

## The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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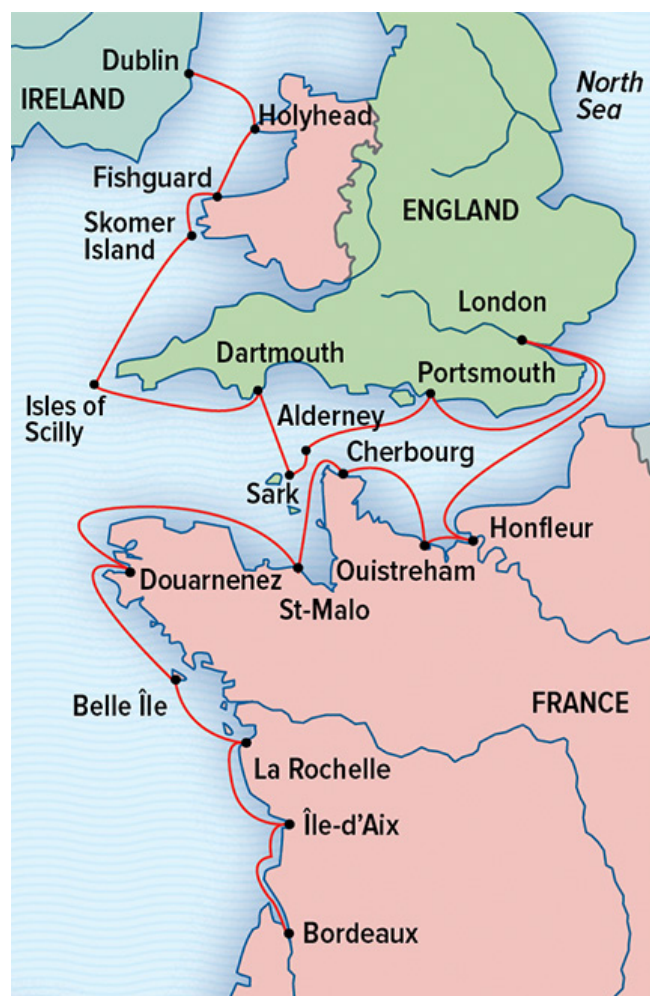
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## THE FRENCH ATLANTIC COAST TO THE ISLES OF ENGLAND & WALES

Follow the thread of D-Day from the beaches of Normandy, France across the English Channel to the secret Allied headquarters in Portsmouth, England. By special permission, enter the private, hallowed map room of Southwick House, Portsmouth to see where D-Day was planned. This two-week voyage will also call at the beautiful, small islands frequented only by locals; explore Belle Île, a favorite of Monet, and Sark, a migratory seabird stop in the middle of the Channel. Enjoy England's picture-postcard villages and gardens, and relish the classic food of the French region: cheese, oysters, ciders, cognac, and more. Discover the musical traditions of each culture you encounter. An ethnomusicologist on your expedition team helps bring a unique perspective on Europe's traditions and cultural diversity. Our musicologist Jacob Edgar has curated a set of exclusive performances and special concerts. Enjoy an exclusive private dinner and performance in a 13th-century castle in the English Pembrokeshire countryside, as well as a festive musical celebration at Holyhead. An onboard concierge for personal exploration. Combining the best of independent travel with the gracious and effortless benefits of shipboard travel, our concierge provides assistance with daily choices to suit your individual interests: active, cultural, or more sedentary options, and with special arrangements, off-ship dining and more. Get the most out of your time in Europe with personal outing tailored to specific interests. Travel in excellent company. Explore under the sure guidance of an expedition leader, an assistant expedition leader, a mix of historians, naturalists, archaeologists, an ethnomusicologist, an onboard concierge, a National Geographic photographer plus a National Geographic

certified photo instructor, and a wellness specialist. Their knowledge and passion is the key to your incredible



experience.

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### ITINERARY

#### DAY 1: Bordeaux, France/Embark

Arrive in Bordeaux and embark National Geographic Orion in the elegant and ornate city center. Spend the afternoon exploring the cafes and shops along the thriving waterfront, before departing through the Gironde estuary, passing sloping hills and islands en route to the Atlantic Ocean. (L,D)

#### DAY 2: Ile d'Aix/La Rochelle

Stretch your legs on a walking tour of the quaint Ile d'Aix, Napoleons last stop on French soil before his final exile. Visit the Napoleon Museum, then continue to the nearby port of La Rochelle for an afternoon in this charming seaside city guarded by medieval ramparts. Enjoy a special seafood dinner ashore this evening. (B,L,D) Learn how Cognac is made in the traditional way at Chateau La Peraudiere, a privately held estate, established in 1872.

