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THE HEBRIDES ARCHIPELAGO, A JOURNEY DEEP INTO THE HEART OF THE SCOTTISH WILDERNESS

PONANT invites you on a 10-day cruise aboard *Le Laprouse* for an extraordinary journey featuring the archaeological sites and sumptuous scenery of northern Scotland, on the edge of the Highlands, in the heart of the dreamlike and mysterious Hebrides archipelago. From Dublin, the Irish capital brimming with convivial atmosphere and authentic charm, your ship will then take you to the Isle of Man, located between the United Kingdom and Ireland, with a clear Celtic and Viking heritage. The capital Douglas is an authentic postcard from the United Kingdom of yesteryear with a Victorian atmosphere. Then you will call in Portrush, where you can visit the Giant's Causeway. This massive geological formation is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and features over 40,000 basalt columns. You will then reach Rathlin Island, a small and austere territory in County Antrim, whose sheer cliffs are home to Northern Ireland's largest seabird colony. Near the surprising upside-down lighthouse, located on the west of the island, you will be able to visit the RSPB seabird centre. Then you will set sail towards the Hebrides archipelago. Located to the west of Scotland, it has around 150 islands and will reveal its diversity. You will make a stop on Iona, the birthplace of Christianity in Scotland, home to an impressive abbey, and probably where the Book of Kells was produced. Then, you will enjoy sailing along Staffa Island and its impressive basalt columns and will reach the volcanic territory of Lunga, in the Treshnish Isles. The small island is a protected area for seabirds and home to colonies of puffins and guillemots among others. You will continue your exploration of the Inner Hebrides on the Isle of Skye. With their granite hills and heather moorlands, the landscapes of Loch Scavaig are

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among the wildest in the Highlands and will be an opportunity for an unforgettable walk at Loch Coruisk. Canna, a charming islet inhabited by twenty or so souls and nicknamed "the garden of the Hebrides", will unveil itself, with its Christian, Celtic, Nordic and Scottish vestiges, in a natural setting of great beauty, a sanctuary for rich marine birdlife. Your ship will then cruise towards Ullapool on the shore of Loch Broom in the western Highlands. This former herring fishing port boasts a picturesque atmosphere made up of white cottages and colourful fishermen's boats. You will continue to the Outer Hebrides and you will discover Callanish on the Isle of Lewis. This port of call will take you back in time to between 2900 and 2600 BC, the period during which the island's megalithic site would have been created... Before the circle of standing stones, aligned with the cardinal points, the mystery remains entire, the emotion is palpable. Next, you will reach the Shiant Isles for an unforgettable experience sailing at the foot of their cliffs, where many colonies of seabirds come to nest. Then *Le Lap* erouse will set sail towards Rothesay, an elegant Victorian seaside resort on the Isle of Bute. Constructed around its 13th-century castle, the small town brims with charm, with its fine dwellings in the extravagant Georgian architectural style, and its sumptuous wild and landscaped gardens. Finally, you will reach Glasgow, your



disembarkation port.

ITINERARY

Day 1 - Dublin

The Irish capital stretches along the banks of the Liffey to Dublin bay, on the East coast of Ireland. Discover Ireland's warm conviviality in the pedestrian district of **Temple Bar**. Its cobbled streets are brimming with fabulous shops, pubs and arts centres. Next to Trinity College, famous for its 18th century library, you can stroll along Grafton Street: in one of its famous tea shops, try a delicious scone and clotted cream served hot and melt-in-the-mouth with jam. Not far from here, the majestic O'Connell bridge leads you to the avenue with the same name, on which **Spire**, a luminous contemporary sculpture presides.



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Day 2 - Douglas

Douglas is the capital of the **Isle** of **Man**, a self-governing island in the Irish Sea between England and Ireland. The Isle of Man is best-known for its gruelling annual TT motorbike race but Douglas itself is a charming traditional seaside resort. The stroll along the busy **promenade** is very popular, as well as the visit of the **Manx Museum**, which retraces the island's fascinating Celtic and Viking heritage. It is possible to take a steam train into the mountainous interior, where medieval castles and pretty villages and farms can be observed.

Day 3 - Portrush

Portrush is a small seaside resort in County Antrim, Northern Ireland, which is famous for hosting The Open golf tournament in 1951 and 2019. The main part of the old town is located on a peninsula that is 1.5-km (1-mile) long, **Ramore Head**. With three beautiful sandy beaches, the town has a pleasant seaside atmosphere and great appeal due to its proximity to exceptional cultural sites, such as **Dunluce Castle** or the **Giant's Causeway**, a unique natural wonder, the most fascinating formation of basalt columns in the world, and the first UNESCO World Heritage Site in Northern Ireland.

