



The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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BRITAIN & IRELAND ODYSSEY - SCOTLAND, IRELAND & ENGLAND CRUISE

In the early summer the MS Hebridean Sky will undertake a voyage from the South Coast of England to Scotland by way of the Channel Islands, Isles of Scilly, the far West of Ireland and the Outer and Inner Hebrides. Travelling by small ship in the company of just 118 fellow guests we have the advantage of being able to reach remote islands and, with the use of Zodiacs we will be able to explore some of the loveliest places from seductive coastal towns to stunning seascapes and idyllic isles. This unusual journey will take us along the edges of the United Kingdom and Ireland and offers a unique portrait of life in our islands. This is a wonderful opportunity to see some of our most beautiful places, meet some interesting inhabitants as far afield as the Isles of Scilly to John O'Groats, and learn more about both the past and present of Britain and Ireland. We will sail from Portsmouth and during our cruise visit remarkable places of great natural beauty, rich in wildlife and history. From the tiny island of St Martin's in the Isles of Scilly to the mystical Skellig Islands off the west coast of Ireland and the Hebridean outpost of St Kilda, we will explore some truly delightful spots. Being early summer, we have also included a number of gardens including the world famous Abbey Gardens on Treeco and for keen birders there are numerous highlights including a visit to the Cape Clear Bird Observatory and sailing past one of the largest gannetries in the world at Stac Lee. During our expedition, many of the islands, gardens and estates will be at their most appealing and the countryside will be beautiful and inviting. This, combined with the sheer diversity of the coastline, makes for a most appealing sea journey, whether you be an avid gardener, birdwatcher or simply enjoy sailing past and

visiting some of the most enchanting places in the world.

ITINERARY

Day 1 Portsmouth, England.

Embark the MS Hebridean Sky in the afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station at a fixed time. Sail this evening for the Channel Islands.

Day 2 Guernsey, Channel Islands.

Anchor this morning off Guernsey, the 'Island of Flowers'. There will be the option of a walking tour of St Peter Port including a visit to Castle Cornet, a 12th century battlement which guards the entrance to St Peter Port Harbour. Alternatively, enjoy a panoramic island drive during which we will see the beautiful coastline and beaches and also visit the Little Chapel, built in 1914 as a miniature version of the famous basilica at Lourdes and covered in fragments of shattered china. The afternoon is free to explore the picturesque town at your own pace before we sail in the late afternoon.

Day 3 Treeco & St Martin's, Isles of Scilly.

Spend the morning on traffic-free Treeco, walking its idyllic lanes from the beach to the famous sub-tropical Abbey Gardens. Defying the Atlantic weather, this miracle of a garden is home to more than 20,000 species of plants from over 80 countries. Enjoy time to wander at your own pace along the paths, maybe visit the Valhalla collection of ship figureheads from ships wrecked on the islands or relax in the café. This afternoon we

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discover the northernmost island of the group, St Martin's, a small island community of just 120 residents. Enjoy time to explore independently, climb to one of the viewpoints for vistas over the islands and the offshore seal colonies, join one of our expedition team on a guided walk or make a visit to the local vineyard for a tasting.

Day 4 Cape Clear & Mizen Head, Ireland.

Cape Clear is the southernmost inhabited part of Ireland, 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 feeling active may also want to climb down to the Keepers' 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 5 Skellig Islands.

Over breakfast we will 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. Meanwhile at Little Skellig the sky can on occasion turn white as some of the 20,000 pairs of breeding gannets leave their roosts. Spend the afternoon at sea as we continue our journey around the Irish coast.

Day 6 Killybegs, Donegal.

Spend the day in County Donegal where from our base in the village of Killybegs we have a choice of excursions. Choose to drive west to the Glencolmcille 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. Alternatively a full day tour will drive through the scenic landscapes of northern Donegal to the Glenveagh National Park where we find the wonderful 19th century castle built on the shores of Lough Veagh. Surrounded by magnificent mountains, pristine lakes and native oak woods, this is a magical place. See the castle and explore the woodland gardens set in the starkly dramatic shadows of the Kinnaveagh, Dooish and Staghall Mountains.