#### DAY 3: Belle-Ile-en-Mer

Wake up to magnificent views of Belle-Ile-en-Mer (beautiful island in the sea), known for its rugged cliffs on the western side and charming ports on the eastern side. Explore highlights such as the Bangor lighthouse, the rocks at Port Coton favored by Monet, the Vauban citadel (one of 12 Vauban fortifications recognized by UNESCO), and the fishing town of Le Palais. Weve built in free time so you may explore Belle-Ile on your own, too. (B,L,D)

#### DAY 4: Douarnenez

Today we explore Brittany. Have a guided walk of medieval Locronan, officially one of the most beautiful villages in France, with its Renaissance buildings and church. Take time to discover its many craft workshops on your own, perhaps tasting Breton

butter cake. (B,L,D)

#### DAY 5: Saint-Malo/Mont-Saint-Michel

Wake up in Saint-Malo, and take a walking tour of this fortified port city surrounded by ramparts dating from the 12th century. Or, head east on an excursion to the iconic abbey fortress of Mont-Saint-Michel, a UNESCO World Heritage site poised dramatically on a rocky tidal island a few hundred yards off the coast. (B,L,D) Weve arranged for an exclusive visit to a privateers mansion followed by a tasting of the cider for which the region is known. Or for an authentic foodie experience, join us at a local oyster farm to gather oysters for the ships chef, who will shuck and season these delicacies for a sampling on board. If you wish to explore Saint-Malo on your own on foot or by bike, weve made it easy with a pre-provided map and a list of the best cafes and shops.

#### DAY 6: Cherbourg/The Normandy Beaches

Today we visit the Normandy beaches with a local historian. The D-Day landings on June 6, 1944 were the first wave of the largest seaborne invasion in history; more than 6,000 ships landed on these beaches. Walk in the footsteps of the Allied troops at Omaha Beach, and pay your respects at the American Cemetery nearby. Travel through countryside known for Calvados, cider, and cheese to the city of Bayeux for an afternoon exploration, including a visit to the Bayeux Tapestry Museum, which houses the 230-foot wool embroidered account of the Norman Conquest. (B,L,D) Weve planned some active options today, too. Cycle through northern France, stopping at relevant WWII sites and have lunch in Bayeux.

#### DAY 7: Honfleur

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Dock in the charming town of Honfleur, a favorite of renowned artists such as Monet, Courbet, and Boudin. Enjoy a guided walking tour of Vieux Bassin (the old port), and visit the Eugene Boudin Museum and Eglise Sainte-Catherine. (B,L,D) Be sure to savor time exploring on your own. Interested in art? Ask our concierge to map out the best galleries (there are nearly 100 in Honfleur.) Or, see for yourself what inspired many of the Impressionists with a hike to the arched limestone cliffs of Etretat.

#### DAY 8: London, England

National Geographic Orion docks on the Thames. Today discover London with a local expert and in the afternoon take some time to explore the city at your own pace. This evening as we set sail down the Thames. Hear a presentation from a maritime expert on the importance of Portsmouth as a seaport. (B,L,D)

#### DAY 9: Portsmouth

Our first anchoring is Englands maritime capital of Portsmouth. Delve into Great Britains nautical history with a behind-the-scenes look at the perfectly preserved historic ships docked in the harbor, including the HMS Victory. Wander the citys atmospheric waterfront, and perhaps stop for a pint at a traditional pub. (B,L,D) Opt to venture through the English countryside to Southwick House, the Allied headquarters during the D-Day landings. We have exclusive permission to enter the fascinating D-Day Map room.

#### DAY 10: Alderney/Sark, Channel Islands

Anchor at Alderney and take a walking tour of the island to learn about its important role in World War II under German occupation. Then, weather permitting, kayak across surrounding waters in search of migratory seabirds: puffins, gannets, and

lesser black-backed gulls. After lunch, we sail to nearby Sark. Take in the colorful sights and intoxicating scents of La Seigneurie Gardens. (B,L,D) The coastal paths of Alderney are perfect for heading off on your own to cycle or hike with stops at must see viewpoints. On Sark, you may wish to explore the blooming headland of the Gouliot Caves.

#### DAY 11: Dartmouth

Enjoy breakfast on deck as our vessel navigates the River Dart en route to Dartmouth, a colorful town that cascades across a steep riverside hill. In small groups, discover the guardrooms, battlements, and winding passages of the 14th-century Dartmouth Castle. Spend the rest of the day exploring Dartmouths lively lanes on your own.(B,L,D) If youre a mystery book fan, dont miss a visit to Greenway House for a curator-led look at Agatha Christies house and gardens.

