


# WONDERS OF MADAGASCAR & THE SEYCHELLES CRUISE

Join us aboard the MS Island Sky for this island hopping expedition through the Indian Ocean which will appeal to those who enjoy the natural world and all its wonders, travelling aboard a small ship and staying clear of the well-beaten tourist tracks. The all-suite MS Island Sky with her fleet of Zodiac landing craft is the perfect vessel for such an enterprise. Carrying just over 100 guests, she is a far cry from the latest breed of cruise ships and can visit small islands which larger vessels cannot access. Your experience will be made all the more memorable by the expert crew and officers, who along with our expedition team of marine biologists, ornithologists and botanists who have many years of experience in the Indian Ocean and will provide commentary on all we see. Setting sail from Mauritius we will land on its nearest neighbour, Reunion, a little bit of France in the Indian Ocean and a truly stunning place. We will spend the day exploring its truly awesome and dramatic landscape before continuing to Madagascar where we will have four days to explore the incredible verdant and beautiful island and its unique flora and fauna. Continuing to the Seychelles, one of the highlights of the voyage will be our time spent exploring the Aldabra Islands, the last breeding ground of the giant tortoise and in addition to seeing some of these endearing creatures, we should also encounter dolphins, turtles and whales as well as countless birds including the flightless rail, the last flightless bird in the Indian Ocean. To explore the abundant crystal clear waters of the vast lagoon and to set foot on atolls that have never been exploited by the hand of man is a rare experience. Our itinerary is a veritable feast of beauty and the natural world. You will witness the bounty of the islands, the wildlife from the lemurs of Madagascar to the giant tortoises of Aldabra, an amazingly prolific birdlife and a mesmerising underwater life.






## ITINERARY

Day 1 Mauritius.

Arrive to Mauritius and transfer to the MS Island Sky moored in Port Louis. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner on board as we sail this evening.

Day 2 Reunion Island.

Arrive at breakfast in Reunion where we have a choice of excursions. On a full day tour we will visit the central highlands, where spectacularly rugged peaks of volcanoes cradle huge amphitheatres known as cirques, where mountains tower to over 10,000 feet and magnificent waterfalls plummet hundreds of feet. The rich soil and mellow climate create a verdant landscape, dotted with villages and towns with a distinct French atmosphere. Fields of sugar cane and plantations of tropical fruits, vanilla and all manner of spices perfume the air. Enjoy panoramic views from the Nez des Boeuf and visit the crater of Piton de la Fournaise. After a Creole lunch in a local restaurant, we will visit La Cite du Volcan museum. Alternatively, take a morning tour to a vanilla plantation in Saint Andre to learn about the history and cultural importance of the crop, an integral part of Reunion's heritage. Continue to Salazie, a verdant landscape and home to many waterfalls including the 'Voile de la Mariee' before spending some free time in Saint Denis on the way back to the ship for an afternoon at leisure.

Day 3 At Sea.

Spend a relaxing day at sea as we sail towards Madagascar. Perhaps attend a lecture or simply relax on deck and enjoy the passing seascapes.

Days 4 & 5 Nosy Mangabe & Masoala National Park, Madagascar.

Spend two days exploring from our anchorage in Antongil Bay. Discover Nosy Mangabe, a 520-hectare island reserve and one of Madagascar's most diverse areas of virgin rainforest. The island has served as an important research centre since the mid-1960s when several aye-ayes and other lemurs were released into the forest. Using our Zodiacs we will land on a beach next to the forest and enjoy guided nature walks looking at the varied trees, plants and ferns and we hope to spot chameleon, lizards and black and white ruffed lemur. For the birders, we will keep an eye out for Madagascar buzzard, kingfisher and paradise flycatchers. We will also explore Madagascar's largest protected National Park, the Masoala Peninsula, which comprises of coastal rainforest, flooded forests, marsh and mangroves. With luck, we may encounter the endemic red-ruffed lemur. The park is also home to various species of brightly coloured Mantella frogs, all manner of extraordinary chameleons and is a refuge for the endangered Madagascar red owl, Madagascar serpent eagle and many endemic bird species. A range of walks for all levels will be on offer, as well as a visit to the local village.

Day 6 Vohemar.

After a morning at sea, arrive over lunch at the port of Vohemar. This afternoon, there is a choice of tours. Set out to explore Daraina Forest, a protected area in Loky Manambato. The undulating hills covered with deciduous and semi ever green forest are home to one of the world's rarest primates, the golden crowned sifaka, as well as Daraina sportive lemur and Sanford's brown lemur. The forest is one of the richest and most ecologically sensitive areas in the north of the island. Its isolation and lack of tourist infrastructure ensure an unspoilt and tranquil experience. Alternatively, for those that would like




to experience a bit of local life there will be a tour of Vohemar. From the port, set out on a walking tour through the city taking in the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Visit the Catholic church and continue along the seaside promenade where pirogues line the beach, and fishermen untangle their nets. There will also be an opportunity to sample the local rice cake, mokary vary, one of the most popular street foods in Madagascar. Continue by tuk tuk to a nearby vanilla plantation, where we will learn about the process of cultivation, harvest and transformation of vanilla for export. Vanilla is the region's main economic resource. Return to the port by tuk tuk, with the opportunity to visit the local market for those who wish.

