

CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM - CASTLES, GARDENS & HISTORIC HOUSES

Drawing on over 30 years of experience operating cruises around the British Isles, we have devised this unique circumnavigation of the UK which offers a wonderful portrait of life on our islands. The voyage is a celebration of the very best of what we offer and it is a wonderful opportunity to return to some of our favourite places to see some of the most beautiful scenery, meet some interesting inhabitants and learn more about both the past and present of the United Kingdom. We will sail from Portsmouth and during our cruise visit remarkable places of great natural beauty, rich in wildlife and history, from the idyllic Isles of Scilly in the southwest with their crystal-clear waters and fine white sandy beaches, to uninhabited Isle Martin, the majestic Scottish Highlands and the Isle of Wight with its stunning seascapes and rich Royal heritage. Amongst the many splendid houses and gardens we will visit are the Lost Gardens of Heligan in Cornwall, the famous, subtropical Tresco Abbey Gardens, Northern Ireland's Mount Stewart with its opulent historic house and formal gardens and the wonderful botanical garden at Inverewe in the Scottish Highlands. We will also visit some of the Kingdom's finest castles of which highlights include Scotland's historic Crathes Castle, Alnwick Castle, the second largest inhabited castle in England, and Dover Castle, site of an eventful 2000-year history. Over the course of just two weeks we will visit all of the UK's four countries and with the MS Hebridean Sky as our base, in the company of just 100 or so fellow guests, we will be able to visit many fascinating yet little-visited destinations that are otherwise inaccessible to the larger ships. All of this makes for a most appealing sea journey whether you be an avid gardener, nature-lover 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 this afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station at a fixed time, alternatively car parking facilities are available at the port



at your own cost. Sail in the early evening.

Day 2 Fowey.

Anchor this morning in the River Fowey, our base for a day exploring this picturesque part of Cornwall. We will make our way to the Lost Gardens of Heligan. The seat of the Tremayne family for 400 years, the garden fell into disrepair after World War I and was lovingly restored between 1990 and 2000. The extensive grounds include a Victorian Kitchen Garden and atmospheric paths lead through the Pleasure Grounds. Spend the afternoon in the picturesque port of Fowey where we have time to wander its historic alleys and lanes. Steeped in history we will see the castles that guarded the harbour from the Spanish fleets as well as the 14th century church in the heart of the town. Those feeling active may wish to head to the cliff paths or over to neighbouring Polruan.

Day 3 Isles of Scilly.

Spend the day in the Isles of Scilly, an archipelago of five inhabited islands and up to one hundred and forty uninhabited islets, located 30 miles off the coast of Cornwall. Our day will depend on weather and sea conditions but we hope to visit traffic-free Tresco, walking its idyllic lanes from the beach to the famous subtropical 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 along the paths, maybe visit the Valhalla collection of ship figureheads from ships wrecked on the islands or relax in the cafe. Later we hope to land on St Agnes, the most south-westerly community in the UK. Surrounded by rocks and reefs this delightful tiny island offers marvellous coastal walks. The small island of Gugh lies across a narrow sandbar and here we find a single stone monolith called the 'Old Man of Gugh' which dates back to the Bronze Age.

Day 4 Holyhead, Wales.

After a morning at sea we arrive at Holyhead, adjacent to Anglesey with its spectacular sea cliffs. This afternoon you can choose to visit the RSPB's reserve at South Stack, a beautiful but fragile maritime sward, farmland and heathland set on a stretch of dramatic sea cliffs facing the islets of South Stack. On a choice of walks we will see also see Ellin's tower, a Victorian folly and South Stack lighthouse built in 1809, maybe spotting some dolphins in the waters below. Alternatively, drive the short distance to Plas Cadnant, a hidden historic garden, which is slowly being uncovered. Three different gardens have been discovered, including an unusual walled garden with curving walls and a pool, a secret valley garden with three waterfalls and a river, and an upper woodland garden with stone outcrops and the remains of a 19th century folly. Work started on restoring the gardens and grounds in 1997, which was a huge undertaking as large areas had not been maintained for more than 70 years. Since then large parts of the gardens have undergone a spectacular transformation and have been restored to their former glory.

Day 5 Barrow in Furness, England.

