

The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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PASSION FOR PORTUGAL - 10 DAY CRUISE

Portugal offers an abundance of attractions from Medieval castles, charming cities, atmospheric towns, idyllic scenery and traditional wine growing regions. The country has one of the oldest borders in Europe and a unique, rich cultural heritage with an extraordinary diversity relative to its size with the legacy of the Celts, Romans, Moors and Christians having each left their mark over the centuries. During this nine night exploration, for which we have combined a four night cruise aboard the all-suite MS Island Sky with hotel stays in Oporto and Malaga, we will discover the cultural diversity of the country from Oporto, the birthplace of port with its Baroque churches and merchant houses, the beautiful Douro Valley, Braga with its elegant old town, Coimbra the Medieval capital and university city, the sophistication of Lisbon with its wide boulevards and vintage trams to the Algarve's dramatic coastline. Our final day is spent in Spain's historic city of Malaga where we will stay overnight in a centrally located hotel allowing for time to explore the many wonders of this coastal city. Our days will be varied as we explore UNESCO World Heritage Sites, walk through historic villages and towns and discover the uniqueness of the region as well as enjoying opportunities to sample the local food and wine. In addition to the included, daily guided tours, there will also be time at leisure for individual exploration enabling you to soak up the atmosphere at your own pace.



ITINERARY

Day 1 London or Manchester to Oporto, Portugal.

Fly by scheduled flight. Arrive and transfer to our hotel for a four night stay. The remainder of the day is at leisure before we meet for dinner this evening. (D)

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Day 2 Oporto.

After breakfast in the hotel we explore Oporto, Portugal's second largest city and a World Heritage Site. This attractive city was originally a Celtic-Iberian settlement and became a prosperous Roman village thanks to its natural harbour. During our tour we will drive through its narrow streets to find 16th century arcaded buildings, Baroque churches and chapels, as well as the city's iconic 19th century iron bridge, built by the school of Gustav Eiffel. Our final visit will be to the city's cathedral, located on the top of the Penaventosa Hill. Inside are beautiful examples of golden carved altarpieces and paintings from the Nasoni period, whilst outside we will enjoy the amazing view over the river. The tour will conclude with a visit to a port wine lodge where we will see the old casks full of port and enjoy a sample of this delicious world famous wine. The remainder of the day is at leisure to explore at your own pace. (B)

Day 3 Douro Valley.

Today a full day tour takes us into the Douro Valley. This morning we visit the unique 18th century Mateus Manor House and its gardens. This fine looking palace and gardens is still owned by the Count of Vila Real and is one of the best examples of Baroque architecture in Portugal. On our guided tour of the Palace we will see the rare books library, as well as vestments and religious icons, view the remarkable chestnut wood crafting on the ceilings as well as some beautiful paintings from the 17th and 18th centuries. Stroll around the romantic gardens which feature a unique 100 foot long cedar tunnel and formal garden and visit the villa's pretty chapel. Continue to the heart of the Douro Valley. The region is one of the oldest demarcated wine regions in the world with a microclimate perfect for grape cultivation. Here we find steep terraced vineyards that stretch up the riverbanks and which boast breathtaking views. Visiting one

of the local Quinta we will learn about the production methods and sample some of the local wines over a traditional lunch. Return to our hotel in Oporto this afternoon and enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure. (B, L)

Day 4 Guimares.

After breakfast we drive to Guimaraes, the birthplace of Afonso Henriques, the first independent King of Portugal. Guimaraes has beautifully preserved its illustrious past; its Medieval centre is a warren of lanes and picturesque plazas framed by 14th century edifices and on an adjacent hill stands the 1,000 year old castle and the palace built by the first duke of Braganca in the 15th century. Also see the charming Museum Alberto Sampaio in the historical centre. After lunch in the town we return to Oporto where the remainder of the day is free to explore at your own pace. (B, L)

Day 5 Braga, Tui & Vigo, Spain.

