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Smithsonian Journeys and Ponant Explorations Unveil 2027 Small-Ship Cruise Collection

Newly Announced Departures Include a Rare Solar Eclipse Sailing Along the Iberian Peninsula

Smithsonian Journeys—the travel program of the Smithsonian Institution and a recognized leader in enriching, small-group exploration—has announced 35 new ocean cruise departures for 2027 in collaboration with PONANT EXPLORATIONS, a global leader in small-ship expeditions.

Reflecting Smithsonian Journeys and PONANT’S shared passions, each voyage pairs the Smithsonian’s 179-year legacy of learning and scholarly discovery with PONANT’s award-winning expertise in hospitality and comfort. The cruises feature additional value and enrichment including two Smithsonian Journeys Experts who lead engaging lectures and informal discussions that deepen understanding of each destination; included shore excursions in each port, thoughtfully curated to complement the onboard enrichment; and complimentary airport transfers on embarkation and disembarkation days – all combined with PONANT’S all-inclusive amenities. Guests sail aboard PONANT’S modern fleet, known for its ambiance of quiet luxury, refined French flair, and an intimate atmosphere—free from crowds onboard, with a high crew-to-guest ratio, and access to smaller, less-traveled ports.

Among the highlights and new to the collection is *A Solar Eclipse at Sea: Voyage Along the Iberian Peninsula* (July 30–Aug. 6, 2027), offering travelers the rare opportunity to witness the 2027 solar eclipse from an ideal vantage point—aboard ship in the Mediterranean, directly within the band of totality. Jim Zimbelman, senior geologist emeritus for the Center for Earth and Planetary Studies at Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum, will be one of two experts onboard, providing context and insight into the eclipse through lectures and informal conversations.

“We are delighted to present this expansive collection of small-ship journeys across all seven continents in collaboration with PONANT. Our travelers desire quality experiences that are both enriching and immersive, and our 2027 collection aboard PONANT’S ships of refined luxury and relaxed comfort deliver that expertly,” said Walter Littlejohn III, senior vice president of Smithsonian Journeys.

The Smithsonian Journeys and PONANT EXPLORATIONS alliance of small-ship cruises augments the Smithsonian’s robust collection of small-group land journeys, river cruises, cultural stays, active journeys, private jet trips, and tailor-made journeys for the independent traveler. Bookings can be made through Smithsonian Journeys by visiting www.smithsonianjourneys.org/Ponant or calling (877) 338-8687.

2027 departures include:

The Americas and Caribbean

Panama and Costa Rica by Sea: The Natural Wonders of Central America

Feb. 19–26; and Feb. 25–March 5, 2026

NEW DATE—*Feb. 19–26, 2027*

Eight days starting from \$6,690 per person double occupancy.

Venture to Panama's pristine Caribbean islands, and experience a full daylight transit of the historic Panama Canal. Gain insight from researchers on an exclusive visit to the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute's Punta Culebra Nature Center. Meet an Indigenous community in Darién National Park and explore Costa Rica's Manuel Antonio National Park. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Cruising the Caribbean's Windward Islands

Feb. 28–March 8, 2026

NEW DATE—*Feb. 17–24, 2027*

Eight to nine days starting from \$5,930 per person double occupancy.

From the rainforests of Dominica to the World Heritage-listed architecture of Barbados, discover history, culture, and natural wonders as you sail across the eastern Caribbean. Explore remote islands in St. Vincent and the Grenadines by catamaran, visit a French fort on Guadeloupe, and swim and snorkel or dive amid reefs teeming with marine life. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Fall Foliage on the St. Lawrence: Québec to the Canadian Maritimes

Sept. 24–Oct. 6, 2026

NEW DATE—*Sept. 26–Oct. 9, 2027*

13 to 14 days starting from \$13,440 per person double occupancy.

Follow the Saint Lawrence River through Québec to the Atlantic seaboard, sailing through stunning scenery aglow with the copper hues of mid-autumn. Experience the rich cultural scenes of Montreal and Québec City and watch for beluga and blue whales off the coast of Tadoussac. Learn about Acadian culture amid the soaring red cliffs of Îles de la Madeleine and explore Provincetown, Massachusetts, at the tip of historic Cape Cod, where the Pilgrims landed in 1620, and which now features a vibrant art scene. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Baja and the Sea of Cortez

NEW CRUISE—*Feb. 10–20, 2027*

11 days starting from \$11,680 per person double occupancy.

