

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

The Russian Far East. So far. So good.

Geographically closer to Los Angeles than Moscow, Russia's Far East, epitomised by the Kamchatka Peninsula and Kuril Islands, remains a rarely visited region of grand proportions and power - both natural and man-made.

If names that sound like places from a Cold War novel appeal - Petropavlovsk, Zhupanova, Russkiya and Yankitcha - then you will be fascinated by Orion Expedition Cruises' voyages to a part of the world that, until recently, remained off-limits to the West.

Orion II's 2011 voyages to this *land of ice and fire* are designed for modern day adventurers to experience places as yet untouched by tourism, all the while from the comfort and security of a five star specialist expedition cruise ship, your base camp from which to explore in the company of the specialist expedition team.

Like opening a Russian Doll, each layer revealing another beneath, the Russian Far East is a region of surprises. From Petropavlovsk, home to Russia's atomic submarine fleet, gilt statues and memorials to the Red Army, to villages with picturesque Russian Orthodox onion dome churches, succulent barbecued salmon and traditional vodka tastings, these *Orion II* voyages provide varying perspectives and insight into lands of modern nuclear and primal volcanic power.

Arm yourself with a camera to capture enduring memories of impressive wildlife - here brown bears, not humans, sit at the top of the food chain. Huge bird colonies dot cliffs and large seal rookeries are scattered along the coast; an array of predators from arctic foxes to orcas and massive raptors roam freely. Zodiac expeditions will take you close to the action.

The region boasts 160 volcanoes, 29 currently active. On this expedition, at Ushishir, *Orion II's* Zodiacs will transport guests into a flooded caldera to investigate the hydrothermal field with its steaming fumaroles, sulphur crystals, hot springs and boiling puddles, with the scent of hydrogen sulphate hanging in the air.

From a Russian military-style helicopter access the Valley of the Geysers, with its 200 thermal spouts ejecting steam; in the shadow of a snow covered volcano visit an abandoned Soviet air base, complete with anti aircraft guns. Join the expedition team ashore in the sparsely inhabited Kuril Islands to meet the inhabitants who still make their living from a sea regarded as among the most productive in the world.

Life back onboard is by way of contrast. Combine a relaxed onboard ambiance, extensive and unexpected range of facilities including boutique, massage and health spa, expansive accommodation options, satellite television, 24 hour room service and a welcoming, thoughtful, crew - including a dedicated expedition

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

team - and you will discover it's not just what Orion does, it's the way it's done that sets the benchmark for expedition cruising in Australia and Asia.

PLEASE NOTE: some aspects of these itineraries may change as arrangements are finalised. Check for latest updates on www.orionexpeditions.com

Further information on Orion Expedition Cruises 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@orionexpeditions.com

.....

Pricing onboard all *Orion* and *Orion II* voyages is in Australian dollars. Orion's voyages to the Russian Far East all start and finish in places with international flight access. Sapporo and Petropavlovsk are the points of embarkation or disembarkation with Orion Expedition Cruises providing an exclusive connecting charter to streamline access or departure.

Fares Guide:
Early booking savings available

2011 Natural Treasures of the Russian Far East Expedition 10 night fares begin from \$8,150 per person for an Ocean View Suite/Category B. Junior Suites from \$11,300 per person and Penthouse Suites with balcony are \$16,400 per person

Expedition fares per person, twin occupancy, include accommodation, all meals, landings, port charges, gratuities and selected activities ashore.

.....

Orion Expedition Cruises' itineraries for 2011 include 49 voyages to 17 countries and more than 170 remote and exotic destinations stretching from Antarctica to the Russian Far East including Borneo, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia and the Inland Sea of Japan (onboard *Orion II*) and Australia's Kimberley coast and Arnhem Land, New Zealand and the Sub Antarctic islands, Antarctica and Papua New Guinea (onboard *Orion*).

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

[For further media information please contact:](#)

**Michael Corbett
Public Relations Manager
Orion Expedition Cruises
Phone: (61-2) 4572 1885
Mobile: 0417 469 228
Email: mcorbett@orioncruises.com.au**