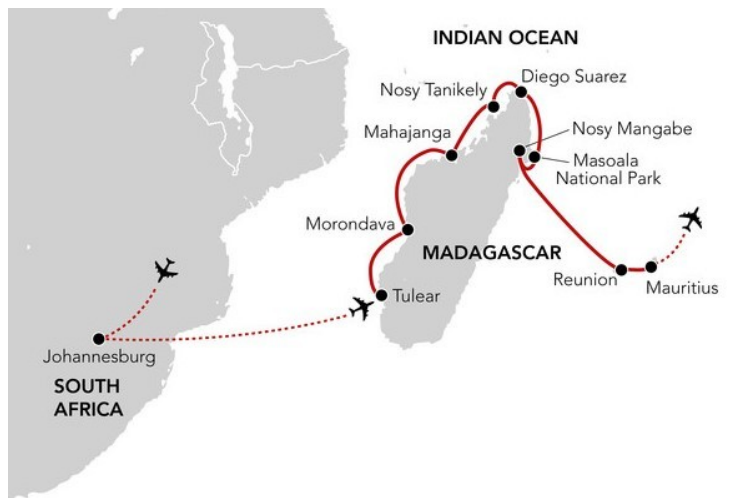




MARVELS OF MADAGASCAR - 14 DAY INDIAN OCEAN CRUISE

The term 'unique' is an often overused description in the travel world but certainly applies to the island of Madagascar. The animals, plants, landscapes and people that make up this thousand mile long island are unlike anywhere else in the world. This extraordinary country long remained obscure as a destination and is still relatively unknown amongst even the most serious of travellers. There is minimal infrastructure in many parts of the island and for those wishing to explore in some depth, doing so by small ship, especially one as well-suited as the MS Hebridean Sky is far preferable to exploring by any other means. Our unique ten night voyage focuses on the wonders of the island of Madagascar with opportunities to explore rainforests full of wildlife including lemurs, chameleons and indigenous birdlife as well as witnessing the underwater world and village life. Our days will be spent exploring ashore, often traversing over rugged terrain and walking through spectacular rainforests and each evening we will have the benefit of returning to our comfortable ship to relax and look forward to the next adventure. With the vessel's fleet of Zodiacs for forays ashore, allowing access to some wonderful places denied to larger ships, you can enjoy encounters with fabulous endemic wildlife in this immensely rich and timeless corner of the Indian Ocean. Our onboard experts will greatly enrich your experience and ensure that we make the most of our time on the world's "eighth continent".



ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Johannesburg, South Africa.
Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

Day 2 Johannesburg.

Arrive today and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day is at leisure before we meet for drinks and dinner.

Day 3 Johannesburg to Tulear, Madagascar.



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Return to the airport this morning to join our specially chartered flight to Tulear. Arrive this afternoon and transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky for embarkation. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail this evening.

Day 4 Morondava.

After a morning cruising we arrive during lunch at our anchorage off the town of Morondava. We will use the Zodiacs to land on the local beach from where we will visit the Avenue des Baobabs. Of the eight baobab species in the world, six are endemic to Madagascar and here we will see the *Adansonia grandidieri* species with a row of 20 to 25 trees which border the gravel road. We will learn about the trees and their spiritual significance before returning to Morondava and exploring the local market.

Day 5 At Sea.

Spend a leisurely day on board as we continue our journey around the Madagascan Coast.

Day 6 Mahajanga.

Mahajanga is a major port in northwest Madagascar situated on the Betsiboka River and is our base for a full day excursion to the Ankarafantsika National Park. This deciduous forest is a haven for birds, lemurs and reptiles and on a choice of walks, we will explore with our guides. Eight species of lemur have been observed here including the famous microcebus, the smallest primate in the world. Meanwhile over 120 species of birds nest here and we will keep an eye out for the Madagascan fish eagle and banded kestrel whilst the 44 species of reptile include chameleon, turtles and crocodiles that live in Lake Ravelobe. We will enjoy lunch in the park and in the afternoon there will be options to join further walks or watch for birdlife at

the nearby lake before returning to the MS Hebridean Sky.

Day 7 Nosy Tanikely.

