



The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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BEYOND THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

If you have been to Ireland before and have been meaning to return to explore in greater depth, or are yet to discover the appeal of what is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful countries in the world, then our circumnavigation offers the perfect opportunity. Culturally rich with amazingly gifted writers, poets, musicians and actors, and historically fascinating with a past stretching back some 10,000 years, Ireland has so much to discover. Join us aboard the all-suite MS Island Sky for this unique and comprehensive itinerary that promises to be a most enjoyable and informative experience. During this circumnavigation of Ireland, we will learn much of Ireland's forgotten past from the arrival of Christianity in the 5th century, followed by the Vikings and the Anglo Normans to the more recent and often troubled history. A republic and independent nation for barely 100 years it has witnessed enormous changes particularly in the last couple of decades. With a population of less than Yorkshire, it has achieved so much to be proud of and during our in-depth exploration we will aim not only to show its beauty but delve into its past to gain a better understanding of modern day Ireland. For many the highlight will be our visits to some of Ireland's grandest houses and gardens set amidst stunning and uniquely Irish landscapes. However, perhaps most of all it will be the charm and warmth of the people that make any trip to Ireland most memorable. As we set sail from Liverpool, a city steeped in Irish history, we can offer an enlightening and entertaining journey and given the *joi de vivre* of the Irish we can promise, it will not be boring.

ITINERARY

Day 1 - Liverpool, England

Embark the MS Island Sky this afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Liverpool Lime Street Station at a fixed time. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail this evening.

Day 2 - Dublin, Ireland

We start our exploration of Ireland in Dublin where a city tour will include Merrion and Fitzwilliam Squares and the famous 'Doorways of Dublin'. We will also see the National Gallery, Dublin Castle and the city's cathedrals. See the famous Guinness Brewery before ending at Trinity College, Ireland's oldest college, founded in 1592, where we can wander through the grounds. This afternoon we travel south of the city to discover the magnificent gardens at Powerscourt. The gardens span 20 hectares and are a blend of formal gardens, sweeping terraces, statuary and ornamental lakes together with secret hollows, rambling walks, walled gardens and over 200 variations of trees and shrubs. The gardens were begun in the 18th century although most of what we see today dates from the 19th century.

Day 3 - Warrenpoint, Northern Ireland

This morning we will sail into the small harbour town of Warrenpoint where the Mountains of Mourne meet the sea.

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Today we will explore this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty driving along the coastal road and taking in the majestic sweeping Mourne mountains that have influenced poets, singers and writers including C.S. Lewis. Our drive today will take us to Downpatrick where there will be time to visit the St Patrick Centre which shares the story of Ireland's patron saint. From here we will head to Down Cathedral which stands on a fortified hill and has been continuously occupied since neolithic times and to nearby Saul which is the first ecclesiastical site in Ireland, a church has stood here since 432 AD when St Patrick landed in Ireland. Continue to the coast heading towards the coastal town of Newcastle. There will be time to wander its wonderful seaside promenade after lunch, while taking in the Slieve Donard, Northern Ireland's highest peak. Return to the ship along the coastal road taking in the beautiful mountain scenery.

Day 4 - Belfast

This morning we will head to Belfast and start our exploration of the city with the Titanic Experience, located right beside the historic site of this world-famous ship's construction. Housed in an iconic, six-floor building, this state-of-the-art visitor experience tells the story of the Titanic, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900s, through her construction and launch, to her famous maiden voyage and tragic end. Continue on to the Grand Opera House and the Albert Memorial before passing Queen's University and the Botanic Gardens. Return to the ship for lunch. This afternoon is free to explore at our own pace or join a tour of the famous gardens at Mount Stewart which were planted in the 1920s by Edith, Lady Londonderry, and are of international importance. The magnificent series of outdoor 'rooms' and vibrant parterres contain many rare plants that

thrive in the mild climate of the Ards Peninsula. There will be time to explore the opulent house which reveals a fascinating heritage and historic world-famous artefacts and artwork.

Day 6 - Giant's Causeway and Derry

From our berth in Lisahally we will visit the Giant's Causeway which became widely known from the 1700s as the 'Eighth Wonder of the World' and large numbers of visitors came to view this amazing array of basalt columns of which there are estimated to be around 40,000 in total. After a stop at Dunluce Castle, we return to the ship for lunch followed by an afternoon to explore Derry, a vibrant city steeped in history. Walking the walls, built over 400 years ago, you can see the city's history all around you. During the tour we will visit St Columb Cathedral which has stood on its prominent site inside the city walls since 1633, as well as the Tower Museum which charts the city's history.