Set out on a whale-watching adventure in breathtaking Baja, cruising from the wildlife-rich lagoons of the Pacific coast to the sparkling Sea of Cortez. Encounter curious gray whales in remote Guerrero Negro and Bahía Magdalena, and seek out humpbacks and blue whales in Loreto Bay. Discover rare flora and birdlife on nature walks and hikes, swim with sea lions, and snorkel the reefs of Cabo Pulmo. Full details are [available on the website](#).

A Voyage Along the Great Lakes

Aug. 11–19; and Aug. 19–27, 2026

NEW DATES—*Aug. 13–21; and Aug. 21–29, 2027*

Nine days starting from \$9,150 per person double occupancy.

Cruise four of the five Great Lakes, exploring the islands and coasts of Ontario and Michigan and discovering a treasure trove of wild islands, unusual geology, and legendary waterfalls. Get to know the region's unique cultural and natural heritage as you voyage from Niagara Falls to Mackinac Island and beyond. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Antarctica

Antarctica: The White Continent

NEW DATE—Jan. 16–27, 2027

12 days starting from \$17,350 per person double occupancy.

Immerse yourself in a magnificent realm of ice on a once-in-a-lifetime voyage to Antarctica. Explore Argentina's Tierra del Fuego and the Beagle Channel before sailing to the Antarctic Peninsula. Set out by Zodiac to encounter incredible wildlife—from thousands of penguins to breaching whales and lolling seals—and observe their behavior alongside our naturalists. See ice in all its forms, from towering glaciers to turquoise icebergs. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Northern Europe

Celtic Voyage: The Hebrides and the Irish Sea

May 7–15, 2026

NEW DATE—May 9–17, 2027

Nine days starting from \$7,360 per person double occupancy.

Delve into legends and lore as you cruise to historic sites and breathtaking landscapes across the British Isles and Ireland. Trace World War II history in Dover and encounter early Christian sites on mystical Iona. Follow legends of Scottish clans and English kings on the Isle of Mull, explore Irish history in Cork and Belfast; and marvel at natural wonders from Giant's Causeway to the scenic Isle of Wight. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Scottish Isles and Norwegian Fjords Voyage

May 28–June 4; and June 21–28, 2026

NEW DATES—May 24–31; and Aug. 27–Sept. 3, 2027

Eight days starting from \$6,820 per person double occupancy.

Follow in the wake of ancient seafarers on a voyage to the archipelagos of Scotland and Norway's spectacular coast. Spend a day on the mystical Isle of Skye, and on the Orkney and the Shetland Islands, discover prehistoric sites and the legacy of the Vikings. Experience the majesty of the Norwegian fjords by train and cable car, encountering glaciers, traditional fishing villages, and breathtaking vistas. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Iceland Voyage: Land of Fire and Ice

June 1–8, 2026

NEW DATE—June 3–10, 2027

Eight days starting from \$8,960 per person double occupancy.

Encounter the thrilling geological extremes of Iceland, where glaciers and lava fields co-exist, and emerald hills give way to bursting geysers and waterfalls. Discover spectacular landscapes imbued with mythology, and learn about the resilient people who have made their life in these rugged lands. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Cruising the Norwegian Fjords

June 4–11, 2026

NEW DATE—*May 31–June 7, 2027*

Eight days starting from \$9,290 per person double occupancy.

Sail into the heart of the Norwegian fjords, discovering extraordinary landscapes of sheer cliffs, snowcapped peaks, jewel-toned lakes, and picturesque villages. See natural wonders from the Jostedal ice cap to precipitous Pulpit Rock, and venture to historic sites from Viking settlements to centuries-old ironworks. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Cruising the Historic Cities of the Baltic Sea

Aug. 3–10, 2026

NEW DATES—*June 11–18; and Aug. 5–12, 2027*

Eight days starting from \$9,210 per person double occupancy.

