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Media Release

**Reef Endeavour to host Marine Science Guest Lecturers in Fiji – Jan & April 2023**

Captain Cook Cruises is thrilled that both leading Marine Biologists, Dr Penny Berents and Prof Kris Helgen, Chief Scientist at the Australian Museum will be joining MV Reef Endeavour for cruise expeditions in the Fiji Islands in 2023. Captain Cook Cruises pioneers marine education and sustainability initiatives in the Pacific and the collaboration with Dr Berents and Prof Helgen sparks an exciting opportunity for guests.

Dr Berents will join the 7 night Remote North Cruise on 22 April. She is one of Australia's leading Marine Biologists and has spent over 40 years researching all aspects of biodiversity. Dr Berents has dedicated her life to conducting surveys and collecting data in marine environments, from coral reefs to the deep sea. In addition to her wealth of knowledge, she is also a Scuba Dive Instructor and an experienced boat handler leading numerous expeditions to the Great Barrier Reef and the Indo-Pacific. She retired in 2014 as Head of Natural Sciences at the Australian Museum and is now a Senior Fellow in the Australian Museum Research Institute. Dr Penny Berents had an incredible time cruising with the company in 2022 and simply couldn’t wait to be back on board to deliver another insightful lecture.

Dr Helgen will join the 7 night Remote Lau Island Cruise departing on 14 January. As Chief Scientist at the Australian Museum he brings with him a wealth of experience. The Harvard University Fullbright Scholar is a Trustee of the Lizard Island Reef Research Institute, has previously been Curator-in-Charge of Mammals at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History having conducted research in more than 50 countries documenting some 100 previously overlooked species of living mammals. Prof Helgen’s expeditions and discoveries have been featured in two major documentary series by the BBC Natural History Unit. He is a National Geographic Society Explorer, a CNN Inspirations Researcher, and named in the list of the “Most Innovative Under 40” by Business Insider magazine.

Guests who join these departures will benefit from an extraordinary number of enhanced skills and knowledge. Captain Cook Cruises offers guests numerous opportunities to learn about and engage with Fiji’s marine life. The team of Marine Biologists onboard MV Reef Endeavour guide guests on snorkelling trips where they can witness magnificent coral reefs and its abundant ecosystem of tropical fish, reef sharks, manta rays, turtles and more. The ship is PADI 5 star and the dive offerings are also comprehensive from intro to advanced dives. After witnessing Fiji’s exquisite marine life, guests are bound to be inquisitive and can join interactive ‘Reef Talks’ with the company Marine Biologist. These educational discussions inspire guests to conserve and protect the Pacific Ocean. On MV Reef Endeavour and Day Cruises to Tivua Private Island, guests can help revitalise Fiji’s coral reefs by planting a coral frag and earning a participation certificate in their ‘Buy a Coral, Build a Reef’ program. Guests can also be Citizen Scientists and log their marine sightings on Captain Cook’s projects on iNaturalist.org to help contribute to the scientific data on Fiji’s marine life.

‘We are very excited to welcome Dr Berents and Prof Helgen on board Reef Endeavour and are looking forward to working with them as we explore and share remote Fiji’s wonderful natural environments’ Amos Daniel, Marine Biologist, Captain Cook Cruises Fiji.

The educational experiences Captain Cook Cruises offers will be heightened with the attendance of Dr Berents and Prof Helgen. They will conduct daily lectures and be actively collaborating with all the established on board programs. Guests can expect to learn about marine invertebrates, biodiversity of crustacean amphipods, Fiji’s contribution to the biodiversity of the Pacific and the positive effect of the giant clam rejuvenation program on the crown of thorns star fish on the reefs of Fiji.

Prof Kris Helgen will be joining Captain Cook Cruises on the 14th of January 7 night Lau Island Cruise and Dr Penny Berents 22nd of April 2023 for the 7-Night Cruise exploring the Remote North. Book now and benefit from the educational insight from one of the world’s leading scientists.

Reef Endeavour’s voyages to the Remote North and Lau Islands occur only a few times a year. These bucket list experiences provide an opportunity to immerse the visitor in the pristine natural environment of Fiji and to experience this unique culture first-hand. Other voyages include a 3, 4 and 7 Night cruise to the Mamanuca & Yasawa islands, departing most Tuesdays and Saturdays, and a 7 and 11-Night cruise to the Lau & Kadavu on selected dates. For a short and sweet adventure, join their Day Sail to Tivua Private Island or Sunset Dinner Cruise.

