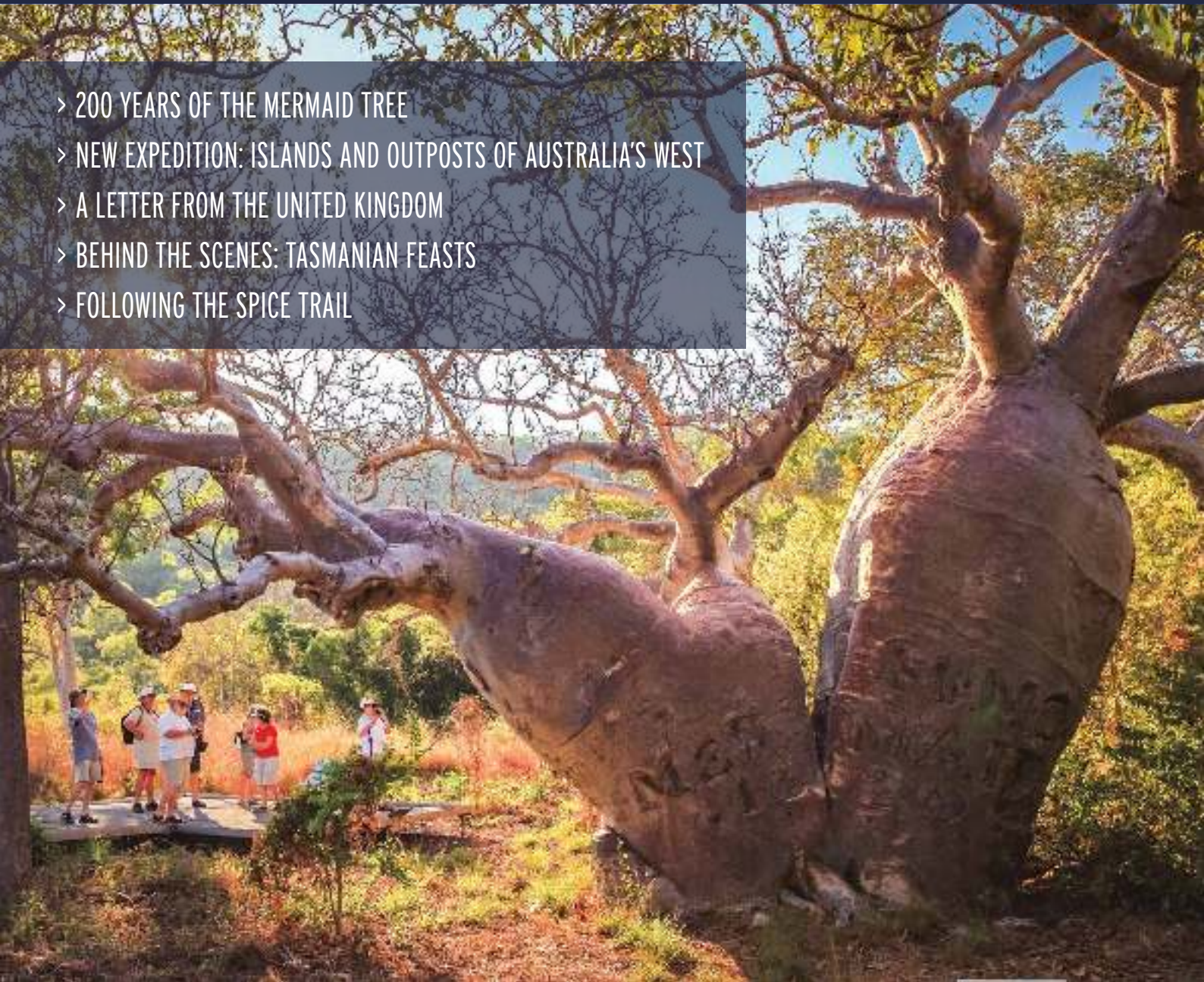


# DISCOVER NEWS

ISSUE 47 • OCTOBER 2019

- > 200 YEARS OF THE MERMAID TREE
- > NEW EXPEDITION: ISLANDS AND OUTPOSTS OF AUSTRALIA'S WEST
- > A LETTER FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM
- > BEHIND THE SCENES: TASMANIAN FEASTS
- > FOLLOWING THE SPICE TRAIL



