



## The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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## WHALES, WILDLIFE & WINES - A VOYAGE FROM PORTSMOUTH TO MALAGA

Join us aboard the all-suite MS Hebridean Sky for a voyage that will take us along Spain's rugged northern coast to the remarkable Galicia region and around the Iberian coast to Malaga calling into Portugal and Morocco along the way. This ten night voyage has been designed to appeal to those who enjoy being at sea and have a passion for the natural world and we are delighted to have joined forces once again with ORCA, a UK based whale and dolphin conservation charity dedicated to the long-term protection of whales, dolphins and porpoises and their habitats worldwide. As part of ORCA's ongoing education work, Ocean Conservationists will be joining us on board, delivering exciting wildlife experiences and innovative education programmes, teaching guests about the marine environment whilst at the same time collecting critical scientific data about some of the richest habitats in the ocean. We will be sailing through one of the world's top five best whale and dolphin locations as we pass through the English Channel and down into the Bay of Biscay, a rich feeding ground and an important migration route for many species, such as fin whales - the second largest animal on the planet. Large schools of fish are found here feeding on these microscopic plants, which not only provides the perfect pit-stop for migrating fin whales, but also the perfect habitat for a variety of other whale and dolphin species, such as the common dolphin, striped dolphin, Risso's dolphin, sei whales and many more. Journeying towards Spain, we will be met by two deep-sea canyons in which you can find the wonderful world of beaked whales. These elusive mammals are deep diving specialists and we will keep our eyes peeled for the deepest diving mammal on the planet - the Cuvier's beaked

whale. In addition to the marvellous marine wildlife we will encounter, we have designed our itinerary to ensure that there are many more natural world wonders to be experienced. Take the opportunity to visit Portugal's Sado Estuary Natural Reserve from where you can observe colonies of flamingos, spoonbills, herons, cormorants and many other bird species and also Spain's UNESCO World Heritage Site of Donana National Park, an important wetlands area and home to over 200 species of birds as well as mammals including the red deer. For garden enthusiasts we will meander through the Galician countryside visiting the most beautiful Pazos and their gardens and whilst in Tangier our exploration will include a visit to the newly created Donabo Gardens, a botanical oasis by the sea. Other highlights include stepping into the pilgrimage cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, exploring the timeless beauty of Evora and opportunities to sample the local wines in the Galicia and Alentejo regions. It is difficult to imagine a better time than September for our journey, whale and bird migrations from north to south are taking place increasing further the possibility to spot wildlife during our voyage. Just about everything is as perfect as it can be, from the comfortable temperatures to the relatively crowd free sites and our schedule has been planned to ensure that the balance is just right between exploring ashore, relaxing on board and time at leisure for individual exploration. We hope you can join us and the ORCA Ocean Conservationists to discover the wonderful marine and wildlife for yourself on what promises to be an

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unforgettable trip.

## ITINERARY

### Day 1 Portsmouth, England.

Embark the MS Hebridean Sky this afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station at a fixed time.

### Day 2 Lyme Bay & Dartmouth.

At dawn we will be sailing through Lyme Bay and staff will be on deck as we look for common dolphins that can be found in these waters. Later this morning we will sail along the River Dart to our anchorage off the town of Dartmouth. Here you can choose to spend a couple of hours exploring the town or maybe join a Zodiac ride along the river and see the castles and river

fortifications whilst keeping an eye out for wildlife. Over lunch we sail out to the English Channel where the shallow waters are home to several species of whale, dolphin and porpoise. Regular sightings in these waters include minke whales, common dolphins, bottlenose dolphins and harbour porpoises. A few lucky spotters could even see some rarer visitors, including the second largest animal on the planet - the fin whale, long-finned pilot whales, Risso's dolphin and even the iconic humpback whale. Keep an eye out for playful bow-riding dolphins who leap in the waves made by the ship as we sail through these waters.

### Day 3 Shelf Edge, Bay of Biscay.

Overnight we have sailed into the Bay of Biscay which is one of the most exciting areas in the world for whale and dolphin watching. A dramatic change in water depth from 150 to 4000 metres creates the perfect mixing bowl of nutrients that promote large algal blooms. These microscopic plants are the catalyst for drawing in ocean giants, who feed on the large schools of fish sustained by this explosion of life. We spend the day cruising in these rich feeding grounds, keeping a lookout for fin whales, sei whales, minke whales, long-finned pilot whales, Risso's dolphins, bottlenose dolphins, striped dolphins and common dolphins. Around one-third of the world's whale and dolphin species can be sighted in Biscay - with orca and blue whales being among the occasional visitors, meaning it is always an exciting area to watch for wildlife.

### Day 4 Canyons.

Arrive this morning in the southern Bay of Biscay. Around 2-30 kilometres off the coast of Spain, lies the Santander and Torrelavega Canyons which are both more than twice the depth of the Grand canyon. These colossal trenches are the perfect

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habitat for some of the most elusive and interesting whale and dolphin species, such as the Cuvier's beaked whale. This mindboggling species is the deepest diving mammal on the planet, they can hold their breath for an astonishing 3 hours and 42 minutes, and dive to an incredible 2,992 metres. Other beaked whales sighted here include the Sowerby's beaked whale, northern bottlenose whale and True's beaked whale, as well as other marine mammal species like the pilot whale and sperm whale. So keep your eyes peeled for some of the most exciting and unusual species you might spot.