For further information and bookings visit[**www.captaincookcruisesfiji.com**](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fcampaigns.customlinc.com%2ft%2fr-l-jukjyull-odkkhhrfr-j%2f&c=E,1,GgWJbx6doirEce7Qxpkabmvs8hY8UWzBxB9-dEx62b0UvTuClGreeFuGfV868fjeSs5iovda6a8VmYYFVNvUxQNzFhX1GI6B4MGLPLmJhDQ3zKb3Puo,&typo=1)**, phone** +679 6701 823, +61 2 9126 8160 or contact your local travel agent.

**Overview of Captain Cook Fiji Itineraries**

Captain Cook Cruises Fiji’s seven-night itineraries include the Mamanuca and Yasawa Islands cruisedeparting most Tuesdays and Saturdays, the Remote North Discovery cruises and the Lau & Kadavu Discovery Cruise departing selected dates.

The 3 and 4 night Mamanuca and Yasawa Islands cruise discovers the beauty of these westerly Fiji Island groups and cruises through some spectacular passages from Malolo lai lai to the Yasawa’s northern reaches.  The cruise visits the islands of Waya, Naviti, Sacred Islands, the private island of Tivua, the Sawa-l-Lau limestone caves and lagoon and Mononki – the island where Tom Hank’s movie Cast Away was filmed.

Captain Cook Cruises seven nights Remote North Fiji Discovery Cruise reveals the unique history, art and culture of the Northern Fiji Islands and allows passengers the ultimate experience of ‘standing’ on the 180th Meridian, the natural dateline.  The cruise also visits the recent UNESCO, Heritage listed old capital of Levuka, Tavoro Falls and Naselesele Village on Taveuni, Savusavu for a unique hot springs and Pearl farm experience and the historic island of Makogai, a past leper colony and now giant clam farm and turtle sanctuary.

Departure dates for the Remote North Fiji Discovery Cruise include 20 December 2022, 18 February & 22nd April 2023.

Explore the length of the remote Lau group and the island of Kadavu, a part of Fiji is rarely seen by tourists on the seven or eleven night’s Lau & Kadavu Discovery Cruise.

Highlights include visiting a freshwater swimming pool on Taveuni, exploring the ruins of an old light house and snorkelling untouched reefs at Wailagilala, a village church service at Oneata and visiting Qilaqila known for its pristine aqua waters, reefs, amazing caves and mushroom shaped islands. See extinct volcano craters on Fulaga or Totoya Island and experience a traditional Tongan Meke, Sevusevu and lovo feast with the people of Naikeleyaga Village.

Departure dates for the 11 night Lau & Kadavu Discovery Cruise include 21 March 2023 or 7 night departs 14 January  or  20 May 2023 .

All cruises offer on and underwater world experiences with daily swimming, kayaking, paddle boarding, snorkelling and glass bottom boating over amazing coral reefs. The ship is equipped with a hydraulic platform ensuring boarding and disembarking the glass bottom boat is easy.  Our Marine Biologist provides expert marine habitat knowledge with guided snorkeling, glass bottom boat tours and lectures and our Ocean Ambassador helps educate passengers and locals to reduce our oceans of plastic.

Try mind blowing scuba diving operated by Viti Water Sports, a PADI5 Star Dive Centre Dive with two dives offered daily and always in different locations.

On-board be pampered at the ship’s Day Spa, relax on the sun deck by the jacuzzi or freshwater pool, work out in the mini-gym, play a game in the lounge or grab a cocktail at the pool bar and watch the breathtaking scenery pass by.

Enjoy mouthwatering cuisine including buffet breakfasts, alfresco lunches, casual barbecues and a-la-carte dinners. All food is prepared on board from fresh local and imported produce.

Minimum age for children is 5 years and complimentary Kids Club is available for children 5 -9 years.

For further information and bookings visit [**www.captaincookcruisesfiji.com**](https://campaigns.customlinc.com/t/r-i-juukkdky-l-y/)

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