

ISLAND HOPPING IN THE HEBRIDES EXPEDITION CRUISE

If ever an archipelago was made for expedition cruising it is the islands off Scotland's west coast. You can travel the world visiting all manner of exotic and wonderful places, however some of the finest scenery, fascinating history and most endearing people may be found close to home. Nowhere is that truer than around Scotland's magnificent coastline, an indented landscape of enormous natural splendour with offshore islands forming stepping stones into the Atlantic. One of Europe's last remaining wilderness areas affords the traveller a marvellous island hopping journey through stunning scenery accompanied by spectacular sunsets and prolific wildlife. Over the course of eight nights and accompanied by our naturalists and local guides, we will explore the isles and with our nimble Zodiac craft be able to reach some of the most remote and untouched places including the remarkable uninhabited archipelago of St Kilda, spiritual Iona, and Ulva, one of the smallest inhabited islands in the Hebrides. There is no better way to explore this endlessly fascinating and beautiful region that will cast its spell on you than by small ship. In the northern summer there is a stillness and an almost wistful feeling in the air and this is the time when the enchanted visitor will be moved and seduced by the majesty of the islands, lochs and seascapes. With just 100 or so fellow travelling companions, the atmosphere on board the MS Hebridean Sky is more akin to a private yacht trip and when exploring ashore we will divide into small groups thereby enjoying a more comprehensive and peaceful experience. Learn something of the island's history, see their abundant bird and marine life, but above all revel in the timeless enchantment that these islands exude to all those who appreciate the natural world.



ITINERARY

Day 1 Oban, Scotland.

Embark the MS Hebridean Sky in the afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Glasgow Central Railway Station and Glasgow International Airport at a fixed time. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail this evening.

Day 2 Staffa & Iona.

At first light we arrive at Staffa where the perpendicular rock face features an imposing series of black basalt columns, known as the Colonnade, which has been cut by the sea into cathedralesque caverns, most notably Fingal's Cave. Weather



permitting, we will use our Zodiacs to explore more closely. Sail over lunch to Iona which 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 white sandy beaches or go in search of the corncrake amongst the irises.

Day 3 Loch Scavaig & Inverie.

We have the morning at the lovely Loch Scavaig. Just beyond is the freshwater Loch Corruisk with its breathtakingly beautiful view over the Cuillins. This is great walking country, but for those who prefer a less energetic morning our Zodiacs will explore the coast looking out for seals. 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 4 Canna & Carbost, Isle of Skye.

Strategically placed between the mountains of Rum and the Outer Hebrides, the island of Canna and its adjoining neighbour Sanday are bound together like some rare text that reveals over 60 million years of Hebridean geology and history. They have an amazingly rich archaeological landscape with remains dating to all periods of settled occupation in Scotland. Canna is run as a single farm and bird sanctuary by the National Trust for Scotland and enjoys the best harbour in the Small Isles, a hornshaped haven. The fertile soil and its diversity of habitats mean that the island has an incredibly rich plant life with 248 native flowering plants recorded. We will see Canna House and wander across grassy basalt plateaus to the 600 foot cliffs on the north shore. Over lunch we sail to the Isle of Skye and from our anchorage in Loch Harport we make our way to the MacLeod stronghold of Dunvegan Castle. Remarkably, the castle has been almost continuously occupied by the MacLeods for nearly eight centuries. Discover the castle, a fascinating place that contains work from at least ten building periods. We will also explore the gardens, following paths through woodland glades past pools and burns fed by a waterfall. The formal gardens were laid out in the 18th century and make a wonderful contrast to the moorland hills and sea. We will also keep a look out for the seal colony on the adjoining rocks. Alternatively, spend the afternoon at leisure in the town of Carbost or make a visit to the Talisker whisky distillery.

Day 5 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 gannet.

Day 6 Stornoway, Isle of Lewis & Shiant Islands.

On leaving the island capital of Stornoway, we will head across the island of Lewis to the beautiful west coast. Described as Scotland's Stonehenge, the Callanish Standing Stones date from around 3000 BC. There are a total of 32 stones in a circular and avenue design. The stones stand like a petrified forest on the flat top of a peninsula which reaches out into East Loch Roag. We also visit the Dun Carloway Pictish Broch, probably built sometime in the last century BC, it would have served as an occasionally defensible residence for an extended family complete with accommodation for animals at ground floor level. Our next stop is the Gearrannan Blackhouse Village, a reconstructed settlement of traditional black houses which were made using dry stone masonry and have thatched roofs, distinctively weighted down with rocks. Visit the small museum, enjoy a display of a typical crofting activity such as weaving and take in the views of this dramatic site on the wild Atlantic coast. This afternoon we will board the Zodiacs for a cruise around the spectacular basalt cliffs of the Shiant Islands, a group of little islands located a few miles off the shores of Lewis. This is an excellent place to spot puffins, razorbills, guillemots, seals and hopefully white-tailed eagles.

Day 7 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 wellpositioned 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 or 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 8 Ulva & Tobermory, Isle of Mull.

At only five miles long and two miles wide, Ulva is one of the smallest inhabited islands in the Hebrides, with a population of just 16. We will use our Zodiacs to go ashore and spend the morning exploring this tranquil island steeped in history and rich in wildlife. Our final afternoon is on the Isle of Mull and the pretty port of Tobermory. Spend the afternoon at leisure in the town walking amongst the colourful buildings, visit the town's distillery or maybe take the coastal walk to the Rubha nan Gall lighthouse.

Day 9 Oban.

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

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

YOUR SHIP: **Hebridean Sky**

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

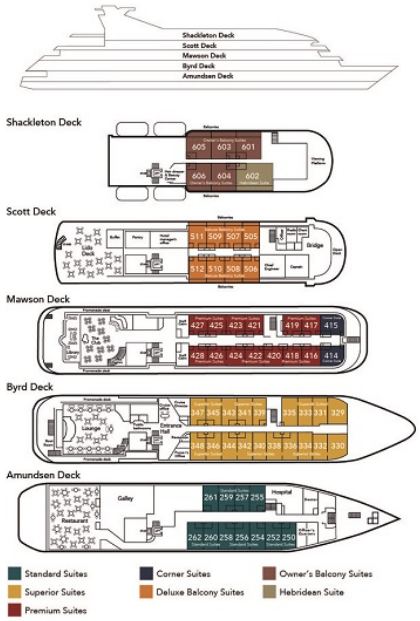
Hebridean Sky has always been known for its effortless elegance, impeccable service and atmosphere of charm and camaraderie. Now we add increased adventure options and an on-site Passenger Service Representative. Hebridean Sky is the perfect blend of luxury and adventurous exploration. Is it a luxury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

13-Jun-2027 to 21-Jun-2027

Amundsen Deck Standard Suite	£5895 GBP pp
Byrd Deck Superior Sole	£6995 GBP pp
Amundsen Deck Standard Sole	£6795 GBP pp
Scott Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite	£7495 GBP pp
Byrd Deck Superior Suite	£6095 GBP pp
Shackleton Deck Hebridean Suite	£8195 GBP pp
Mawson Deck Corner Suite	£6595 GBP pp
Shackleton Deck Owner's Balcony Suite	£7695 GBP pp
Mawson Deck Premium Suite	£6295 GBP pp