### Day 5 Whale Watching & Ferrol, Spain.

Spend the morning cruising along the northern Iberian Coast which is home to around 22 whale and dolphin species including the harbour porpoise, common dolphin, bottlenose dolphin, and Risso's dolphin. Several members of the iconic "blackfish" have also been sighted in these waters, including regular sightings of the longfinned pilot whale and occasional sightings of orca and false killer whale. Further offshore species such as the striped dolphin, Cuvier's beaked whale, Sowerby's beaked whale, sperm whale, minke and fin whale can be spotted. Over lunch we arrive in Galicia at the port of Ferrol from where we head to the Estaca de Bares, the northernmost headland in Spain. Between August and November this is on the route of the seabird migration south with thousands of birds passing each day. Maybe also walk to the observation station or the lighthouse. Alternatively spend the afternoon in Ferrol which grew following the construction of a naval base in 1750. Explore the historic streets of the Magdalena neighbourhood where we find the Cathedral of St Julian, the town hall and local market.

### Day 6 Vilagarcia de Arousa & Santiago de Compostela.

Continuing our time in Galicia we have a choice of excursions today. You may wish to visit some of the wonderful houses and gardens of the region. Visit the Pazo de Oca, a Baroque stately home known as the 'Galician Versailles' and 'El Generalife of the north' due to the beauty of its gardens. We also visit see the 15th century Pazo de Rubianes where we find one of the three official lordships in Spain. Explore the 11 hectare garden before we visit the Pazo's vineyards to learn about the local Albarino wine production and enjoy a tasting. Alternatively, visit Santiago de Compostela, the capital of the autonomous community of Galicia. The city's cathedral is the destination of the important Medieval pilgrimage routes which are still walked today. For those keen to walk some of the route there will be the chance to hike a section before transferring to Santiago. Otherwise transfer directly to the site where we will visit the Conventual de San Francisco, the Faculty of Medicine and the world-famous Plaza del Obradoiro. Inside the cathedral, we will visit the Romanic crypt and see the facade of Platerias, the Quintana Plaza, House of Parra, the facade of Azabacheria, and the facade of San Martin Pinario.

### Day 7 Figueira da Foz, Portugal.

Located at the mouth of the Mondego River, Figueira da Foz is one of central Portugal's prime beach resorts. This morning we will have a few hours of free time to explore the town or the coastline. This afternoon you choose to visit the nearby city of Coimbra, the Medieval capital of Portugal for over 100 years, and the site of the country's greatest university for the past five centuries. On a walking tour we will view the stunning buildings from the 16th to 18th centuries, including the Paco das Escolas (Royal Palace) and the Monastery of Santa Cruz before we head to the university which was recently appointed UNESCO status.

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Alternatively, drive to the Bairrada wine-producing region and visit the Alianca Underground Museum which is part winery, part art museum. Here we can explore a network of underground tunnels housing an extraordinary collection of African and Portuguese art alongside cellars crammed with huge oak barrels of maturing wines and brandies. Our visit will end with a tasting before we return to the ship.

#### Day 8 Setubal & Evora.

Moor today in the the picturesque port of Setubal where we have a choice of excursions including a full day tour to visit the Alentejo region. We will 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 will see the well preserved Roman Temple, St Francisco Church and the Chapel of Bones before exploring the charming squares. Alentejo is a highly respected wine region traditionally producing red wines from the Tempranillo and Trincadeira grapes. We will enjoy lunch in a vineyard including a tasting before we return to the MS Hebridean Sky. Alternatively, join a birdwatching boat excursion to the Sado Estuary Natural Reserve, one of the best natural areas in Portugal, from where you can observe colonies of flamingos, spoonbills, herons, cormorants and many other species. After lunch on board enjoy an afternoon at leisure. Be on deck as we sail in the early evening into Setubal Bay where we hope to spot some of the resident bottlenose dolphins.

#### Day 9 Huelva, Spain.

After a morning at sea we arrive in the Andalucian port of Huelva, on the Costa de la Luz, from where Christopher Columbus set sail for what turned out to be the New World in 1492. Learn more about this historic voyage at the Muelle de

las Carabelas Museum where we find replicas of the ships. Also visit the 14th century La Rabida Monastery which was declared a national monument in 1856 and is where Columbus stayed whilst preparing for his voyage. Alternatively, visit Donana National Park, one of the most important wetlands in Europe and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Located on the banks of the Rio Guadalquivir the park is a vast area of coastal beaches, sand dunes, forest and freshwater marshes and home to over 200 species of birds as well as mammals including the red deer. We will use 4x4 vehicles to access the park and enjoy a series of nature walks on the lookout for wildlife.

#### Day 10 Tangier, Morocco.

This morning we arrive in North Africa at the port of Tangier. A short drive will bring us to the Donabo Gardens, located on the coast with wonderful sea views. Divided into ten sections we can explore the Moroccan garden that celebrates the tradition of tea, the mints maze where multiple varieties blend their fragrances along the alleys, a rose garden thriving in the cool shade and the pollinators garden purposely designed to attract bees. Later we can explore the city where on a walking tour we will visit the Medina, enjoy the views from the Kasbah situated at the highest point of Tangier, and wander through the Grand Souk.

#### Day 11 Malaga, Spain to London or Manchester.

Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London or Manchester.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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## YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

**YOUR SHIP:** Hebridean Sky

**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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## 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

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## PRICING

07-Sep-2026 to 17-Sep-2026

Amundsen Deck Standard Suite	£6495 GBP pp
Byrd Deck Superior Sole	£7295 GBP pp
Mawson Deck Corner Suite	£7195 GBP pp
Amundsen Deck Standard Sole	£6995 GBP pp
Mawson Deck Premium Suite	£6995 GBP pp
Shackleton Deck Owner's Balcony Suite	£7795 GBP pp
Scott Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite	£7495 GBP pp
Shackleton Deck Hebridean Suite	£7995 GBP pp
Byrd Deck Superior Suite	£6795 GBP pp