

PASSAGE THROUGH THE EAST CHINA SEA

Here is a unique voyage offering the opportunity to visit Japan with its unique heritage and culture, combined with modern pulsating cities as well as little known and remote regions that are well away from the usual cruise routes in the Far East. Setting sail from the Japanese port of Kanazawa we will explore this alluring country with its blend of ancient traditions and modern technology before continuing to the islands of Japan, delightful outpost islands that offer an altogether different experience from Japan's mainland. Finally, by way of Tawain where we have two days to explore, we reach the vibrant city of Hong Kong. Highlights of our voyage will include the historical city of Kanazawa with its traditional crafts and one of Japan's most famed landscape gardens, Kenroku-en, atmospheric Kyoto, the historic and serene castle town of Matsue and Nagasaki where Japan's first contact with the West took place. Here we will learn of the more sombre history of the Atomic Bomb attack at the Peace Museum and Peace Park and we will also explore Dejima Island which served as a trading post during Japan's isolation period. We will also visit the aweinspiring contemporary landscape of Tokyo but what makes our itinerary truly unique is our visits to parts of Japan where relatively few tourists set foot such as the southernmost inhabited islands which are home to idyllic beaches, crystal clear waters and an abundance of natural wonders. Largely unspoilt, we will enjoy three days cruising amongst these delightful outposts, including Yakushima, Amami and Ishigaki, where we can enjoy nature at its very best whilst on guided walks. Our journey to Hong Kong also takes us past the southeastern tip of South Korea where we will spend a day in Gyeongju, the former capital of the Silla Dynasty (57 BC to 935 AD) which is known as the 'Museum Without Walls' and here you can walk through streets lined with royal palaces, temples, shrines and tombs. We continue to Taiwan, a relatively unexplored treasure in the Far East which offers breathtaking scenery and a remarkable diversity for an island of its size. We will visit the country's ultra modern capital, Taipei which is an interesting place to learn more about the Japanese colonial period and the more recent era of Chiang Kai Shek, and spend a day in Taichung from where there will be a choice of tours. Such places invoke the strongest of memories and allow you to immerse yourself in the myth and mystique of these ancient lands whilst returning each evening to the peace and comfort of the MS Island Sky. This unusual itinerary will appeal to those who would like to combine Japan's mainland and her islands with the treasures of Taiwain, or to those simply looking for something different, combining explorations of the natural world with a look at the culture of the region visiting a number of ports which are off the usual cruise route. All this will be achieved with great ease sailing aboard the MS Island Sky and in the company of just over 100 fellow like-minded passengers, our expert Guest Speaker and guides who will bring to life all that we see and





experience.

ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Tokyo, Japan.

Fly by scheduled flight.

Day 2 Tokyo.

Arrive and transfer to our centrally located hotel for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

Day 3 Tokyo to Kanazawa.

After breakfast in the hotel, our morning city tour will include the Meiji Shrine and Sensoji Temple. Continue to the train station to join the bullet train to Kanazawa where, on arrival, we will transfer to the MS Island Sky. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we moor overnight.

Day 4 Kanazawa.

Kanazawa is a thriving centre of the arts, long known for its lacquer ware, outstanding collectable pottery of the Kutani style, gold leaf workmanship, delicate hand painting of silk for kimonos and Noh theatre dramas. The narrow and winding cobblestone streets have a quaint photogenic charm with old fashioned streetlamps and wooden lattice windows hiding elegant restaurants and craft galleries. Around each bend is a traditional house, museum, art gallery, craft shop, historic samurai residence and even a geisha house to explore. The fascinating open-air market displays a vast variety of items from flowers to fish and local handicrafts. Next to the Kanazawa Castle ruins, we will visit one of Japan's premier highlights, the famed Kenroku-en Garden, ranked among the country's top three gardens.

Day 5 Kyoto.