Discover the rich history and culture of the Baltic Sea region as you cruise between Copenhagen and Helsinki. Step into the past in the World Heritage-listed medieval old towns of Tallinn and Visby. Trace 20th-century history in Gdansk, Poland, during an exclusive presentation by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Lech Walesa, and soak up local culture in seaside Klaipeda, Lithuania. Full details are [available on the website](#).

London to Lisbon: Cruising Europe's Western Shores

Sept. 5–14, 2026

NEW DATE—*April 30–May 9, 2027*

10 days starting from \$6,410 per person double occupancy.

Experience centuries of history along the coasts of England, France, Spain, and Portugal—from Roman times to the D-Day landings. Marvel at architectural gems like Porto's Church of São Francisco and Frank Gehry's iconic Guggenheim in Bilbao. Trace Europe's religious history at the pilgrimage site of Santiago de Compostela and the abbey of Mont St. Michel, and explore World War II history on Normandy's beaches. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Mediterranean and Aegean

A Solar Eclipse at Sea: Voyage Along the Iberian Peninsula

NEW CRUISE—*July 30–Aug. 6, 2027*

Eight days starting from \$8,920 per person double occupancy.

Experience the 2027 total solar eclipse aboard an elegant ship as you voyage along Spain and Portugal's southern shores from the Algarve to the Costa del Sol. Venture into historic towns such as Coimbra and Cadiz, opt to explore the gorgeous coast by kayak and catamaran, and savor local wines and tapas. Watch the eclipse from an ideal spot: afloat on the Mediterranean within the band of totality. Full details are [available on the website](#).

A Circumnavigation of Sicily

May 5–13; and Aug. 29–Sept. 6, 2026

NEW DATES—*May 10–18; and Oct. 15–23, 2027*

Nine days starting from \$8,460 per person double occupancy.

Set sail from Malta's walled capital to circumnavigate Sicily, exploring the extraordinary ruins of cities that flourished in the Greco-Roman era. Visit numerous World Heritage sites, including Agrigento and Syracuse, the

Phoenician capital of Carthage near Tunis, and the Arab-Norman sites of Palermo. Along the way, sample local wines on the slopes of Mount Etna and on the island of Lipari. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Mediterranean Island Voyage: Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and Elba

May 13–20; and May 25–June 1, 2026

NEW DATES—*May 18–26; and June 7–14, 2027*

Eight days starting from \$7,440 per person double occupancy.

Step through the centuries on a voyage to the Mediterranean islands of Italy and France, exploring the temples of the ancient Greeks in Sicily, Napoleon's elegant villa-in-exile on Elba, and the lively harbor towns of Corsica and Sardinia. Encounter a wealth of World Heritage sites from the baroque heart of Valletta, Malta to Ancient Syracuse. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Cruising the Greek Islands of the Southern Aegean

June 16–23; and Oct. 8–15, 2026

NEW DATE—*July 6–13; and Sept. 8–15, 2027*

Eight days starting from \$6,240 per person double occupancy.

Set sail on the Aegean Sea, exploring World Heritage sites from Patmos to Delos on a voyage to the Dodecanese, the Cyclades, and beyond. Along the way, explore delightful villages, get acquainted with local life, and immerse yourself in some of the most spectacular scenery in the Greek Isles. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Cruising the Dalmatian Coast and the Ionian Sea

June 18–25, 2026

NEW DATE—*Sept. 29–Oct. 7, 2027*

Eight days starting from \$7,540 per person double occupancy.

Take to the Adriatic Sea on a voyage between Venice and Athens, following the spectacular Dalmatian Coast. Visit historic Hvar and World Heritage sites such as the walled town of Dubrovnik and Montenegro's Bay of Kotor. Delve deeper into Balkan culture in the lesser-known sites of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania, and cap off the experience in Delphi, Greece. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Cruising the Aegean: Turkey and the Greek Isles

June 25–July 2, 2026

NEW DATE—*Oct. 14–21, 2027*

Eight days starting from \$6,660 per person double occupancy.

