

The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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PASSAGE TO INDIA - A VOYAGE FROM THE SEYCHELLES TO CHENNAI

We find it difficult to imagine a more perfect way to escape the British winter than to enjoy the warmth and beauty of the Indian Ocean aboard the wonderfully comfortable MS Hebridean Sky as she undertakes exactly the type of itinerary that suits her best. Join us in the tropics as we journey from the islands and atolls of the Indian Ocean and around Sri Lanka to the Bay of Bengal. Our journey to Chennai first allows us to explore the Seychelles and Maldives, two of the world's most pristine and picturesque archipelagos. With our purpose built Zodiacs we will land on otherwise inaccessible beaches, explore vast lagoons and coral reefs and encounter some extraordinarily beautiful tropical scenery. Our small ship is ideal for such a region, allowing us to enjoy the peace and tranquillity of this paradise. After all, it would be disappointing to find yourself in the company of hundreds on what was a deserted beach. Contrasting well with this natural world exploration, our itinerary then takes a more cultural focus as we reach Sri Lanka. Here we spend time in Colombo with its Buddhist and Hindu temples and old colonial buildings before exploring Galle Fort, the fortified old city founded by the Portuguese colonists in the 16th century and now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There is also the option to visit Polonnaruwa, the 5th century ancient city considered to be one of the best planned archaeological sites in the country. Whilst in Sri Lanka we also discover some natural world wonders with visits to Yala National Park, renowned for its rich wildlife, most notably its many elephants, and Bundala National Park, a haven for birdwatchers and Sri Lanka's first designated wetland site of international importance. After much adventure, our voyage will end with a leisurely day at sea as we

sail across to Chennai allowing for time to catch up with fellow travellers and the onboard team regarding all you have seen and experienced on our passage to India. This unusual itinerary will appeal to those looking for something different, incorporating explorations of the natural world with a more expedition focus, followed by a fascinating look at Sri Lanka. With the MS Hebridean Sky as our base and travelling with just over 100 fellow passengers, we can enjoy great food, good company, a convivial atmosphere and an expert team which entices travellers to cruise on her time and

time again.

ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Mahe, Seychelles.

Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

Day 2 Mahe.

Arrive this afternoon and transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky for embarkation. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail the short distance to our overnight anchorage at Aride.

Day 3 Aride & Curieuse.

Aride is one of the finest and most important seabird islands in the Indian Ocean. Over one million seabirds breed on the island including tropical shearwater, lesser noddy, frigate birds and roseate tern in addition to five species unique to the Seychelles such as the Seychelles warbler and Seychelles magpie robin. The island is largely covered in native woodland, including the endemic Wright's gardenia, a shrub with beautifully scented

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flowers found nowhere else in the world. We will sail over lunch to Curieuse, a rugged island which was once home to a leper colony and now houses an eco-museum and visitor centre. The island is an important nesting site for hawksbill turtles and boasts endemic vine and mangroves which we will explore on an island walk.

Day 4 Grande Soeur & Praslin.

Spend the morning on Grande Soeur, an idyllic uninhabited island. Walk the island trails which link the white sand beaches and maybe catch sight of some of the island's giant Aldabra Curieuse tortoises, enjoy a swim or join a snorkelling opportunity in the turquoise waters. Our last call in the Seychelles will be at Praslin where we explore the 'Vallee de Mai', the last remnant of the original high canopied Seychelles palm forest and home to the coco de mer. We will walk its paths looking out for the rare black parrot and enjoying its natural beauty. This evening we will clear custom formalities as we start our journey to the Maldives.

Days 5 to 7 At Sea.

Relax and enjoy our days at sea. Watch out for the bird and marine life and listen to the interesting talks by our onboard team. We are assured of warm weather so make the most of the fresh air, get lost in a novel from your deck chair and enjoy all the comforts of the MS Hebridean Sky.

Days 8 to 11 Maldives.

We spend four days exploring the whole archipelago. This vast area of ocean is scattered with staggeringly beautiful dots of land surrounded by a cerulean sea. It offers some of the finest lagoons, beaches and coral reefs in the world. Our day to day schedule will be left in the capable hands of the Captain and Expedition Leader and we hope to include visits to a number of

atolls as we sail from the southern islands to the north. Our expedition team will be on hand to take guided walking tours to explore the birds and wildlife on land whilst our Snorkel Master will take us to some stunning reefs to view the wonderful coral and marine life.

Day 12 At Sea.

Our lecture programme continues as we make our way across the Laccadive Sea to Sri Lanka.

