


# MIDSUMMER IN THE SCOTTISH ISLANDS AND NORWEGIAN FJORDS

Norway is, by anyone's standards, one of Europe's most beautiful and awe-inspiring countries. Its unhampered landscape and pristine wilderness promises to delight those with a love for the natural world. Join us as we voyage along the western coast of this remarkable country which is punctuated by seemingly endless beaches, bustling coastal towns, fjords of cinematic grandeur and thriving fishing communities. Our summer voyage sets sail from Oban on Scotland's west coast and before we reach the wonderous landscapes of Norway we have the added advantage of spending time on remote and idyllic St Kilda and visiting the ancient ruins on the Orkney Islands and the Shetland capital, Lerwick. We have been operating cruises to Norway and the Scottish Islands for many years and know this to be an itinerary that is perfectly suited to small ship cruising especially aboard a vessel with the self-sufficient qualities of the Sea Explorer. With our fleet of Zodiacs we are able to make calls into some of the remote and uninhabited islands that surround the Scottish coast, land on remote beaches and cruise close to shorelines and cliffs crowded with birdlife. Keeping a flexible schedule, our experienced Captain and Expedition Team are able to make the most of each day based on the weather and wildlife sightings.




## ITINERARY

Day 1 - OBAN, SCOTLAND.

Embark the Sea Explorer this afternoon and sail this evening. A transfer will be available from Glasgow Central Station and Glasgow Airport at a fixed time.

Day 2 - ST KILDA.

Arrive at first light in St Kilda, a remarkable uninhabited archipelago some fifty miles beyond the Outer Hebrides. The




largest island, Hirta, once supported a population of over 200, but the last islanders left in the 1930s. The Medieval village has been restored by the National Trust for Scotland and offers a marvellous link with the past. The islands are an important breeding ground for many seabirds including Atlantic puffins and northern fulmars. Later, cruise past two of the largest gannetries in the world at Stac Lee, Stac an Armin and Boreray.

### Day 3 - ORKNEY.

After a morning at sea we arrive at the Orkney capital of Kirkwall from where we will head into the west of Mainland, Orkney's largest island. We will pass through gentle rolling landscape and into the Neolithic Heartland of Orkney; an area designated as a World Heritage Site due to its wealth of pre-historic archaeology. We will see the Standing Stones of Stenness, the Ring of Brodgar; a huge ceremonial circle of stones dating back almost 5000 years. We continue to the 5000-year-old village of Skara Brae and see the remarkable dwellings revealed from beneath the sand dunes by storms only 150 years ago. Time permitting we will also visit Birsay, the ancient centre of Viking power and explore St Magnus Church which dates back over 900 years.

### Day 4 - LERWICK.

After breakfast, discover the Shetland capital and begin your exploration of this historic port with a tour that wanders through its narrow stone lanes. We will visit the excellent Shetland Museum, containing historical artefacts from the Neolithic period, Viking memorabilia through to the whaling era. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at sea as we cross to Norway. Maybe join a lecture or relax in the lounge.

### Day 5 - HARDANGERFJORD & ROSENDAL, NORWAY.

Our first call in Norway is Hardangerfjord, the third largest fjord in the world, where we dock at Rosendal. We will drive along the fjord towards the small part of the Hardangerfjord called Maurangerfjord, experiencing the idyllic scenery and farms on the way and viewing the magnificent Langfoss waterfall. When we arrive at the small village of Sunndal we will walk to Bondhus Lake which is surrounded by a fascinating landscape of fjords and mountains. After lunch onboard we have free time to explore the town, maybe visit the 12th century Kvinnherad church or see the gardens at Barony Rosendal.

### Day 6 - SOGNEFJORDEN & NAEROFJORDEN.

We spend the day enjoying spectacular fjord scenery from aboard the Sea Explorer. Sognefjorden, Norway's longest and deepest fjord extends more than 200 kilometres inland and is surrounded by three national parks. Here we will see thundering waterfalls, glacier arms stretching down into green valleys and many small farms clinging to the mountainside. We will continue to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Naerofjorden, one of the many fjord arms of Sognefjord and considered one of the most dramatic. If time and weather permits we will drop the Zodiacs to find a suitable landing to explore. This evening we will moor at the village of Flam.

### Day 7 - FLAM.

This morning we will embark on one of the most dramatic train rides in Europe. The Flam Railway is only 20 kilometres long but a masterpiece of engineering. The train climbs up from sea-level to 867 metres during these 20 kilometres, crossing back and forth across rivers and through 20 tunnels. To allow you to view the magnificent scenery the train will proceed slowly and even stop at the Kjosfossen waterfall where you may leave the train to take a closer look or take some pictures. At Vatnahalsen you will




leave the train and walk from the station to the Mountain Hotel. Here there will be time to relax and take a walk before re-boarding the train back to Flam. After lunch onboard the afternoon is free to spend time relaxing in the village before we sail back along the scenic fjords this evening. With the long evenings this is a perfect time to relax on deck after dinner and watch the world go by.