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PAST GUEST COMMUNITY

  
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# WELCOME

We are at the end of our 24th Kimberley season, and it is with mixed emotions that we farewell *Coral Expeditions I* after a long and distinguished service. It is fitting that her final voyage was in the Kimberley and I am sure you will join our crew in celebrating the great times had by all aboard over many years.

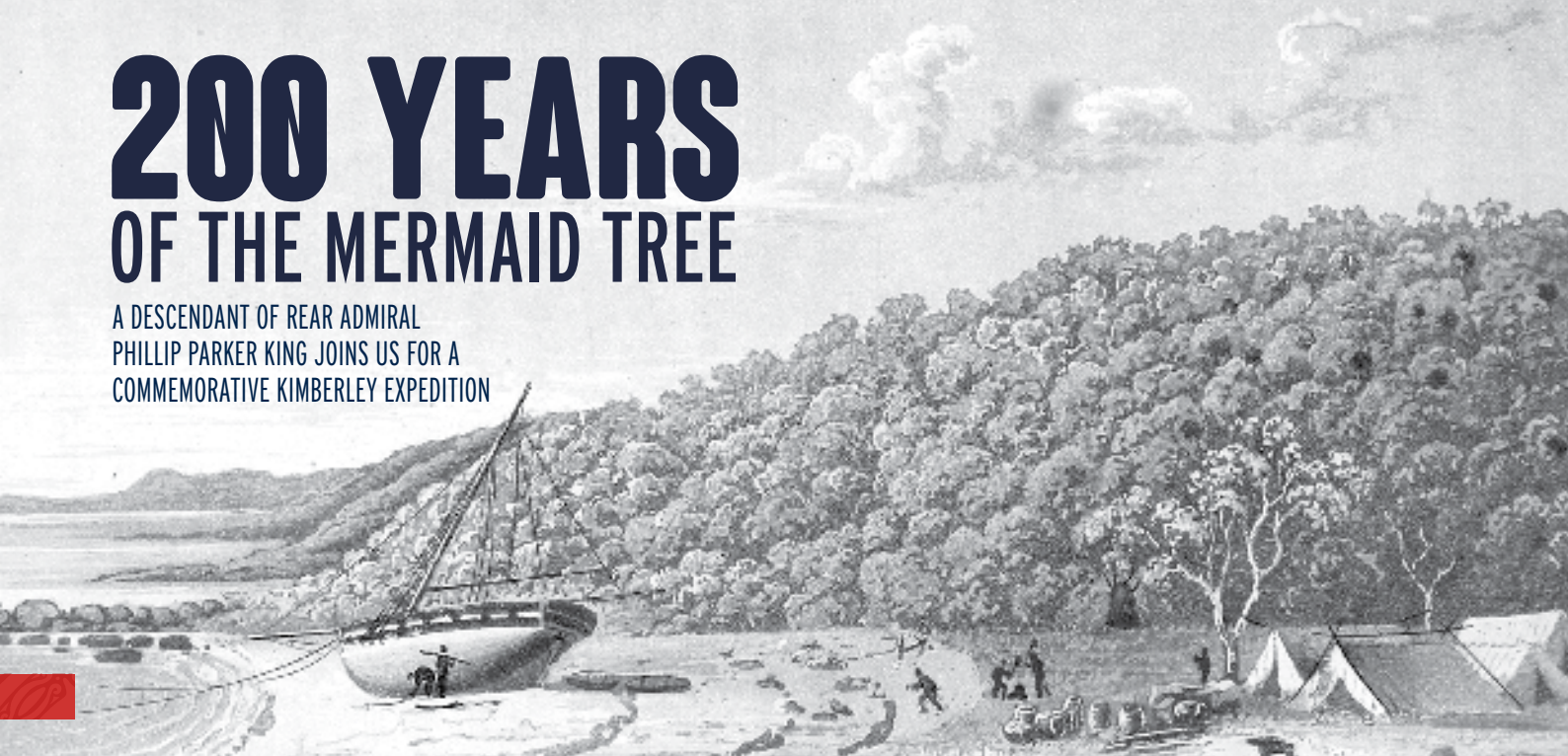
It is good to see the interest building in the Maiden voyage series of the new *Coral Geographer*, with our "Small Islands of the Indian Ocean" series filling fast. We are very excited to share with you details in this issue of a new expedition to Australia's West coast and island outposts including Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands and the Abrolhos Group. Construction of *Coral Geographer* is well on track and our team has recently visited the shipyard and signed off on the new design features of our suite's bathroom interiors.