Days 6 and 7 Killybegs, Ireland.

Spend the next day and a half in County Donegal where from our base in the village of Killybegs we drive west to the Glencolumbkille area, a Gaeltacht (Irish speaking) area steeped in culture and rich in folklore and music. One of the most scenic areas in Ireland, the drive through the countryside is outstanding. The Folk Museum which opened in 1967 is a monument to Father James McDyer who came to the village in 1952 and set about infusing the local people with a spirit of self-reliance and pride in their heritage. Here we will learn about the history of the area and be treated to some traditional Irish music. In the afternoon visit the charming Salthill Gardens. Located some 200 yards from the sea, this old walled garden has been gradually transformed by Elizabeth Temple into something very special. Independent of trends, this delightful

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half hectare enclosure offers a feeling of privacy and mystery that is particular to old walled gardens. Alternatively spend some time at leisure exploring the picturesque village of Killybegs. Irish dancers will come aboard in the evening to perform after dinner. The following morning take a stroll through Donegal town, which was invaded by Vikings in the 8th century and used as their port, giving its Gaelic name Dun na nGall, 'Fort of the Foreigners'. The walking tour will take you through the town's history taking in the Castle, the ruined Franciscan friary as well as the 'The Diamond' or centre of town where markets were held until 1967. Return to the ship for lunch and sail this afternoon.

Day 8 - Galway

From Galway we explore the beautiful region of Connemara. Here the National Park covers nearly 3,000 hectares of scenic mountains, heaths and woodland and is home to herds of ponies. During our drive along the 'Wild Atlantic Way' we will see beautiful coves, bays and traditional fishing villages where we will experience local culture in this Irish speaking part of the country. Visit Kylemore Abbey which is set on a lake against a backdrop of the Connemara Mountains and home to Ireland's only Benedictine order of nuns who have restored and cared for the Kylemore estate since 1920. Uniquely, only Victorian varieties of flowers and vegetables are grown in the walled garden which contains two distinct areas: the kitchen garden and the flower garden. We will overnight in Galway and there will be the opportunity to go ashore this evening.

Day 9 Cliffs of Moher and Skellig Islands.

This morning we will cruise by the magnificent Cliffs of Moher which rise to 213 metres and are over five miles long. Spend the day cruising and in the late afternoon we arrive off The

Skelligs, tiny islands just off the magnificent coast of the Dingle Peninsula. Weather permitting, we will sail around these mystical islands with their early Christian history. Skellig Michael is a World Heritage Site and atop this rugged pyramid, that rises from the sea, are the ruins of a monastery.

Day 10 - Bere Island

Docking in Castletownbere we will take the ferry across to Bere Island which lies at the entrance to the deep, sheltered waters of Bantry Bay. The small island, roughly 10 kilometres by three kilometres, has a population of about 200 people but its place in history is assured. After the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, the island became one of three Irish ports retained by the British because of its strategic value. Evidence remains of earlier visitors too with megalithic standing stones, wedge tombs and ring forts. We will explore on a choice of island walks, spend time at the Heritage Centre which showcases island life and take the chance to meet the islanders.

Day 11 - Cape Clear Island and Mizen Head

Cape Clear is Ireland's southernmost inhabited place, located eight miles from the Cork coast and home to 120 Gaelic speaking residents. It is a great place to spend a morning and there will be options to visit the Cape Clear Bird Observatory, the Heritage Centre with archive information on the island, or to join a series of island walks where we may see some of the active birdlife and enjoy the views over the Atlantic. Later we hope to use the Zodiacs to land at the quaint village of Schull from where we will take the road to Mizen Head, the most southwesterly point of Ireland. Here we find the famous signal station and there will be a choice of walks, all offering stunning views along the west coast and a great chance to see kittiwakes, gannets and choughs as well as seals on the rocks below. Those

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feeling active may also want to climb down to the Keeper's Quarters including displays on the Fastnet lighthouse, the Marconi radio room and the bird mural room, home to a spectacular mural by Jules Thomas showing the birds of the Mizen peninsula, their habitats, nests and eggs.

Day 12 - Kinsale

As we sail into the picturesque harbour town of Kinsale we pass the impressive fortifications of Charles Fort and James Fort which were built in the 17th century to protect against invading Spanish forces. However, today Kinsale is renowned for its brightly coloured buildings and glorious harbour setting which you can explore at your own pace. Renowned as the gourmet capital of Ireland you may wish to take a break in one of the cafes, pubs or restaurants after our morning walking tour. This afternoon we will drive through the delightful countryside and coastal roads to explore the charming and colourful town of Clonakilty, filled with historic buildings, hand painted signs and warm welcomes.

