

IRELAND AND THE CELTIC SHORES: WILDLIFE, CULTURE & COASTAL WONDER

Circuit along the Celtic fringe linking Scotland, the Isle of Man, Wales, Ireland, and Northern Ireland. Focus on coastal geology, early mediaeval culture, Gaelic communities, seabird habitats, and island traditions. Mix of national parks, sea cliffs, basalt formations, and remote island settlements.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Troon/Glasgow, Scotland

Harbour lights shimmer in the distance as you embark in Troon, where ship and sea meet the spirit of Scotland's west coast. Beyond the gangway, the rolling Ayrshire hills and echoes of Glasgow's maritime past set the tone for a voyage shaped by music, story, and salt air. As the vessel slips from the pier, bagpipe strains and seabirds' cries mingle--a prelude to the journey ahead, the first notes of a Celtic tune carried across the tide.



Day 2: Isle of Man

A solitary land rising from the Irish Sea, the Isle of Man hums with ancient rhythms--and holds a rare distinction as the world's only entire nation designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Here, natural beauty and cultural heritage are deeply entwined: rolling hills meet rugged coastlines, and stories flow as freely as the tides.

Celtic crosses tilt in quiet churchyards, while the Manx language lingers in local song and story. Wander narrow cobbled lanes where brightly painted doors open onto tiny shops, children's laughter drifts through the salt air, and the scent of fresh kippers mingles with baking and sea brine. There's a music to the wind here--a low, steady drone beneath the flight of seabirds, a melody of independence and endurance.

Day 3: Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, Wales

Explore the UK's only coastal national park, where seaside cliffs blaze with wildflowers and waves pound against sandstone headlands. Seal heads bob in the surf, and the cries of choughs echo through the wind--a natural symphony shaped by sea and stone. Every turn reveals another view of raw beauty and living coastline, where the elements are in constant conversation.

Ashore, wander through harbour towns alive with the scent of salt and smoked fish, the hum of conversation in Welsh and English, and shop windows filled with handwoven wool and carved driftwood. Here, Welsh poetry and maritime craft endure. Beneath it all runs the quiet strength of place--steadfast, grounded, and proud, like the pulse of a harp's deep string echoed in the lilt of Welsh voices and the bilingual signs that mark the streets.

Day 4: South Coast of Ireland

Along Ireland's southern coast, rolling headlands give way to sheltered bays alive with seabirds and seals. We'll cruise by Clear Island (Cape Clear)--the country's southernmost inhabited island--where rugged cliffs, lighthouses, and green slopes reveal the wild heart of West Cork. Weather permitting, a Zodiac cruise may bring us closer to seabird colonies and quiet coves shaped by wind and tide.

Continuing into Bantry Bay, we'll visit Ilnacullin (Garinish Island), home to one of Ireland's most exquisite gardens. Here, subtropical blooms and sculpted terraces flourish in a sheltered microclimate. As we trace the shores of the Iveragh Peninsula--better known as the Ring of Kerry--the landscape unfolds in layers of beauty: sweeping coastlines, tranquil villages, and stone ruins that speak softly of Ireland's deep and enduring past.

Day 5: Killarney National Park

Mist clings to the oak woods and high passes of Killarney, the Jewel in Kerry's Crown. A UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Killarney National Park stretches from the foot of the Macgillycuddy Reeks--the highest mountain range in Ireland--to the outskirts of town, encompassing lakes, mountains, and plains. Here, the land feels alive with myth--where red deer move through mossy glades, and lakes mirror the shifting light. The forest seems to breathe in rhythm, a quiet harmony between water, wood, and wind. You may wander beneath ancient yews or listen to the soft hush of water beneath the trees. In Killarney, time slows; the tune softens; the world feels older, gentler, profoundly green.

Day 6: Aran Isles



On the edge of Ireland's western sea lie the Aran Isles, windswept, enduring, and geologically unique. Set in Galway Bay, these limestone islands--Inis Mor, Inis Meain, and Inisheer--enjoy a temperate climate and host an extraordinary diversity of plant and animal life. The Arans are bastions of Irish culture, where a large proportion of the population are Gaelic speakers. Stone walls run like script across the fields, and the Aran sweater, homespun of local wool in intricate patterns, remains a symbol of island identity. You might explore Dun Aonghasa, a prehistoric hill fort perched on a 100 metre cliff edge on Inis Mor--an archaeological wonder and one of Ireland's most significant ancient sites. Here, language, land, and sea are interwoven--a harmony as enduring as the Atlantic itself.

