



## NATURAL WONDERS OF ICELAND

Join us aboard the MS Hebridean Sky for this in-depth exploration of Iceland, one of the most extraordinary and dramatic lands on the planet. This is a unique opportunity to see nature in the raw and witness the huge icecaps and glaciers, active volcanoes, gurgling mud pools, steaming hot springs and lava fields of the 'Land of Fire and Ice'. Europe's least populated country offers the visitor an unparalleled experience of elemental forces at work and we will take advantage of weather conditions and possible whale sightings to achieve the maximum with our time. After a day to explore Reykjavik and the iconic landmarks of the 'Golden Circle', we will set sail for our circumnavigation of the island during which we will witness the immense scale of the landscape, dominated by towering snow-capped mountains and thundering waterfalls, as we learn of the centuries old legacies of a Viking and Norse heritage. Early summer is the optimum time for our journey, the skies and rocks will be filled with the sights and sounds of puffins, guillemots and gannets, the wildflowers will be prevalent and the seas will hopefully be rich with whales and marine life. In addition to the wildlife, the island also provides a unique historical, cultural and geological experience. Under the surface, Iceland simmers with the sparks that are the tell-tale signs of its youthfulness as Europe's most recent geological addition, only 16-20 million years old. Iceland is continuously being created; some of its newest land is a mere 40 years old. We have timed our voyage for June when we can make the most of the long days and the midnight sun, spending time on deck whilst cruising, looking out for humpback whales, orcas, white-beaked dolphins and observing the colonies of seabirds. With just over

100 travelling companions the atmosphere on board is warm and friendly and ashore with our experts and fleet of Zodiacs we will divide into small groups enabling us to get up close to nature and explore areas inaccessible to



larger vessels.

### ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Reykjavik, Iceland.

Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky and enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we moor overnight.

Day 2 The Golden Circle.

A full day tour will head inland to the famous 'Golden Circle'



with three of Iceland's most iconic landmarks. We will start at Thingvellir National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site which is situated in a rift valley that offers incredible views of the Reykjanes Ridge. This is the only place in the world where the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, which separates the Eurasian and North American plates, is above sea level. Not only is Thingvellir of tremendous geological interest, it is where the legislative parliament, the Althing, was founded in the year 930 AD. Also see the Gullfoss Waterfall, the most famous of the country's numerous waterfalls. Here, a huge amount of water rushes down a stone cascade into a deep ravine with incredible force, creating a powerful spectacle. Our last stop is the Geysir geothermal area, the place where the word 'geyser' originates and where Strokkur, an explosive geyser, erupts every few minutes. Return to the ship in Reykjavik and sail this evening.

#### Day 3 Snaefellsnes Peninsula.

Sail this morning into Stykkisholmur, located in Breidafjörður Bay and surrounded by an archipelago of islands. The town is famed for its beautiful and well preserved old houses and is also the gateway to the Snaefellsnes Peninsula which is dominated by the Snaefellsjökull volcano, regarded as one of the symbols of Iceland and known as the setting for Jules Verne's "Journey to the Centre of the Earth". Our tour will include a drive through the lava landscape to the glacier visiting pretty fishing ports and beaches along the way. Afterwards, there will be the opportunity to spend some time at leisure in the town.

#### Day 4 Western Fjords.

This morning we enter the Western Fjords, an isolated but spectacular area of Iceland. We will explore Isafjardardjup and depending on local weather conditions, we hope to land on Vigur, a serene little island with only five residents but home to many more puffins, eider ducks, black guillemots and Arctic terns. We will also visit Iceland's only extant windmill dating from the 19th century. Sail over lunch and maybe join a lecture as we spend a leisurely afternoon at sea.

#### Day 5 Grimsey Island & Siglufjörður.

Spend the morning on Grimsey Island. The Arctic Circle bisects this island which is known for its tiny community, basalt cliffs and large variety of birdlife. Join our expedition team members for a morning nature walk on the island. In the early afternoon we sail into Siglufjörður, a picturesque town that enjoys an idyllic setting in a small fjord backed by mountains. Here in the early 1900s, a booming economy due to the herring industry resulted in a prosperous town with some marvellous Icelandic architecture. Stroll through the town and visit the Herring Era Museum.

#### Day 6 Akureyri & Hrísey Island.

Akureyri is a delightful town on the north coast of Iceland. On a morning tour we will visit the spectacular Godafoss Waterfall where water from the Skjalfandafljót River falls from a height of 12 metres over a width of 30 metres. From Godafoss we return to the charming town of Akureyri and visit the botanical garden which was founded in 1912 and grows examples of every





## The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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species indigenous to Iceland as well as an extensive collection of high-latitude and high-altitude plants from around the world. Our tour ends at the Art Alley where artisans keep their workshops and galleries. Return to the ship for lunch and sail to Hrisey Island this afternoon where you can join nature walks. The island is known for its rich and diverse birdlife and approximately 40 species of birds nest on the island.