Day 13 - Waterford and Kilkenny

From our berth in Belview, Waterford we will drive inland to the Medieval city of Kilkenny. The great building prowess of the Normans is very evident in the 11th and 12th century buildings bestowed on the city. Characterised by many beautifully restored buildings, the most splendid is Kilkenny Castle which was until recently a stronghold of the Butler family. The castle began life as a Norman fortress and gradually became more domesticated through the centuries. After exploring the interior, including the gallery with portraits by Van Dyck and Lely we will wander in the surrounding 21 hectares of gardens. On the famous Medieval mile which leads from the castle to the city we can see the St Canices Round Tower, the 13th century St Mary's

Church and the enchanting Rothe Gardens. Return to the MS Island Sky for lunch and in the afternoon there will be a visit to Waterford, Ireland's oldest city. Join a tour to the House of Waterford Crystal to learn about the world-renowned crystal ware and see how it is made or, alternatively, enjoy a leisurely afternoon to explore at your own pace and perhaps visit the excellent Medieval Museum and the Viking built Reginald's Tower.

Day 14 - At Sea

Today enjoy a leisurely day at sea as we sail towards Portsmouth.

Day 15 - Portsmouth, England

Disembark this morning. Transfers will be provided to Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station at a fixed time.

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YOUR SHIP: ISLAND SKY

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

With a maximum passenger capacity of only 116, a vessel of her size is capable of carrying many more but instead the MS Island Sky has the benefit of unusually large suites, luxuriously appointed public areas and spacious outside decks. There is a high ratio of crew to passengers- the friendly crew of 75 crew and Scandinavian captains are experienced mariners, having been in service aboard large 2000 plus passenger vessels and who now prefer a less frantic life aboard a small ship. If, like them and us, you prefer a more peaceful life at sea, you will find the MS Island Sky the perfect ship. When choosing the vessel for your next voyage of discovery, you can select a ship with endless entertainment and impersonal service or come with us where peace, high quality service and attention to detail are the order of the day. We promise there will be no organised entertainment, fancy dress, deck games or any of the usual big ship experiences. The atmosphere on board is more akin to a private yacht or country hotel. A little music in the lounge or bar after dinner, guest speakers, informative port briefings from our cruise director and of course good food which may be enjoyed leisurely in the attractive dining room. After a day ashore you will return to the comfort and peace of a well run and exceedingly

comfortable ship. Your Suite Onboard there are 57 exceptionally spacious and well designed suites. All feature a sitting room area and some have private balconies. The feeling of luxury is enhanced by the wood panelling and brass, which predominates throughout the vessel conveying the atmosphere of a private yacht. The passenger accommodation is arranged over five decks and all suites have outside views. Each affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring marble-topped vanity unit with sink and walk-in shower, large wardrobes, dressing table with large mirror and stool and excellent storage. There is a mini-fridge, flat screen television with inbuilt DVD player which can also play CDs and a telephone in each suite. Bottled water, towelling dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted toiletries and individually controlled air-conditioning and heating. The suites on each deck have their own colour theme. Soft hues and blended tones enhance the traditional maritime style making the passenger accommodation an inviting and relaxing place to be. Your Space The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large lounge where daily briefings and talks will be provided throughout the voyage and an elegant bar where a pianist plays periodically throughout the day. The bar also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. The onboard library is the perfect place to relax with a book and is stocked with reference books pertaining to the places the vessel is visiting along with a selection of games and two computers with internet access. Daily newspapers and magazines are also placed in the library depending on local availability. There is



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also WI-FI access throughout the vessel. Outside there is a rear sun deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade, a bar and comfortable deck furniture for sun bathing or relaxing with a book. On the top deck there is a Jacuzzi and further observation and sun deck. There is also a small hairdressers on board with appointments made on request. Your Dining Another benefit of a small ship is the quality of the cuisine. With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the galley is able to provide delicious meals. Where possible and when it meets his high standards, the chef will obtain local produce in markets or buy the catch of the day from a passing fishing boat. Such purchases enhance the well stocked larders and bring a local touch to the



varied menus.



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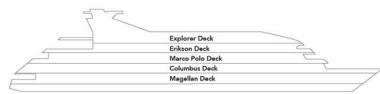
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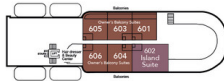
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INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Explorer Deck



Erikson Deck



Marco Polo Deck



Columbus Deck



Magellan Deck



- Standard Suites
- Corner Suites with Deck Access
- Owner's Balcony Suites
- Superior Suites
- Deluxe Balcony Suites
- Premium Suites with Deck Access
- Island Suite



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PRICING



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