

2027 Caribbean Crossroads

Rival Empires in Paradise

with Dr. Richard Bell

March 2–10, 2027



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March 2–10, 2027

From \$7,100

double occupancy, per person



2027 Caribbean Crossroads

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This cruise through the Caribbean’s Windward Islands in the company of Professor Richard Bell, Associate Professor of History at the University of Maryland, is an opportunity to combine serious study of the colonial history of the Caribbean with time at leisure to enjoy the natural beauty, sun and surf for which the islands are famous. Beginning on St. Lucia, sailing south through St. Vincent and the Grenadines, then turning north to Guadeloupe and Dominica, you will explore a series of fortresses and battlements that tell the story of the struggle between Britain and France for control of these islands during the 17th and 18th centuries. You will learn about the sugar and coffee plantations that made them worth fighting over. And you will also have days devoted to swimming, snorkeling, and relaxing on beaches and reefs among the most beautiful in the Western Hemisphere.

Your Journey Expert



Dr. Richard Bell is a professor of history at the University of Maryland, College Park. He received his PhD in History from Harvard University. His research interests focus on American history between 1750 and 1877. Professor Bell is a passionate believer in the educational value of travel, and especially throughout the Caribbean, where he believes you can truly see and experience both the history and cultural legacy of the region and its peoples. His most recent book is *The American Revolution and the Fate of the World*, in which he repositions the Revolution at the center of an international web, this narrative ranges as far afield as India, Africa, Central America, and Australia. Professor Bell's previous book, *Stolen: Five Free Boys Kidnapped into Slavery and Their Astonishing Odyssey Home*, won the NEH Public Scholar Award. He has created three Great Courses: *America's Long Struggle Against Slavery*; *Ordinary Americans in the Revolution*. His third, on the Declaration of Independence, releases in 2026.

Highlights

- Travel alongside your expert on a deeply contextual voyage through the Windward Islands, examining how imperial rivalry, plantation economies, and maritime strategy shaped the Caribbean world of the 17th and 18th centuries.
- Learn about the role of these islands in the long battle between France and Britain for control of these resource-rich islands as you explore the remains of military installations at Vieux Fort, Pigeon Island, Les Saintes, and Cabrits.
- Discover the legacy of plantation culture at the Morne Coubaril Estate near Soufrière on St. Lucia.
- Enjoy the charms of small ports and fishing villages on St. Lucia, Bequia, and Guadeloupe.
- Experience the islands' unique flora and fauna throughout the voyage, but especially along the Indian River on Dominica.



Caribbean Crossroads

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Itinerary



Day 1: Arrive in the Windward Islands

Arrive at Hewanorra International Airport (UVF), in Vieux Fort, St. Lucia, where you will be met and transferred to the Harbor Club St. Lucia (or similar) for overnight. This evening, join fellow travelers and The Great Courses Journeys Expert for a welcome reception. Dinner will be at your leisure.

Included Meal: Reception

Accommodation: Harbor Club St. Lucia Curio Collection by Hilton (or similar)

Day 2: Colonial Conflict and Scenic Splendor

Today, you and your local guide and Great Courses Journeys Expert focus on a theme that will recur more than once during this voyage: the centuries-long struggle among colonial powers for control of the Windward Islands. As you visit the remains of two 19th-century military installations—the coastal defenses at Upper La Roc Battery and the hilltop barracks at Morne Fortune—your expert local guide will tell the story of the enduring conflict between the French and British for control of St. Lucia as a gateway to the wider Caribbean.

You will also enjoy sweeping views of the harbor and coastline from these vantage points and have lunch at a restaurant with scenic views of the emblematic Pitons and Soufrière before returning to Vieux Fort to embark *Le Bougainville*.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Bougainville*

Day 3: Maritime Heritage and Indigenous History

Spend a leisurely afternoon discovering the charm of Bequia, beginning with a guided walk along Port Elizabeth's picturesque waterfront, where pastel-painted shops, wooden jetties, and fishing boats create an iconic Caribbean scene. Your local guide will share insights into Bequia's maritime traditions and boat-building heritage, and you will visit the Bequia Heritage Museum, with exhibits highlighting the island's Indigenous culture, whaling history, and proud tradition of model boat-building.

Your ship remains at anchor until late in the evening, providing ample time to browse Port Elizabeth's boutiques, sample local treats, or simply sit by the water and enjoy the gentle rhythms of island life.

