

AFRICA'S ATLANTIC COAST - A VOYAGE BETWEEN CAPE TOWN AND ACCRA

This extraordinary voyage along the southwest coast of Africa offers a rare opportunity to explore one of the least-visited regions, travelling from the magnificent city of Cape Town in South Africa to the vibrant shores of Ghana. Without doubt the only comfortable means of experiencing the region's many wonders is by small ship and we are fortunate in having such a special vessel as the 118-passenger, all-suite MS Hebridean Sky for our exploration. Our journey begins in the spectacular surroundings of Cape Town, a fitting place to commence our expedition with its cosmopolitan culture and dramatic scenery, which we will explore before setting sail for Namibia. During our first day at sea you will have the opportunity to become better acquainted with our onboard team and Guest Speaker as our programme of lectures begins. Upon reaching Namibia we will visit the colonial coastal towns of Swakopmund and Luderitz and cruise along Namibia's bleak yet beautiful Skeleton Coast. We continue to the former Portuguese colony of Angola which, with tourism still in its infancy, remains largely unexplored by all but the most intrepid travellers. Over four days we will discover this vibrant country including the capital, Luanda, a melting pot of cultures where modern skyscrapers stand alongside historic buildings dating from the colonial era. We will also venture inland towards the Namib Desert where we may see the remarkable welwitschia plants, among the oldest living plants on Earth. After two relaxing days at sea we reach Gabon where we will explore the capital, Libreville and travel to Pongara National Park, an area of diverse habitats including forest, savanna and extensive sandy beaches that support a variety of wildlife. We then call at the two-island nation of Sao Tome and Principe where natural wonders abound, from beautiful untouched beaches to jungle-covered mountains, while the surrounding emerald waters form an important biodiversity hotspot. Our two days here perfectly demonstrate the advantages of small ship cruising as we land ashore using the vessel's Zodiacs. Principe still retains the atmosphere of an undiscovered island and we will anchor off the idyllic islet of Bom Bom. Following two final days cruising the Gulf of Guinea, our fascinating voyage concludes in Ghana where we will explore the Shai Hills Game Reserve, home to antelope, baboons, green monkeys and over 170 bird species, before discovering the vibrant capital city of Accra. The roads may be poor and the tourist infrastructure very much in its infancy in some of the countries we will be visiting, but that is precisely why we believe this region presents such an array of exciting experiences for the adventurous traveller who wishes to witness this extraordinary area, its diverse cultures and marvellous wildlife but who is weary of the more well-trodden paths around the world. After a day's exploration, we will return each evening to the comfort of the all-suite MS Hebridean Sky with the added benefit of some days at sea interspersed throughout the itinerary when you can relax on board and attend the informative lectures by our Guest Speaker and





onboard team.

ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Cape Town, South Africa.

Fly by scheduled flight.

Day 2 Cape Town.

Arrive today and transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we moor overnight.

Day 3 Cape Town.

We spend the morning in Cape Town with a choice of excursion options. You may wish to visit Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden which is spread over 560 hectares on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain and contains over 8,500 species of indigenous plants and where we take a leisurely stroll through these beautiful surroundings. Alternatively, if weather permits, we will take the cableway to the top of the iconic Table Mountain, one of the city's most celebrated landmarks. From the summit we can enjoy the views down to the city below or take a walk on one of the trails amongst the endemic flora and fauna. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at sea as we begin our journey north along the African coastline.

Day 4 At Sea.

Spend the day at sea as we sail towards Namibia. Take the opportunity to relax on deck or maybe join a lecture in the lounge.

Day 5 Luderitz, Namibia.

Sandwiched between the Namib desert and the South Atlantic, Luderitz is an isolated settlement and one of the few towns and sheltered harbours on the Namibian coast. First landed by Portuguese mariners in the 15th century, it was not until 1883 when the land was bought by a wealthy merchant, Adolf Luderitz, that the town developed as part of German colonisation of the region. A morning walking tour includes the Luderitz Museum and the colonial buildings, among them the Goerke Haus and Felsenkirche. Nearby, visit the ghost town of Kolmanskop where the first diamonds were found in Namibia in 1908. Sparking a "diamond rush", the town grew in the ensuing years, peaking in the 1920s, until the discovery of richer deposits further south. By the 1960s the population had left and the town is now at the mercy of the weather and



encroaching sand dunes.

