

# *Nomadic* neighbourhood

THERE IS A VILLAGE ON A SHIP THAT PERPETUALLY AND LEISURELY TRAVELS THE GLOBE,  
WRITES **EDWARD COLLESS**. IT IS AN EXTRAVAGANT, MAGICAL, FLOATING WORLD.





*On board The World, cabins have been replaced by plush metropolitan apartments.*

In the 1920s and 30s the most stylish modernist architects were being inspired by luxury ocean liners. The sleek, functional geometry of maritime architecture, with its in-built furnishings and stark glass and metal armature, was transposed to domestic housing with imaginative splendour and novelty. Almost a century later, the tide has turned with an equivalent – if postmodern – innovation. On board *The World*, cabins have been replaced by plush metropolitan apartments. Unlike the cruise ships of last century and unlike almost anything on the ocean now, *The World* is not a floating hotel but a nomadic neighbourhood. With an average population of about a hundred international residents (ships of equivalent size might carry five hundred or more), none of the immaculately maintained facilities on board is crowded, nothing is rushed: it's an intimate and utopian city that's perhaps more like a village in its unique ambience, with cafés and a delicatessen, a library, art gallery,

a cigar bar and small nightclub. And always, the exceptional and changing views out of every window. It's a village that perpetually and leisurely travels the world: a global village.

And it explores every nook of the world. Not only the familiar parts of the Mediterranean and Bahamas but also Papua-New Guinea and the Persian Gulf, and from the Antarctic to the Bering Sea. Due to its specialised reputation – as a small community of travellers that is not going to trample a site down – as well as to the ship's superb manoeuvrability, *The World* has access to many places that other vessels cannot physically get to, or are not permitted to visit. You'll be surprised by its distinctive itinerary. Surprisingly too, more than half the year is intentionally spent in ports, with ship staff tirelessly arranging anything from sightseeing tours to expeditions. You won't find shuffleboard competitions to keep you occupied. Instead, you might be disembarking on Zodiac rafts or kayaks, climbing on a

mountain bike at the end of the gangway, being ferried to a private party on a desert island beach, or settling into a wine-tasting or degustation of local cuisine in one of the ship's formal restaurants. *The World's* general manager Renato Chizzola justifiably boasts that the voyage provides personal enrichment and an immersion in the experience of world cultures, with "the security and enjoyment of feeling at home." *The World*, he adds, is a place "for those who are comfortable wearing sneakers or black-tie when they wish to."

For some passengers, the ship is indeed a full-time home. When *The World* was launched in 2002 the accent was on full-time occupancy. But, as residents occasionally take time away from the ship, it has increasingly become open to guests interested in sampling the life-style through renting an apartment. Once tasted in this way it would be hard to resist coming back for more. With about two staff to every passenger, the service is exquisitely individualised as well as personal, exceptionally welcoming and friendly at every level. And then there is the unfolding scenery. There's undoubtedly a fantasy-like experience in all this: the ship offers, after all, the extravagant pleasures of a "floating world", a magical retreat as much as an engaged adventure. The romance of this life-style is pervasive as well as particular. Particularly so when, under tropical moonlight, you hear the sound of deep ocean waves softly surging past, just beneath your balcony. Is there anything more we can do for you, sir? Probably not.



**Karijini National Park** Outback Luxury

100% owned by Gumala Aboriginal Corporation

- Uniquely furnished luxury eco tents with full linen
- Quality king or twin beds, family bedding available
- Private en-suite with solar heated shower
- Outback style alfresco licensed restaurant and bar
- Campsites available, self catering BBQ facilities
- Tour desk, coach & adventure tours arranged

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