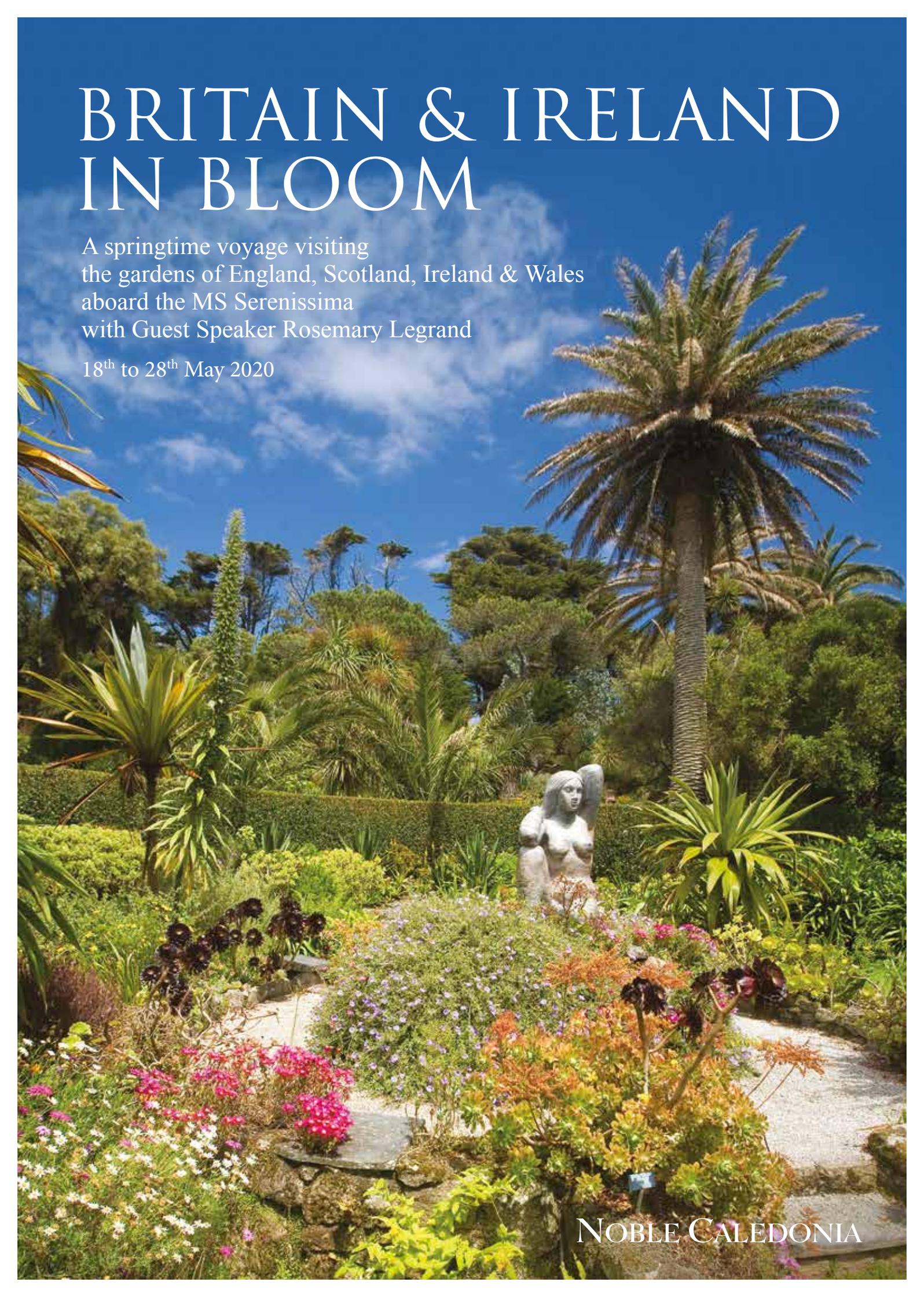


BRITAIN & IRELAND IN BLOOM

A springtime voyage visiting
the gardens of England, Scotland, Ireland & Wales
aboard the MS Serenissima
with Guest Speaker Rosemary Legrand

18th to 28th May 2020

A vibrant garden scene under a clear blue sky. A large, tall palm tree stands prominently on the right. In the center, a classical statue of a woman is partially obscured by a dense bed of colorful flowers, including purple and pink blossoms. The garden is filled with various plants, including a large green spiky plant on the left and a well-manicured hedge in the background. The overall atmosphere is bright and sunny.

NOBLE CALEDONIA



Abbey gardens, Treviso

During the month of May our western shores and Ireland become alive with colour. This is a spectacularly beautiful time when many of the gardens, estates and national parks are at their most appealing and the countryside will be lush and inviting. The gardens of Britain and Ireland have a unique quality and from the formal and manicured, to the wilder and more natural, our itinerary includes some of the most beautiful and diverse gardens which in spring are a sight to gladden any heart.

