

SPECIAL  
OFFER - SAVE  
**£200**  
PER PERSON

# BEYOND THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

A CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF IRELAND  
ABOARD THE MS SERENISSIMA

4<sup>TH</sup> TO 16<sup>TH</sup> & 16<sup>TH</sup> TO 28<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2023

NOBLE CALEDONIA



Bantry House overlooking Bantry Bay

“ Have you ever been across the sea to Ireland? If you are reading this then chances are that you have, but I am constantly surprised when I meet people in the UK that have not ventured on the short flight or 60 mile ferry crossing to the Emerald Isle.



I am a proud Hibernophile, I return many times each year and have done so for 50 years. I don't need to tell you that it's one of the most beautiful countries in the world, being constantly voted so by travel writers. But, it is so much more. Culturally rich with amazingly gifted writers, poets, musicians and actors and historically fascinating with a history stretching back some 10,000 years.

During this circumnavigation of Ireland, we will learn much of Ireland's forgotten past from the arrival of Christianity in the 5th century, followed by the Vikings and the Anglo Normans to the more recent and often troubled history. A republic and independent nation for barely 100 years it has witnessed enormous changes particularly in the last couple of decades. With a population of less than Yorkshire, it has achieved so much to be proud of and during our in-depth exploration we will aim not only to show its beauty but delve into its past to gain a better understanding of modern day Ireland.

For many the highlight will be our visits to some of Ireland's grandest houses and gardens set amidst stunning and uniquely Irish landscapes. However, perhaps most of all it will be the charm and warmth of the people that make any trip to Ireland most memorable. As we set sail from Liverpool, a city steeped in Irish history, we can offer an enlightening and entertaining journey and given the joy de vivre of the Irish we can promise, it will not be boring.

Andrew Cochrane, Noble Caledonia Founder & Director



## The Itinerary

**Day 1 Liverpool, England.** Embark the MS Serenissima this afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Liverpool Lime Street Station at a fixed time. Alternatively car parking will be available at the port. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail this evening.

**Day 2 Dun Laoghaire & Dublin, Ireland.** We start our exploration of Ireland in Dublin. From our berth in Dun Laoghaire a city tour will include Merrion and Fitzwilliam Squares and the famous 'Doorways of Dublin'. We will also see the National Gallery, Dublin Castle and the city's cathedrals. See the famous Guinness Brewery before ending at Trinity College, Ireland's oldest college, founded in 1592, where we can wander through the grounds. This afternoon we travel south of the city to discover

the magnificent gardens at Powerscourt. The gardens span 20 hectares and are a blend of formal gardens, sweeping terraces, statuary and ornamental lakes together with secret hollows, rambling walks, walled gardens and over 200 variations of trees and shrubs. The gardens were begun in the 18th century although most of what we see today dates from the 19th century.

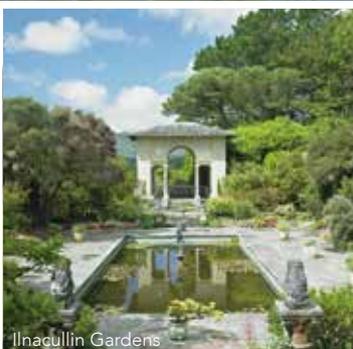
**Day 3 Waterford & Kilkenny.** From our berth in Waterford we will drive inland to the Medieval city of Kilkenny. The great building prowess of the Normans is very evident in the 11th and 12th century buildings bestowed on the city. Characterised by many beautifully restored buildings, the most splendid is Kilkenny Castle that was until recently a



Powerscourt House & Gardens



Kilkenny Castle



Innacullin Gardens



Kylemore Abbey

stronghold of the Butler family. The castle began life as a Norman fortress and gradually became more domesticated through the centuries. After exploring the interior including the gallery with portraits by Van Dyck and Lely we can wander in the surrounding 21 hectares of gardens. On the famous Medieval mile which leads from the castle to the city we can see the St Canices Round Tower, the 13th century St Mary's Church and the enchanting Rothe Gardens. Return to the MS Serenissima for lunch and enjoy a leisurely afternoon to explore Waterford, Ireland's oldest city, at your own pace. Maybe visit the excellent Medieval Museum, the Viking built Reginald's Tower or the House of Waterford Crystal. Alternatively join a tour to Mount Congreve, a spectacular woodland garden on the banks of the River Suir. This privately owned, seventy acre garden has a collection of over three thousand trees and shrubs. Enjoy time to walk the numerous paths bordered with giant hydrangeas and visit the vantage points with views over the landscape and meadows beyond.