We arrive mid-morning at the Nosy Tanikely Island Marine Reserve, an uninhabited island which offers snorkelling opportunities and wonderful beaches. We will take the opportunity to either swim in the clear waters or snorkel over the corals keeping an eye out for reef fish, turtles and morays. Alternatively our naturalists will lead guided walks on the island where we may see the resident lemurs, fruit bats and hermit crabs and enjoy fantastic views from the lighthouse on the island's highest point.

Day 8 Diego Suarez.

This morning we will enter dramatic Diego Suarez, a stunning natural harbour with a cosmopolitan mix of inhabitants including Creoles, Indians, Chinese, Comorans and Arabs. This morning choose from a city tour visiting the Commonwealth Cemetery and Place Joffre or a visit to the Malagasy rainforest at the Mount Amber National Park. Dividing into short and long walk parties we will go in search of lemurs and chameleons as we explore the rainforest. In the towering vegetation, we may spot several species of lemurs and chameleons as well as endemic birds, including parrots. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon cruising.

Days 9 & 10 Masoala National Park & Nosy Mangabe.

We will spend a day and a half exploring from our anchorage in Antongil Bay. We discover Nosy Mangabe, a 520-hectare island reserve and one of the most diverse areas of virgin rainforest in Madagascar which has also been an important research centre since the mid-1960s when several aye-ayes and lemurs were released into the forest. We will use our Zodiacs to land on the



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beach next to the forest and organise a series of nature walks looking at the varied trees, plants and ferns and we hope to spot chameleon, lizards and black and white ruffed lemur. For the birders, we will keep an eye out for Madagascar buzzard, kingfisher and paradise flycatchers. We will also explore Madagascar's largest protected area, the Masoala National Park, which comprises of coastal rainforest, flooded forests, marsh and mangroves. Mammal species encountered include the red-ruffed lemur, the red-fronted brown lemur and the ring-tailed mongoose. The park is also home to various species of brightly coloured Mantella frogs, all manner of extraordinary chameleons and is a refuge of the endangered Madagascar red-owl, Madagascar serpent eagle and many endemic bird species. A series of walks for all levels will operate whilst there will also be the option to swim off the beach or perhaps visit the local village.

Day 11 At Sea.

Enjoy the day at sea to relax and reflect on our Madagascan adventure as we sail to Reunion.

Day 12 Reunion.

We arrive at breakfast in Reunion where we have a choice of excursions. On a full day tour we will visit the central highlands where spectacularly rugged peaks of dormant or extinct volcanoes cradle huge amphitheatres known as cirques, where mountains tower to over 10,000 feet and beautiful waterfalls plummet hundreds of feet. The rich soil and mellow climate produce a lush and verdant landscape which is dotted with villages and towns with a uniquely French atmosphere. Fields of sugar cane and plantations of tropical fruits, vanilla and all manner of spices perfume the air. We will enjoy views from the Nez de Boeuf and see the Piton de la Fournaise crater. After

enjoying a creole lunch in a local restaurant we will visit the 'Cite du Volcan' museum. Alternatively enjoy a morning tour to a vanilla plantation in St Andre where we learn about the history and culture of this integral part of Reunion's heritage. Continue to Salazie, a verdant landscape and home to many waterfalls including the 'Voile de la Mariee' before spending some free time in St Denis on the way back to the ship. This afternoon is at leisure before we set sail this evening.

Day 13 Mauritius to London.

Disembark this morning and enjoy a morning tour of Mauritius including the Trou-aux-Cerfs volcano, the Grand Bassin Lake and Black River Gorges. After lunch we transfer to the airport for our scheduled indirect flight to London.

Day 14 London.

Arrive this morning.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

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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.

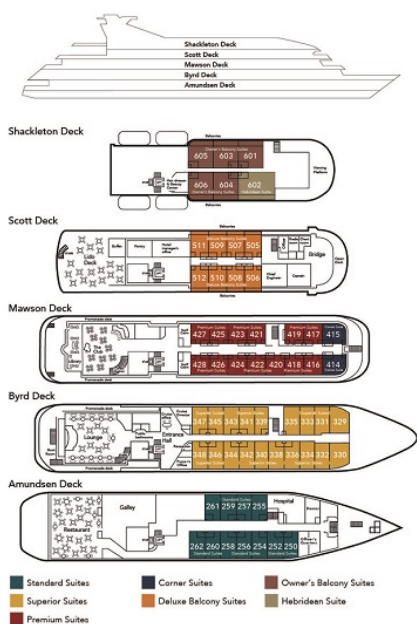
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