


# MEDITERRANEAN WONDERS: SICILY, GREECE, SARDINIA CRUISE AND BEYOND

On this special voyage featuring wine selections curated by Food & Wine magazine experts, experience exclusive culinary excursions and world-renowned delicacies as we explore a vast swath of the Mediterranean--from Spain and Sardinia to Corsica and Greece. Walk amid pre-historic standing stones on the isle of Menorca, swim in the azure waters of Kefalonia, and discover the UNESCO World Heritage site of Delphi, the center of the ancient Greek world. Aboard the nimble National Geographic Orion, navigate places out of reach to other ships, like the narrow Corinth Canal, and enjoy insights from our onboard wine expert, who guides us through nightly tastings of wines personally selected by Food & Wine magazine's Executive Wine Editor, Ray Isle.




## ITINERARY

Day 1 Athens, Greece / Lavrio / Embark Ship

Arrive in Athens and transfer to the hospitality suite. Explore the city at your own pace. Then transfer to Lavrio and embark _National Geographic Orion_ in the late afternoon to set a course west for the Corinth Canal. Or explore more on a pre-voyage extension in Athens.

**Arrival time:** Arrive before 1:30 p.m. local time.
**Arrival City:** Athens, Greece

Day 2 Corinth Canal / Delphi




Navigate the historic Corinth Canal, slipping between the 300-foot limestone walls that tower above both sides of the vessel. Built in the late 19th century, the canal is too small for most modern-day ships, but _National Geographic Orion_ is perfectly sized for the transit to the Gulf of Corinth and Ionian Sea.

Later, visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Delphi, the center of the ancient Greek world. The ruins here are home to the Temple of Apollo--Greece's most important shrine--where the Oracle of Delphi delivered divine prophecies. Learn about the city's storied past and explore the temple and other important sites.

### Day 3 Kefalonia

Start the day with an early morning hike in Kefalonia. Later this morning visit the natural marvels of Melissani Lake and Drogarati cave. Enjoy lunch onboard before transferring overland to a nearby beach for a sun-filled afternoon. Soak in the vivid blue waters--a true photographer's delight. Stroll along the shoreline, or swim, kayak or paddleboard in the beautiful sea (weather permitting).

### Day 4 Corfu

Known for its strong cultural heritage, Corfu is home to many of the country's firsts: the first university, theatre and opera. Learn about the island's history, including its triumphant defense against the Ottoman empire, and spend time around Spianada, the old city's main square--and the largest one in Greece--built in the 16th and 17th centuries by the Venetians. Discover the island's most iconic landmarks and signs of foreign influences. Or meander through the old town's charming city streets tasting local delicacies such as kumquats and olive oil. Alternatively, spend the day taking in the stunning landscapes of Greece's greenest island exploring the countryside and mountain trails.

### Day 5-6 At Sea / Siracusa, Italy

Spend the following day at sea, relaxing aboard _National Geographic Orion_ as she makes her way toward Italy.

Head ashore at Siracusa, one of the most powerful cities in the classical world. Explore the archaeological park where a well-preserved Greek amphitheater with carved limestone seats is still used today. Paradise Quarry, now an attractive garden and orange grove, was the primary source of that limestone, and is the site of the curious Ear of Dionysius--a huge cave with incredible acoustics. Make the most of your time in port: explore the city's excellent market or join a walking tour of the adjacent island of Ortigia, where a stunning cathedral was built on the columns of the 6th-century Temple of Athena.

### Day 7 Taormina, Sicily

This morning, drive up to the beautiful town of Taormina, perched 250 meters above the sea. With Mount Etna dominating to the south, this medieval town boasts the pedestrian-friendly Corso Umberto, lined with exquisite buildings and one of the world's most interesting cultural sites: the Greco-Roman Theater. This remarkable theater was built right into the cliffside, overlooking the vast sea below, in the third century B.C. Enjoy lunch at a nineteenth-century estate at the foot of Monte Serra in Viagrande.

### Day 8 At Sea / Aeolian Islands

Enjoy the day at sea as you sail toward the Aeolian Islands--not only famous for the winds of the god Aeolus, but also for some of the most well-known classical volcanoes. With a bit of luck,




you will witness the pyrotechnics of the active volcanic island of Stromboli. Pass through the narrow Strait of Messina overnight, the purported location of Homer's monsters Scylla and Charybdis: the rock and the hard place through which Odysseus had to sail.

### Day 9 Golfo Aranci, Sardinia

Step ashore on Sardinia's east coast, known for its stunning and remote landscapes, including grottos and mountain peaks. Populated since pre-historic times, the landscape is dotted with Roman village ruins and monasteries from the Middle Ages. Venture into the mountains to visit the archeological discoveries, including tombs and village remains or spend the morning in San Pantaleo, visiting local artisan shops that showcase the handicrafts of painters, goldsmiths, sculptors and potters.