Today we explore the picturesque Lake District on a choice of tours. On the southern tip, on the lower reaches of the River Kent, stands what has been described as 'one of the wonders of Lakeland'. Levens Hall, a remarkable Elizabethan mansion, evolved from a simple pele tower erected in the 13th century, has an intriguing past and fascinating links to the Duke of Wellington. A tour of the house will take you through Leven's spectacular rooms lined with exquisite carved oak panelling, leather wall coverings, ornate plasterwork and magnificent



collections of Elizabethan furniture and paintings. Then stroll in the gardens, first established in 1694 by Colonel James Grahame. He commissioned a French designer/artist, Guillaume Beaumont (who also designed Hampton Court Gardens), to create the topiary, reputedly, the oldest topiary in the world. In addition to over 100 unique topiary pieces, the gardens also have numerous vibrant showcases of beautiful colourful plants. Alternatively, drive along the scenic banks of Lake Windermere towards Rydal Mount, home of England's most celebrated poet, William Wordsworth who lived here from 1813 to his death in 1850. The house is much as it was when the family resided there. Discover the ambience that inspired Wordsworth as you wander through bright 'lived-in' rooms filled with furniture bought second hand from country sales and an abundance of Wordsworth's possessions. Climb to Wordsworth's attic study, his place of work when he reluctantly agreed to become Poet Laureate. Wordsworth is recognised for his love of flowers, in particular daffodils. He had a keen eye for design and was quite a skilled landscape gardener. Take some time to wander through the delightful gardens, which remain very much as he originally designed them and enjoy the spectacular views of Windermere and Rydal Water.

Day 6 Belfast, Northern Ireland.

This morning we will make our way to 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. The formal areas exude a strong Mediterranean feel and resemble an Italian villa landscape; the wooded areas support a range of plants from all corners of the world. There will be time to explore the opulent house which reveals a fascinating heritage and historic world famous artefacts and artwork. Do not leave without taking in the magnificent views of Strangford Lough from the Temple of the Winds. Return to the ship for lunch and the afternoon is free to relax on board, explore the city of Belfast at your own pace or maybe make an independent visit to the Titanic Experience. Located by the site of the ship's construction, this museum tells the story of the Titanic from her conception through her construction and launch in 1911.

Day 7 Armadale & Inverie, Scotland.

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 surrounds 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. Maybe take a walk in the surrounding forest with great views down to Loch Nevis or alternatively, choose to explore the town and visit the Old Forge which is listed as mainland Britain's most remote pub.

Day 8 Inverewe & Isle Martin.

This morning we visit one of Scotland's premier gardens, Inverewe. This botanical garden in the northwest Highlands presents an amazing collection of exotic trees and shrubs that are sheltered by well-positioned windbreaks of native pine. After an independent exploration of the gardens, we will return to the MS Hebridean Sky and sail to the Summer Islands. Isle Martin, Eilean Mhartainn in Scots Gaelic, is an uninhabited island in



Loch Broom, on the west coast of Scotland. During the 1980s and 1990s it became the site of a reforestation experiment by ecologists with native woodlands planted throughout, and these are now flourishing and improving soil fertility and biodiversity. Then in 1999 the island became one of the first handovers of land to community ownership. We will be offered a very warm welcome by volunteers from the community trust and will learn about the work they do on the island promoting the landscape, community and traditions.

Day 9 Scrabster.

Sailing across the top of Scotland we arrive, over lunch, in Scrabster, the most northerly port on the British mainland. This afternoon 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.

Day 10 Aberdeen.

From our berth in Aberdeen we drive through Royal Deeside to Crathes Castle and Garden, regarded by many as the finest historic castle and garden in Scotland. Steeped in history, it is famed for its exceptional 16th century painted ceilings, oak panelling, and other antiquities. Enjoy the wonderful plant collection including herbaceous borders and a wide variety of exotic shrubs surrounded by a magnificent ancient yew hedge. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon to explore Aberdeen independently. Alternatively, join a full day tour to Balmoral Castle which was purchased for the Royal Family by Prince Albert in 1852 and has been their highland home ever since. Stroll through the three acres of formal garden including Victorian greenhouses and vegetable gardens before visiting the castle ballroom and the stable exhibitions.

Day 11 Port of Tyne, England.

Returning to England, the Port of Tyne is our base for a day in Northumberland. Maybe choose to visit Alnwick Castle, the second largest inhabited castle in England (after Windsor). It has been home to the Dukes of Northumberland since 1309 and is currently the home of the 12th Duke and Duchess and their family. The Castle's origins date back to Norman times and having withstood many battles over the course of time, it is one of the most iconic landmarks of Northeast England. Behind the foreboding walls, Alnwick is home to lavish state rooms and an enviable collection of fine art, including paintings by Van Dyck, Canaletto, and Titian. Alternatively, drive inland to Hadrian's Wall. Designated a World Heritage Site in 1987, Hadrian's Wall is the most important monument built by the Romans in Britain. Built around AD122, it defined the northernmost limit of the Roman Empire in Britain at that time. It consisted of a stone-built wall, seven metres high with a ditch to the north and a bigger bank and ditch earthwork to the south with turrets, mile castles, and forts built at regular intervals. Continue to Chesters Roman Fort, one of the series of troop bases added to Hadrian's Wall soon after it was built, it is the best-preserved example of a Roman cavalry fort in Britain. Also visit the Clayton Museum to discover a myriad of Roman finds and learn about John Clayton, the antiquarian renowned for his work in the excavation of the site.