Including Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Bougainville*





Day 4: Caribbean Culture on Mayreau Island

Spend the entire day ashore on Mayreau Island, exploring this tight-knit community that retains a strong connection to traditional Caribbean culture. The ship's staff will come ashore with you to prepare and serve a barbecue buffet. A local steel band will provide the perfect musical backdrop to a delightful day of swimming and snorkeling—or doing nothing more than soaking up the ambience of this tropical paradise.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Bougainville*

Day 5: Biodiversity and Pristine Coral

A second day devoted to the beaches of St. Vincent and the Grenadines finds you on Tobago Cays, where you will want to keep a lookout for the rich marine and terrestrial biodiversity, including pelicans, terns, iguanas, and a remarkable array of sea turtles. Activities include swimming, snorkeling, and diving along one of the largest remaining pristine coral reef groups in the Windward Islands.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Bougainville*

Day 6: Plantations and Traditions

Your morning on Pigeon Island begins with a presentation from an expert local guide on St. Lucia's Amerindian roots and its military importance during the British-French rivalry in the Caribbean, followed by a tour of Fort Rodney and a performance of traditional music and dance.

Enjoy lunch aboard ship as you sail south to Soufrière for an afternoon excursion to the Morne Coubaril Estate, a former sugar plantation. Here you will learn about St. Lucia's history as a major producer of sugar, coffee, and cocoa from the early 17th century until the middle of the 18th, when the British abolition of slavery collapsed the plantation economy that had been built on enslaved labor from Africa.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Bougainville*

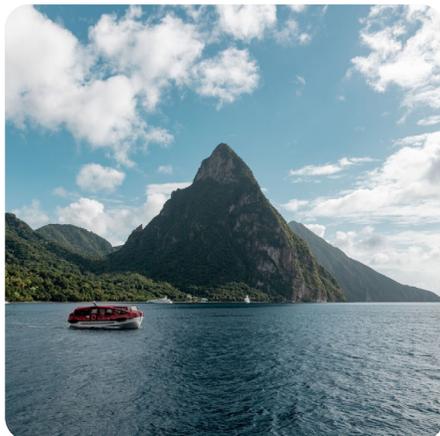
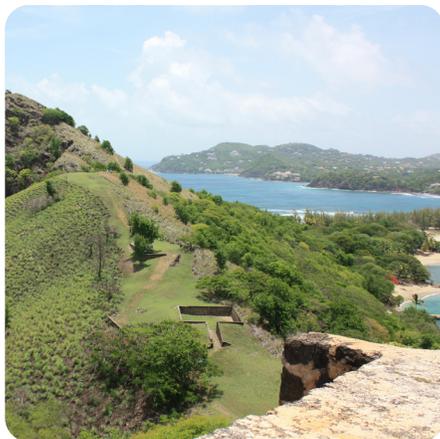
Day 7: Naval History and Creole Culture

Your discovery of Les Saintes begins with a tour of Fort Napoléon, located on a promontory above the bay. As you tour the ramparts, museum rooms, and gardens, your local guide will explain the fort's strategic importance in colonial naval history as it passed between French and British control during the Seven Years' War, the American Revolution, and the Napoleonic Wars.

Returning to town, walk through narrow lanes lined with Creole cottages, pastel façades, and red-tiled roofs that reflect the island's blend of French and Caribbean architecture, and enjoy time at leisure to explore the shops and cafés that line the waterfront.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Bougainville*





Day 8: Garrisons and Inland Rivers

A full day exploration of Dominica begins at Cabrits National Park for a tour of Fort Shirley, a well-preserved 18th-century British garrison that was the island's main military base during the French-British rivalry. It has splendid views over Prince Rupert Bay and the town of Portsmouth.

After a lunch of local cuisine, enjoy a cruise aboard a local boat up the Indian River, which flows through the lowlands around Portsmouth and is home to an unusual variety of flora and fauna, including herons, kingfishers, and iguanas. The river is now also famous as the setting for a number of scenes in the Pirates of the Caribbean franchise, and you will likely hear stories about the filming as you sample the owner's special rum punch at the renowned Bush Bar.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Bougainville*



Day 9: Vieux Fort | Disembark

After breakfast aboard, disembark and transfer to the Hewanorra International Airport (UVF), in Vieux Fort, St. Lucia, for flights homeward.

Included Meals: Breakfast

What's Included:

- Comprehensive 7-night cruise aboard the deluxe *Le Bougainville*
- One pre-night at the Harbor Club St. Lucia, Curio Collection by Hilton (or similar) in Vieux Fort, St. Lucia, with welcome reception (dinner on own) on March 2, 2027
- One PONANT EXPLORATIONS Tour Director dedicated to The Great Courses Journeys from the Pre-Night on March 2, 2027, through the end of the voyage/disembarkation on March 10, 2027
- Full day of touring Vieux Fort, St. Lucia, with transfer to pier for embarkation on March 3, 2027
- One exclusive The Great Courses Journeys onboard hosted cocktail reception
- 2-3 onboard lectures given by The Great Courses Journeys Expert
- One shore excursion exclusively custom for The Great Courses Journeys at each port of call led by expert guides
- Captain's gala dinners and cocktail receptions aboard ship
- All meals aboard ship including early riser's coffee and pastry, breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner
- Meals ashore as listed in the itinerary
- Open bar aboard ship excluding premium alcohol, including select wines with lunch and dinner
- 24-hour complimentary room service
- Comprehensive pre-departure materials
- Unlimited WiFi (as available via satellite)
- Airport/hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage on official arrival and departure days, March 2, 2027 and March 10, 2027, respectively
- Port taxes and charges
- Gratuities to shipboard personnel, porters, guides, and drivers on tours

