exotic Spice and Tanimbar Islands and for the first time will be adding an expedition that includes Irian Jaya, world-famous for its Asmat Art.

There is a wide choice of enticing destinations for new and repeat guests alike in 2010, with voyages from the polar regions to the tropics to the exotic, all experienced onboard the world's youngest purpose-built expedition ship, Orion.

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In 2010 Orion has Australia covered - For the first time *Orion* will be visiting every Australian State - plus Macquarie Island and Antarctica. Two coastal highlights voyages that include Victoria and South Australia in November will round out visits to every State and the Northern Territory.

Expeditions also include Melanesia, remote islands of Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, New Zealand fjord lands and sub-Antarctic islands.

2010 voyages feature

- 6 new rarely-visited island destinations in Papua New Guinea
- 3 new ports in the exotic Spice and Tanimbar Islands
- *Orion's* inaugural visit to Irian Jaya, famous worldwide for its vibrant Asmat Art woodcarvings
- New Australian coastal voyages from Cairns to Hobart including World Heritage listed marine parks, nature reserves, national parks and wilderness areas
- Inaugural voyages to Melbourne, the Limestone Coast, Kangaroo Island, Eyre Peninsula and Fleurieu Peninsula
- Christmas in New Zealand's spectacular fjordland

Expeditions overview

Returning from **Antarctica** in February 2010, *Orion* will spend **10 nights exploring the majesty of New Zealand's Fjordland, Marlborough Sounds** and imposing White Island.

In March *Orion* returns to Melanesia (Auckland to Rabaul) for a 16 night expedition. The influential US magazine *Islands* describes this voyage as a South Pacific 'must-do', with experiences along the way including an unforgettable visit to Tanna Island (home of the *Jon Frum* Cargo Cult) and the adrenalin-rush vista over the rim of Mt Yasur - an active volcano famed for its pyrotechnics. Wonderful still photos and video opportunities abound in a desolate world of black ash and guttural rumblings.

The voyage continues along the *Ring of Fire* with *Orion's* signature Zodiac arrivals on crystalline island beaches. Search for Megapod eggs in the warm black sands of Savo and on Ngella Island snorkel around the wreck of the doomed expedition ship *World Discoverer*. Throughout the voyage there is a wealth of singing and frenzied dancing as friendly villagers welcome guests to their communities.

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In the Solomon Islands *Orion* will also visit the beautiful island of Ghizo and nearby Kennedy Island, named after one JFK's WWII heroic exploits as commander of the PT109.

Many guests say this voyage encapsulates all the best elements of an *Orion* expedition!

In March, April and October *Orion* returns to Australia's nearest neighbour, **Papua New Guinea**, with five voyages to exciting points of call including spectacular Lambom and Lamassa (visited for the first time in 2009 and regarded as highlights of unspoilt wonder), and evocative Tingwon, Manus, Wuvulu, Sissano, Hansa Bay and Bagabag – newly uncovered by Orion's Expedition Scouting team and described as being unbelievable cultural experiences.

Returning home, **in late April and early November *Orion* will explore the highlights of our own Great Barrier Reef.** Choose from either 6 or 7 nights itineraries (both different) – perfect for a short escape, yet with time enough to re-discover just why the Reef is World Heritage listed. Lizard Island, Hardy Reef, Hayman - all the icons are here!

May 2010 will see *Orion* in Arnhem Land. This has become a regular annual event, and no wonder. Typical of every Orion Expedition, enjoy cultural interaction, on this occasion with indigenous groups in Jensen Bay, Yirrakala, Elcho Island, Maningrida and Pirlangimpi, all important, investment quality indigenous art centres. Specialist lecturers will help guests understand their various cultures, often displayed through dreamtime stories and artworks (highly sought after by art collectors worldwide). This voyage provides access to artists at the very source of their artistic inspirations.

If you have not yet marveled at **the mighty Kimberley coastline** then the milder months of May through September provide the best time of the year to see the Kimberley. After the 'Big Wet', in May and June, while the run-off continues, the massive waterfalls are spectacular and the sheer power overwhelming. Later in the season, as the waterfalls diminish, you can get closer, especially to the towering King George Falls. In August the Kimberley coast becomes a watery highway for migrating whales.

