



The ancient Mayan City of Tulum, Mexico

## Histories of the Caribbean and the Americas Cruise

27 February – 12 March 2020





The old city, Cartagena de Indias, Colombia

**The Caribbean and the Americas have a long, multi-faceted history that encompasses ancient cultures and colonisation to the modern day. This cruise explores coastlines which were strategic, bountiful and beautiful, making them hotly contested by colonial powers over centuries. They attracted investment from the wealthy of the day, leaving a legacy of magnificent architecture amongst the natural beauty of the area, which is also rich in wildlife. Today this area is both a fascinating and attractive destination for the modern traveller with an interest in the past.**

**Travelling with the experienced and popular husband and wife tour leader team of John and Susi Richardson, set sail from the Dominican Republic to explore Mayan ruins, rainforests, an array of wildlife, colonial cities and contemporary society. Experience different cultures and cuisines and see the influence of colonisation and modern societies on these lands. Tour leaders John and Susi will give specialist talks and commentary throughout and there will be escorted shore excursions during the cruise..**

Arrive in La Romana in the Dominican Republic and transfer to *Braemar* in the evening. Spend your first night on board settling in at your leisure.

Next day take a walking tour of Santo Domingo, founded in 1496 by Bartholomew Columbus. Walk along Las Damas street, the oldest paved street in the New World, which boasts colonial era architecture. Stop to sample some traditional Dominican hot chocolate and see Fortaleza Ozama, the first permanent military structure built by the Spanish in the Americas. Continue to the National Pantheon, a tomb for many famous figures of the Republic. Stop in Parque Colon, with the figure of Christopher Columbus at its centre and surrounded by colonial and modern architecture. Visit Columbus Palace and spend time exploring at leisure before returning to the ship for welcome drinks.



Santo Domingo, Dominica Republic



The Altun Ha Mayan site, Belize

Spend the next two days at sea at leisure enjoying the ship's facilities. Hear a talk on 'The British West India Regiment - Britain's Forgotten Black Soldiers' by John Richardson during this time. Dock at Cozumel in Mexico and take a ferry to the main land, Playa del Carmen. From here drive to Tulum and explore its fascinating Mayan ruins with your guide. Enjoy a picnic lunch and take time to relax or explore Tulum itself before returning to the ship in the late afternoon.

Arrive at Belize City the next morning and disembark. Drive through the lush Belize landscapes to visit Altun Ha, once a thriving Mayan trading post, before lunch on the banks of the Belize River. Return to the city and visit the Museum of Belize, housed in the old prison. Continue to the colonial heart of the city and see St. John's Cathedral, the oldest Anglican cathedral in Central America, and hear about the history of the British and Baron Bliss.

Spend two days at leisure at sea, hearing two talks by John Richardson – one on the British Trans-Americas Expedition of 1971-72, and one on the achievements of Mary Seacole.

Arrive at Puerto Limon in Costa Rica the next day. Dock and drive to the Veragua Rainforest and Research Centre, Costa Rica's newest private rainforest reserve, in the company of a naturalist guide. Visit the snake, frog and butterfly exhibits - set up by the University of Costa Rica - before boarding the open air aerial trams that offer

exceptional views of the rainforest as you ride through the treetops. Stroll through the Trail of the Giants and to the Puma Waterfall before returning to the aerial tram. There will be time to visit the biological research centre before sampling succulent local tropical fruits. Return to the ship for a late lunch and spend the afternoon at leisure.

Travel from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast of Panama, a route that follows in the footsteps of the conquistadors. Arrive in Miraflores Docks to watch ships making their way through the Panama Canal. Visit the exhibition centre to learn about the history of the canal, including the opportunity to watch a film showing how it was built. Return to Colon to see the Panama Canal Expansion, which creates a new traffic lane along the canal, along with the construction of new locks. The rest of the day is at leisure.

Continue to Colombia and the magnificent city of Cartagena. Start the day with a panoramic view of the city as you make your way to the



Aerial Tram, Puerto Limon, Costa Rica (top);  
Gatun Locks, Panama Canal (above)



San Felipe Fortress, where there will be time to explore. Continue to the old city to see the Convent and Church of San Pedro Claver. There will be time to visit the Bovedas, a collection of archways built into the city walls - once these served as a prison, but they are now home to artisans. After a delicious local lunch explore the colonial district, including Bolivar Park and the Inquisition Palace. Return to the ship.

The next day is at leisure at sea. Dock the following day at Willemstad in Curacao, where classic Dutch architecture has been given the local treatment, painted in vibrant colours. Your day here is at leisure. You may relax on a beach, swim or snorkel, explore at your own pace or take part in optional activities including visiting the Maritime Museum, Christoffel National Park with its former plantations and Savonet Museum. The ship departs later in the evening.

Spend the next day at sea enjoying the ship's facilities and listening to lectures on board.

