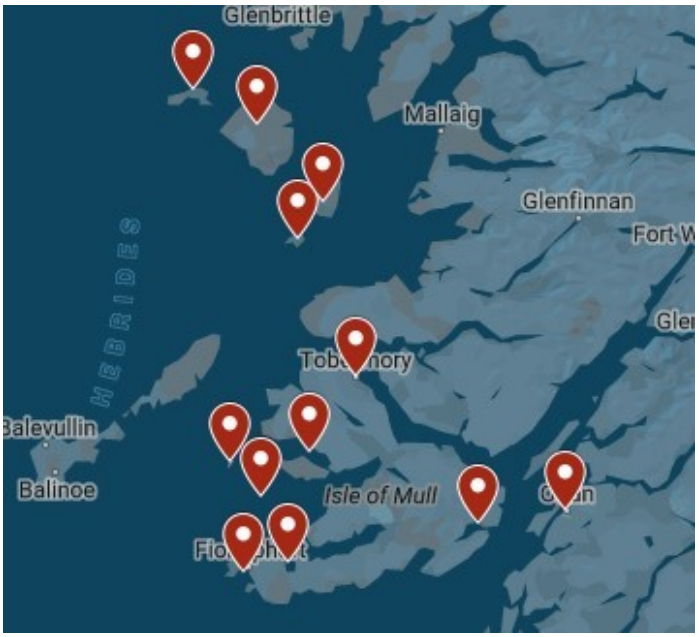


SCOTLAND'S ISLAND CRUISING: TRESHNISH ISLES, STAFFA, IONA AND THE SMALL ISLES

A special Scottish island cruise combining the beautiful Small Isles (Muck, Eigg, Rum and Canna) and a circumnavigation of the Isle of Mull which is at the heart of the Inner Hebrides. The outlying Small isles are justly famous for their sheltered anchorages, spectacular birdlife and ever-changing, island scenery. After visiting the Small Isles we visit the famous islands of Lunga, Staffa and Iona. Lunga, one of the Treshnish Isles, is famous for the breeding colonies of kittiwakes, manx shearwaters, guillemots, razorbills, storm-petrels and the colony of puffins which, in the breeding season, allow you to approach very close. Staffa has one of the world's most spectacular natural marvels in Fingal's cave - one of the island's many sea caves. The moving beauty of the island and the cave's towering, six-sided basalt columns are famously captured by Mendelssohn's Hebridean Overture. Iona, birthplace of western Christianity was where, in AD563, Saint Columba founded an abbey when he traveled over from Ireland. Iona has been for centuries a place of Christian pilgrimage and here the early abbey monks created the wonderful Book of Kells. Saint Columba and 48 Scottish kings, including Macbeth, as well as some Irish and French kings, are buried on Iona. One can walk in peaceful solitude along the island paths away from the Abbey. As we travel we can see incredible wildlife - soaring sea and golden eagles, basking sharks, minke and killer whales, porpoises, dolphins, seabirds and seals.



ITINERARY

Days 1 - 9 Island Cruising

Some of the places we may visit are: Oban: Your departure point will be Oban (Dunstaffnage Marina), the gateway to the Hebridean isles. After a short introduction to life on board our small ship we lift anchor and set sail to our first destination. Tobermory: One of the most picturesque towns in the Hebridean



Isles with its famous whisky distillery and colourful waterfront. You can wander along the streets, visit the delightful local museum, perhaps watch a pipe band, admire the wooden fishing boats and take in the long history of this lovely village. Canna, the Small Isles: Canna is possibly the most beautiful of all the Small islands. Its 200 metre high cliffs of Compass Hill rise dramatically out of the sea and we have a good chance of seeing both sea and golden eagles. A stroll ashore to see the puffins and wild flower meadows of Sanday's Machair is a pure delight. Muck, the Small Isles: The small island of Muck (Muck is Gaelic for 'Pig') is only a couple of miles long and a mile wide. Ashore there are wonderful coastal walks and many seabirds. On Horse Island, which is accessible at low water, there is a colony of puffins. Eigg, the Small Isles: The "Sgurr of Eigg", an ancient, eroded volcanic plug that creates a dramatic cliff on the east side of the island and a high ridge which runs west. There are beautiful white-sand bays and a quartz beach that creates the famous "singing sands". Rum, Loch Scresort, the Small Isles: Rum Island is a National Nature Reserve and famous for its herds of red deer and sheer sea cliffs which are home to nesting sea eagles. Lunga, Treshnish Isles: Keeping well clear of Caliach Point we head down towards the Treshnish Isles, breeding grounds for seals and puffins. Lunga is a site of Special Scientific Interest because of the plants which grow there and the wildlife. Soribay Bay, Loch Tuath: Our destination is a pretty anchorage in Soribay Bay where we see, in the distance, the mountains of Mull dominated by Ben More (963 m) and close-by, across the Loch, is the picturesque Eas Fos waterfall tumbling into the sea. Fingal's Cave, Staffa: It may be difficult to anchor off the island because of the lack of sheltered anchorages but we can sail close to the island to see all of its natural beauty. With our new sea kayaks guests can sometimes explore the incredible Fingal's cave on the Isle of Staffa! Iona: As there are no sheltered over-night anchorages on Iona, we organize a daytrip from the village of Bunessan. There is a short ferry crossing across the Sound of Iona to Iona. Loch Spelve: Up anchor and travel down the Sound of Iona. This a special Sound where the clear blue waters flow over the white sand and where the Abbey tower is used as a navigational mark to denote a safe passage. Out of the Sound the dangerous Torran Rocks have to be avoided as we travel along the rocky southern shores of the Ross of Mull to enter remote Loch Spelve. A narrow entrance leads us in to the tranquil waters of Loch Spelve with its surrounding ancient oak forest. The anchorage gives us a different perspective than our previous views of the wonderful mountains of Mull. There are resident otters along the loch's shoreline.

