



## The Small Cruise Ship Collection

[www.small-cruise-ships.com](http://www.small-cruise-ships.com)

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## THE ORKNEY AND SHETLAND ISLANDS

The Orkney and Shetland Islands offer their visitors spectacular nature, remarkable bird life and fascinating history. For the collector of remote islands this is a unique opportunity to reach several exciting islands such as Fair Isle, Out Skerries or Papa Stour. Walk up Meall Mor, the highest point on the Tanera Mor island to be rewarded with a magnificent view. Find the ruins from a stone house called Taigh Beannaichte (Blessed House) Travel to the 5 000-year-old village of Skara Brae and see the remarkable dwellings that were revealed from beneath the sand dunes by storms only 160 years ago See the Ring of Brodgar a huge ceremonial circle of stones dating back almost 5 000 years Explore in the hanseatic city of Bergen, surrounded by high mountains and deep fjords

### Day 1: Glasgow

We arrive in Glasgow and spend a night at a comfortable and centrally located hotel.

### Day 2: Oban

After lunch we travel together to Oban and board M/S Stockholm in the afternoon. After settled into our cabins we set course north the expedition has started!

### Days 3-9: Expedition cruising

We are now on an expedition and our exact itinerary will depend on weather and wind conditions. These are places we hope to visit:

#### \*\*Summer Isles & Handa

\*\* We sail towards the Summer Isles and go ashore on the largest and the only inhabited island of the archipelago Tanera Mor. Those who walk up Meall Mor, the highest point on the island, will be rewarded with a magnificent view. We also visit the little post office that has issued its own postage stamps since 1970. Later, we reach the small island Handa. During the summer season the islands dramatic sandstone cliffs become home to an estimated 100 000 breeding seabirds such as puffins, razorbills and guillemots.

#### \*\*Sula Sgeir

\*\* The uninhabited and remote Island of Sula Sgeir is located in the midst of the sea and is known for its bustling birdlife. Here, you also find the ruins from a stone house called Taigh Beannaichte (Blessed House). If the sea is calm we might also

## ITINERARY

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get a chance to explore some of the caves along the coast.

### \*\*North Rona

\*\* East of Sula Sgeir lies North Rona. Even more isolated and remote than St Kilda it is also very hard to find on a map. North Rona is said to have been the home of Saint Ronan in the 8th century. A small Christian oratory that probably dates back to the same period stands almost intact. Today, grey seals and sea birds are the only inhabitants on the island.

### \*\*Stromness & Kirkwall

\*\* In a private bus from the charming town of Stromness we travel to the 5 000-year-old village of Skara Brae and see the remarkable dwellings that were revealed from beneath the sand dunes by storms only 160 years ago. This is the heart of Neolithic Orkney, designated as a World Heritage Site due to its wealth of pre-historic archaeology. Today it is western Europe's best preserved prehistoric village. We continue to the Ring of Brodgar a huge ceremonial circle of stones dating back almost 5 000 years. Our day ends in Kirkwall, where we visit the beautiful St. Magnus Cathedral.

### \*\*Fair Isle

\*\* Located halfway between Orkney and Shetland, this small island claims to be the best place to find rare birds in Britain with at least 27 first records and also hosts a famous bird observatory. Fair Isle is also a traditional knitting technique used to create patterns with multiple colours.

### \*\*Hermaness

\*\* The moorland and the dramatic cliffs of Hermaness are home to gannets, cormorants, guillemots and puffins. Here, you

also find a large colony of great skuas, known as the flying pirates. Even the giants are said to have settled here. Unfortunately a giant called Herman, the namesake of the island, is said to have been lured away by a mermaid...

### \*\*Papa Stour

\*\* The islands eroded, volcanic cliffs form an interesting coastline consisting of cliff ledges, stone columns, arches, blowholes and caves. The most famous cave is Kirstan Hol and during a calm day it is possible to sail through its labyrinths. On the island you also find several Neolithic graveyards and what is said to be the remnants of a 13th century house that belonged to Duke Hakon.

### \*\*Out Skerries

\*\* If you look at a map it may be difficult to imagine that this small island is inhabited, but these four square kilometers of rock and pasture boast of more than 70 residents. The dramatic landscape, the birdlife and the interesting history make a visit here unforgettable.

### \*\*Noss

\*\* In the 1850s some 20 people lived on the island, but today it does not have any permanent inhabitants (not counting the sheep that graze here). The scenic sandstone cliffs of Noss are home to an array of nesting seabirds and if lucky we might see porpoise and otter in the surrounding waters.

### Day 10: Lerwick

Lerwick is the capital and main port of the Shetland Islands. By strolling around the streets, we can feel the history that still dwells here. The town also houses a beautiful museum, where

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we get acquainted with the islands fascinating history and culture. We then head at sea, towards the Norwegian coast and beautiful Bergen.

### Day 11: Bergen

Explore in the hanseatic city of Bergen, surrounded by high mountains and deep fjords. Popular sights include Bryggen Museum, the Bergenhus fortress and the fish markets. We also take the cable car up to the highest of Bergen s seven mountains, Mount Ulriken, from where we get a spectacular view of the city.

### Day 12: Disembarkation

In the morning we disembark and continue home. If you have time, we suggest you take the Bergen Line to Oslo and experience one of the most beautiful train journeys in the world.

### Please Note:

Several of the islands mentioned above are extremely exposed to weather and wind and the exact route is dependent on these factors. Please keep in mind that flexibility is the key to a successful adventure!

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## YOUR SHIP: STOCKHOLM

**YOUR SHIP:** Stockholm

**VESSEL TYPE:**

**LENGTH:**

**PASSENGER CAPACITY:**

**BUILT/REFURBISHED:**

The M/S Stockholm is a classic vessel built in 1953 for the Swedish National Maritime Administration. In 1999 she was totally refitted and started her career as a comfortable polar passenger ship. The M/S Stockholm exclusively carries a maximum of 12 passengers in outside twin cabins, all with upper and lower berth and private facilities. She is a marvellous piece of maritime history with beautiful brass details and pine decks. No wonder the M/S Stockholm is loved by so many! On board the ship you will enjoy delicious meals in the company of likeminded travellers who enjoy the natural world, and who are as fascinated by the Arctic as you will be. The food on board is of a high standard. All wine, beer and drinks are included in the trip fare. With such a small party on board, this is like travelling on a private yacht. An entirely different experience and perspective to that of a larger and more conventional vessel! The M/S Stockholm is also ideal for private parties who wish to explore the Svalbard archipelago. The owner, Captain and crew of the ship have long experience in Arctic waters, and are actively involved in making expeditions in tune with nature conservation. The crew onboard M/S Stockholm are great enthusiasts of the unique wildlife and unspoilt nature too, so do

not be surprised if you suddenly see the chef ashore taking photographs or studying birds, whenever his time permits. The genuine curiosity of the crew is a prerequisite for expedition cruises of this kind. A trip on board M/S Stockholm in these northern waters, with its unique wildlife and pristine nature is an experience of a lifetime, simply



hard to beat.

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## PRICING

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