### Day 7 Husavik.

From our berth in Husavik we will head inland to visit the Lake Myvatn-Krafla area, a fine example of the volcanic world with lava fields, boiling and steaming mud pools and steam vents of sulphur and craters. The area illustrates the sheer magnitude of Iceland's forces at work. The lake itself, with beautiful natural rock formations and hot springs, is also a unique ecosystem and the largest migratory bird sanctuary in Europe. There will be the opportunity to spend some time in the natural baths before returning to the ship. After lunch on board we have the afternoon to explore the pretty town of Husavik including time at the excellent whale museum, the exploration museum and quaint local church. Be on deck in the early evening as we sail from Husavik whilst our expedition team keep an eye out for whales.

### Day 8 Neskaupstadur & Mjoifjordur.

Today we will enjoy the benefits of our small ship as we spend the day exploring the lesser known fjords in the east of Iceland. We hope to land at the small town of Neskaupstadur for a chance to visit the excellent museum which features the local

art gallery, the Museum of Natural History and the Maritime Museum. Those that are feeling active can hike to the avalanche barriers behind the town, offering great views of the surrounding areas. We will also cruise through Mjoifjordur where we can enjoy the wilderness of this remote area.

### Day 9 Hofn.

As we approach Hofn we will see the shimmering white Vatnajokull Glacier, Europe's largest glacier, sometimes called an icecap. The 600 metre thick ice surmounts active volcanoes, one of which erupted in 1996 creating a crater on the surface of the glacier, a most unusual phenomenon. From our berth we will drive to the otherworldly glacial lagoon of Jokulsarlon, a dramatic drive through some of the finest scenery that Iceland offers. Once we reach Jokulsarlon, the 100 metre deep glacial river lagoon which is full of large icebergs carved from the glacier Breioamerkurjokull, we will embark on a cruise on the pristine water.

### Day 10 Westman Islands.

Our morning is spent at the Vestmannaeyjar (Westman Islands). Islanders here live with a dramatic volcanic history. In 1973 the island of Heimaey experienced an eruption which created a new mountain, Eldfell, known as Mount Fire. Explore the only community, Heimaey, where half buried houses can be partially seen peeking out through the lava and ash. We will also use the Zodiacs to explore the cliffs and coves. If time permits, we will also use our ship to circumnavigate Surtsey Island which was created volcanically in 1963 and is a closed nature reserve. Few



places in the world illustrate more dramatically the powerful forces of nature.

Day 11 Reykjavik to London.

Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.





## YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

**YOUR SHIP:** Hebridean Sky

**VESSEL TYPE:**

**LENGTH:**

**PASSENGER CAPACITY:**

**BUILT/REFURBISHED:**

Hebridean Sky has always been known for its effortless elegance, impeccable service and atmosphere of charm and camaraderie. Now we add increased adventure options and an on-site Passenger Service Representative. Hebridean Sky is the perfect blend of luxury and adventurous exploration. Is it a luxury ship? An adventure ship? It's both! The vessel underwent a multi-million pound refurbishment in Sweden in Spring 2016.

**ONBOARD DINING** Great expeditions require great food! We are pleased to offer daily changing breakfast, lunch and dinner menus with an emphasis on providing well balanced and nutritional cuisine. Our team of international chefs has boat loads of creativity and you are sure to experience a variety of interesting dishes throughout your voyage. The restaurant is located on Deck 2 and our service team looks forward to providing a memorable dining experience.

**IMPECCABLE SMALL-SHIP AMENITIES** Returning from excursions, passengers enjoy complimentary refreshments, afternoon tea and all-day coffee in The Club, a gracious space for relaxation, surrounded by panoramic windows. Other Sea Explorer features include: Library with Internet access Lounge with audiovisual facilities Dining room Wraparound sun deck with Jacuzzi Exercise room

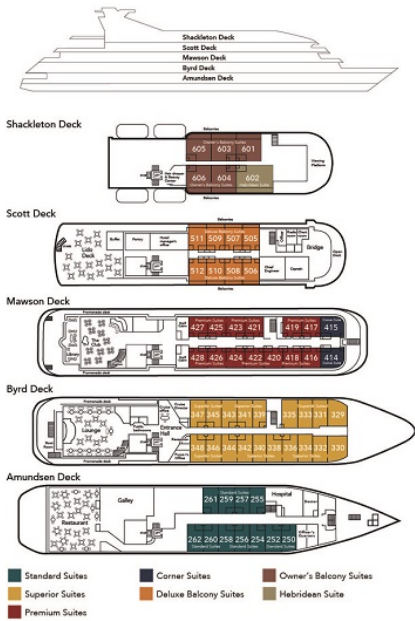
Medical facilities with available doctor Elevator serving all passenger decks Swimming/zodiac platform All Voyages Include: Up to Two Pre-Voyage Hotel Nights Complimentary Wine or Beer with Dinner Certified Emergency MD and Clinic World Class Cuisine Live Entertainment Complimentary Coffee/Tea station Voyage Photographer Dedicated Passenger Service Manager Complimentary Expedition Jacket Please note deck



plan may vary.



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Byrd Deck Superior Sole



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## PRICING

### 14-Jun-2024 to 24-Jun-2024

Shackleton Deck Hebridean Suite	£8995 GBP pp
Byrd Deck Superior Sole	£8795 GBP pp
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Scott Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite	£7995 GBP pp
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### 03-Jul-2025 to 13-Jul-2025