

ISLANDS AND CITIES, FROM THE NORTH SEA TO THE BALTIC

With featured guest Lech Walesa, former President of the Republic of Poland and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, for a two-hour event in Gdansk. He will share his personal testimony during an exclusive meeting on board. Embark on an 10-night cruise aboard _Le Champlain_ to discover iconic islands and towns of Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Estonia and Finland. Throughout your journey, you will benefit from an excursion included per person per port of call, to choose from a selection offered by PONANT. On this cruise, you can stroll through the countryside and villages of Bornholm ,enjoy a visit to Gdansk and fall under the spell of the music at a Chopin concert and attend an Estonianfolk show in Tallinn. The diversity of experiences on offer promises you intense and varied moments (to discover the full range of excursions, go to the itinerary tab). The diversity of experiences on offer promises you intense and varied moments (to discover the full range of excursions, go to the itinerary tab). From Fredrikstad , Northern Europe's best preserved fortified town, you will sail towards the southern part of Denmark, along the shores of the Limfjorden strait, to reach the city of Aalborg. Founded by the Vikings, it is home among other things to the archaeological remains of a circular fortress built during the same period. _Le Champlain_ then heads for the Danish capital, Copenhagen , before reaching Gudhjem , a charming village lying on the small Danish Island of Bornholm , much admired by Danes for its varied landscapes of granite and long sandy beaches. Your ship will then call at Gdansk, famous for its amber stone and its shipyards. The former Hanseatic city will reveal some of its architectural treasures, in Gothic and Baroque styles, restored or rebuilt. _Le Champlain_ will sail to the Swedish island of Gotland and call at Visby , a site that was important for the Hanseatic League in the Baltic Sea around the 13th century.A UNESCO Heritage Site , this once-opulent city still has remarkably well-preserved ramparts, public buildings, merchant houses and warehouses. You will then head towards Stockholm. Built on water, the Swedish capital embraces nature, which is omnipresent there. Its blend of medieval architecture, colourful houses and trendy neighbourhoods makes it a particularly enjoyable city to visit. On Saaremaa , dive into the complex history of this island, Estonia’s largest. First invaded by the Vikings, it became Danish then Swedish before being taken by the Russian Empire and later occupied by the Germans. In 1991, it finally became Estonian when the country gained its independence. You will also visit Tallinn , emblematic city of the Hanseatic League, the large trading network that dominated the Baltic Sea for several centuries. Listed as UNESCO Heritage Site, this once opulent city still have remarkably well-preserved public buildings, merchant houses and warehouses. Finally, you will then chart a course Helsinki. Located on a peninsula surrounded by almost 300 islands, the verdant capital of Finland will charm you with its Art Nouveau





architecture.

ITINERARY

Day 1 Fredrikstad

Nestling on the shores of the Glomma estuary, Fredrikstad captivates with its rich historical heritage, picturesque canals and warm atmosphere. Founded in 1567, the fortified old town still has traces of its rich past. Fall under the spell of its cobbled narrow streets, edged with traditional old wooden buildings, boutiques and lively cafes, and also discover the extremely well-preserved ramparts, built almost 5 centuries ago. Nature enthusiasts will also appreciate the magnificent hiking paths along the Oslo fjord and surrounding islands, such as Hankø, with its idyllic beaches and lush plains.

Day 2 Aalborg

In the very north of Denmark, on the banks of the Limfjorden sea,the Viking town of Aalborg opens its welcoming arms. A must-see is the Aalborg tower standing like a lighthouse in the middle of the town. At the top, a magnificent view of the surroundings awaits your visit. Several museums, including the Utzon Centre, propose a sample of local artistic creation. As far as shopping goes, the famous JomfruAneGade street and its district, include some of the most beautifulDanish fashion boutiques as well as numerous restaurants and cafes where you might try one of the country's specialities such as "platte"

Day 3 Copenhagen

Connected to the far eastern side of Sealand island, a few kilometres away from the Swedish coasts, Copenhagen offers you the high colour of Scandinavian capitals. You can discover the city's riches that weaves through the canal networks through the historical districts of Christiansborg and Nyhavn. Many palaces provide an apercu of Danish history. For eating, you can try out the smorrebrod, traditional danish sandwiches made with ham, cheese or smoked fish.

Day 4 Gudhjem, Bornholm

Lying in the south-west of the Baltic Sea, the medieval village of Gudhjem, on the island of Bornholm, is one of the most visited and most popular villages in Denmark. As you stroll along its picturesque streets, you will fall under the spell of its varied landscapes, its easy way of life, and the authenticity of this charming town with half-timbered houses topped with red roofs, in the Danish tradition. It is here, along these charming streets, that the first herring smokehouses were built in the mid-19th century, attracting all the region's fishermen. Tucked away in a gorgeous natural setting composed of rocky cliffs, dense forests and beaches of white sand, Gudhjem will provide an



unforgettable interlude where time will seem to stand still.