From our berth in Maizuru, we drive inland to Kyoto, Japan's former historic capital and the Emperor's home for nearly 1000 years. Our full day tour begins with a visit to the bamboo forest before continuing to the World Heritage Site of Tenryu-ji Temple, ranked first amongst the city's five great Zen Temples. After lunch we continue to the Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion),



which was built as a retirement villa for the Shogun and converted into a Buddhist Temple after his death. Built on the edge of a tranquil pond with the second and third stories covered in gold leaf we can walk through the peaceful gardens and marvel at the reflection in the still waters. Alternatively, spend the morning at the quaint fishing village of Ine, famous for its 'funaya' boat houses which line the bay. Enjoy a walk through the village and a boat tour in the bay for the picturesque views from the sea.

Day 6 Matsue.

From the port of Sakaiminato we visit Matsue, the 'town of water,' which nestles between a scenic lake and a large lagoon. We will visit the cultural attractions of the town including the 17th century Matsue Castle before enjoying a boat ride on the local canals. Alternatively visit the Adachi Museum of Art which is set in a beautiful natural environment and well known for both its superb Japanese gardens and its collection of contemporary Japanese paintings, comprising approximately 1500 of the country's most highly regarded paintings produced after the Meiji period. Return to the ship for lunch as we sail for South Korea this afternoon.

Day 7 Ulsan, South Korea.

Crossing over to South Korea we embark on a full day excursion to magnificent Gyeongju, a World Heritage Site which is often described as the world's finest open-air museum embracing ancient Korean history and Buddhist culture. As the ancient capital of the Silla Dynasty, Gyeongju's cultural heritage dates back to the first millennium. Today, as we stroll through some of the hundreds of excavated monuments, temples, tombs and pagodas, there will be time to explore the National Museum with its exceptional collection of finely worked gold jewellery, metal weapons and distinctive pottery. At lunchtime, we will sample Korean delicacies and enjoy a cultural performance of traditional dance.

Day 8 Nagasaki, Japan.

Back in Japan, this morning we will explore Nagasaki, the second city destroyed by an A-bomb in World War II. Our tour will include the Peace Memorial Park, Atomic Bomb Museum and Glover Garden. This afternoon we will visit Dejima Island which was built during the Edo Period to house Portuguese Christian missionaries and prevent the propagation of their religion. It was also the residential quarters of the Dutch, the only foreigners allowed to trade in Japan during the Sakoku isolation period for 200 years until Japan reopened to the world. Alternatively, there will be a visit to the abandoned Gunkan-jima, or Hashima Island* that lies just off the coast of Nagasaki. The island was populated until 1974 and served as a coal mine with more than 5000 residents living on an island only 480 metres long and 150 metres wide. To accommodate so many people in such a small area every piece of land was built on, so the island came to resemble a battleship and was given the name Gunkan-jima or 'Battleship Island'. In 1974 the coal mine closed and the residents had to leave the island. Over the years the natural elements have taken hold giving the island an eerie atmosphere. In more recent years the island has become a set for several movies, including the James Bond film, 'Skyfall'. During your visit the guide will walk you through the island to observation areas before taking the local ferry back to the mainland. *Please note that the visit to the island is weather/tidal dependent.

Day 9 Yakushima Island.



Sailing down the coast of Kyushu this afternoon we arrive on the island of Yakushima which became Japan's first World Heritage Taipei Site in 1993. Yakushima is famous in botanical circles for many great garden plants, including dwarf plants that have evolved to grow smaller than their mainland cousins. We will spend time here on nature walks, including Yakusugi Land, a nature park populated by a number of the island's ancient cedar trees such as the Buddhasugi, Futagosugi and Sennensugi.

Day 10 Amami Oshima.

Today we arrive on Amami Oshima, a natural subtropical paradise situated in the Amami Islands and surrounded by transparent waters, brightly coloured coral reefs and tropical fish. The island is almost entirely covered in forest and mangrove and offers fantastic bird watching and wildlife sightings. We have the day to explore and will visit the Nature Observation Park where we can walk through the forest and hope to see the Amami jay, ruddy kingfisher, Ryukyu akashobin, butterflies and possibly the rare black hare. We will also see local industry and watch the process of making tsumugi and kasuri silk-cotton fabrics, used for making kimonos, at the Oshima Tsumugi Village, a craft complex in a beautiful hillside setting amongst flowers. In the afternoon we will visit the Amami Park which focuses on the artist Tanaka Isson with a museum of his works which depict the natural beauty and life of Amami.

