

THE NORDIC NATIONS: NORWAY, SWEDEN, DENMARK & FINLAND

Discover the joys of a Scandinavian summer and embrace the unique character of the region. Hike and kayak Swedens Weather Islands, stroll through colorful fishing hamlets of Finnish islands, and meander through medieval streetsvestiges of the once great Hanseatic League. Discover the cosmopolitan gems of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Oslo, with a behind-the-scenes visit to Oslos new Opera House. Explore the outlying islands of the Baltics and see medieval fortifications and trading towns, chase down a traditional herring meal with an ice-cold Danish beer. Discover the musical traditions of each culture you encounter An ethnomusicologist on your expedition team helps bring a unique perspective on Europe's traditions and cultural diversity. Our musicologist Jacob Edgar has curated a set of exclusive performances and special concerts. On this voyage, youll enjoy a Norwegian folk revival performance at a special outdoor seafood luncheon on Stangholmen skerry, and a private concert on Gotland Island by Vasen, a Swedish folk group. An onboard concierge for personal exploration Combining the best of independent travel with the gracious and effortless benefits of shipboard travel, our concierge provides assistance with daily choices to suit your individual interests: active, cultural, or mode sedentary options, and with special arrangements, off-ship dining and more. Get the most out of your time in Europe with personal outing tailored to specific interests. Travel in excellent company Explore under the sure guidance of an expedition leader, an assistant expedition leader, a mix of historians, naturalists, archaeologists, an ethnomusicologist, an onboard concierge, a National Geographic photographer plus a National Geographic certified photo instructor, and a wellness specialist. Their knowledge and passion is the key to your incredible

experience.

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DAY 1: Bergen, Norway/Embark

Our first port of call is the lovely city of Bergen, perched on a fjord and ringed by seven hills. After embarking the National Geographic Orion and having lunch onboard, take a guided city walk to explore the city a bit before sailing to one of Norway's most spectacular fjords.(B)

DAY 2: Hardangerfjorden

Awaken this morning in the heart of Norway's western fjordlands, considered one of Europe's greatest natural attractions. Deep in the Hardangerfjordenthe fourth-longest fjord in the worldcruise beneath staggering cliffs, snow-dusted mountains, and rolling valleys dotted with tiny settlements. From our quiet anchorage, head out with our naturalists to explore the area on a variety of Zodiac, kayak, and hiking excursions. (B,L,D)

DAY 3: Hidra Island

Enjoy a leisurely morning at sea as we sail along Norway's southern fjords Arrive on the shores of Flekkefjorden, and go for a afternoon hike on Hidraa lush island steeped in a rich maritime history dating back to before the Vikings. Visit the World War II-era Hagasan Fort, stroll past quaint wooden houses, and cruise in a Zodiac through the scenic channel that



splits the island in two. (B,L,D)

DAY 4: Risr

Sail back down the Oslofjorden and anchor outside the attractive coastal town of Risr to experience the "town of wooden houses," protected on Norway's heritage list. Risr has not only preserved its old wooden buildings, but it has also taken care of the archipelago. Zodiacs ferry us over to Stangholmen skerry for a walk to the lighthouseand perhaps a unique experience kayaking near one of the "potholes" or small lagoons. (B,L,D) Enjoy a relaxing outdoor seafood lunch on Stangholmen, with a Norwegian folk revival musical performance.

DAY 5: Oslo

Cruise up the epic Oslofjorden to discover the delights of Norway's cosmopolitan capital. Visit the Fram Museum and learn about the early Norwegian polar expeditions, or take a private, backstage tour of Oslo's newest landmark, the Opera House, with its white sloping marble roof which rises directly from the fjord. Spend the afternoon with our team and a National Geographic photographer at Vigeland Park, training your lens on more than two hundred life-size human figures by native sculptor Gustav Vigeland. (B,L,D) For further insight into the Norwegian consciousness, hear a talk from Thor Heyerdahl, Jr. the son of the Norwegian explorer and ethnographer of the same name. And since food is at the core of any culture, opt to join a cooking class at the Mathallen Gourmet Food Market to learn to cook Norwegian style.

DAY 6: Weather Islands, Sweden

Journey across the Skagerrak Strait to Sweden's westernmost archipelago: the Vaderoarna, or Weather Islands. This seascape of rugged islets, skerries, and picture-perfect villages boasts some of the most stunning scenery in Scandinavia. Set out by kayak or Zodiac to encounter seal colonies and an array of seabirds. Dock at Grebbestad where you can bike or we will drive you to the evocative Bronze Age rock carvings in Tanum, a UNESCO World Heritage site. (B,L,D) Summer in Sweden is a special time, so we've arranged a traditional Swedish dinner on shore to savor the long hours of daylight.

DAY 7: Skagen, Denmark

Dotted with yellow and red clapboard houses, Skagen is perched along windswept dunes at the northern tip of Denmark. Explore this charming fishing village, and delve into the history of the Skagen Paintersa community of Scandinavian artists who settled here beginning in the late 19th century, drawn by the towns magnificent landscapes and remarkable light. Discover rich birdlife with our naturalists, or bike along the peninsula's white beaches. Cap off the day with a taste of the famous "Skagen Sild," a special herring dish that can only be enjoyed with a cold Danish beer. (B,L,D) Skagen is perfect for a cycling jaunt. Grab a bike and head out along the beaches.