In the very heart of the Baltic Sea, in the Ertholmene archipelago, the small island of Christiansoe - less than 0,5 km2 (barely 0,3 square miles) - awaits you. Thanks to its geographic form, which constitutes a natural harbour with the island of Frederiksø, it has been used as such for more than a thousand years. Pirates and fishermen succeeded one another here before the construction of its fortress, built between the 17th and 18th centuries, in the time of the Danish-Swedish wars. Visiting Christiansoe, you see the shaping of great history, the re-emergence of the rivalries and alliances that took place in the Baltic Sea. Today, this peaceful island offers you wild and preserved nature. A natural reserve since 1926, it is home in particular to a very large population of nesting and migrating birds that find food and tranquillity here.

Day 5 Gdansk

This ravishing city on the Baltic sea is nicknamed "the golden door of Poland", and you'll understand why when you see its beautiful Hanseatic architecture. You'll be charmed by the mouldings and gables that enhance the colourful façades of the houses. Along the Vistula Quays, you can take a pleasant stroll among the crafts shops. In elegant Mariacka street, the amber jewellers will most certainly tempt you into their boutiques. You can visit the church of Saint-Mary and its astronomic clock. Not far, the majestic Long Market square offers the famous Artus Court and the rich Gdansk History Museum.

Day 6 Visby, Gotland

This old Hanseatic city lies to the west coast of Gotland, a Swedish island in the Baltic sea. Pass through the spectacular Visby fortifications and visit the old town, a UNESCO World Heritage site. You'll discover the grand Visby homes of rich merchants as well as the lovely low wooden houses in the little cobbled streets. Don't miss Saint Mary's cathedral with its octagonal steeples, as well as Powder tower along the fortifications. Make sure you stop over in one of the rose-adorned cafes; indeed roses abound in this town where you can taste one of the island's specialities, namely saffron pancakes with red fruit.

Days 7 - 8 Stockholm

The capital of Sweden occupies an archipelago in the east of the country at the junction of Malar Lake and the Baltic sea. In Gamla stan, meaning "old town" in Swedish, you can stroll at your leisure in picturesque medieval streets until you reach the majestic Royal Palace. On the green island of Djurgarden, you can visit several very different kinds of cultural centres: the Vasa museum is dedicated to a 17th century three-mast, the ecomuseum of Skansen presents traditional customs, and the ABBA museum is dedicated to the legendary pop group. For a fantastic, all-encompassing view of Stockholm, you can take a ride in SkyView, a glass-encased sphere gondola that takes you to the top of the world's largest building, the Ericsson Globe, a Stockholm landmark.

Day 9 Saaremaa

Welcome to Estonia's largest island, Saaremaa, with its age-old history and mysterious charm. Located in the Baltic Sea, it closes off the Gulf of Riga. The episcopal castle, a medieval fortress and preserved witness of the rich history of the Baltic States, stands proudly in the island's capital, Kuressaare. The



island's soils and mild climate give it abundant and diverse nature, where forests, cliffs, dunes and beaches flourish, becoming a haven for thousands of migratory birds every year. The island offers many treasures, between wild nature, nature reserves, meteor craters and windmills.

Day 10 Tallinn

Opening onto the Baltic sea, to the far north of Estonia, the town of Tallin will win you over with the picturesque charm of its architecture. You can meander through its little streets in the heart of the medieval centre where its gothic town hall has been standing since 1404. The Kiek in de Kok tower, the Orthodox Alexander Nevski cathedral, or Toompea castle give visitors a taste of this town's rich past. The city was particularly active during the medieval period, as is demonstrated by the very beautiful monuments from this period that are still visible. Don't hesitate to lose yourself in the heart of Tallinn, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Day 11 Helsinki

Seated in the southern peninsula of Finland, Helsinki offers the buzz of a cosmopolitan city that has opted for both elegance and beauty. Explore its historical centre where the soft hues of neoclassical buildings are juxtaposed with spectacular modern constructions. The bustling Kallio district is teeming with boutiques and restaurants where you can taste some local specialities like graavilohi - a sweet, marinated, aromatic salmon dish. Keskuspuisto park, a stone's throw from the centre, is a good place to sit and unwind.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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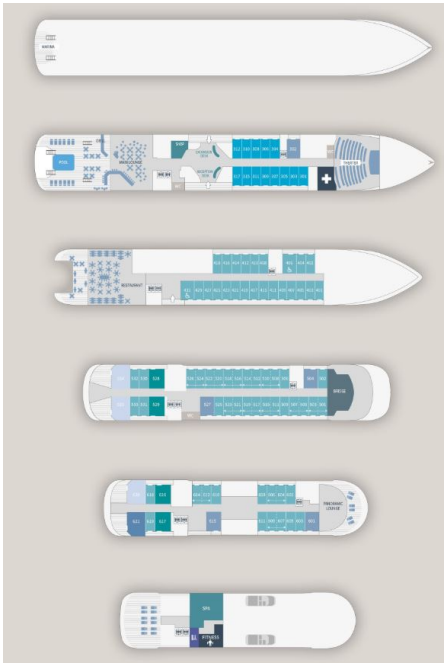
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