



PONANT

As the only French-owned cruise line, luxury megayacht brand Ponant provides all the panache you would expect from *la Française*. The crowd is chic (and mostly French), the décor mixes breezy whites with crystalline accents, and the culinary temptation is constant. The cocktail party atmosphere never ends, even when a ship is heading into the Arctic ice floes.

What Else We Love:

The Spa: European staff — using French Sothys products — provide top-notch treatments, whether it's a facial or a pedicure or simply an updo in the salon. There's also a hammam (Turkish steam bath) on every ship except the original *Le Ponant*.

Details: While there are formal dinners every night, the quality of "the basics" is what really creates a feeling of indulgence. Every meal includes as much French butter and cheese as you can handle, and the Champagne and rosé are free-flowing.



Photo credit: Ponant | Sommelier

Best Known For:

Brand Partnerships: Many iconic French luxury brands have partnered with Ponant, so the ineffable French style is reinforced by exquisite details like Laduree macarons at tea and Veuve Clicquot behind the bar. The housekeepers leave a trail of Fragonard room fragrance in their wake.

Polar Expeditions: It's hard to believe that such graceful ships would specialize in breaking through ice to reach the world's extreme zones. Venture to the bridge, where up to five officers might be on duty to navigate rough passages.

Who It's Best For:

Mixed Groups: Personalized experiences are encouraged, so families with young children can go their own way by day, while grandparents can opt for a coach tour. In the evening, the grown-ups meet in the lounge for cocktails while kids go up to the casual restaurant for burgers and fries.

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Destination: All

Cruise Line: Ponant Yacht

Ship: All

Date: All Months

Length: All

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Expeditioners: The Subantarctic and the Orinoco are too remote to have actual port infrastructure, but passengers still get to explore on Zodiac dinghies that can navigate the area (most of these outings are included in the cruise price).

Don't Say We Didn't Warn You:

Wi-Fi Has Its Quirks: The system of purchasing wireless access in small, expensive chunks and then having to type a zillion-letter username and password every time you get booted out is frustrating — even worse is not logging out and accidentally squandering 60 euros on unused Wi-Fi. Better to plan on a digital detox.

by: [Lena Katz](#)



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