Day 11 At Sea.

Enjoy a day at sea with time to relax on deck and join the lecture programme in the lounge.

Day 12 Ishigaki Island.

Our final call in Japan will be at the Yaeyama Islands, a cluster of coral reefs and forested mountains. This morning, from our base in Ishigaki we will explore the island. Our tour will start with a visit to the Yoneko- Yaki Pottery to learn about the craft of making the famous Shisa - half dog, half lion statuettes, typically sold in pairs. From here we will drive along the scenic roads to Ishigaki Yaima Village. We will explore this open-air museum that has preserved traditional Japanese houses. Located in the forests, keep an eye out for the local wildlife such as squirrel monkeys. There will also be a chance to walk through the mangroves along the boardwalk and see the unique flora and fauna. Later, after lunch on board, we will take in more of the island with a visit to the Tamatoizaki Cape, where from the observatory there are wonderful views of the Hirakubo Peninsula and the sea of Ishigaki. We will continue to Kariba Park located on Kariba Bay, taking in the stunning views while exploring the shrines and statues that decorate the park. Our final stop will be the Yaesen Brewery which produces awamori, a sake-like Okinawan spirit.

Day 13 Keelung for Taipei, Taiwan.

After breakfast we will travel by coach to Taiwan's capital, Taipei. We will delve into the history and heritage of Taiwan and explore how Taipei fuses the past with modernity. We begin our exploration at the National Palace Museum which houses over 600,000 priceless treasures of Chinese art, many dating back almost 5,000 years. Many of the items were removed from the Forbidden Place before the Communist revolution. From here we will visit the Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall, which pays tribute to the former President of Taiwan. Lunch will be at a local restaurant where we will enjoy a range of dishes including dumplings. Later we will ride the lift to the 89th floor of the Taipei 101 building for panoramic views of the city and after some time at leisure will return to the ship.



Day 14 Taichung.

From our berth in Taichung we have a choice of tours. Choose from a full day tour inland to the Sun Moon Lake, the largest lake in Taiwan and so named as the eastern part of the lake is round like the sun and the western side is shaped like a crescent moon. Its crystalline, emerald green waters reflect the hills and mountains which rise on all sides and provide one of Taiwan's most mesmerising landscapes. We will spend time on the lake and also visit one of the temples on the banks before enjoying lunch. We return to the ship via the Chung Tai Chun Monastery, a lavish monument to Chan Buddhism which has fused ancient traditions with modern architecture. Alternatively, join a half day tour to Lukang, one of Taiwan's oldest port towns which was used as a major harbour by Dutch traders in the 17th century. We will see the 17th century Lungshan Temple, one of the best preserved in Taiwan, and whilst in Old Street we can see the historic buildings or purchase some of the rare handicrafts produced here. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy a leisurely afternoon in Taichung.

Day 15 At Sea.

Spend a final relaxing day at sea as we sail towards Hong Kong.

Day 16 Hong Kong to London.

We arrive in Hong Kong this morning. Disembark and enjoy a tour of Hong Kong with lunch before transferring to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

Day 17 London.