Days 6 & 7 Walvis Bay.

Arriving at lunchtime we spend a day and a half in Namibia's main coastal town of Walvis Bay. During our time here we will have the option to visit Swakopmund, Namibia's seaside resort on the west coast, and a place of singular charm. It resembles a small Bavarian village nestled between the desert and the sea and enjoys a restful and relaxing atmosphere. The source of Swakopmund's continental vibe is the graceful Art Nouveau buildings many of which, including the Lutheran Church and old railway station, are national monuments. We will also have the opportunity to drive past the imposing sand dunes to the Welwitschia Plains in the Namib-Naukluft Park and we hope to see the prehistoric welwitschia mirabilis plants, unique to this region, as we drive through the lunar landscape. Those feeling active may wish to take 4x4 vehicles to Sandwich Harbour, a tidal lagoon located in the Namib- Naukluft Park surrounded by huge sand dunes which run into the ocean. Here we can experience the isolation and scenery which the Skeleton Coast is famous for.

Day 8 At Sea.

Spend the day at sea as we continue our journey north.

Day 9 Mocamedes, Angola.

Our first call in Angola is the town of Mocamedes which was founded in the mid-19th century by the Portuguese, but was cut off from the rest of the country until the construction of the Namibe Railway in 1905 and today it is one of Angola's busiest ports. Arriving at lunchtime, this afternoon we venture inland to the Arco Lagoon, a wonderful freshwater oasis located in the Namib desert bordered by distinctive rock formations. We will also see the nearby rare welwitschia plants, considered to be some of the oldest plants on earth at up to 1,000 years old. Return to the ship via the old city for a short sightseeing tour passing the Church of Santo Adriao and the military fortress.

Day 10 Lobito, Benguela & Catumbela.

After a morning at sea we arrive at the port city of Lobito. The town was created in 1903 as the sea terminal to the Benguela railway, developed to link with the mineral-rich regions in Angola and over the border in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We drive to the city of Benguela which was founded in 1617 around the Sao Filipe Fortress and was one of the bases for Portuguese expansion in Africa. Explore the town viewing the Portuguese colonial buildings including the Igreja de Populo and the pretty gardens surrounding the town hall. Continue to nearby Catumbela to visit the 17th century Fort of Sao Pedro offering panoramic views to the river below, before we have the chance for a tasting of the local rum at the Caxaramba distillery.

Days 11 & 12 Luanda.

In the 19th century, the Angolan capital city of Luanda, was one of the most successful cities in the Portuguese Empire with the port being a major trading centre for ivory, cotton, coffee and cocoa as well as being a key port in the slave trade. With access to vast natural resources including oil and diamonds, the city has recovered from the damage of the civil war which ran from 1975 to 2002, and will be our base for a day and a half. During our time here we will take a city tour including the 16th century San Miguel Fort, the National Museum of Anthropology, Remedios Church, parliament buildings and the unique obelisk of the Agostino Neto Mausoleum dedicated to Angola's first president who fought for independence. In South Luanda we can visit the Benfica Market selling many wooden artefacts and



local art before continuing to the Slave Museum in the village of Morro da Cruz, located on a cliff overlooking the ocean and offering a poignant reminder of this tragic period in Angola's history. We will end at the stunning viewpoint, Miradouro da Lua. We also hope to gain a glimpse of the vibrant culture and spirit of the Musseque da Mulemba as we visit their community and hear about the challenges of retaining their traditions in an expanding urban environment.

Days 13 & 14 At Sea.

Spend two days on board as we cruise to Gabon.

Day 15 Libreville & Pongara National Park, Gabon.

From our berth in Port D'Owendo we have a choice of excursions today. Maybe spend some time in the city of Libreville where we will see the Presidential Palace, St Michel Cathedral and the city museum. After our tour you can return to the ship for lunch and a free afternoon or continue to the Pongara National Park which is sandwiched between the Komo estuary and the Atlantic Ocean, the pristine beaches here are a nesting ground for leatherback turtles whilst the animal population includes elephants, red river hogs, buffalo, mangabeys and a variety of birds. After lunch we will join a 4x4 safari on the lookout for wildlife before returning to the ship this afternoon.