### Day 10-11 Bonifacio, Corsica, France / At Sea

Wake up to the sunrise over the layered cliffs of Bonifacio, one of the Mediterranean's most beautiful towns. Begin your day with a walking orientation to the citadel, established by the powerful margraves of Tuscany in the ninth century, and enjoy a hike or travel to a charming mountain village. In the afternoon, enjoy some time relaxing onboard or exploring at your own pace. Later, enjoy a musical performance at a majestic church in town.

The following day is spent at sea: listen to talks by your onboard experts, get photo tips from a National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions certified photo instructor or spend some time on the bridge with officers who are happy to answer questions. A massage from the wellness specialist is another inviting option, or relax with a book in the observation lounge.

### Day 12 Ciutadella de Menorca, Spain

The Vandals, the Moors and the British Empire have ruled over this stunning little island where prehistoric civilizations left intriguing rock mounds and megalithic monuments dating back some 4,000 years. Walk through the Bronze Age village of Torralba d'en Salord and see the characteristic T-shaped stone monuments left by the Talayotic peoples. This evening, set a course west toward Barcelona.

### Day 13 Barcelona / Disembark Ship

Disembark in Barcelona and transfer to the airport for flights home.

**Departure Time:** Depart after 12:00 p.m. local time.
**Departure City:** Barcelona, Spain

### Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.




# YOUR SHIP: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION

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|---|---|
| **YOUR SHIP:** | **National Geographic Orion** |
| **VESSEL TYPE:** | **Luxury Expedition** |
| **LENGTH:** | **103 metres** |
| **PASSENGER CAPACITY:** | **102 (in 53 cabins)** |
| **BUILT/REFURBISHED:** | **2003 / Refurbished 2014** |

Engineered for maximum comfort and safety, _Orion_ is equipped with the latest technology including large retractable stabilizers, sonar, radar, and an ice-strengthened hull. A shallow draft plus bow and stern thrusters provide the convenience of being able to maneuver close to shore. 14 Zodiacs ensure quick disembarkation and offer the ideal transport for up-close exploration. _National Geographic Orion_ meets strict specifications for environmental protection and the on board waste management systems meet the stringent Antarctic operational standards enabling us to travel to the most pristine environments. A host of advanced design features and technology ensures sustainable marine environmental practices. _National Geographic Orion_ accommodates 102 guests in 53 cabins, including several with balconies. She is spacious and modern, with a variety of public rooms that offer panoramic views of the passing landscape. Friendly and informal, _Orion_ fosters a welcoming atmosphere where like-minded guests share in exceptional experiences and enrichment. Her public rooms include a dramatic window-lined main lounge, as well as an observation lounge and library perched at the very top of the ship, with plentiful observation decks. The spacious lounge is the heart of our expedition community, and is suited for spirited cocktail hours, informative presentations and our nightly tradition of Recap. In addition, a dedicated theater provides a unique setting for specialist presentations or films and slideshows. Both the main dining room and outside buffet easily accommodate all guests at once for open seating dining. On selected nights, weather permitting, our dining room menu is also available on the outside deck. While _Orion_ interiors are elegant, life aboard is always casual, with no need for formal clothing. And you'll find shipboard services like laundry, in-room cabled internet, and public-area wifi make packing and traveling more






convenient.

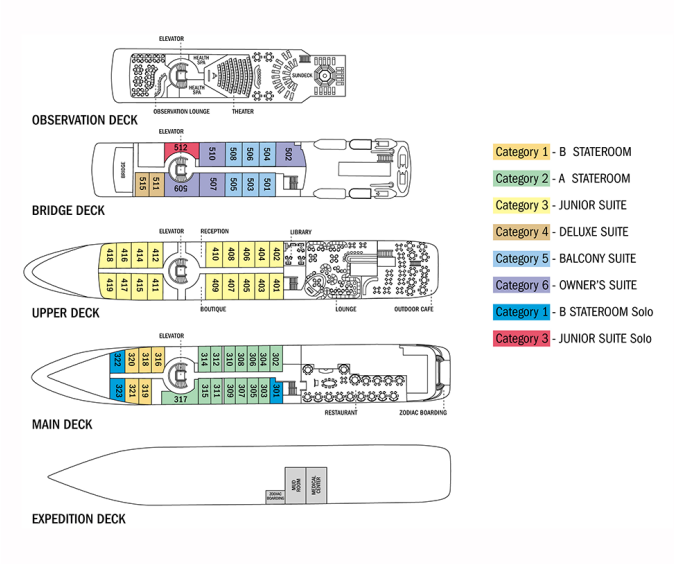
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