**Day 4 Kinsale & Cork.** Arrive in County Cork at the picturesque harbour town of Kinsale. As we sail into the town we pass the impressive fortifications of Charles Fort and James Fort which were built in the 17th century to protect against invading Spanish forces. However today Kinsale is renowned for its brightly coloured buildings and glorious harbour setting which you can explore at your own pace. Renowned as the gourmet capital

of Ireland you may wish to take a break in one of the cafés, pubs or restaurants. From Kinsale we will also drive the short distance to Ireland's second city of Cork for a leisurely walk around the compact 800 year old city. Experience the smells and sounds of the English Market which dates back to 1610, stroll the busy lanes of the 18th century Huguenot Quarter and wonder at the magnificent Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral.

**Day 5 Garnish Island & Bantry.** We anchor this morning off the sheltered harbour of Bantry and drive to nearby Glengarriff where local boats will take us to Garnish Island. Here we visit the beautiful Innacullin Gardens where the sheltered position and Gulf Stream is favourable to the growth of ornamental plants, many normally only found in sub-tropical or Mediterranean climates. We return by local boats sailing past 'Seal Island', home to 250 common seals. After lunch on board we will walk to Bantry House, overlooking Bantry Bay. We will explore the house, one of the finest historic houses in Ireland along with the gardens.

**Day 6 Skellig Islands & Kerry.** Over breakfast we will arrive off The Skelligs, tiny islands just off the magnificent coast of the Dingle Peninsula. Weather permitting, we will sail around these mystical islands with their early Christian history. Skellig Michael is a World Heritage Site and atop this rugged pyramid, that rises from the sea, are the ruins of a monastery. Meanwhile at Little Skellig the sky

can on occasion turn white as some of the 20,000 pairs of breeding gannets leave their roosts. We will continue along the famous Kerry (Iveragh) peninsula and anchor at the port of Knightstown on Valentia Island. Spend the afternoon exploring the island, perhaps take a coastal walk, visit the tropical gardens at Glanleam or join an island drive including the Cromwell Point Lighthouse. Alternatively take the scenic drive around the Ring of Kerry including the charming villages of Waterville and Sneem whilst also taking in the stunning views from the Coomakista Pass and Killarney National Park. We are also requesting permission to visit Derrynane House, the ancestral home of Daniel O'Connell, known as the 'Liberator' and a key player in the emancipation of Irish Catholics in the early 19th century.

**Day 7 Galway.** From our berth in Galway we explore the beautiful region of Connemara. Here the National Park covers nearly 3000 hectares of scenic mountains, heaths and woodland and is home to herds of ponies. By driving along the 'Wild Atlantic Way' we will see beautiful coves, bays and traditional fishing villages where we can experience local culture in this Irish speaking part of the country. Also visit Kylemore Abbey which is set on a lake against a backdrop of the Connemara Mountains and home to Ireland's only Benedictine order of nuns who have restored and cared for the Kylemore estate since 1920. Uniquely, only Victorian varieties of flowers and vegetables are grown in the walled garden which contains two distinct areas:

the kitchen garden and the flower garden.

**Day 8 Cliffs of Moher & Aran Islands.** This morning we will cruise by the magnificent Cliffs of Moher which rise to 213 metres and are over five miles long. A little further up the coast and some 30 miles from the Galway Coast are the Aran Islands. We will call into the largest, Inishmore and explore some of the early Christian sites. This island was a place of monastic study from the earliest Christian times. Also, see the dramatic stone fort of Dun Aonghusa, parts of which date back some 3000 years.

**Day 9 Donegal.** After a morning at sea we arrive in Donegal at the village of Killybegs from where we have a choice of excursions. Choose to drive west to the Glencolmille area, a Gaeltacht (Irish speaking) area steeped in culture and rich in folklore and music. One of the most scenic areas in Ireland, the drive through the countryside is outstanding. The Folk Museum which opened in 1967 is a monument to Father James McDyer who came to the village in 1952 and set about infusing the local people with a spirit of self-reliance and pride in their heritage. Here we will learn about the history of the area and be treated to some traditional Irish music. Alternatively visit the charming Salthill Gardens. Located some 200 yards from the sea, this old walled garden has been gradually transformed by Elizabeth Temple into something very special. Independent of trends, this delightful half hectare enclosure



offers a feeling of privacy and mystery that is particular to old walled gardens. A short drive takes us to the shores of lovely Lough Eske where those feeling active may wish to take the two kilometre Ard na Mona Woods walk which skirts the lough, taking in the Fairy Glen, giant redwoods and Castle O'Donnell, a Medieval tower house from where the 'Flight of the Earls' began in 1607 signalling the end of Gaelic rule in Ireland.