Next morning arrive in Bridgetown in Barbados and disembark. As most flights depart Bridgetown in the late afternoon we will be offering an optional tour exploring bustling Bridgetown with its vividly coloured colonial buildings. Tour the historic Garrison Savanna District, which contained the largest garrison in the British Colonies during the 18th and 19th centuries and is today a Unesco World Heritage

site for its historical significance. The tour includes a visit to George Washington's house, a beautiful Georgian house at the top of Bush Hill where Washington stayed in 1751 – the only place he lived outside of the USA.

Make your way to the airport for your return flight, or extend in Barbados.



Willemstad, Curacao (top); Bottom Bay, Barbados (above)

# Itinerary 27 February – 12 March 2020

**B** = Breakfast **L** = Lunch **D** = Dinner

La Romana, Dominican Republic – Cozumel, Mexico – Belize City, Belize – Puerto Limon, Costa Rica – Colon, Panama – Cartagena de Indias, Colombia – Willemstad, Curacao – Bridgetown, Barbados

<b>27 Feb (Thur)</b>	<b>La Romana, Dominican Republic</b> <b>D</b>	<b>5 Mar (Thur)</b>	<b>At Sea</b> <b>B L D</b>
<b>Pm</b>	Arrive and transfer to <i>MS Braemar</i>	<b>Am</b>	Talk: <i>“There is more to Mary Seacole than the Crimean War”</i>
<b>Eve</b>	At leisure	<b>Pm</b>	At leisure
<b>28 Feb (Fri)</b>	<b>Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic</b> <b>B L D</b>	<b>6 Mar (Fri)</b>	<b>Puerto Limon, Costa Rica</b> <b>B L D</b>
<b>Am</b>	Walking tour of Santo Domingo, founded in 1496. Walk along Las Damas street, the oldest paved street in the New World, and Fortaleza Ozama, the first permanent military structure built by the Spanish in the Americas, the National Pantheon. Stop in Parque Colon and visit Columbus Palace	<b>Am</b>	Visit Veragua Rainforest and Research Centre with your naturalist guide. Visit the snake, frog and butterfly exhibits, ride the open air aerial trams through the treetops and walk the Trail of the Giants to the Puma Waterfall. Visit the biological research centre
<b>Pm</b>	At leisure	<b>Pm</b>	Return to the ship for a late lunch and afternoon at leisure
<b>Eve</b>	Welcome drinks	<b>7 Mar (Sat)</b>	<b>Colon, Panama</b> <b>B L D</b>
<b>29 Feb (Sat)</b>	<b>At Sea</b> <b>B L D</b>	<b>Am</b>	Arrive at Miraflores Docks to see the ships making their way through the Panama Canal and visit the exhibition centre showing you the history of the canal. Return to Colon to see the Panama Canal Expansion creating a new traffic lane along the canal, along with construction of new locks
<b>Am</b>	Day at leisure	<b>Pm</b>	Afternoon at leisure
<b>1 Mar (Sun)</b>	<b>At Sea</b> <b>B L D</b>	<b>8 Mar (Sun)</b>	<b>Cartagena de Indias, Colombia</b> <b>B L D</b>
<b>Am</b>	Talk <i>“The British West India Regiment - Britain’s Forgotten Black Soldiers”</i> - John Richardson	<b>Am</b>	Panoramic view of the city before exploring San Felipe Fortress. Continue to the old city and the Convent and Church of San Pedro Claver. Visit the Bovedas, a collection of archways built into the city walls that were once a prison, but now house artisans
<b>Pm</b>	At leisure	<b>Pm</b>	Explore the colonial district including Bolivar Park and the Inquisition Palace. Return to the ship
<b>2 Mar (Mon)</b>	<b>Cozumel, Mexico</b> <b>B L D</b>	<b>9 Mar (Mon)</b>	<b>At Sea</b> <b>B L D</b>
<b>Am</b>	Depart the ship and take a ferry to the main land, Playa del Carmen, and from here drive to Tulum. Explore the fascinating Mayan ruins with your guide	<b>Am</b>	Day at leisure
<b>Pm</b>	After a picnic lunch there will be time to relax or discover Tulum itself before returning to the ship in the late afternoon	<b>10 Mar (Tue)</b>	<b>Willemstad, Curacao</b> <b>B L D</b>
<b>3 Mar (Tue)</b>	<b>Belize City, Belize</b> <b>B L D</b>	<b>Am</b>	Day at leisure to explore Willemstad
<b>Am</b>	Drive through the beautiful Belize countryside to visit Altun Ha, once a thriving Mayan trading post. Lunch along the banks of the Belize River	<b>11 Mar (Wed)</b>	<b>At Sea</b> <b>B L D</b>
<b>Pm</b>	Return to the city to visit the Museum of Belize, housed in the old prison. Continue to the colonial heart of the city and see St. John’s Cathedral, the oldest Anglican cathedral in Central America. Hear about the history of the British and Baron Bliss	<b>Am</b>	Day at leisure
<b>4 Mar (Wed)</b>	<b>At Sea</b> <b>B L D</b>	<b>12 Mar (Thur)</b>	<b>Bridgetown, Barbados</b> <b>B</b>
<b>Am</b>	Talk <i>“The British Trans-Americas Expedition 1971-72”</i> - John Richardson	<b>Am</b>	Disembark the ship after breakfast. Optional tour of Bridgetown. Transfer to airport, or extend in Barbados
<b>Pm</b>	At leisure		

All itineraries are subject to change according to local conditions.