Over the summer months, *Coral Adventurer* is setting sail on our new itineraries through the wilds of Papua New Guinea, the Spice Island kingdoms and our Singapore and Sulawesi voyages, which are still available for booking, with offers available for Xplorers and solo travellers. We look forward to welcoming you aboard soon!

Mark Fifield - Group General Manager

## 200 YEARS OF THE MERMAID TREE

A DESCENDANT OF REAR ADMIRAL  
PHILLIP PARKER KING JOINS US FOR A  
COMMEMORATIVE KIMBERLEY EXPEDITION



Dr. Jonathan King, historian, author and descendant of British Naval officer Rear Admiral Phillip Parker King, is a Guest Lecturer on our Kimberley cruise as we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Mermaid Tree.

Dr King is the great-great-grandson of Parker King, who as a lieutenant, commanded *HMC Mermaid* on a series of voyages charting northern Australia's coastline. Parker King produced marine charts of such quality and accuracy that they were still in use a century later.

In 1820 Parker King left an indelible mark in the Kimberley while repairing his leaking vessel at what is now known as Careening Bay. With his crew stranded on this remote coastline for 17 days while effecting repairs, the ship's carpenter carved the words 'HMC Mermaid 1820' into the bottle-shaped trunk of a boab tree near the beach. Almost 200 years later, the 'Mermaid Tree' has split into two trunks and sports a mammoth girth of 12m with the inscription now standing almost as tall as a person. Visiting this site is one of the highlights of our Kimberley voyages.

Guest Lecturer Dr. Jonathan King is the author of 30 historical books and 20 documentaries, has led pilgrimages to Gallipoli, is a sought-after keynote speaker and has re-enacted great historical events and voyages. He was presented with the Australian of the Year Award and Australian Achiever Award after orchestrating a re-enactment of the First Fleet's voyage from London to Sydney to celebrate Australia's 1988 Bicentenary.

Dr King inherited family memorabilia passed down through the generations from his great ancestor. The Family Album contains Rear Admiral King's sketch book, calling cards, original family silhouettes as well as an original 19th century sketch of the location of the Mermaid Tree.

Dr King is a classic storyteller with a passion for history and the events that shaped Australia. His lively presentations onboard *Coral Adventurer* promise to bring a rare insight into his ancestor's voyages through the Kimberley.

SPECIAL DEPARTURE: 21 SEPTEMBER 2020 > BROOME TO DARWIN

^ Image: HMC Mermaid at Careening Bay, sketched by Phillip Parker King





^ Sea Lions at the Houtman Abrolhos Islands

# ISLANDS & OUTPOSTS OF AUSTRALIA'S WEST

Coral Expeditions is excited to announce an all new exploratory voyage to remote islands and outposts of Australia's west coast aboard *Coral Geographer*.

Sailing north from Fremantle on a far-flung Indian Ocean adventure, this voyage with multiple sea days takes in The Abrolhos Islands, Shark Bay, Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island before arriving in Darwin 27 nights later.

