

# The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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## ATLANTIC ARCHIPELAGOS - DISCOVER THE CANARY ISLANDS, MADEIRA & THE AZORES

Join us aboard the MS Hebridean Sky for this wonderful island hopping itinerary visiting the diverse islands of the Atlantic with their mountains, intriguing topography, lunar like landscapes, verdant pine forests and stunning national parks. We have chosen an ideal time of year for our voyage and can expect gardens and scenery awash with blossoms and moderate temperatures with the absence of high season crowds. We will begin our exploration in the Canary Islands and during our three days here we will visit the lesser known islands of La Gomera, El Hierro and La Palma where we can enjoy nature at its very best. These volcanic islands impress with their unique flora and fauna and boast rugged, rocky landscapes, evergreen cloud forests, metre-high ferns and bizarre-looking dragon trees. Then follows time on the delightful island of Madeira, the "floating garden in the Atlantic", visiting the wonderful gardens and experiencing the breathtakingly beautiful scenery on offer. After a relaxing two days at sea we then arrive in the Azores, some 800 miles from the Portuguese coast and known for its spectacular volcanic scenery, abundant flora and peaceful lifestyle. We will spend five days exploring the raw beauty and cultural vibrancy of this remote and unsophisticated archipelago whose appeal is difficult to define in words. Every new day brings a different vista and our itinerary has been carefully designed so that we can fully explore the dramatic beauty and cultural vibrancy of these amazingly varied groups of islands, each one having a distinct culture and landscape. In the company of just 100 like-minded travel companions we will be able to make the most of the region and in our small groups we can explore the places otherwise inaccessible to the larger ships. Whether your

interests lie in botany, geology, history or walking, this cruise has something



for everyone.

### ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Tenerife, Canary Islands.

Fly by scheduled flight. Upon arrival transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky for embarkation. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we set sail this evening.

Day 2 La Gomera & El Hierro.

Arrive this morning on beautiful and unspoilt La Gomera. On a full day tour we will explore the island including Garajonay National Park, home to the world's only surviving laurel forest and visit the villages of Hermigua, Agulo and Las Rosas followed by lunch in a local restaurant. Before returning to the ship experience a demonstration of Silbo Gomero, the island's

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unique whistling language, and visit the magnificent rock formations of Agando. Alternatively, you may wish to join a morning guided trek through the Garajonay National Park commencing in the village of El Cedro which offers some interesting examples of the architecture of the Canary Islands. Set sail during dinner as we make our way to El Hierro where we will moor overnight.

### Day 3 El Hierro.

Probably the least known of the Canary Islands, and once considered to be the end of the world, El Hierro is unique and utterly captivating. This morning is free to explore the town or relax on board. This afternoon we explore the island and it will be impossible not to be entranced by the island's slow pace and simple style; by its craggy coast, where waves hurl themselves against lava sculpted rock faces; by the pretty farmland and flower meadows of the interior; by the eerily beautiful juniper groves; and by the desolate volcanic badlands that stretch out like moonscapes in the south. We will also have the opportunity to sample some of El Hierro's local wines and visit the lizard house where the island's unique giant lizards are bred; near extinction, they are protected by international law. Alternatively, opt for the La Llania hiking excursion which will take us through primaevial forests, along ancient cisterns and mythical witches dance floors to El Hierro's top viewing point affording spectacular views of the western parts of the island.

### Day 4 La Palma.

La Palma is known by locals as the 'Beautiful Island', and it is easy to see why. It is a simply stunning, peaceful and most importantly an un-spoilt destination that has deservedly been declared a UNESCO biosphere reserve. This morning drive inland to the beautiful village of El Paso and visit the Silk Museum. This

is the only place in Europe where the 500-year-old tradition and processes have been preserved. From here we will continue onto the Caldera de Taburiente, a massive depression eight kilometres wide which scientists agree was a majestically tall volcanic mountain that collapsed in on itself. Explore on foot and whilst all may seem stoic and still, the forces of erosion are hard at work and some geologists estimate that it will finally disappear in just 5,000 years. Alternatively, for those who would prefer a more energetic excursion there will be a guided trek on offer through the El Pilar area; see remains of volcanic eruptions, the magnificent views of the Valley of Aridane and the crater wall that surrounds the Taburiente National Park. Return to the ship for lunch and set sail for Madeira.