**Day 10 Glenveagh & Tory Island.**

We will use our Zodiacs today to land at Magheraroarty from where we drive through the scenic landscapes of northern Donegal to Glenveagh National Park where we find the wonderful 19th century castle built on the shores of Lough Veagh. Surrounded by magnificent mountains, pristine lakes and native oak woods this is a magical place. After a tour of the castle we will explore the woodland gardens set in the starkly dramatic shadows of the Kinnaveagh, Dooish and Staghall Mountains. The original Victorian garden was first laid out in 1885 and then extensively developed in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. The walled garden is a stunning affair as is the Tuscan garden, Italian terrace and the famous 67 steps. Over lunch we sail the short distance to Tory Island, located off the northwest coast of Ireland and home to 150 or so Gaelic speakers. It is the most remote inhabited Irish island; although only 14 miles offshore, it feels like many more and island life here is full of traditions. We will meet some of the local community

in the village hall and enjoy some of their legendary storytelling, music and dance. Tory Island is also famous for its migratory birds and we hope to hear the calls of the corncrake for which the island is known.

**Day 11 Giants Causeway & Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland.**

From our anchorage in Portrush we will visit The Giant's Causeway which became widely known from the 1700s as the 'Eighth Wonder of the World' and large numbers of visitors came to view this amazing array of basalt columns of which there are estimated to be around 40,000 in total. After a stop at Dunluce Castle, we return to the ship and sail to Rathlin Island. Located just a few miles from the North Antrim coast, Rathlin has been settled for more than 6000 years. Today, there are only 80 or so souls, whereas before the famine there were 1200 inhabitants. History is everywhere with historic buildings and ruins which we will explore with our local guides.

**Day 12 Belfast.** Arrive in the Northern Irish capital where we will make our way to the famous gardens at Mount Stewart which were planted in the 1920s by Edith, Lady Londonderry and are of international importance. The magnificent series of outdoor 'rooms' and vibrant parterres contain many rare plants that thrive in the mild climate of the Ards Peninsula. There will be time to explore the opulent house which reveals a fascinating heritage and historic world-

famous artefacts and artwork. After lunch on board we explore Belfast where a city drive will include the Grand Opera House and the Albert Memorial before passing Queen's University and the Botanic Gardens. Our final stop is the Titanic Experience, located right beside the historic site of this world-famous ship's construction. Housed in an iconic, six-floor building, this state-of-the-art visitor experience tells the story of the Titanic, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900s, through her construction and launch, to her famous maiden voyage and tragic end.

**Day 13 Liverpool, England.**

Disembark this morning. Transfers will be provided to Liverpool Lime Street Station at a fixed time.

**SHIP TO SHORE**

This voyage is a combination of both expedition style cruising and small ship destination cruising. Whilst we will be alongside in some ports, on many days we will be at anchor and the vessel's Zodiacs will be utilised to transport passengers ashore and for Zodiac cruising to explore the more remote places we will be visiting. The use of Zodiacs will be key to the operation of the itinerary shown.



**PRICES PER PERSON**

Based on double occupancy

**SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £200 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY**

Cat	Cabin Description	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
2	Standard Stateroom	£5495	£5295
3	Classic Stateroom	£5795	£5595
4	Superior Stateroom	£6095	£5895
5	Deluxe Stateroom	£6795	£6595
6	Junior Suite	£7295	£7095
7	Owner's Suite	£7595	£7395
8	Serenissima Suite	£7795	£7595
10	Standard Single	£6795	£6595

**PRICE INCLUDES:** 12 nights aboard the MS Serenissima on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia onboard team including Guest Speaker • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.  
**Not Included:** Travel insurance.

# MS SERENISSIMA



Harald Jarl Lounge



Venice Restaurant



Andrea Lounge

The charming MS Serenissima began her career as the Harald Jarl, cruising the Norwegian coastline and fjords. Since 2003, when she was extensively renovated, she has been operating as a classic cruise ship. Previously known as the MS Andrea, she was upgraded again in 2013 and started her new life as the MS Serenissima. With her small size she can navigate into small, remote ports inaccessible to the big cruise ships and appears an impressive sight when moored. With her fleet of Zodiacs, she is capable of both destination and expedition cruising.

## Your Cabin/Suite

Accommodating no more than 95 passengers, there are eight different grades of cabins arranged over five decks, and all feature either windows or portholes. The cabins are attractively designed for comfort and convenience. All cabins are fully air conditioned with an en-suite bathroom with shower (please note cabins 601 - 605 and 507 have a bath with shower attachment) and a selection of toiletries in addition to a hairdryer, robes and slippers. All cabins come equipped with telephone, flat screen television, safety deposit box and other thoughtful appointments. Refillable water bottles are available in all cabins for use on board. Due to the very nature of the ship, the cabins vary in shape and size, adding to the vessel's overall charm.