Day 12 Great Yarmouth.

Spend the morning cruising to Norfolk arriving in the seaside town of Great Yarmouth over lunch. This afternoon you may choose to spend time on, the Norfolk Broads, a National Park with 125 miles of navigable waterways set in beautiful countryside and dotted with charming towns and villages. Boarding a local boat we will spend a couple of hours navigating the waterways enjoying the scenery and keeping an eye out for the resident wildlife including otters and a variety of birds. Alternatively, drive to Mannington Estate where we find the 15th century hall, which retains its Medieval appearance with crenellations, Gothic windows and a drawbridge. The hall is surrounded by gardens including the Heritage Rose Garden which has over 1,000 varieties as well as a wildflower meadow and ancient woodland. Maybe take a trail through native and foreign tree species to see the Saxon church.

Day 13 Dover.

Arrive this morning in Kent, "the garden of England". A short drive from the port brings us to Dover Castle which was built soon after 1066 and has been the site of royal intrigue and epic sieges. Spend the morning exploring at your own pace. Maybe visit the underground tunnels which became the centre of "Operation Dynamo" and the plan to evacuate hundreds of thousands of Allied troops from the beaches of Dunkirk. Alternatively, climb the Great Tower built by King Henry II and filled with Medieval art and furnishings. Later, drive the short distance to Walmer Castle and Gardens. Built on the orders of Henry VIII to defend England's southern shores, Walmer Castle later became a home for the Lords Warden of the Cinque Ports, among them the Duke of Wellington and the Queen Mother. A tour of the house will include some of their private rooms before we visit the eight acres of gardens, a mix of formal and informal styles, from grand scale herbaceous planting, the kitchen garden and natural woodlands.

Day 14 Cowes, Isle of Wight.

Renowned as the sailing capital of the UK, Cowes is also our gateway to the Isle of Wight. Arriving over lunch we spend the afternoon on the island and you may wish to explore Osborne House, the holiday home of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Built between 1845 and 1851, it brought the Italianate style of architecture to the island. In the house we can see sumptuous state rooms, ornate architecture and a fine art collection whilst outside we can enjoy the walled garden, the woodland walk, the private beach or take in the views over the Solent from the garden terraces. Alternatively, drive across the island to the Mottistone Gardens and Estate, located in an area of outstanding natural beauty. Our visit will hopefully coincide with the rose garden coming to life and the colourful pink shells of the Bonica rose. We can also see the organic kitchen garden and walk through the orchard and garden terraces taking in the sea views. For those keen to take a walk you may wish to visit the nearby Long Stone, a sandstone pillar which retains a mystical history.

Day 15 Portsmouth.

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

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

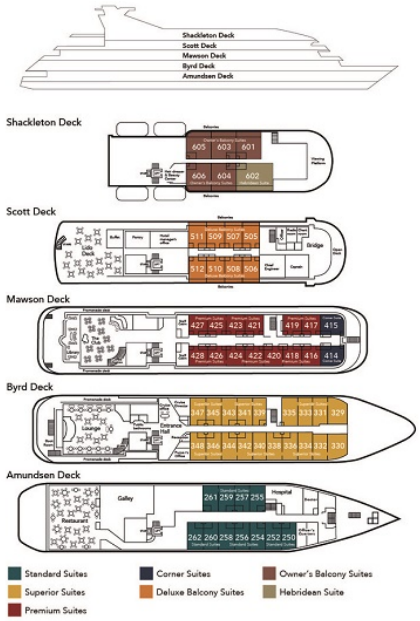
Hebridean Sky has always been known for its effortless elegance, impeccable service and atmosphere of charm and camaraderie. Now we add increased adventure options and an on-site Passenger Service Representative. Hebridean Sky is the perfect blend of luxury and adventurous exploration. Is it a luxury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



Mawson Deck Premium Suite





Scott Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite



Shackleton Deck Hebridean Suite



Shackleton Deck Owner's Balcony Suite





PRICING

06-May-2027 to 20-May-2027

Scott Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite	£10795 GBP pp
Mawson Deck Corner Suite	£9995 GBP pp
Amundsen Deck Standard Suite	£8995 GBP pp
Amundsen Deck Standard Sole	£11495 GBP pp
Shackleton Deck Owner's Balcony Suite	£10995 GBP pp
Byrd Deck Superior Sole	£11995 GBP pp
Mawson Deck Premium Suite	£9695 GBP pp
Byrd Deck Superior Suite	£9395 GBP pp
Shackleton Deck Hebridean Suite	£11495 GBP pp