Please Note:

Please note that your voyage is weather dependent. Weather doesn't just mean good or bad weather. There are many considerations such as tidal gates, wind direction and strength, the strength and direction of currents, overfalls, and fetch. Depending upon the weather and nature's conditions, wildlife viewing varies. If you wish to visit a specific place or have a specific experience, such as sea eagle tours or whisky tasting, then please do let your skipper know and he will endeavour to meet your request. Excursions and visits ashore are at your own cost.



YOUR SHIP: GEMINI EXPLORER

YOUR SHIP: **Gemini Explorer**

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Gemini Explorer, a mini cruise ship, is a historic, converted cruising lifeboat that once roamed the Western Approaches and was involved in the storm of the ill-fated 1979 Fastnet Race. Gemini Explorer was built in 1974 in Bideford Shipyard as the City of Bristol (70-003), one of three, Clyde class, cruising lifeboats (see Wikipedia) with an extended offshore range of 1700 miles. She is powered by two powerful Gardner diesel engines and she will achieve speeds of up to twelve knots. The Gemini Explorer entered service at the Clovelly Lifeboat Station on the North Devonshire coast and, after saving 44 lives, was finally retired in 1989. Since then, after extensive re-fits and modifications (including a new galley, high bulwarks, viewing top deck, en-suite accommodation and a well lit saloon), she has been converted to a mini cruise ship and today sails as the Gemini Explorer. However, there are parts of the insides of the vessel that have been kept in their original state to give an exciting insight in to role she once played as a cruising lifeboat. As a mini cruise ship she has voyaged as far away as Greenland and, for the last 10 years, sailed as a charter vessel on the east coast of Scotland. In 2020 after a further refit and upgrade she will be sailing the beautiful islands and sea lochs of Scotland's west coast as part of St Hilda Sea Adventures little fleet. Accommodation The deck saloon is where everyone dines and socialises and where everyone enjoys a convivial atmosphere that is encouraged by shipboard life aboard this ex-cruising lifeboat. Cabins are warm and comfortable with eight berths for our guests. In the forward part of the vessel there is a double en-suite, a twin en-suite and single en-suite. In the aft part of the vessel there is a cabin which can sleep up to three guests (choice of one double bed and two single berths). This aft cabin shares the bathroom with the two crew. All en-suites and the bathroom have a washbasin, toilet and shower. All cabin linen and towels are supplied. There is an upper viewing deck complete with teak benches and perfect for spotting wildlife and relaxing. You also have some deck space to embark your own equipment such as kayaks and paddleboards. You will also be able to use the onboard two person





sea kayak.

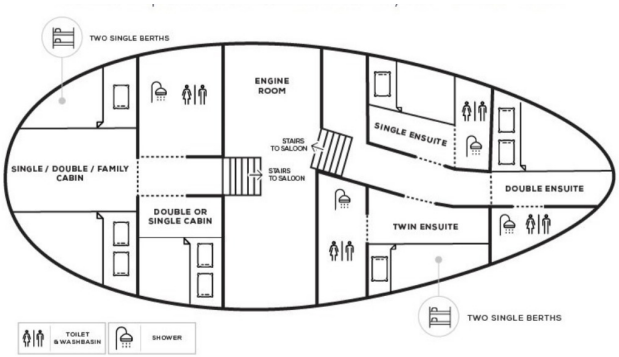
The Small Cruise Ship Collection
www.small-cruise-ships.com

01432 507 280 (within UK)

info@small-cruise-ships.com | **small-cruise-ships.com**



INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Double / Twin Cabin En-suite



Single Cabin



Single Cabin En-suite



Twin / Double Cabin



Twin / Double Cabin En-suite



Twin Cabin Semi En-suite





PRICING

02-May-2027 to 10-May-2027

Single Cabin	£2080 GBP pp
Twin / Double Cabin	£2280 GBP pp
Single Cabin En-suite	£3555 GBP pp
Twin / Double Cabin En-suite	£3555 GBP pp

09-May-2027 to 17-May-2027

Twin Cabin Semi En-suite	£2920 GBP pp
Single Cabin	£2720 GBP pp
Double / Twin Cabin En-suite	£3160 GBP pp

02-Jul-2027 to 10-Jul-2027

Single Cabin	£2720 GBP pp
Double / Twin Cabin En-suite	£3160 GBP pp
Twin Cabin Semi En-suite	£2920 GBP pp

21-Aug-2027 to 29-Aug-2027

Double Cabin adjacent En-suite	£2960 GBP pp
Double Cabin En-suite	£3160 GBP pp
Twin Cabin En-suite	£2960 GBP pp