## MUTINY, MAYHEM AND A SHIPWRECK LADEN WITH TREASURE

The Abrolhos Islands are a low-lying archipelago of 122 islands and reefs 60km off Geraldton. These National Park islands are surrounded by the southernmost coral reefs and are significant in Australia's history as the resting place for Dutch shipwrecks *Batavia* and *Zeewijk*. The *Batavia* shipwreck, the recovery of artefacts 300 years later and the discovery of graves is one of Australia's most fascinating maritime stories.

*Batavia* was laden with gold and silver coins and bound for the Spice Islands with 322 passengers and crew onboard when she ran aground on Morning Reef in 1629. Shipwrecked survivors scrambled ashore, but mayhem and massacre ensued as a mutinous crew lusted after power and the bounty of treasure that lay within *Batavia's* wrecked hulk. In their bloodthirsty quest for control, the mutineers dispatched a contingent of soldiers to what we now know as West Wallabi Island, hoping they would quickly perish

without food or water. Instead, the soldiers flourished, surviving on wallaby and a freshwater spring they found and building a makeshift fortress to repel the murderous mutineers. This simple structure, little more than rocks piled atop each other amongst low-lying scrub, became the first European construction in Australia, and the ruins are still visible today.

Historic shipwreck aside, the waters surrounding the Abrolhos Islands are the main attraction. Abundant marine and bird life are lured by the warm waters of the Leeuwin Current. The islands are a significant seabird breeding ground for millions of shearwaters, noddies and terns. But it is the inquisitive sea lions who steal the underwater limelight. Swimming and snorkeling with these curious mammals as they frolic playfully with swimmers is an undisputed highlight of our Abrolhos stopover.

## RED SAND, FOSSILS AND A 17TH CENTURY PEWTER PLATE

Shark Bay is Australia's most westerly point and one of just four West Australian World Heritage Sites. UNESCO recognises Shark Bay for three exceptional natural features. It has the largest and richest sea-grass beds in the world, which in turn attracts a large dugong (also known as sea cows) population. But it is the 'living fossil' stromatolites of Hamelin Pool which attract the most attention in these parts. The oldest life forms on earth, they are an estimated 3.7 billion years old.

By comparison, the Indigenous Australians' 22,000-year occupation of Shark Bay makes them relative newcomers. In 2018, Indigenous Malgana and Nhanda people were granted native title rights, giving them unhindered access to occupy, hunt and fish the red sand country they have roamed for eons. Ancient midden sites have been found in the sand of Peron Peninsula and Dirk Hartog Island.

This island was named after 17th century Dutch sailor Dirk Hartog, who discovered it when the Roaring Forties took his ship *Eendracht* close to the 'Southland' coast while en route to Batavia (present-day Jakarta) to trade for spices. Hartog stayed long enough to ascertain (incorrectly) the land was uninhabited and of little interest. Nevertheless, he marked his arrival by nailing a pewter dinner plate to a post on the cliff top before resuming course for the Spice Islands. Hartog thus became the first known European to land on Australia's west coast and the second to step ashore on New Holland (Australia) after countryman Willem Janszoon. Englishman and natural historian William Dampier followed 83 years later, recording the first detailed botanical drawings of flora and fauna and naming the region after the proliferation of marine life sighted.

From Shark Bay, we steam northwest across the Indian Ocean, with a fascinating program of activities and lectures over five luxuriant days at sea.

### A KINGDOM OF COCONUTS AND 'AUSTRALIA'S BEST BEACH'

The first thing you'll see rising above the horizon as *Coral Geographer* nears the Cocos (Keeling) Islands are palm trees swaying in the breeze. Emerging from a cobalt-blue Indian Ocean, this horseshoe-shaped string of low-lying atolls rimmed by powder-soft sand appear adrift upon a turquoise lagoon. Beach expert Brad Farmer named Cossies Beach at Direction Island the best in Australia.