DAY 8: Copenhagen

Today we arrive in Denmarks capital. The fairytale feel of the city where Hans Christian Andersen wrote is the home of incredible stories and a long history. Our local experts will take you on a guided walk through 6000 years of Copenhagens history, ending in the city center near the Town Hall and famed Tivoli. Youll have time to explore on your own before heading to the ship for lunch. One of the most enjoyable ways to see this old maritime city is from a boat sailing on its charming canals, and this afternoon we have a water-level view of the citys landmarks, palaces and, of course, The Little Mermaid statue. (B,L,D)



DAY 9: Christians

Zodiacs take us to the almost uninhabited island of Christians, where Danish fortifications date from 1684. Explore the craggy shores and lighthousethe first in Denmark Christians, and just one type of mammal, the hedgehog. Look for eider ducks, razorbills, and more nested on the small island of Grsholmen, a bird sanctuary. (B,L,D)

DAY 10: Visby, Gotland, Sweden

Spend the day exploring Visby, one of the best-preserved medieval towns in Scandinavia. Founded as a Viking settlement, the town became a center of the Hanseatic trade in the 12th to 14th centuries. Stroll the cobblestone streets of the enchanting old town and walk along its nearly two-mile-long, 13th-century wall. Ride a bike through town or along the many bike paths across the island of Gotland. This evening join us for a special night on Gotland with a Swedish dinner and a private concert by Swedish folk music group, Vasen. (B,L,D) Extremely picturesque, Visby is perfect for a guided photo walk through medieval neighborhoods capped off with a visit to the Gotland Museum.

DAY 11: Stockholm Archipelago

Anchor near the small island of Uto and explore its quiet coves by kayak. Or, take a Zodiac to the island to walk through Utos nature preserve. Keep your camera handy as we maneuver through the scenic Stockholm Archipelago to dock in the heart of Stockholm, the city built on 14 islands. (B,L,D) Youll arrive in Stockholm like no one else: via Zodiac through the lush greenery of the Djurgarden Canal.

DAY 12: Stockholm

The great Scandinavian maritime capital of Stockholm provides some favorite experiences: view the royal Vasa warship (which capsized in Stockholm harbor in 1628 and was salvaged and restored 350 years later.) Take a walking tour of Old Town Gamla Stan, or learn about Swedens living history at the Skansen open-air museum. This afternoon enjoy time on your own or take a tasting tour of Swedish sweets in the Gamla Stan. We stay docked overnight so you can enjoy this magical Scandinavian city. (B,L,D) Take a rooftop walk across the Old Town. Yes, opt to buckle up in your safety harness and step along the narrow rooftop path that only we will follow. Youll be stunned by the fantastic views and the fascinating stories that your guide will narrate.

DAY 13: Mariehamn, Aland, Finland

Sail to the Aland Islands, an autonomous, Swedish-speaking, Finnish territory. In Mariehamn, the capital, visit the four-masted merchant sailing ship Pommern, and visit the Aland Maritime Museum, or bicycle out into the countryside. Tonight we have a special tasting ashore while we hear traditional sea shanties from the Age of Sail. (B,L,D)

DAY 14: Turku

Visit Turku, the oldest city in Finland. Explore Turku Castle, the Luostarinmaki Handicrafts Museum, or the artwork and underground ruins at Aboa Vetus and Ars Nova museum. This afternoon cruise via Zodiac to a small island for nature hikes and a relaxing swim. (B,L,D) Experience an authentic Finnish sauna in the good ol outdoors. Take a sauna or a swim in the waters of one of the many islands in Turkus Archipelago.

DAY 15: Tallinn, Estonia/Disembark

Disembark today for flights home or remain for an added stay in our centrally-located hotel in Tallinn. (B)



Please Note:

All day-by-day breakdowns are a sampling of the places we intend to visit, conditions permitting.



YOUR SHIP: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION

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.

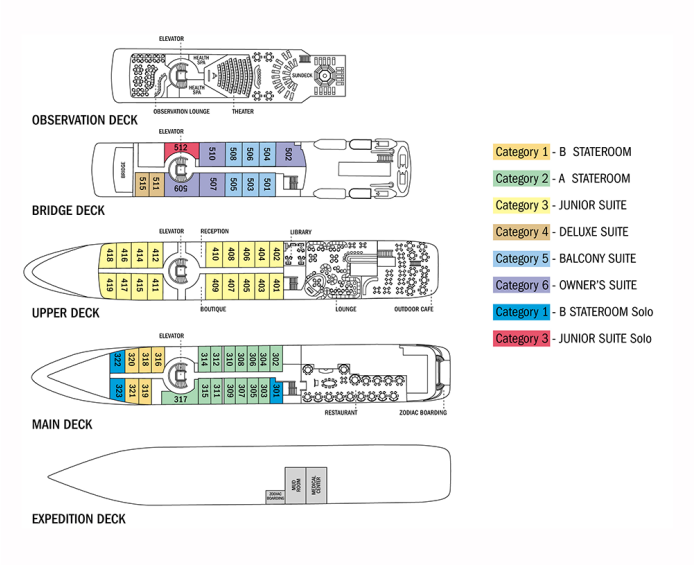
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