#### DAY 12: Isles of Scilly/Tresco

According to Arthurian legend, the Isles of Scilly are all that remain of Lyonesse, a lost land off Cornwalls coast that is said to have vanished into the Atlantic. Discover Tresco Island and the world-class Tresco Abbey Gardens, where a surprising variety of tropical plants flourishes. Then stroll the village of Tresco, or join our naturalists for a nature walk, spotting the flora and fauna of these mythical islands. (B,L,D)

#### DAY 13: Skomer Island, Wales/Fishguard

Beautiful Skomer Island overflows with wildlife. Hop on a Zodiac to spot whales, dolphins, seals, and nesting seabirds. This afternoon stretch your legs along the Pembrokeshire Coastal Path, which winds along the cliffs and pristine beaches surrounding Fishguard. Or, discover the prehistoric archaeology of Pembrokeshire, the area that yielded the stones for



Stonehenge. Or, venture to St. Davids Cathedral for a guided walk of the lovely little town, before dinner ashore in Fishguard.(B,L,D) This evening we've arranged a special dinner in a 13th century castle in the incredible Pembrokeshire countryside, complete with a private musical performance.

#### DAY 14: Snowdonia/Angelsey Island

Dock at Holyhead and take a scenic drive to Snowdonia National Park. There are river gorges, waterfalls, lakes, and valleys to explore, whether you are coming for pulse-raising activities or for simply standing and admiring the Snowdonia Mountains. Or, visit Angelsey, a recognized GeoPark, to hike or cycle past intriguing rock formations. Enjoy a festive musical celebration before setting sail to Dublin. (B,L,D)

#### DAY 15: Dublin, Ireland/Disembark

Wake up in Dublin, disembark and head to the airport for your flight home, or remain in Dublin for an added stay. (B)

#### Please Note:

All day-by-day breakdowns are a sampling of the places we intend to visit, conditions permitting.





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### YOUR SHIP: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION

<b>YOUR SHIP:</b>	<b>National Geographic Orion</b>
<b>VESSEL TYPE:</b>	<b>Luxury Expedition</b>
<b>LENGTH:</b>	<b>103 metres</b>
<b>PASSENGER CAPACITY:</b>	<b>102 (in 53 cabins)</b>
<b>BUILT/REFURBISHED:</b>	<b>2003 / Refurbished 2014</b>

Engineered for maximum comfort and safety, *Orion* is equipped with the latest technology including large retractable stabilizers, sonar, radar, and an ice-strengthened hull. A shallow draft plus bow and stern thrusters provide the convenience of being able to maneuver close to shore. 14 Zodiacs ensure quick disembarkation and offer the ideal transport for up-close exploration. *National Geographic Orion* meets strict specifications for environmental protection and the on board waste management systems meet the stringent Antarctic operational standards enabling us to travel to the most pristine environments. A host of advanced design features and technology ensures sustainable marine environmental practices. *National Geographic Orion* accommodates 102 guests in 53 cabins, including several with balconies. She is spacious and modern, with a variety of public rooms that offer panoramic views of the passing landscape. Friendly and informal, *Orion* fosters a welcoming atmosphere where like-minded guests share in exceptional experiences and enrichment. Her public rooms include a dramatic window-lined main lounge, as well as an observation lounge and library perched at the very top of the ship, with plentiful observation decks. The spacious lounge is

the heart of our expedition community, and is suited for spirited cocktail hours, informative presentations and our nightly tradition of Recap. In addition, a dedicated theater provides a unique setting for specialist presentations or films and slideshows. Both the main dining room and outside buffet easily accommodate all guests at once for open seating dining. On selected nights, weather permitting, our dining room menu is also available on the outside deck. While *Orion* interiors are elegant, life aboard is always casual, with no need for formal clothing. And you'll find shipboard services like laundry, in-room cabled internet, and public-area wifi make packing and traveling more



convenient.



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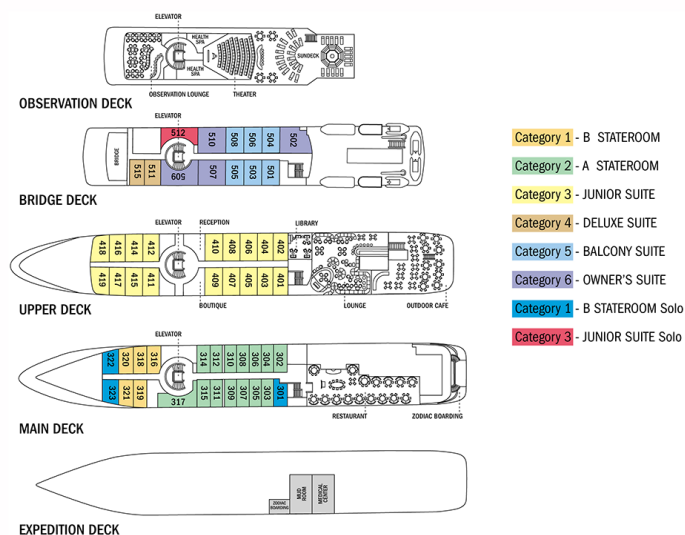
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## INSIDE YOUR SHIP



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## PRICING

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