The thousands of palm trees are the legacy of a copra plantation established by the original 'King of the Cocos Islands,' Scottish merchant seaman John Clunies-Ross. In the 1820's, Clunies-Ross ruled this sunshine-blessed paradise as his own private kingdom, bringing in indentured Malay laborers to work his coconut plantation. Their 500-odd Cocos Malay descendants, plus a handful of Australian government employees, make up the entire population of Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

One year before Coral Expeditions' first Great Barrier Reef cruise in 1985, Cocos residents voted to become a democratically run, self-governing Australian territory. Self Determination Day is the biggest festival of the year and *Coral Geographer's* visit is timed to join in the celebrations. The festival promises a beguiling clash of Cocos Malay dances, Scottish line dancing and a colourful boat regatta between traditional jukung sailing boats.

Cocos' remote location makes it a significant habitat and rookery for seabirds - oft-sighted species include red footed boobies, noddies, white terns, frigate birds and the Rufus night heron. The ridiculously aquamarine lagoon rimmed by Direction, West and Home Islands is inhabited by turtles, manta rays, reef sharks, dolphins and colourful tropical fish.

### A SUBMERGED MOUNTAIN, RARE BIRDS & CRABS AS LARGE AS TOASTERS

In stark contrast to beach-lined Cocos, Christmas Island's landscape is all craggy outcrops befitting its topography as the flat-topped summit of a 4,500m underwater mountain (Switzerland's Matterhorn is 4,478m). With just 360m of the mount visible, the island's near-vertical underwater cliffs make it a world-class scuba diving and snorkeling destination.

In fact, the natural world dominates life here, and much of Christmas Island's flora and fauna is protected by national park which covers more than 60% of the island.



A mammoth robber crab population, with their gigantic size that sees them weigh as much as 4kg, command the spotlight, exceeded only in numbers by 100 million or so red crabs whose annual spawning is considered one of the world's greatest migrations. Endemic seabirds like endangered Abbott's booby's and Christmas Island frigate birds nest here as well as migratory great cormorants and lesser frigate birds being regular visitors.

Beyond these extraordinary wildlife watching opportunities, Christmas Island is graced with stands of rainforest pierced by waterfalls and caves carved by freshwater springs and pummeling seas. Sea cliffs edge much of the 80km long coastline, giving way momentarily to picturesque coves and beaches bookended by weathered limestone outcrops.

Home to a harmonious multicultural community who have themselves travelled far across the seas, Christmas Islanders embrace visitors to their remote island outpost.

Far-flung Christmas Island is a rewarding final stopover for *Coral Geographer* before turning for Darwin and returning to mainland Australia.

< A beach on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands ^ The famous Christmas Island Red Crab

#### > DISCOVER

Remarkable remote islands of the West Coast, and Australia's distant Indian Ocean territories

#### > ITINERARY

Islands & Outposts of Australia's West Fremantle to Darwin, 27 Nights, departs 26 March 2021

Contact us to be among the first to secure your place on this extraordinary voyage.



# A LETTER FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM



More than 80 UK-based Xplorers Club members were delighted to attend our first-ever overseas member events. Two cocktail parties were held in London and Knutsford to coincide with the opening of our first international office in London, marking a milestone in Coral Expeditions' continued growth.

Platinum Xplorers Club member Elizabeth Nairn, a veteran of many Coral Expeditions voyages, was honoured to mark the momentous occasion by 'ringing the bell' of *Royal Yacht Britannia* which hangs in the Quarterdeck Room at London's historic Trinity House. This elegant bell was gifted to HM the Queen by Trinity House in 1953 and returned to Trinity House when *Britannia* was decommissioned in 1997.

Trinity House has long been the spiritual home of mariners since 1514 when a Royal Charter was granted by Henry VIII to the Corporation of Trinity House to safeguard shipping and seafarers. Revisiting Trinity House felt like a special homecoming for Senior Master Gary Wilson who served as a 2<sup>nd</sup> mate with Trinity House for one year and was its first-ever Australian officer.