Day 7 Iona & Lunga, Scotland.

Iona has been occupied for thousands of years and has been a place of pilgrimage and Christian worship for several centuries. It was to this flat, Hebridean island that St Columba fled from Ireland in 563 and established a monastery. Here his followers were responsible for the conversion of much of pagan Scotland and Northern England. No less than 62 Scottish Kings are buried in the Abbey. Visit the Abbey or perhaps walk along the

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white sandy beaches or go in search of the corncrake amongst the irises. We continue to the Treshnish Isles, an archipelago of uninhabited volcanic islets. The island of Lunga is the largest of the isles and of volcanic origin has been described as 'a green jewel in a peacock sea' and is a summer nesting place for hundreds of seabirds.

Day 8 Armadale & Inverie.

From our anchorage at Armadale we will visit the Clan Donald Centre, a 20,000 acre Highland estate which includes the ruins of Armadale Castle and the Museum of the Isles which showcases 1,500 years of history and culture of the area. We will also explore the restored historical gardens and the beautiful walking trails through the 40 acres of woodland which surround the castle and may see some of the resident wildlife including red deer. This afternoon we arrive at the Knoydart Peninsula and the village of Inverie which is the largest settlement in mainland Britain without a road connection. Our expedition team will lead walks in the surrounding forest with great views down to Loch Nevis. Alternatively, choose to explore the town and visit the Old Forge which is listed as mainland Britain's most remote pub.

Day 9 St Kilda & Stac Lee.

We spend the morning at St Kilda, a remarkable uninhabited archipelago some fifty miles beyond the Outer Hebrides. Dominated by the highest cliffs and sea stacks in Britain, Hirta, St Kilda's main island was occupied on and off for at least two thousand years, with the last 36 Gaelic speaking inhabitants evacuated at their own request in 1930. Immediately after the evacuation, the island was bought by the Marquess of Bute to protect the island's thousands of seabirds including puffin and fulmars and in 1957 it was bequeathed to The National Trust for Scotland. St Kilda is one of the few UNESCO World Heritage

Sites with dual status reflecting its natural and cultural significance. The local ranger will join us on board before our expedition staff lead guided walks on the island. Later, we will cruise past one of the largest gannetries in the world at Stac Lee. The impressive stacs rise 170 metres from the sea and are home to up to 60,000 breeding pairs of northern gannets.

Day 10 Scrabster.

Sailing across the top of Scotland we arrive in Scrabster, the most northerly port on the British mainland. This morning visit the Castle and Gardens of Mey, built between 1566 and 1572 by George Sinclair, 4th Earl of Caithness. The castle was purchased by Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, in 1952, who renovated and restored it and created the beautiful gardens which we will see today. Alternatively, take a drive along the coast to John O'Groats, the most northerly town on mainland Britain. After some free time here we will return to the ship via Dunnet Bay, a glorious crescent of sand and dunes, and Dunnet Head to see the lighthouse, built in 1831 by Robert Stevenson, taking in the views over the Pentland Firth to the Orkney Islands. Return to the ship for lunch and a final leisurely afternoon at sea.

Day 11 Aberdeen.

Disembark the MS Hebridean Sky after breakfast. Transfers will be provided to the Railway Station and Aberdeen Airport at a fixed time.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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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.

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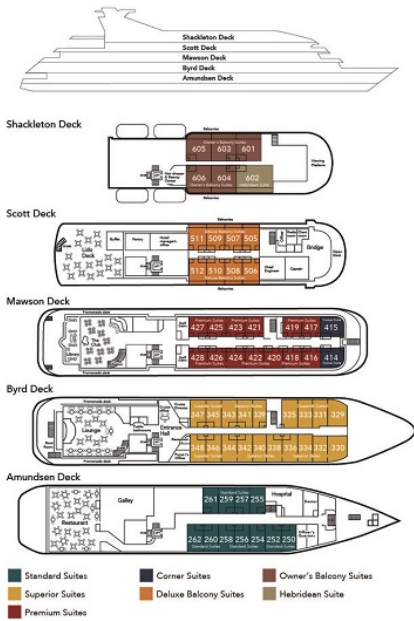
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PRICING



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