Days 16 & 17 Sao Tome and Principe.

We will experience the benefits of our small ship as we spend a full day on each of the islands of Sao Tome and Principe which are well off the usual tourist route. Fortunately the islands have yet to succumb to mass tourism and we can enjoy their beautiful beaches, tropical rainforests and colonial architecture in relative peace. Colonised by the Portuguese in the 15th century, they were originally a holding centre for slaves en-route to the Americas. However, in the 1800s coffee and cacao plantations expanded and by 1908 they became known as the Chocolate Islands becoming the world's leading producer of cacao. Today, production has slowed but the islands still produce high quality coffee and cacao. We will anchor off Sao Tome and land using the ship's Zodiacs. On a full day tour we will visit one of the plantation houses, or "rocas". In the interior we will discover waterfalls and hope to see some of the many orchid species in the botanical gardens and endemic bird life. Meanwhile, in Sao Tome city we will see the National Museum, cathedral and visit the bustling markets. Principe is the smaller of the two islands at 136 square kilometres and with a population of just 6,000 residents. In 2012 the waters around the island were designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and from our anchorage off Bom Bom Island we will use the ship's Zodiacs to land and have the option to relax on the beach and swim in the clear waters.

Days 18 & 19 At Sea.

Spend two days at sea as we cross the Gulf of Guinea. Our lecture programme will continue in the lounge, or alternatively you may find a spot on deck to relax.

Day 20 Tema for Shai Hills Game Reserve, Ghana.

Arrive in Ghana over breakfast, after which we drive to the Shai Hills Game Reserve and embark on a trek through the reserve's savannah plains to view antelopes, bushbucks, kobs, baboons, monkeys and many bird species including the Senegal parrot, swallow-tailed bee-eater, Vieillot's barbet, piapiac and redshouldered cuckooshrike. Lunch will follow offering views over the evergreen valley and plains of the surrounding Akuapem Mountain Range before we continue to the Aburi Botanical Gardens. They were established in 1890 as a



convalescent retreat for the British colonial officers governing the then Gold Coast (now Ghana). Over the years, the gardens have cultivated a variety of tropical plants which attract many birds and butterflies. After a walk through the gardens we will return to the ship.

Day 21 Accra to London.

Disembark this morning and drive to the capital city of Accra where a tour includes the National Museum of Ghana, and the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum and Memorial Park. After lunch we transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

Day 22 London.

Arrive today.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

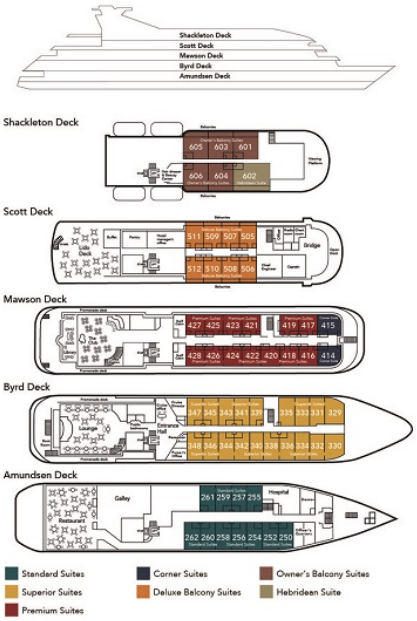
Hebridean Sky has always been known for its effortless elegance, impeccable service and atmosphere of charm and camaraderie. Now we add increased adventure options and an on-site Passenger Service Representative. Hebridean Sky is the perfect blend of luxury and adventurous exploration. Is it a luxury 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.



INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Amundsen Deck Standard Sole



Amundsen Deck Standard Suite



Byrd Deck Superior Sole



Byrd Deck Superior Suite



Mawson Deck Corner Suite



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Scott Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite



Shackleton Deck Hebridean Suite



Shackleton Deck Owner's Balcony Suite





PRICING

10-Jan-2028 to 30-Jan-2028

Byrd Deck Superior Sole	£17495 GBP pp
Byrd Deck Superior Suite	£14795 GBP pp
Mawson Deck Premium Suite	£15495 GBP pp
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Shackleton Deck Hebridean Suite	£18495 GBP pp