Day 7: Tory Island

Toraigh (Tory Island) lies nearly fifteen kilometres off the northwest coast of County Donegal, where Gaelic remains the main spoken language. Since the 1950s, the island has been home to a small community of artists and musicians, with its own art gallery and a tradition of warm hospitality. Conversations here feel like songs, and every visit carries the sense of being welcomed into something rare--a community defined by creativity, resilience, and warmth, its heartbeat kept in time with the sea's quiet measure.

Day 8: Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Giant's Causeway is a geological wonder where about 40,000 interlocking basalt columns rise from the surf like steps built by legend. Formed by ancient volcanic eruptions, these stones lead from the coastal cliffs down into the North Sea. The Causeway invites both awe and reflection--its symmetry the work of time, fire, and the patient sea, and its myths tied to the hero Fionn mac Cumhaill. The air vibrates with the deep hum of the Atlantic, a bass note beneath the cry of kittiwakes. Nature's artistry and human story entwine here, composing a quiet symphony--the harmony of earth and ocean.

Day 9: Troon/Glasgow, Scotland

Returning to Troon, the coastline greets you like an old song revisited. There's a fullness to the homeward passage--the sound of waves against hull, the camaraderie of new friends, and a deepened sense of familiarity with these Celtic shores. The voyage ends where it began, its melody resolved but still echoing with in--the refrain of sea, story, and kinship carried onward.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: OCEAN VICTORY

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

This stylish cruise ship, built specifically for small ship expeditions to the Polar Regions, features cutting edge technology mixed with great comfort. With a total of 93 comfortable cabins for our guests, all with a view of the ocean, (and 90% with their own balcony), several restaurants, a wellness area, an Albatros Nordic Bar, an open deck dining facility, a modern lecture lounge, and other amenities, the vessel will also be environmentally-friendly onboard, with an implementation of the Green Initiative Program, ensuring both absolute comfort and sustainability for our guests. Now, for the technical details: With the highest Polar code 6 and Ice class 1A, Ocean Victory is the ideal vessel for small-ship cruising due to her sturdy construction and X-Bow®-Infinity class, which provides high stability in rough weather and allows for the smoothest movements on high waves, and a Solas 2012 classification which facilitates a safe return to port. The vessel is part of a brand new generation of low-energy vessels, with 4 diesel engines and 2 electro engines, all controlled electronically to optimize speed and fuel consumption. Restaurant & bar Dinner always starts with delicious hot soups, cold cuts and crisp, fresh salads. Several choices of entrees are offered each evening, to accommodate different tastes and dietary requirements; always including a meat choice, fish choice and vegetarian choice. After dinner, freshly prepared desserts, including ship-made ice cream or cakes are a great way to end a meal and satisfy any sweet tooth. A selection of wines and beers is available to perfectly compliment your visit to our restaurant... and if you're interested in relaxing during your time off from activities and landings, delight onboard Ocean Atlantic by raising your glass to the experience of a lifetime! Our bar is fully equipped with a variety of cocktails, beers, non-alcoholic beverages and more, to quench your thirst and reward the

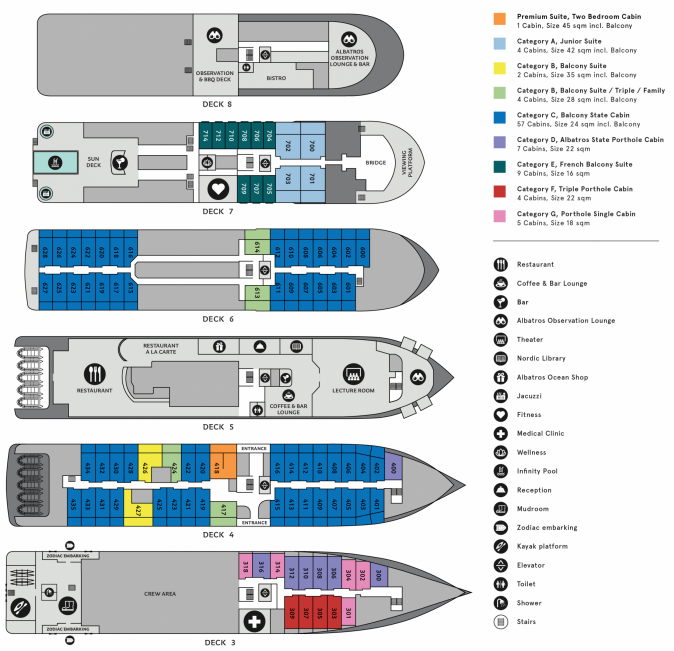




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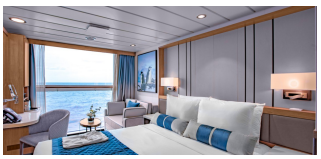
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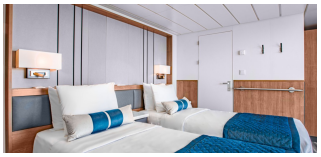
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