Accommodations



Luxury Ship *Le Bougainville*

The five-star *Le Bougainville*, part of the PONANT EXPLORATIONS' expedition yacht series, features 92 cabins accommodating 184 guests. Designed with advanced eco-friendly technology, its Clean Ship certification highlights energy efficiency and marine protection. Compact yet luxurious, it navigates shallow bays and sensitive environments while offering safe, comfortable voyages with custom stabilizers. **(7 nights)**

Harbor Club St. Lucia, Curio Collection by Hilton

Vieux Fort, St. Lucia

The Harbor Club St. Lucia, Curio Collection by Hilton is a stylish Caribbean resort on Rodney Bay, the west coast of Saint Lucia, blending laid-back island charm with upscale comforts. Set on a marina, it offers 115 nautically inspired rooms and suites with marina or mountain views. Guests enjoy multiple pools, diverse dining options, a spa, fitness center, and easy access to beaches and local attractions. **(1 night)**



SPA



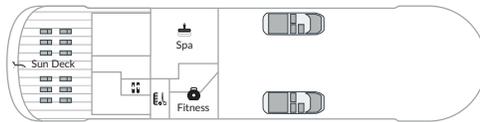
RESTAURANT



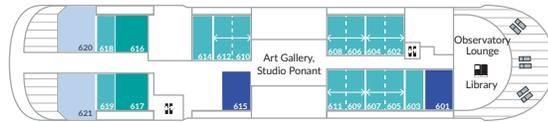
OWNER'S SUITE

Le Bougainville Deck Plan & Pricing

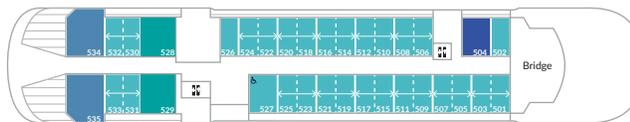
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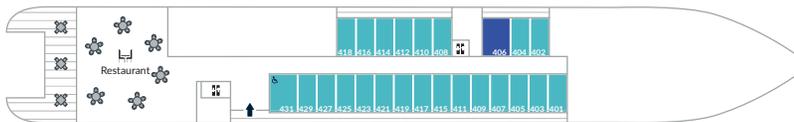
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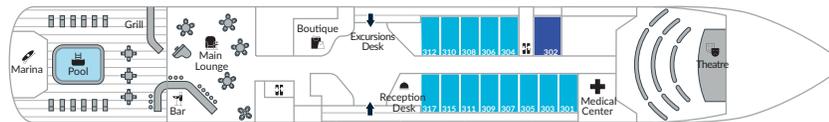
DECK 5



DECK 4



DECK 3



DECK 0 / The Blue Eye underwater lounge

- Deluxe Stateroom Deck 3
- Prestige Stateroom Decks 4-5-6
- Deluxe Suite Decks 3-4-5-6
- Prestige Suite Decks 5-6
- Privilege Suite Decks 5-6
- Grand Deluxe Suite Deck 6
- Owner's Suite Deck 5

Suites 431 and 527 are designated for guests with reduced mobility.

CATEGORY	DOUBLE OCCUPANCY <i>per person</i>	SINGLE OCCUPANCY <i>per person</i>
Deluxe Stateroom - Deck 3	\$7,100	\$9,850
Prestige Stateroom - Deck 4	\$7,347	\$10,220
Prestige Stateroom - Deck 5	\$7,489	\$10,430
Prestige Stateroom - Deck 6	\$7,689	\$10,730
Deluxe Suite - Decks 3, 4, 5, 6	\$9,475	\$13,410
Prestige Suite - Deck 5	\$9,997	\$14,190
Prestige Suite - Deck 6	\$10,244	\$14,560
Privilege Suite - Decks 5, 6	\$10,434	\$14,850
Grand Deluxe Suite - Deck 6	\$10,681	\$15,220
Owner's Suite - Deck 5	\$14,195	\$26,460

Departure: Caribbean Crossroads: Rival Empires in Paradise
March 2–10, 2027 | Deposit: 25% of Tour Fare

You will be allocated a cabin within The Great Courses Journey's allotment, specific cabin requests based on availability.

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