Day 13 Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Arrive today in Colombo, Sri Lanka's commercial capital and largest city which dates back over 600 years having been a trading hub for sea merchants and colonial rulers. Buddhist temples, Hindu temples, mosques and churches reflect the various beliefs practiced all over the island and the beautiful facades of the old, colonial buildings contrast with the modern but elegant shopping arcades that have been developed inside. There will be a choice of activities today including a cultural tour visiting the Gangaramaya Buddhist Temple, the National Museum and Independence Square. Alternatively visit the Kelaniya Buddhist Temple, located on the outskirts of the city, it is believed that Buddha visited and preached his doctrine here to a gathering of serpent-kings. Today worshippers come to lay sprigs of lotus flowers around the great white dagoba, light oil lamps, and sprinkle the base of the Tree of Enlightenment with purifying water. We can see the fine carvings and lovely frescoes, fascinating geometrically patterned ceiling paintings, and three important images of Buddha.

Day 14 Galle.

Awake this morning in Galle where we take a walking tour of the impressive Galle Fortress. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is

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where the Portuguese first landed in Sri Lanka in the 16th century and it was then extensively fortified by the Dutch during the 17th century. Also see the maritime museum, which is housed in an old Dutch house, the lighthouse, mosque and church before taking a stroll through the narrow streets with their shuttered mansions and cloistered courtyards. Return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon is free to explore Galle further at your own pace. Alternatively join a tour to a nearby tea plantation where we will learn about the growing processes and enjoy a tasting.

Days 15 & 16 Bundala National Park, Yala National Park & Kataragama.

We have one and a half days in Hambantota from where we will visit a couple of the region's highlights. We will visit Yala National Park, known as Ruhunu it was designated as a wildlife sanctuary in 1900 and is now home to 44 varieties of mammal and 215 bird species. This vast region of arid scrub interspersed with pockets of dense forest and open patches of grassland hosts one of the highest densities of leopard in the world. On a Jeep safari we also hope to see sloth bears, jackals, wild boar and elephants. From Hambantota there will also be the opportunity to explore Bundala National Park, a haven for birdwatchers and Sri Lanka's first designated wetland site of international importance. Located in the deep south of the island, the diversity of the park lies in its landscape, from dry thorny scrubland to sand dunes and salt marshes, to mangroves and lagoons. Take a jeep through the park and discover close to 200 species of bird as well as many species of butterfly, crocodiles, elephants and deer. Alternatively you may wish to visit Kataragama, one of the three most important religious sites in Sri Lanka and a popular place of pilgrimage for the Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and the indigenous Vedda communities of Sri

Lanka and South India. According to the Buddhists this was one of the 16 places visited by Buddha during his stays in Sri Lanka. We will explore the religious complex built across the Menik Ganga which contains buildings from all three religions including the mosque, the temple, the small archaeological museum and the principal shrine of the god Kataragama. After our explorations we will spend a relaxing afternoon at sea as we sail to Trincomalee.

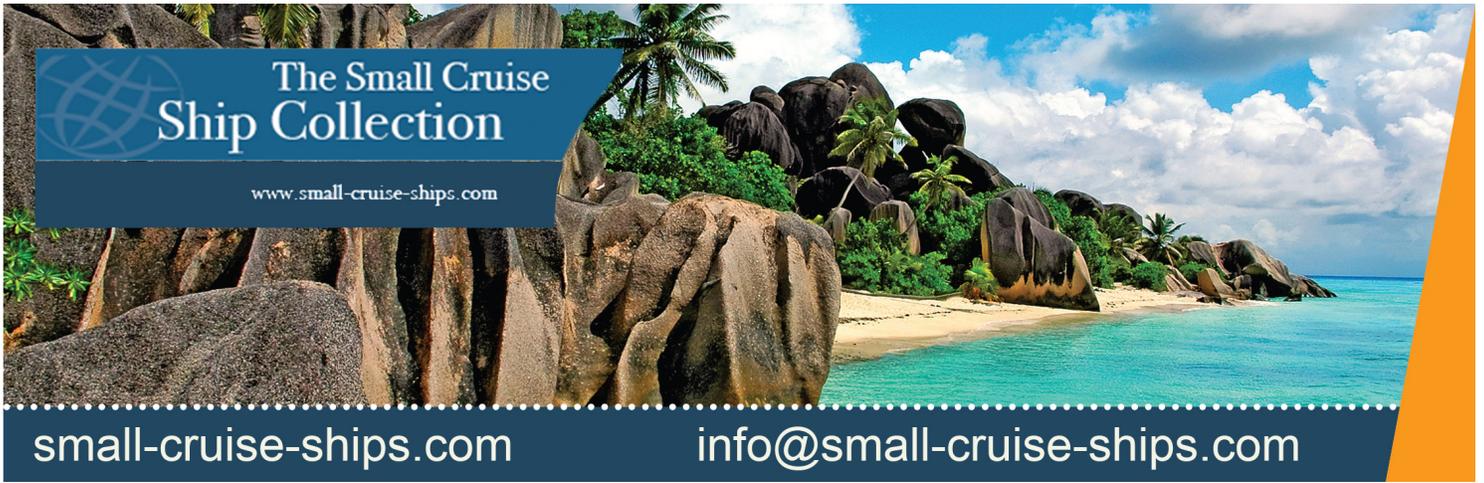
Day 17 Trincomalee, Pigeon Island National Park & Polonnaruwa.