Arrive this morning.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: ISLAND SKY

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

With a maximum passenger capacity of only 116, a vessel of her size is capable of carrying many more but instead the MS Island Sky has the benefit of unusually large suites, luxuriously appointed public areas and spacious outside decks. There is a high ratio of crew to passengers- the friendly crew of 75 crew and Scandinavian captains are experienced mariners, having been in service aboard large 2000 plus passenger vessels and who now prefer a less frantic life aboard a small ship. If, like them and us, you prefer a more peaceful life at sea, you will find the MS Island Sky the perfect ship. When choosing the vessel for your next voyage of discovery, you can select a ship with endless entertainment and impersonal service or come with us where peace, high quality service and attention to detail are the order of the day. We promise there will be no organised entertainment, fancy dress, deck games or any of the usual big ship experiences. The atmosphere on board is more akin to a private yacht or country hotel. A little music in the lounge or bar after dinner, guest speakers, informative port briefings from our cruise director and of course good food which may be enjoyed leisurely in the attractive dining room. After a day ashore you will return to the comfort and peace of a well run and exceedingly comfortable ship. Your Suite Onboard there are 57 exceptionally spacious and well designed suites. All feature a sitting room area and some have private balconies. The feeling of luxury is enhanced by the wood panelling and brass, which predominates throughout the vessel conveying the atmosphere of a private yacht. The passenger accommodation is arranged over five decks and all suites have outside views. Each affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring marble-topped vanity unit with sink and walk-in shower, large wardrobes, dressing table with large mirror and stool and excellent storage. There is a mini-fridge, flat screen television with inbuilt DVD player which can also play CDs and a telephone in each suite. Bottled water, towelling dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted toiletries and individually controlled air-conditioning and heating. The suites on each deck have their own colour theme. Soft hues and blended tones enhance the traditional maritime style making the passenger accommodation an inviting and relaxing place to be. Your Space The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large lounge where daily briefings and talks will be provided throughout the voyage and an elegant bar where a pianist plays periodically throughout the day. The bar also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. The onboard library is the perfect place to relax with a book and is stocked with reference books pertaining to the places the vessel is visiting along with a selection of games and two computers with internet access. Daily newspapers and magazines are also placed in the library depending on local availability. There is

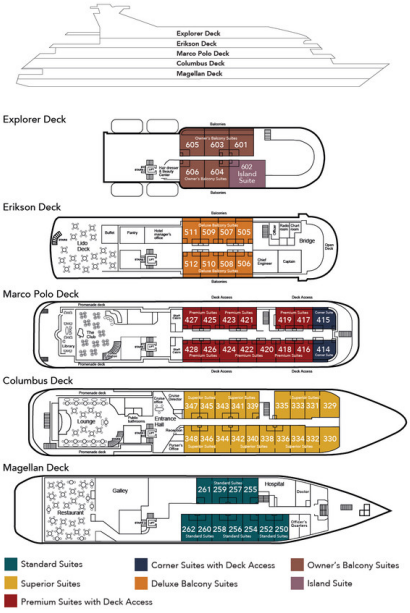
also WI-FI access throughout the vessel. Outside there is a rear sun deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade, a bar and comfortable deck furniture for sun bathing or relaxing with a book. On the top deck there is a Jacuzzi and further observation and sun deck. There is also a small hairdressers on board with appointments made on request. Your Dining Another benefit of a small ship is the quality of the cuisine. With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the galley is able to provide delicious meals. Where possible and when it meets his high standards, the chef will obtain local produce in markets or buy the catch of the day from a passing fishing boat. Such purchases enhance the well stocked larders and bring a local touch to the



varied menus.



INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Columbus Deck Superior Single



Columbus Deck Superior Suite



Erikson Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite



Explorer Deck Island Suite



Explorer Deck Owner's Balcony Suite



Magellan Deck Standard Single



Magellan Deck Standard Suite



Marco Polo Deck Corner Suite





Marco Polo Deck Premium Suite





PRICING

09-Jun-2027 to 25-Jun-2027

Columbus Deck Superior Single	£13495 GBP pp
Marco Polo Deck Corner Suite	£12795 GBP pp
Explorer Deck Island Suite	£14995 GBP pp
Marco Polo Deck Premium Suite	£12295 GBP pp
Columbus Deck Superior Suite	£11895 GBP pp
Magellan Deck Standard Single	£12995 GBP pp
Erikson Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite	£13995 GBP pp
Magellan Deck Standard Suite	£11495 GBP pp
Explorer Deck Owner's Balcony Suite	£14495 GBP pp