### Days 5 & 6 Funchal, Madeira.

Spend the morning at sea and during lunch arrive into the island of Madeira. Over the next day and a half there will be a choice of excursions, including a beautiful panoramic exploration of the western part of the island taking in Ribera Brava and Porto Moniz. There will also be the opportunity to visit the Botanical Garden which covers an area of over 35,000 square metres and has more than 2,000 exotic plants from all continents, some of which are endangered species. This fantastic garden has several ornamental trees and shrubs, an orchid area, lawns, and lovely viewpoints. Those feeling more active may wish to join a Levada walk. Levada are irrigation channels that were created by the Portuguese settlers in the 19th century, who painstakingly carved them out of the rock by hand. Designed to carry freshwater from the north to the drier southern regions of the island, they helped to create many of the lush landscapes that can be seen today. The walk will follow the course of 'levadas' for over three miles, seeing the verdant plants, mountain views and green farmland that cover Madeira.

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### Days 7 & 8 At Sea.

Spend the next two days at sea as we sail towards the Azores. Our lecture programme will continue in the lounge or maybe find a spot on deck to relax.

### Day 9 Faial, Azores.

Our day begins with an island drive where we explore the fairly recent volcanic activity at Ponta dos Capelinhos. See how a 1957- 1958 volcanic eruption transformed the area and created a new land mass. Visit the Volcano Interpretation Centre before continuing to the impressive caldera, now a nature reserve, which is 400 metres deep and nearly 1,500 metres in diameter. This afternoon a walking tour of Horta will include the Scrimshaw Museum and Cafe Peter, a famous stopping point for sailors crossing the Atlantic.

### Day 10 Pico.

Explore distinctive Pico, home to Portugal's highest peak and numerous black lava flows. The UNESCO-designated Lajido Acros tells the story of early winemakers who used the volcanic soil for the grapes and we will enjoy a tasting of the local product during a visit to a vineyard. After a typical Azorean lunch we will learn about whaling life in the Azores at the Museum of Lajes returning to the ship via the Lagoa do Capitaó offering views over the north of the island.

### Day 11 Sao Jorge.

This largely rural island is of geographical interest with its cliff shoreline marked with flat fajás sweeping to the sea. We start our full day tour on the western part of the island, Ponta dos Rosais, visiting a Forest Park and cheese factory. As we move to the north we enjoy the view over the Fajas, an area of flat land at sea level resulting from the erosion of cliffs. Travelling

onwards to the south side towards Calheta, we will stop for lunch at a local restaurant before continuing on to Urzelina to visit the remaining tower of a church buried under lava from the eruption of 1808. Now it is surrounded by fruit trees and vegetation. Upon our return to Velas we will take a walking tour of this charming old-world harbour town.

### Day 12 Terceira.

This morning explore Angra do Heroísmo, a charming UNESCO heritage town with a distinct Mediterranean flavour of cobblestone streets and a certain quiet charm. Enjoy a walking tour that takes in the Misericórdia Church, Convent do São Francisco, public gardens and museum. In the afternoon there will be free time to hike to Monte Brasil, offering wonderful views over the island, or alternatively relax and wander around the historic town at your own pace.

### Day 13 Sao Miguel.

Enjoy a full day exploring the island of Sao Miguel, known as Ilha Verde, the green island is home to some of the most stunning viewpoints in the Azores. This morning we head west towards the Sete Cidades volcano from where we can enjoy excellent views over the Lagos de Canários. We will continue our drive along the attractive northern coast before arriving in the Furnas Valley, an enormous valley and luxuriant garden in the east of the island where we enjoy lunch. We will also visit the village of Furnas and the botanical gardens before returning to the ship and sailing this evening. For the keen hikers, weather permitting, we will arrange to walk the trail in Sete Cidades.

### Day 14 Sao Miguel to London.

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

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Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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## 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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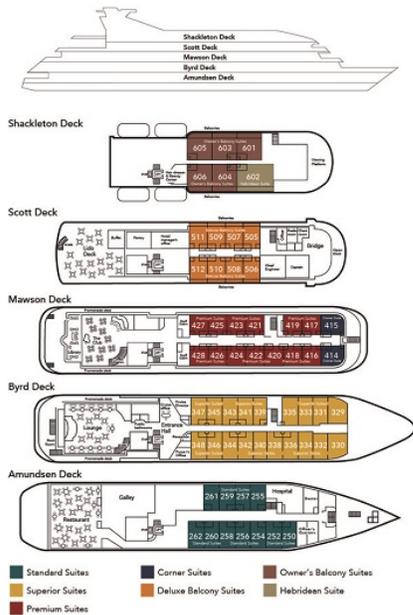
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## INSIDE YOUR SHIP



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## PRICING

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