Today we are in Trincomalee on the north east coast of Sri Lanka, one of the finest deep water harbours of the world. Choose to join a morning excursion of Trincomalee which includes Fort Frederick, built by the Portuguese in 1623, and walk to Swami Rock to see the Koneswaram Temple, one of the five most holy Shaivite temples in the country. Alternatively join a local boat to Pigeon Island National Park, an island off the Sri Lankan coast and one of two national marine parks in the country. Here it will be possible to snorkel over the coral reefs and maybe see some of the turtle species that reside here. A third option today will be a full day tour to Polonnaruwa. This 5th century ancient city was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1982 and is considered to be one of the best planned archaeological sites in the country. The entire landscape of the region is punctuated by high manmade reservoirs, the most famous of which is Parakrama Samudra or the Sea of Parakrama, built during King Parakramabahu's reign in 1164-1196 AD. The monuments in the ancient city are relatively well preserved and highlights are the Royal Palace complex, including the King's Palace and Audience Hall and the spectacular Gal Vihare complex of four massive images of the Buddha cut from a single slab of granite.

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Day 18 Sailing to Chennai, India.

After a day at sea we arrive this evening in Chennai where we clear immigration formalities and moor overnight.

Day 19 Chennai to London.

Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London. Arrive this afternoon.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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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.

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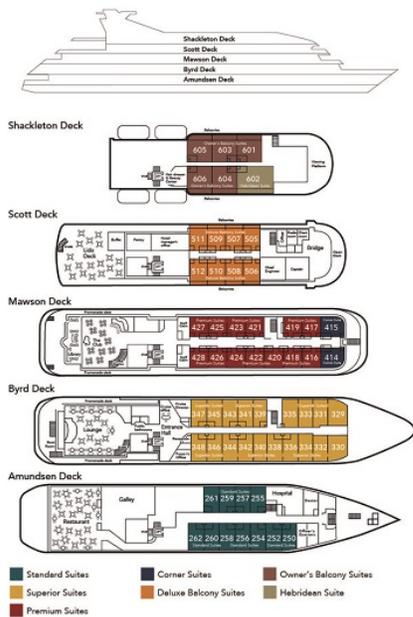
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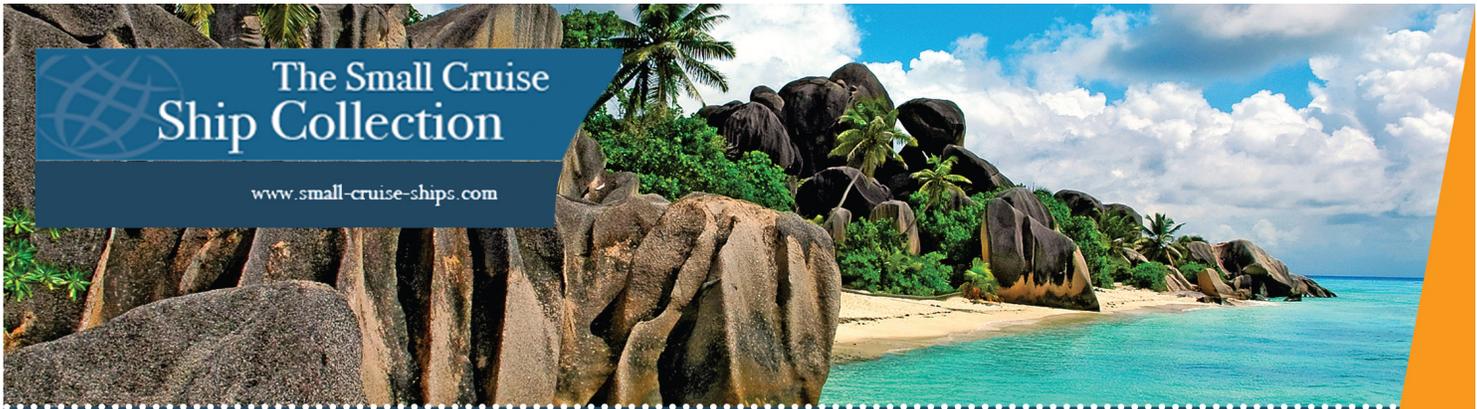
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PRICING



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