Orion's guests will visit amazing Wandjina and Gwion Gwion rock art sites many thousands of years old, where wide eyed spirit gods stare down from caves and overhangs. For many this is a spiritual moment, matching any church fresco or painting.

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Come mid winter and you may be thinking of warmer places. Consider the Darwin/Darwin **Spice Islands Adventure** in July that includes exotic Kisar, Alor, Maumere, Komodo, Sumba and Rote. This expedition promises to capture the excitement of old places and traditions captured anew. History and customs, long forgotten, re-discovered.

September features the **Forgotten Islands and Asmat Art 10 night voyage**. *Orion* will depart Darwin bound for Cairns via Kisar, Tanimbars, Aru, Agats, Thursday Island and Lizard Island. Discover the beauty of these tropical islands, the history of ancient trade routes as you follow in the wake of the early navigators and traders who opened this new world of spices, gold, pearls and wood carvings.

Pre Christmas is the perfect time to take a break and gather yourself for the busy festive season. What better way than onboard *Orion* taking in the sights of **Australia's East Coast**? Choose your 7 night escape and select between either the Great Barrier Reef and coast between Cairns and Sydney, or enjoy the voyage between Sydney to Jervis Bay and Montague Island, the historic fishing town of Eden, Sealer's Cove (Wilson's Promontory) and Phillip Island before arriving in Melbourne for *Orion's* inaugural visit to this great city.

Melbourne is followed by a **7 night Voyage of Discovery to South Australia**. Another first for *Orion*. This Food and Wine-focused voyage is perfectly timed as a prelude to Christmas, and with visits to the Limestone Coast, Kangaroo Island, Eyre Peninsula and Fleurieu Peninsula you will return home with plenty of culinary inspiration.

Completing the list of visits to all States, *Orion* ends the year with two **7 night explorations of beautiful Tasmania**. These distinct itineraries capture the rugged South West Wilderness, the staggering beauty of Wineglass Bay as well as the turbulent convict history still palpable on Maria Island and in Port Arthur. Of course, the wonders of Tasmanian seafood, cheeses and wines will all be rewards after a day of exploration.

To round out the year *Orion* will head south and east to visit the **remote sub-Antarctic sanctuaries** of World Heritage listed Macquarie Island and the Campbell, Auckland and Snares Islands (all precious and rarely-visited wildlife paradises) before arrival in Dunedin and preparation for the greatest adventure of the year – Antarctica.

During the period December 2010 and January 2011 there are two separate (18 and 20 night) itineraries for **Antarctica** with probing expeditions that include

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visits to Mawson's historic huts and Scott and Shackleton's bases. The departures from Bluff in New Zealand and Hobart make for easy connections for those living in Australia - and visiting this side of the Antarctic Continent means avoiding the busy peninsular area frequented by many from South America.

Just 5% of all visitors to the Antarctic visit the Ross Sea region of the continent – so you will truly be experiencing a path less travelled. In true expeditionary spirit Orion will cross the Antarctic Circle and forge further south to the region where the South Magnetic Pole resides.

Perhaps this is the adventure you have always promised yourself.

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Fares Guide:

6 nights Great Barrier Reef: Fares begin from A\$4,460 per person for an ocean view Category B stateroom; A\$6,150 for a Junior Suite per person; Owners' Suites with French Balcony are A\$9,335 per person. All prices twin share.

10 nights Kimberley Expedition: Fares begin from A\$9,100 per person for an ocean view Category B stateroom; A\$12,550 for a Junior Suite per person; Owners' Suites with French Balcony are A\$19,055 per person. All prices twin share.

18 nights Mawson's Antarctica: Fares begin from A\$19,365 per person for an ocean view Category B stateroom; A\$26,710 for a Junior Suite per person; Owners' Suites with French Balcony are A\$40,555 per person. All prices twin share.

Further information on Orion Expedition Cruises 2009 – 2010 Calendar of Sailings can be obtained by visiting the website www.orionexpeditions.com

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

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Ranked #2 expedition cruise ship in the world in the current Berlitz Cruise Guide, Orion is the world's youngest and Australia's only 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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