### Day 8 - SUNNFJORD & BYGSTAD.

Sunnfjord lies at the heart of western Norway with its starkly contrasting fjord scenery, half way between Bergen and Alesund. Its little known fjord arms and gentler landscape in harmony with powerful and diverse watercourses have left their impression on the landscape and settlement. Today's tour will take us through this beautiful environment with its magnificent waterfalls and mountains. We will visit Sunnfjord Museum, which provides an insight into how life was in Sunnfjord settlements in the mid-1800s, before taking a scenic drive to the region known as 'the waterfall country' making various stops at waterfalls and small settlements.

### Day 9 - OLDEN & NORDFJORD.

From our anchorage at the village of Olden we travel up the beautiful Olden Valley. Where the road ends we continue on foot to the great cascade of water, which rushes from beneath the Briksdal Glacier. Returning to the ship for lunch we enjoy an afternoon cruising the scenic Nordfjord. Here we find the very essence of the fjord country, with many side fjords, waterfalls and lakes.

### Day 10 - RUNDE & ALESUND.

Be on deck early this morning as we cruise by the bird cliffs at Runde one of the largest nesting cliffs in Norway and home to half a million birds. More than 240 different species have been observed here including puffins, gannets, razorbills and Northern Fulmar. We continue to Alesund recently voted the most beautiful town in Norway. It is a great place to spend a morning exploring the streets with their art nouveau buildings or the more active enjoy a walk up Mount Askla taking the 418 steps for magnificent views of the town, islands and Sunnmore Alps. Return to the ship for lunch as we continue our journey north.

### Day 11 - TORGHATTEN, BRONNOYSUND & SVARTISSEN.

This morning Mount Torghatten will come into view, one of the most famous landmarks on the Norwegian coast. A fairly strenuous walk will take you to the 'hole' in the mountain which has been eroded by the sea. For those wishing to have a more relaxing morning our naturalists with lead some gentler walks along the water's edge. During lunch we will sail through Bronnoysund and later this afternoon we cross the Arctic Circle by the island of Vikingen where we will see the monument and raise a glass on deck to celebrate. In the early evening we arrive at Svartissen where we will enjoy an after dinner walk to the view the impressive Svartissen glacier in the midnght sun.

### Day 12 - LOFOTEN ISLANDS & TROLLFJORDEN.

Our final call will be one of the most spectacular as we arrive in the Lofoten Archipelago, an enchanting area of picturesque villages with jagged granite mountain peaks forming a dramatic backdrop. We will have a full day tour to explore the village and life of these islands. We will disembark in the small fishing village of Aa where we will visit the local museum before continuing to the nearby village of Reine. Our next stop will be the village of Sund where we will visit the blacksmith famous for their forged cormorants. We continue to the Viking centre at Borg where we enjoy a local lunch before continuing to Kabelva




where we visit the Lofoten Museum and Kare Espolin Johnson gallery a nationally recognised artist who took his inspiration from his life and the nature of the area. Our day ends in Svolvaer to where the ship will have sailed to meet us. Be on deck this evening as we sail through the beautiful, narrow and steep sided Trollfjorden enjoying the birdlife, waterfalls and dramatic scenery.

Day 13 - TROMSO TO LONDON.

Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for your scheduled flight to London via Oslo.




# YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

**YOUR SHIP:** **Hebridean Sky**

**VESSEL TYPE:**

**LENGTH:**

**PASSENGER CAPACITY:**

**BUILT/REFURBISHED:**

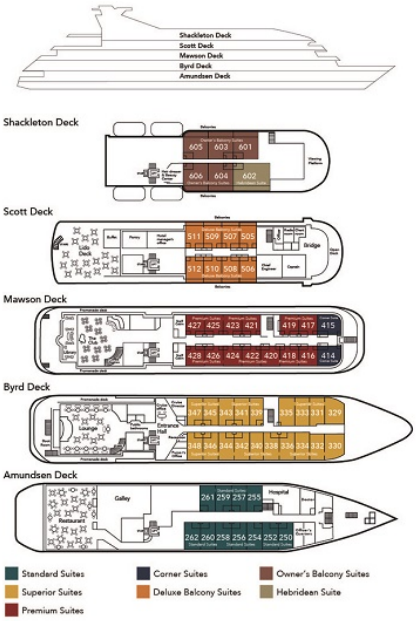
Hebridean Sky has always been known for its effortless elegance, impeccable service and atmosphere of charm and camaraderie. Now we add increased adventure options and an on-site Passenger Service Representative. Hebridean Sky is the perfect blend of luxury and adventurous exploration. Is it a luxury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




The Small Cruise
Ship Collection
www.small-cruise-ships.com
small-cruise-ships.com
info@small-cruise-ships.com

# PRICING