

SPRING IN THE CLASSICAL WORLD - A VOYAGE FROM VALLETTA TO ATHENS

The seas between Malta and Greece offer access to a wealth of ancient sites, unspoiled islands and traditional towns. Join us aboard the all-suite MS Hebridean Sky as we set sail from Valletta's Grand Harbour to the ancient sites of Sicily and on to the storied landscapes of mainland Greece as we discover some of the Mediterranean's most evocative classical sites. Our voyage begins with four days of exploration in Sicily during which we will be able to appreciate the island's rich legacy of so many invading civilisations. Explore the remarkable Valley of the Temples at Agrigento which reveals some of the finest surviving Greek remains outside of Greece. Inland, the exquisite mosaics of the Villa Romana del Casale offer a vivid glimpse into Roman life, while Catania's striking Baroque architecture, hewn from volcanic stone, stands in the shadow of Mount Etna. In Syracuse, once one of the greatest cities of the ancient world, we will explore atmospheric archaeological sites and enjoy the experience of a private concert in an elegant palazzo. Continuing to Greece and the Peloponnese we will walk among the ruins where the Olympic Games were born before exploring the Byzantine splendours of Mystras or the rugged beauty of the Mani Peninsula from Gythio. In Crete, the legendary Palace of Knossos brings to life the myths of King Minos and the Minotaur, and our penultimate port of Nafplio, one of the most beautiful towns on mainland Greece, provides a charming base from which to explore the great sites of Mycenae, Epidaurus and Nemea, each rich in history and myth. Our custom-made itinerary focuses on many places that the mega cruise ships cannot access and, in addition to our included guided excursions and the magnificent sites we will explore, there will be ample time at leisure for some independent exploration in addition to opportunities to savour regional cuisine and



local wines.

ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Valletta, Malta.

Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky and enjoy welcome drinks and dinner. Sail this evening.

Day 2 Agrigento for Valley of the Temples, Sicily.

Although handsome in its own right and awash with Medieval atmosphere, Agrigento is not our main reason for calling at this southern coast port. Close by is the Valle dei Templi, a series of Doric temples and the most captivating of Sicilian Greek remains, a grouping unique outside Greece. Surrounded in greenery of olive and almond trees, admire the Temple of Hera, the Temple of Concordia, the Dioscuri Temple, the Temple of Olympic Jove and the Temple of Hercules. After lunch on board the afternoon is free to explore Agrigento and shuttles will run from the port to the town and the excellent archaeological museum which you can explore at leisure. This evening we will sail for Licata where we will moor overnight.



Day 3 Licata for Piazza Armerina.

From the port of Licata we travel inland to what is regarded as the finest Roman site in Sicily, the Imperial Roman Villa of Casale, which is located close to Piazza Armerina amidst wooded rolling countryside. This huge villa was built in the 3rd century and has some stunning floor mosaics. Our return drive takes us through the province of Caltanissetta, recognised today as one of the best winemaking regions in Italy thanks above all to its production of high quality, prestigious red wines including Nero D'Avola. We will break our journey at one of these vineyards and enjoy the opportunity to sample some wine over a Sicilian lunch before returning to the ship.

Day 4 Catania.

This morning we arrive in Catania. The architecture here is particularly impressive but a little forbidding being mainly constructed from black lava stone from Mount Etna. During our morning walking tour we will see the magnificent Piazza del Duomo which is a World Heritage Site, St Agatha's Cathedral and the imposing 13th century Castello Ursino. Alternatively join a tour to the slopes of Mount Etna, Europe's largest active volcano. Our drive will take us through scenic countryside, small towns and vineyards before arriving at the Silvestri Craters that were created in the eruption of 1892.

Day 5 Syracuse.

Syracuse was founded by the Greeks in 734 BC and by the 5th century was a political and military power throughout the Mediterranean which rivalled Athens as the largest and most beautiful city in the Greek world. On leaving the vessel we visit the Neapolis Archaeological Park where we will find a well preserved Greek theatre with seats carved from limestone. Paradise Quarry, now an attractive garden and orange grove, was the primary source of that limestone and is the site of the curious 'Ear of Dionysius' a vast grotto with an amplifying resonance. We will continue to explore the island of Ortigia where we will find the Temple of Apollo, considered to be Sicily's most ancient Doric temple and the Baroque Cathedral, erected over the remains of the Temple of Minerva. After lunch on board, the afternoon is free to explore independently before we meet this evening for a private concert in one of the town's palazzos accompanied by local food and wine.

Day 6 At Sea.

Spend a relaxing day at sea as we make our way to Greece.

Day 7 Katakolon for Olympia, Greece.

The port of Katakolon will be our base today for our excursion to Olympia. Pastoral and lush, Olympia's plentiful ruins are shaded by Aleppo pines and olive trees. The fame of Olympia rests upon the Olympic Games. During the celebrations that accompanied the Games, competitors, while not forgetting that they were Athenians, Spartans or from other city states, remembered that they were Greeks and regarded an Olympic victory as the highest honour. We will see the gymnasium, the stadium and the palestra or wrestling school. We will also explore the Altis, or sacred precinct of Zeus, which houses structures including the Temple of Zeus, one of the largest temples on the Greek mainland and the Archaeological Museum which houses some fine sculptures and artefacts from the site. This afternoon is free to explore Katakolon at your own pace before we sail this evening.