Day 3 - Rathlin Island

10 kilometres (6 miles) off the coast of Northern Ireland in County Antrim, **Rathlin Island**, shaped by Irish and Scottish history, was the site of the first Viking raid on Ireland in the 8th century. It is a favourite spot for divers, as the surrounding waters hide many sunken wrecks. This small austere territory, with impressive cliffs, is today home to 80 inhabitants. You will not fail to admire the dance of the seabirds

perched on the vertiginous cliffs, near the surprising upside-down lighthouse, located on the west of the island. You will be able to visit the RSPB Rathlin West Light Seabird Centre and find out more about the puffins, razorbills and black-legged kittiwakes that inhabit the island.

Day 4 - Iona, Hebrides

Of all the islands in the **Inner Hebrides**, **Iona** is by far the most conducive to contemplation and meditation. And for good reason... it is here that St Columba landed from Ireland in 563 and undertook to establish Christianity in **Scotland**. Now an abbey, the island's true spiritual centre stands where the ancient monastery founded by the Irish missionary was built. Many kings of Scotland, including the legendary **Macbeth**, are buried in the nearby cemetery. In sunny weather, arriving on the Isle of Iona is a stunningly beautiful experience.

Day 4 - Lunga, Treshnish Isles

The **Treshnish Isles** lie off the Isle of Mull, to the west of Scotland, forming a small archipelago of seven islands of volcanic origin that belongs to the **Inner Hebrides**. Basalt cliffs and rocky coves shape the contours of the largest island, **Lunga**, while its inner lands are carpeted with moors. Inhabited until the 19th century, Lunga still bears the remains of traditional blackhouses, visible in situ. Designated a Special Protection Area, the island is now the kingdom of **pelagic birds**, including Atlantic puffins, and also home to a large **seal** colony. The craggy terrain and panoramic scenery of this island will delight bird-watchers and nature-lovers.

Day 5 - Canna, Hebrides

The **Hebrides archipelago** has many natural treasures, including **Canna**, a preserved little island with the pretty

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nickname "the garden of the Hebrides". Inhabited since the Neolithic period, Canna has only around twenty inhabitants today but its territory has a rich history featuring Christians, Celtic monks, Norse settlers and Scottish communities, all of whom left traces of their passage, monuments, churches or Celtic crosses as heritage. You will take the time to enjoy beauty of the nature here, between the land and the ocean, from the diversity of the floral species to the captivating dance of the seabirds, including guillemots, come to nest in the island's protected spaces.

Day 5 - Loch Scavaig

In the south of the **Isle of Skye** , **Loch Scavaig**, located on the eponymous river, the shortest in Great Britain, will reveal its stunning scenery: you will not fail to admire the reflections of the **Cuillin Hills** , granite hills carpeted with heather and shrouded in morning mist, on the waters of the loch. Perhaps you will be lucky enough to spot some harbour seals and grey seals lazing on the shore. Let yourself be tempted by a hike to discover **Loch Coruisk** and its sublime panorama at the foot of the Black Cuillin ridge, which has inspired many painters, including **J. M. W. Turner**.

Day 6 - Ullapool, Scotland

On the West Coast of the **Northern Highlands**, you're sure to be charmed by the picturesque city of **Ullapool**, so often admired by holidaymakers passing through. While this delightful fishing port has proven to be the ideal departure point for exploring the region on foot, the place itself is worth the detour. Stretching along the quiet, majestic banks of **loch Broom**, whitewashed cottages line the harbour and the pretty pebble beach. The view of the surrounding mountains only makes this image postcard-perfect. To find out more about Ullapool's

origins, you can visit the town's museum dedicated to local history.

Day 7 - Callanish, Outer Hebrides

In Scotland's **Outer Hebrides**, on the legendary **Isle of Lewis** , **Callanish** dazzles and surprises, fascinates and questions. On the eastern coast of the island, where land and sea rub shoulders and clash in the tumult of wild nature, discover the **Callanish Stones megalithic site**. No fewer than 51 stones stand in the middle of the peat fields. Deliberately arranged about 5,000 years ago, they are a mysterious testimony to the Stone Age. There are many theories as to the purpose of these stones -- a place of worship, a lunar calendar, an astronomic observatory or a healing centre -- but they remain an enigma. The singular atmosphere of this site lends itself to all sorts of interpretations, to all sorts of dreams and musings.

