

MIDSUMMER IN THE SCOTTISH ISLANDS CRUISE

Join us aboard the MS Hebridean Sky for this wonderful journey around Scotland's magnificent coastline, an indented landscape of enormous natural splendour with offshore islands forming stepping stones into the Atlantic. If you have always had a hankering to visit some of the remotest and most inaccessible islands in Scotland, this is the ideal opportunity. Few cruise ships offer the chance to explore in-depth the islands off the northern coast of Scotland and our itinerary ventures far north to the Orkney and Shetland Islands as well as the magical Hebridean islands. We will visit both inhabited and uninhabited islands and places of great natural beauty rich in birdlife, wildlife and mystical history, many with a long history dating back to the Iron Age. 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. With 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. There is no better way to explore this endlessly fascinating and beautiful region that will cast its spell on you than by small ship. With just over 100 travelling companions, the atmosphere on board is more akin to a private yacht trip and ashore, with our local experts 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. Our expedition is timed for the northern summer when the sun barely shrinks below the horizon and the enchanted visitor will be moved and seduced by the majesty of the islands, lochs and seascapes. This is not a 'traditional' cruise but a thought provoking, island hopping voyage of discovery for those who wish to see and learn more about the natural world and the culture of remote communities. The opportunity to combine the small communities of Fair Isle, Fetlar and Unst with the uninhabited St Kilda into one itinerary is rare, and with visits to the spiritual isle of Iona, the charming town of Tobermory and the Shetland capital of Lerwick, such a journey allows us to understand the history, experience the culture and witness the wildlife and astonishing beauty of



the islands.



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 Iona & Ulva.

Overnight we have sailed 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. During lunch we will sail over to Ulva. At only five miles long and two miles wide, it 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 afternoon exploring this tranquil island steeped in history and rich in wildlife.

Day 3 Staffa & Tobermory.

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. We will sail over lunch to 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 4 Canna & Loch Scavaig.

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 cross to the lovely Loch Scavaig on the island of Skye. Just beyond is the freshwater Loch Corruisk with its breathtakingly beautiful view over the Cuillins. This is great walking country and our expedition team will run a series of hikes for all interests. For those who prefer a less energetic afternoon our Zodiacs will explore the coast looking out for seals.

Day 5 St Kilda & Stac Lee.

Mid-morning 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. We then continue to 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.

Day 6 North Ronaldsay, Orkney Islands.

Enjoy a leisurely morning on board as we cruise to the Orkney Islands arriving in the early afternoon at the northernmost isle of North Ronaldsay. The birdlife here is prolific as the wetland habitats support the wildfowl and wader species whilst the rugged coastline provides nesting sites for seabird colonies. If weather conditions permit, a series of walks will include the bird observatory and we also hope to view the seals hauled up on the beaches. Those wishing to explore further can visit the lighthouse with views over the nearby islands or the wool mill where yarn is produced from the island's seaweed eating sheep.

Day 7 Foula & Papa Stour, Shetland Islands.

This morning we visit Foula, one of Britain's most remote inhabited islands. Apart from a narrow coastal strip of fertile croftland, Foula is an expanse of peat and moorland rising steeply to five dramatic peaks. Translated as 'Bird Island' from Old Norse the island is designated as a Special Protection Area for Birds and is home to the world's largest colony of great skuas, known locally as bonxies, which compete fiercely with Arctic skuas for breeding territories. Kittiwakes and Arctic terns return annually to nest whilst the cliffs teem with puffins, shags and fulmars. Over lunch we will sail the short distance to Papa Stour where we will use our Zodiacs to explore the stunning cliff scenery, sea stacks, arches, blowholes and coastal caves which are home to Arctic skua and large numbers of Arctic terns.

Day 8 Unst & Fetlar.

Spend the morning in Unst, Britain's most northerly inhabited island. At the Heritage Centre we will learn about the islanders' struggles over the centuries and the industries that have prospered whilst the Unst Boat Haven is dedicated to the history of the island's distinctive wooden boats which descend from Viking craft. We also visit Saxa Vord with views over Hermaness National Nature Reserve and Muckle Flugga stacks, home to thousands of gannets and puffins as well as rare Arctic alpine plants. Later we will sail to Fetlar which has been inhabited for over 5000 years and lays claim to being the first Norse landing site in the Shetlands. Known as the most fertile of the Shetland Islands, the wildflowers bring colour to the landscape whilst the birdlife on the island is prolific. Our expedition team will lead walks ashore including the Fetlar Interpretative Centre and Museum where we will learn about the wildlife and archaeological history of the island.

Day 9 Lerwick.

From the Shetland capital, we will visit the remarkable archaeological site of Jarlshof. The site was uncovered by a violent storm in the winter of 1896/7, revealing an extraordinary settlement site embracing at least 5000 years of human history. The site contains a remarkable sequence of stone structures - late Neolithic houses, a Bronze-Age village, an Iron-Age broch and wheelhouses, several Norse longhouses, a Medieval farmstead and the 16th century laird's house. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy a free afternoon exploring this historic port. Perhaps wander through its narrow stone lanes or maybe visit the excellent Shetland Museum, containing artefacts from shipwrecks and the whaling era. Tonight, we will enjoy the company of local musicians on board.



Day 10 Fair Isle.

This morning we anchor off the remote island of Fair Isle. Located midway between the Shetland and Orkney Islands, the tiny population of sixty or so islanders always extend us a warm welcome. Enjoy a walk across the island searching out the puffin slopes, visit the community hall for a cup of tea or maybe purchase some of the famous knitwear. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at sea as we return to the Scottish mainland.

Day 11 Aberdeen.

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

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

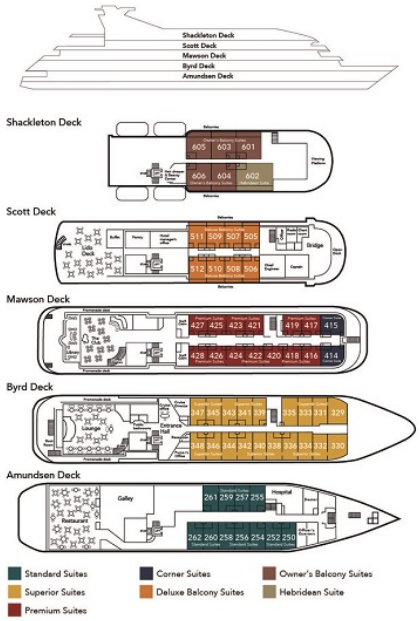
Hebridean Sky has always been known for its effortless elegance, impeccable service and atmosphere of charm and camaraderie. Now we add increased adventure options and an on-site Passenger Service Representative. Hebridean Sky is the perfect blend of luxury and adventurous exploration. Is it a luxury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



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

21-Jun-2027 to 01-Jul-2027

Amundsen Deck Standard Sole	£8795 GBP pp
Shackleton Deck Owner's Balcony Suite	£9095 GBP pp
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