Travel back in time on a voyage from Istanbul to Athens that links some of the most storied sites in antiquity—from Troy and Ephesus to Mycenae. As you sail along Turkey's western coast and across the Aegean Sea, discover ancient temples and cities where the legends of Greek mythology took place and experience the picturesque ports of Paros, Patmos, and Nafplio. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Croatia's Dalmatian Coast by Sea

July 9–16, 2026

NEW DATE—*July 28–Aug. 4, 2027*

Eight days starting from \$6,160 per person double occupancy.

Glide out of Venice's historic lagoon and take to the Adriatic, following the spectacular shores of Croatia from Istria to Dubrovnik. Experience the rich culinary traditions of Istria and visit gem-like Rovinj; and discover an enchanting blend of ancient, medieval, and modern-day in Split and Hvar. Visit the World Heritage site of

Kotor, Montenegro; explore sparkling beaches and stunning national parks; and savor local wines and cuisine. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Cruising Southern Italy and Sicily: Ancient Wonders and Culinary Delights

Sept. 6–14, 2026

NEW DATE—Oct. 7–15, 2027

Nine days starting from \$8,780 per person double occupancy.

Set sail from Malta to Sicily, then follow Italy's coast to Tuscany, visiting a myriad of World Heritage sites including Syracuse, Mount Etna, and ancient Rome. Savor the local gastronomy—with options for vineyard visits, tasting tours, and cooking classes. Explore fishing villages in Calabria and the evocative ruins of Pompeii, and visit *agriturismos* and family-owned farms. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Southern France and the Italian Riviera by Sea

Sept. 23–Oct. 1, 2026

NEW DATE—Sept. 1–10, 2027

Eight to Nine days starting from \$6,050 per person double occupancy.

Trace the Mediterranean coasts of France and Italy, exploring Provence; the Côte d'Azur; and the Italian Riviera, including Cinque Terre. Venture to the medieval walled towns of Carcassonne and Lucca, and trace the legacies of great artists from Cézanne and van Gogh in Provence to Michelangelo in Florence. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Cruising the Mediterranean: Sicily, Sardinia, and Mallorca

Oct. 10–17, 2026

NEW DATE—Aug. 12–19, 2027

Eight days starting from \$6,210 per person double occupancy.

Sail to the baroque gem of Valletta, Malta, on a voyage that will have you exploring Greek and Arab-Norman treasures in western Sicily, the rose-colored capital of Sardinia, Bronze Age sites in Menorca, and medieval monuments of Palma de Mallorca. Along the way, sample local specialties, visit fascinating archaeological sites, and explore gorgeous coasts of limestone cliffs and secluded coves. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Cruising Southern Spain and Portugal

Oct. 17–24, 2026

NEW DATE—May 1–8, 2027

Eight days starting from \$5,520 per person double occupancy.

Sail the southern coast of Iberia from Lisbon to the Balearic Islands, experiencing a rich cultural heritage derived from Spanish monarchs, Moorish kings, and Christian and Jewish traditions. In the captivating cities of Andalusia, explore World Heritage sites such as the Alcázar and the Alhambra. Visit the lively seaside city of Palma de Mallorca and encounter wondrous architecture in Valencia. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Indian Ocean

Madagascar and Seychelles: Natural Treasures of the Indian Ocean

Jan. 7–17, 2026

NEW DATE—Jan. 31–Feb. 10, 2027

11 days starting from \$12,540 per person double occupancy.

The archipelagos of Seychelles and Madagascar harbor a wealth of species that exist nowhere else on the planet. Discover these diverse islands—and the marine protected areas that surround them—on an

expedition-style cruise, with many opportunities for snorkeling and nature walks. Come face to face with tortoises, coco-de-mer palms, and black lemurs, and immerse yourself in the rich marine worlds while snorkeling remote atolls and coral reefs. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Africa

South Africa and Namibia by Sea: Around the Cape of Good Hope

March 19–29, 2026

NEW DATE—*Feb. 21–March 3, 2027*

11 days starting from \$8,530 per person double occupancy.

Sail almost the full length of Africa's southern coast on a voyage from Durban to southern Namibia that rounds the fabled Cape of Good Hope. Along the way, enjoy safaris in a variety of habitats, explore Cape Town and the spectacular Cape Peninsula, and visit Namibian towns that were once hubs of the German diamond trade. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Cruising from Morocco to Spain's Andalusian Coast

NEW DATE—*April 18–25, 2027*

Eight days starting from \$5,230 per person double occupancy.