Capt. Wilson regaled guests with tales from *Coral Adventurer's Maiden Voyage* series following the trail of Abel Tasman through Indonesia, the Spice Islands and West Papua. He also talked fondly about the significance of holding the London event at Trinity House.

"Working for Trinity House was one of the highlights of my seafaring life. This is quite a meaningful moment for me," Capt. Wilson said as he reflected on a lifetime at sea. "To return as Master of a fleet of Australian-flagged world-class expedition vessels is really quite something."

"With more than 2,000 past passengers in the UK, it is wonderful to see so many familiar faces in London and Knutsford - we have had a lot of fun sharing travel adventure stories from far-flung destinations."

Capt. Wilson couldn't resist a good-natured dig about the Brits and their under-performing national cricket team.

"The camaraderie and spirit that exists between Australia and the UK is always healthy, especially when Australia is doing well in the cricket. This friendly banter is something we cherish whenever we have our valued UK guests onboard," he said.



# BEHIND THE SCENES



Executive Chef Barbara Genedics in the galley of Coral Adventurer

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE EXPERIENCES FOR GUESTS ON OUR TASMANIA EXPEDITIONS IN 2020:

- > Learn about Tasmania's exquisite gourmet produce and wines
- > Hear from Executive Chef Barbara Genedics as she presents culturally authentic food & wine demonstrations
- > Taste Tasmania's famed Pinot Noir & other varieties, and learn from guided wine tastings matched to cuisine
- > Taste fresh locally-sourced oysters and seafood at a sundeck soirée with a backdrop of secluded Port Davey
- > Enjoy a curated beverage list of Tasmanian wines, beer, cider & artisanal spirits throughout your cruise

Tasmania's world-renowned food and wine produce is showcased on 2020 and 2021 Tasmania cruises aboard *Coral Discoverer*.

With an emphasis on highlighting Tasmania's diverse flavours, New Zealand-trained Executive Chef, Barbara Genedics is fostering a local community of small-scale, sustainable growers, fishermen, producers and providers whose products will feature on menus during Tasmanian voyages.

"At Coral Expeditions our menu focuses on seasonal herbs and vegetables, locally caught and harvested seafood and small-farm free-range meat and dairy."

## TASMANIAN FEASTS WITH OUR EXECUTIVE CHEF BARBARA GENEDICS

"We're working with Tasmania's best small producers to source exceptional ingredients that showcase the culinary landscape of Tasmania," says Genedics.

Highlighting the diverse flavours of Tasmania on our Pristine Tasmania and Tasmanian Circumnavigation itineraries, shore excursions and onboard cuisine features the tasty treats of the island state.

Known as the Apple Isle due to verdant valleys and rolling hills dotted with organic berry farms and apple orchards, Tasmania's produce is influenced by Roaring Forties weather systems. Fertile pastures produce some of the nation's finest dairy products with award-winning cheeses recognised globally. The Tasman Sea provides an abundance of seafood, whether wild-caught or harvested sustainably. Centuries-old cellar doors specialise in premium cool climate wines while the Apple Isle is home to bespoke beer, cider and artisanal spirit producers that capitalise on its natural assets.

"My approach to cooking is all about simplicity and generosity and our menus change depending on what's in season in the regions we visit. People and place are key to my philosophy - wonderful friends and unique locations will always enhance an eating experience."

"In my opinion, food is the vehicle for conversation, fun and memorable occasions where ingredients speak for themselves with little adornment. Made-from scratch combined with inbuilt curiosity informs everything we do at Coral Expeditions."





A welcome to the small island of Tanjung Kelian is not complete without a tasty snack

# FOLLOWING THE SPICE TRAIL

The vast Indonesian archipelago stretches 5,100 km from east to west (Perth to Sydney is a mere 3,900km). Our 17 night expeditions between Darwin and Singapore, and vice versa, cover a swathe of Sumatra and Java, visiting islands that are otherwise hidden to tourist eyes. Retracing 17th century spice routes where merchants once traded silks for cloves and coffee for nutmeg, *Coral Adventurer's* expedition team takes you through Batavia-era streetscapes and boardwalks of floating villages largely unchanged for centuries.