Day 8 - Sailing along Shiant Islands

The Shiant Islands derive their name from the Gaelic, **Na h-Eileanan Seunta**, which means "enchanted isles". Whether in the mist that frequently envelops the archipelago or beneath a radiant sun, the visitors discovering the Shiant Islands quickly fall under their spell. A veritable paradise for observing seabirds and marine mammals, the archipelago offers magnificent scenery. Puffins, guillemots and razorbills find refuge in the cliffs here, co-existing with fulmars and black-legged kittiwakes. White-tailed eagles soar above inaccessible cliffs. As for the seals, they gather around rocky formations.

Day 9 - Rothesay, Isle of Bute

Rothesay is an elegant seaside resort and the main town on the Isle of Bute, a Scottish island bathed by the **Firth of**

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Clyde** , a vast expanse of coastal water sheltered from the Atlantic Ocean by the Kintyre Peninsular. The town has some remarkable monuments, including its **castle** , a 13th-century building modified several times over its turbulent history between Norwegian attacks and English invasion. You will also discover the Victorian architecture of the houses overlooking the romantic Rothesay Bay, as well as the Isle of Bute Discovery Centre, a unique circular structure from the 1920s constructed of cast iron and glass. Make sure you visit **Mount Stuart House** , an incredible 19th-century manor house built in the Georgian architectural style, with an interior that was modern for the time, and its magnificent wild and landscaped gardens.

Day 10 - Glasgow, Scotland

In the heart of the **Clyde Valley** , the bustling city of **Glasgow** contrasts starkly with the wild beauty of the surrounding countryside. Scotland's biggest city overflows with landmarks from its extensive artistic heritage and outstanding architectural tradition. The city's chequerboard layout makes walking through the major pedestrian thoroughfares easy: go with the flow and let the lively street atmosphere take you past the many Victorian monuments. Don't miss the collections on display in the numerous museums and art galleries. The Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum is an outstanding example.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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serve grilled meats with a variety of salads and desserts. **PUBLIC AREAS** Le Bellot has many common areas that are designed and equipped to meet all of your needs while preserving the intimacy of each passenger. A 140 m² reception area includes: A reception/concierge desk, An excursions desk, The ship's administrative services, The sales office, manned by our Guest Relations Officer, Our 50 m² boutique which sells clothing, jewellery, beauty products, postcards and various accessories, Toilets accessible to passengers with reduced mobility. A new hydraulic platform with adjustable height provides: Easier boarding than on any other cruise ship, Easier Zodiac embarkation and disembarkation for expeditions, Easier access to the sea for swimming and practising various water sports such as kayaking or paddle-boarding. A pool deck offering: A pool with a panoramic view, equipped with a counter-current swimming system, A pleasant solarium, An outdoor bar and lounge with armchairs and sofas. A 200 m² main lounge which can accommodate all of our passengers to share convivial moments and to host activities organised during the day or evening. Lastly, a theatre that seats 188, equipped with: The latest sound and lighting technology, A LED wall as the stage backdrop, for the projection of high-resolution images and videos. Please click the following links to read more about Ponant and the other Ponant



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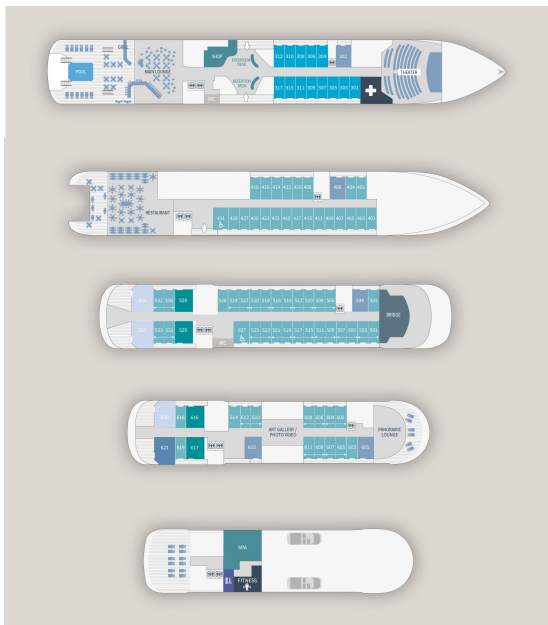
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