Day 8 Gythio.

Arrive this morning at the picturesque port of Gythio from where we have a choice of tours. Perhaps head inland to Mystras, a



remarkably intact Byzantine hillside town that once housed a population of 20,000. Here we visit the Cathedral of Agios Dimitrios, where the two-headed eagle which is the symbol of the Palaeologos Dynasty is carved into a plaque on the floor. Strolling through the narrow lanes of the dead city, we will also visit the Church of Agia Sophia, the Palace of the Despots and the Monastery of Pantanassa, with its brilliant frescoes. Alternatively, join a scenic drive to the Mani Peninsula visiting the villages and enjoying the wonderful views along the coast. Visit Aeropoli, named after Ares, the God of War, for its role in the War of Independence. Here we find tower houses, constructed with field stones, that are distinct from the traditional blue and white buildings that characterise many Greek villages. Following lunch on board, enjoy a leisurely afternoon to explore Gythio at your own pace, maybe take a walk on the promenade, visit the lighthouse or people watch from a waterfront taverna.

Day 9 Heraklion.

From our berth in Heraklion on the island of Crete, it is a short distance to the Palace of Knossos, the legendary home of the Minotaur. Wander around the site impressively excavated by Sir Arthur Evans, seeing some of the 1300 rooms adorned with lively frescoes where King Minos held court. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure in the town, maybe visit the archaeological museum which holds the world's largest collection of Minoan artefacts.

Days 10 & 11 Nafplio.

We have a day and a half in the picturesque port of Nafplio. During our time here we will offer visits to the famous citadel of Mycenae which is located high above the confluence of two boulder-strewn ravines and accessed by way of the Lion Gate. Once inside the gate, we will explore the Royal Palace, the shaft graves and the remains of the city walls. An archaeological briefing within the Treasury of Atreus (also known as the Tomb of Agamemnon) will add to our understanding and appreciation of the sights. We also visit one of Greece's most renowned ancient sites, Epidaurus, which situated on the slopes of a beautiful and wooded valley was known throughout the Hellenic world for its unique medical facilities and healing treatments. Dedicated to Asclepius, the god of healing, the city was filled with curative spas and baths and only priests had access to certain secret sites. Most of the ruins of Epidaurus have been reduced to their foundations, except for the astonishing theatre. Still used for special performances, the theatre is in an admirable state of preservation. Also see Nemea, the site of a religious sanctuary which hosted the pan-Hellenic athletic games every two years from 573 BC until 271 BC. The mythical origin of the Games is sometimes ascribed to Hercules who, after his first labour in which he had to kill the Nemean lion living in the caves of Mount Tritos above the site, established the athletic games in honour of his father, Zeus. Nemea was not a town or settlement but a venue where festivities were held during the games and our tour will include the Temple of Zeus, the bathhouse and the stadium before spending time in the small but excellent onsite museum. Nemea is also famous for its red wines and we will enjoy a wine tasting at a local vineyard before returning to the ship. As we moor overnight there will be time at leisure in Nafplio in the evening to wander the atmospheric, twisting labyrinthine streets and admire the Venetian and Turkish architecture of this charming town.

Day 12 Athens to London.

Disembark this morning in Piraeus and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.



Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

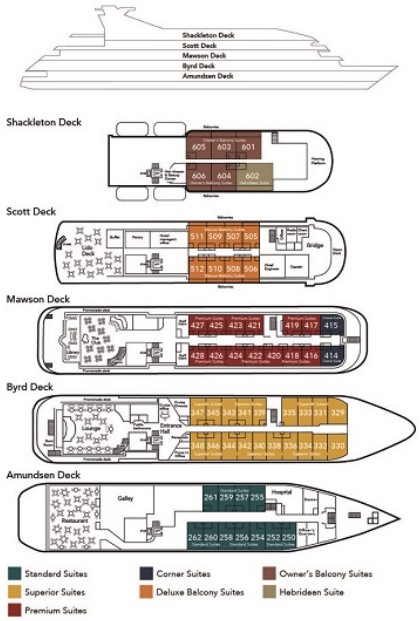
Hebridean Sky has always been known for its effortless elegance, impeccable service and atmosphere of charm and camaraderie. Now we add increased adventure options and an on-site Passenger Service Representative. Hebridean Sky is the perfect blend of luxury and adventurous exploration. Is it a luxury 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.



INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Amundsen Deck Standard Sole



Amundsen Deck Standard Suite



Byrd Deck Superior Sole



Byrd Deck Superior Suite



Mawson Deck Corner Suite



Mawson Deck Premium Suite





Scott Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite



Shackleton Deck Hebridean Suite



Shackleton Deck Owner's Balcony Suite





PRICING

20-Mar-2028 to 31-Mar-2028

Shackleton Deck Hebridean Suite	£11495 GBP pp
Byrd Deck Superior Suite	£8495 GBP pp
Amundsen Deck Standard Suite	£8295 GBP pp
Byrd Deck Superior Sole	£10395 GBP pp
Scott Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite	£10295 GBP pp
Amundsen Deck Standard Sole	£9995 GBP pp
Mawson Deck Corner Suite	£9295 GBP pp
Mawson Deck Premium Suite	£8795 GBP pp
Shackleton Deck Owner's Balcony Suite	£10995 GBP pp