As you cruise from island to island, witness the confluence of history, culture and wildlife unique to Indonesia. You will learn about the country's fascinating history at the heart of international trade and migration routes while meandering through spice markets, maritime and history museums. Visit coastal villages where ironwood ships are built on the beach and textiles are woven on ancient looms, much as they have been for generations.

World Heritage-listed Ujung Kulon National Park, at the southwest corner of Java, is home to over 700 species of plants and the endangered Java rhinoceros. On Rinca Island you will see the famed Komodo Dragons. Amidst the volcanic backdrop of Krakatoa, we will pause to pay tribute to Australia's WWII history at the wreck of *HMAS Perth*, tragically torpedoed in the Battle of Sunda Strait.

In between historic sights and cultural adventures there will be time to relax on white-sand beaches on little-visited islands and snorkel over vibrant coral gardens on these remarkable expeditions.

## > ITINERARIES

<i>Komodo Dragons &amp; Krakatoa</i>	departs 15 January 2020
<i>Komodo Dragons &amp; Krakatoa</i>	departs 2 February 2020
<i>In the Wake of the Makassans</i>	departs 27 February 2020
<i>Sulawesi Circle</i>	departs 12 March 2020
<i>In the Wake of the Makassans</i>	departs 1 April 2020

## WELCOMING CHRISTOPHER RYND

Former Commodore Christopher Rynd, a distinguished seafarer, will join *Coral Adventurer* as a Lecturer on several of our voyages.

Christopher is a charismatic captain who learned to navigate the world's oceans with traditional methods - by the sun, moon and stars and using a sextant and paper charts. His career spans 50 years - he has commanded some of the world's most esteemed cruise liners including *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth 2*. He was also the original 'Love Boat' Captain, commanding *Pacific Princess*, the vessel that starred in the 1970's television series.

Christopher still abides by long-held sailing superstitions that hail from old sailing ship days.

"Whistling on the bridge comes from the old sailing days, where there was a fear that you might whistle up an unfavourable wind," he says. "That custom still prevails. I certainly endorse it, and there will be no whistling on my bridge."

Calling upon his vast maritime experience and travels across the world's great oceans, Christopher will enthrall *Coral Adventurer* guests with his stories. His fascinating talks will cover navigation history, cruise liner history and celestial navigation, along with insights into the ancient trading routes of the Spice Islands, sprinkled with interesting personal anecdotes of a lifetime at sea.





## EXPEDITION DIARY > 3 SEPTEMBER 2019 KIMBERLEY EXPEDITION

*"We went ashore at Jar Island. There we were welcomed to country by the local Wunambal Gaambera people with a touching ceremony, as we filed through the smoke from smouldering ironwood leaves. We visited sites with Gwion Gwion rock art...under a low overhang we saw a panel with several arm-length fish and an echidna. There were depictions of people...some of which are thought to be at least 17,000 years old. On the beach, the traditional owners bid us farewell with a series of dances called 'jumba', depicting stories from their 'lalai' (dreamtime).*

- Guest Lecturers Terry and Chris Done



### EXPERIENCE CORAL ASSURANCE WHEN BOOKING DIRECT

- WE CARE:** Our team is motivated solely to ensure you have the trip of a lifetime.  
**WE KNOW:** Our knowledge of our ships and itineraries ensure you get the best advice.  
**WE COMMIT:** You will not get a better price elsewhere.



### STAY IN THE KNOW:

Want to be among the first to hear about our special offers and new itinerary releases? Sign up to receive our fortnightly email updates. Email [Xplorersclub@coralexpeditions.com](mailto:Xplorersclub@coralexpeditions.com) and let us know that you want to receive our email newsletter.

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