### Day 7 Diego Suarez.

This morning we will enter the dramatic harbour of Diego Suarez, also known as Antsiranana. The town has a cosmopolitan mix of inhabitants, including Creoles, Indians, Chinese, Comorans and Arabs. Take a city tour including the Commonwealth Cemetery, the faded colonial grandeur of Place Joffre, and a baobab viewpoint at French Mountain; or alternatively, drive up to the Amber Mountain National Park at an elevation of 3,200 feet, where we will divide into short and long walking parties to explore the pristine rainforest. Amid the towering vegetation, we may encounter Sanford's brown and crowned lemurs, as well as chameleons, stunningly well camouflaged leaf-tailed geckos, and an array of endemic birds. We will depart this afternoon, continuing our voyage towards the Seychelles.

### Days 8 to 10 Aldabra Islands, Seychelles.

Arriving in the Outer Seychelles we have two and a half days to enjoy the remarkable Aldabra group of islands. Our itinerary will be in the hands of our Expedition Leader and Captain, who will monitor the local conditions to ensure we maximise our time here. Whilst our itinerary is flexible, we hope to call at the island of Assumption which was ruthlessly plundered for its vast deposits of guano in the early 20th century. Happily, peace has returned, and the wildlife of rare birds and green turtles are once again in abundance. Our time here will be spent beachcombing, on nature walks or snorkelling. We will also plan time on Aldabra, the island referred to by Sir Julian Huxley as "One of nature's treasures and should belong to the whole world". Aldabra is truly unique, and every time we call at what is believed to be the world's largest atoll we find something new of interest. Sightings have included the extremely rare white throated rail, while the atoll is also home to the world's second largest colony of frigate birds and the largest crab, the coconut crab. Whilst exploring by Zodiac it is difficult to know in which direction to look first. The clear blue seas abound with life, the skies are alive with varied birdlife and ashore giant land tortoises forage as they have done for millions of years. We hope to explore Picard Island with a short walk to see some of the numerous tortoises and robber crabs or swim in the lagoon, a vast 17 mile stretch of shallow clear water. From our Zodiacs we can watch the ever-changing undersea world and snorkel in colourful coral waters. Meanwhile, at Cosmoledo a huge ring of twelve islands circles a lagoon. Many of the atolls are still to be surveyed and we will explore some of them by Zodiac. This is an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area with all three species of booby found in the Seychelles including the last breeding site for the brown booby. We also hope to spot sooty terns and great frigate birds ashore and encounter turtles as we swim and snorkel in the lagoon.

### Day 11 At Sea.

Spend a leisurely day on board as we continue our journey across the Indian Ocean.




Day 12 Amirante Islands.

This morning we arrive at the 28 islands in the Amirante Group which were discovered by Vasco de Gama in 1501 and are considered to be some of the most pristine and untouched islands in the world. If conditions permit we will visit Poivre Atoll which is made up of three islands. In the past the islands were used for vanilla, nuts, maize, cattle and pig farming but in recent years, the atolls' landscapes have become a popular nesting ground for bird species like Chinese and blue heron, whimbrels, fodies, noddies and greater frigate birds. The sandy shores are also important nesting grounds for hawksbill and green turtles.

Day 13 Aride & Curieuse.

Early this morning we arrive at the Inner Seychelles and hope to anchor off Aride, one of the finest and most important seabird islands in the Indian Ocean. Over one million seabirds breed on the island including tropical shearwater, lesser noddy, frigatebirds and roseate tern and also five species unique to the Seychelles such as the Seychelles warbler and Seychelles magpie robin. The island is largely covered in native woodland including the endemic Wright's gardenia, a shrub with beautifully scented flowers found nowhere else in the world. We will spend our final afternoon on the island of a rugged island that was once home to a leper colony and now houses an eco-museum and visitor centre. The island is an important nesting site for hawksbill turtles and boasts endemic vines and mangroves which we will explore during our island walk.

Day 14 Mahe to London or Manchester.

Disembark this morning.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.




# 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

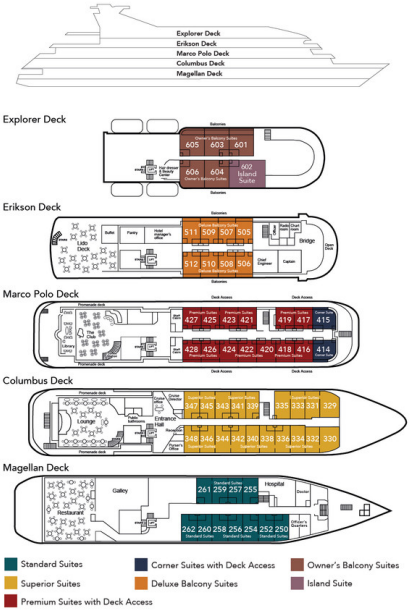
also WI-FI access throughout the vessel. Outside there is a rear sun deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade, a bar and comfortable deck furniture for sun bathing or relaxing with a book. On the top deck there is a Jacuzzi and further observation and sun deck. There is also a small hairdressers 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

**17-Nov-2027 to 30-Nov-2027**

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| Columbus Deck Superior Suite | £10545 GBP pp |
| Explorer Deck Owner's Balcony Suite | £12645 GBP pp |
| Erikson Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite | £12145 GBP pp |
| Magellan Deck Standard Single | £11145 GBP pp |
| Columbus Deck Superior Single | £11545 GBP pp |
| Magellan Deck Standard Suite | £10145 GBP pp |
| Marco Polo Deck Corner Suite | £11445 GBP pp |
| Marco Polo Deck Premium Suite | £10945 GBP pp |
| Explorer Deck Island Suite | £13145 GBP pp |