## Your Dining

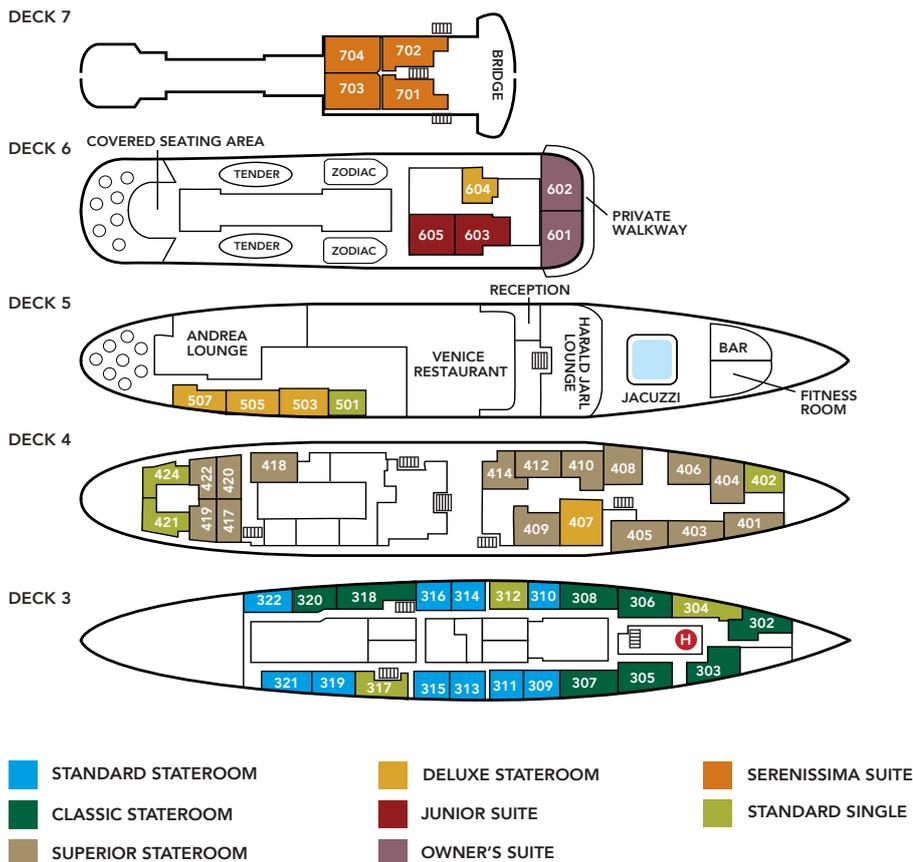
The free seating Venice Restaurant accommodates all guests in one sitting and, with its Deck 5 location, all of the tables benefit from great views. The picture windows also make the restaurant wonderfully light and airy. Breakfast is served buffet-style with cooked dishes available and eggs to order by the ship's accomplished chef. Lunch is also served buffet-style

with hot and cold dishes available. Dinner is served à la carte and is four courses, except at the Captain's Dinner, which is a six course affair. Where possible, local produce is sourced for an authentic dining experience. A choice of red or white wine, beer and soft drinks is included at lunch and dinner. In good weather there are al fresco dining facilities available and tea and coffee are available around the clock in the Andrea Lounge.

## Your Space

The facilities on board include two lounges – the larger Andrea Lounge is comfortable and spacious and the smaller Harald Jarl Lounge is more intimate. There is also a small library and Wi-Fi is available at an extra cost throughout the vessel. The outside areas really are something special. A spacious observation deck allows 360 degree views of the passing scenery. From here, step down to the lido area with Jacuzzi and outside bar. The covered seating area at the back of Deck 6 is ideal for relaxing with a drink in hand. Perhaps, one of the best known and loved features of this vessel is its unique style. During the major refit in Sweden the then owners commissioned Swedish interior designers to create a country house style which has recently been updated with some Art Deco styling which works particularly well on a vessel of this vintage, providing intimacy and a classic nautical sensibility often lacking in larger vessels.

# MS SERENISSIMA DECK PLAN & CABINS



NB. Please note cabin sizes vary in each category and measurements shown are approximate.



**SERENISSIMA SUITE**  
(25 square metres)



**OWNER'S SUITE**  
(22 square metres)



**JUNIOR SUITE**  
(21 square metres)



**DELUXE STATEROOM**  
(15 to 25 square metres)



**SUPERIOR STATEROOM**  
(11.5 to 18 square metres)



**CLASSIC STATEROOM**  
(14 to 19 square metres)



**STANDARD STATEROOM**  
(10 to 11.5 square metres)



**STANDARD SINGLE**  
(7 to 12.5 square metres)



Lido Deck



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Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.  
Cover image: Scenery of the Wild Atlantic Way.