We drive this morning to Braga, an elegant town laced with ancient narrow lanes, plazas and Baroque churches. Later cross to Spain and visit the beautiful walled Medieval city of Tui, located on a hill next to the Portuguese border on the River Mino. Visit Tui's imposing cathedral, built in the 12th century and later converted into a battlement-studded fortress whose tower forms a magnificent balcony over the river. We also take the chance of tasting some of the local Albarino wine. Our day ends in Vigo where we embark the MS Island Sky and sail this evening. (B, L, D)

Day 6 Figueira da Foz for Coimbra, Portugal.

Located at the mouth of the Modego River, Figueira da Foz is one of central Portugal's prime beach resorts. However, the reason for our call is to visit the nearby city of Coimbra, the

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Medieval capital of Portugal for over 100 years. On a walking tour we will view the stunning buildings from the 16th to 18th centuries before we head to the university which was recently granted UNESCO status. Founded in the 13th century we will see the Chapel of Sao Miguel and the Joanine Library which houses over 300,000 works dating back to the 16th century. After a local lunch, choose to return to Figueira da Foz or stay in Coimbra for some free time.

Day 7 Lisbon or Alentejo.

Set on seven hills on the banks of the River Tagus, Lisbon has been the capital of Portugal since the 13th century. It is a city famous for its majestic architecture, old wooden trams, Moorish features and more than twenty centuries of history. Following disastrous earthquakes in the 18th century, Lisbon was rebuilt by the Marquis de Pombal who created an elegant city with wide boulevards and a great riverfront and square. During our morning panoramic tour we will see the Monument to the Discoveries and Belem Tower, and visit the famous Jeronimos Monastery. Alternatively, a full day tour will visit the Alentejo region. Drive to Evora, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where a walking tour will explore the sights and Medieval history of this enchanting city. Evora is one of the oldest towns in the Alentejo region and we can see the well preserved Roman Temple, St Francisco Church and the Chapel of Bones before some time to explore the pretty squares. Alentejo is a highly respected wine region traditionally growing red wines from the Tempranillo and Trincadeira grapes. We will have lunch in a vineyard and enjoy a tasting before returning to the ship via the picturesque port of Setubal.

Day 8 Portimao.

This morning the MS Island Sky arrives on the Algarve Coast at the fishing port of Portimao on the banks of the Arade River. During a morning call we head west to explore the more rugged Algarve and discover its place in history. We will visit the historic town of Lagos, its sturdy Medieval walls testifying to its importance as a 15th century ship building and trading post. We then head to wild headland of Cabo Sao Vicente, its 200-foot cliffs face the Atlantic waves and it lies at the extreme south western corner of Europe. At nearby Sagres, Henry the Navigator built his school of Navigation and it was from here that many sailors set out to discover the New World. Spend a leisurely afternoon on board as we sail to the coast of Andalucia.

Day 9 Malaga, Spain.

Disembark in the historic city of Malaga where a morning tour will take us to the 14th century Castillo de Gibralfaro, built on a hill overlooking the city and once considered the most impregnable fortress in Iberia. Continue to La Merced Square where we see the birthplace of Pablo Picasso before we visit the impressive 16th century cathedral which was built on the remains of a mosque. With its mix of Renaissance and Gothic styles it has been declared a national landmark. After lunch we will check into our hotel for an overnight stay and the rest of the day and evening is free to explore at your own pace. You may wish to head to the market, visit the botanical gardens or, for the art lovers, visit the Picasso Museum. We will meet this evening for dinner in the hotel. (B, L, D)

Day 10 Malaga to London or Manchester.

Check out this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London or Manchester. (B)

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Itineraries are subject to change.



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YOUR SHIP: ISLAND SKY

YOUR SHIP: Island Sky

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

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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.

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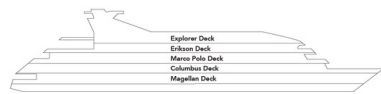
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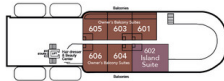
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INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Explorer Deck



Erikson Deck



Marco Polo Deck



Columbus Deck



Magellan Deck



- Standard Suites
- Corner Suites with Deck Access
- Owner's Balcony Suites
- Superior Suites
- Deluxe Balcony Suites
- Island Suite
- Premium Suites with Deck Access



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PRICING



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