Trace the legacy of the Moors from the ancient cities of Morocco to the shores of Andalusia. Explore historic medinas and admire stunning architecture in Tetouan and Tangier. Then sail the Strait of Gibraltar to Spain's southern shores, visiting renowned World Heritage sites and discovering how Moorish influence lingers in great cities like Granada, Ronda, and Seville. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Lisbon to the Canary Islands by Sea: Spain, Morocco, and the Atlantic Isles

Oct. 12–25, 2026

NEW DATE—*Oct. 19–Nov. 1, 2027*

14 days starting from \$9,900 per person double occupancy.

Voyage from Lisbon and the Algarve to Andalusia and the souks of Morocco. Then set sail across the eastern Atlantic to the spectacular volcanic archipelagos of Madeira and the Canary Islands. Along the way, encounter interwoven cultures, numerous World Heritage sites, and dramatic landscapes forged by lava. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Asia

Treasures of Japan and South Korea by Sea

April 5–13, 2026

NEW DATE—*May 1–9, 2027*

Nine days starting from \$11,110 per person double occupancy.

Sail the coast of Honshu, discovering world-renowned art museums and classical gardens, historic shrines and traditional artisan workshops. See the 'floating' torii gate on Miyajima Island, and visit Hiroshima's poignant sites. Learn about the samurai in medieval castle towns, and spend a day exploring South Korea's captivating sites. Full details are [available on the website](#).

Oceania

Voyage to Indonesia: Dragons, Reefs, and the Spice Islands

May 1–13, 2026

NEW DATE—May 15–26, 2027

12 to 13 days starting from \$9,220 per person double occupancy.

Sail through the Coral Triangle, home to vibrant marine life and rugged islands. From Bali, follow Indonesia's Lesser Sundas, a chain of volcanic islands. Then cruise to the remote Maluku archipelago, once known as the Spice Islands, and West Papua's pristine coast. Encounter Komodo dragons, snorkel among dazzling reefs, and visit communities where ancient traditions endure. Explore spice trade history and soak in breathtaking tropical scenery along this unforgettable journey. Full details are [available on the website](#).

For more information, visit the [Smithsonian Journeys website](#).

About Smithsonian Journeys

Smithsonian Journeys is a global leader in cultural travel, offering unique, expert-led trips on all seven continents. In addition to small-ship exploration cruises, it offers small-group land journeys, river cruises, active journeys, cultural stays, private jet trips and tailor-made journeys for the independent traveler. Smithsonian Journeys is part of Smithsonian Enterprises, a division of the Smithsonian that oversees the Institution's commercial activities, including the Smithsonian Channel; the retail operation, which includes 35 museum and airport stores and food concessions; *Smithsonian* magazine, which reaches more than 8 million monthly readers; Smithsonianstore.com, an E-Commerce business; consumer and education licensing; and books. For more information, visit www.SmithsonianJourneys.org or call 855-330-1542.

About the Smithsonian

Since its founding in 1846, the Smithsonian Institution has been committed to inspiring generations through knowledge and discovery. It is the world's largest museum, education and research complex, consisting of 21 museums, the National Zoological Park, education centers, research facilities, cultural centers and libraries. Two of the 21 museums—the National Museum of the American Latino and the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum—are in the early planning stages. The Smithsonian Campaign for Our Share Future, which began in 2018 in a quiet phase, was publicly launched in September 2024 with a goal of \$2.5 billion. There are more than 6,200 Smithsonian employees and 3,800 volunteers. The total number of objects, works of art and specimens at the Smithsonian is estimated at nearly 157 million, of which nearly 148 million are scientific specimens at the National Museum of Natural History. www.si.edu.

About PONANT EXPLORATIONS

PONANT EXPLORATIONS has been committed to more responsible tourism and purposeful voyages of exploration for over 35 years. Aboard a fleet of 12 French-flagged ships, fitted with the latest environmental technologies, the journey of exploration is always elegant, authentic and inspiring.

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