Braemar at sea

## MS Braemar

The cruise is on Fred Olsen *MS Braemar*, a lovely classic mid-sized ship with light and airy décor and excellent, friendly customer service. It has a gym with sea views, a small spa and salon, a crafts room, two swimming pools, two whirlpools, golf nets and deck games. Large windows bathe the ship's interiors in natural light and offer spectacular views while polished wooden fixtures, gleaming brass fittings and rich fabrics provide a traditional country house hotel atmosphere. Capable of comfortably accommodating up to 929 guests, *Braemar* provides a good selection of restaurants, bars and lounges. The five-deck high Atrium leads to the Fitness Centre, Palms Café, Coral Club and the Thistle Restaurant. There is also a dedicated private room for the lectures on board.

*“The standard of the ship (MS Braemar) was a highlight of the trip.”*

Clive & Valerie Whittington, Caribbean Histories Cruise, 2019



On deck Braemar

## Tour leaders & speakers

**John and Susi Richardson** were the doctor and nurse respectively on The British Trans Americas Expedition 1971-2; the first ever drive from Alaska to Cape Horn and the first crossing of the Darien Gap in Panama. He has also acted as doctor to six sailing expeditions with service personnel and students in the Caribbean. Professor John Richardson is Emeritus Defence Professor of Primary Care and General Practice. He has led study tours worldwide and was a medical escort to parties of veterans on journeys of remembrance for the Royal British Legion. Susi Richardson has travelled widely across the world either as an expedition nurse, or as a nurse on war grave pilgrimages for the Royal British Legion, co-tour leader for Jon Baines Tours, or accompanying her husband on his British Army medical officer postings. John and Susi have previously led many tours and cruises for Jon Baines Tours.

*“John and Susi – tour leaders extraordinaire!... Always wonderfully cheerful, well organized and helpful as always. Truly great leaders.”*

Jan and Gavin Fabinyi, Assam and Brahmaputra Cruise,  
March 2018

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## Flights

We have arranged a group flight package with British Airways to Punta Cana and returning from Bridgetown. This will include return transfers as well as a half day tour in Bridgetown on departure. The costs will be **£765** for economy seats. Upgrades are available; please contact us for the prices.

For those making their own way to and from the cruise we can assist with airport transfers; please get in touch with us for a quote. Please note that the ship is docked in La Romana in the Dominican Republic - flights either arrive here or Punta Cana, which is over an hour's drive away.

**The cruise costs do not include flights. For assistance booking flights to and from the cruise, please contact Jon Baines Tours.**

### The cost of the cruise is:

- N Grade - Single Inside = USD \$4,778
- M Grade - Single Inside = USD \$5,068
- L Grade - Single Outside = USD \$5,575
- I Grade - Twin Inside = USD \$3,596
- E Grade - Outside Twin as single = USD \$5,648
- E Grade - Twin Outside = USD \$4,198
- C Grade - Superior Twin = USD \$4,633
- B Grade - Superior Twin = USD \$4,850
- BS Grade - Balcony Suite Twin = USD \$6,583

**Please contact us for a deck plan and full specific cabin details.**

### The cost includes:

- Comprehensive briefing notes
- Private specialist lecture programme
- 14 nights' accommodation with private facilities on *MS Braemar*
- The services of tour leaders (John and Susi Richardson)
- All meals on the cruise ship and iced water, standard tea and coffee with all meals and juice for breakfast
- Lunches on full-day excursions
- Tea and coffee making facilities in cabins
- All on-board entertainment
- Private escorted shore visits as per the itinerary
- Admission fees where applicable
- Services of local English-speaking guides
- Cabin portorage and all tips
- Two Captain's cocktail parties, one welcome and one farewell drinks party and one private ship party, with drinks and canapés

### The cost excludes:

- International flights and transfers (if not taking group flights)
- All personal extras eg laundry, vaccinations
- All optional excursions, tours and visits and drinks not mentioned
- Travel insurance and visas (if required)

# About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.



The Mayan site at Tulum (top); Keel-billed toucan, Belize; Clock Tower Gate, Cartagena; Mambo Beach, Curacao (above)

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**Jon Baines Tours (London)**  
Hyde Park House, 5 Manfred Road,  
London, SW15 2RS  
Tel: +44 (0) 207 223 9485 / 5618  
Email: [info@jonbainestours.co.uk](mailto:info@jonbainestours.co.uk)  
[www.jonbainestours.co.uk](http://www.jonbainestours.co.uk)

**Jon Baines Tours (Melbourne)**  
PO Box 68, South Brunswick,  
Victoria 3055  
Tel: +61 (0) 3 9343 6367  
Fax: +61 (0) 3 9012 4228  
Email: [info@jonbainestours.com.au](mailto:info@jonbainestours.com.au)  
[www.jonbainestours.com](http://www.jonbainestours.com)



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