Of course our main emphasis will be on gardens and amongst the highlights are visits to the stunning sub-tropical Abbey Gardens on Treviso; the splendid gardens of Gigha, which defy the Atlantic elements so admirably; and some delightful Irish gardens which have a unique quality, the 'soft' weather and green mountain backdrops making for lovely views. Each day there will also be the opportunity to experience the sheer diversity of the coastline, see the resident wildlife, enjoy the wonderful views on offer and appreciate the history of the region.

All of this makes for a most appealing sea journey whether you be an avid gardener, birdwatcher or simply enjoy sailing past and visiting some of the most enchanting places in the world. The MS Serenissima is the perfect small ship for such a venture as, with a maximum of just 95 passengers and a fleet of nimble Zodiac craft, we can explore places otherwise inaccessible to the larger ships.



Guest Speaker – Rosemary Legrand



Rosemary is a former nursery owner and daughter of the late George Hyde, who was a hybridist of azaleas and rhododendrons. Many of his award-winning hybrid plants can be seen at the Royal Horticultural Society's gardens at Wisley, Surrey, the de Rothschild rhododendron gardens at Exbury, Hampshire, and the National Trust Gardens at Kingston Lacy in Dorset. Rosemary had the honour of presenting HM The Queen with a collection of her late father's azaleas named after the Queen's former Head Gardener, Fred Nutbeam, at Chelsea Flower Show in 1996. She has travelled extensively to gardens in many parts of the world and is an experienced public speaker. She is on RHS Speakers Register and also speaks for NADFAS; she wrote a number of contributions for the book, '1001 Gardens you must see before you die' and an article for the Royal Horticultural Society 'Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia 2014 Year Book'.

The Itinerary

Day 1 Portsmouth, England. Embark this afternoon. A transfer will be provided from Portsmouth Harbour station to the port at a set time. Enjoy a welcome dinner on board this evening as we set sail.

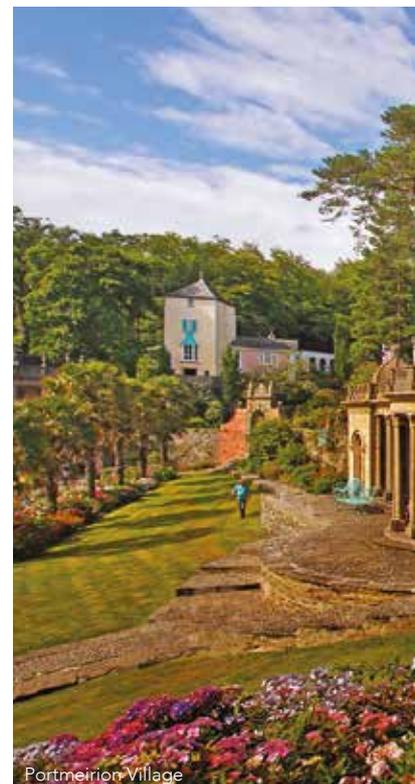
Day 2 Dartmouth. Early this morning we will sail along the River Dart to our anchorage off the town of Dartmouth. From here there will be a choice of excursions, and you may decide to visit 'Greenway', the wonderful historic house and garden that was once home to Agatha Christie. Visit the gardens, including the Camellia Garden, a wonderful place to sit and ponder on the history of the house and the notable residents and visitors that have included Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Francis Drake. Alternatively, visit the 1920s country retreat of the D'Oyly Carte family at Coleton Fishacre. Lose yourself in the RHS accredited garden by the sea as we wander the paths through glades and past tranquil ponds. Meanwhile, the house interior is imbued with 1920s elegance and Art Deco features. Return to the ship for lunch and have some time at leisure in Dartmouth



Castle Rushen, Isle of Man



The Paps of Jura



Portmeirion Village



Mount Stewart garden, Belfast



Peacock, Gigha

which will be taking part in the Mayflower 400 celebrations, commemorating the Pilgrim voyage to the Americas which departed from here in August 1620.

Day 3 Isles of Scilly. Spend the morning on traffic-free Tresco, walking its idyllic lanes from the beach to the famous sub-tropical Abbey Gardens. Defying the Atlantic weather, this miracle of a garden is home to more than 20,000 species of plants from over 80 countries. Enjoy time to wander at your own pace along the paths, maybe visit the Valhalla collection of ship figureheads from ships wrecked on the islands or relax in the cafe. After lunch we will tender ashore to Bryher, the smallest of the inhabited Isles of Scilly. Our naturalists will lead a number of guided walks along the tracks that cross the island amongst hedgerows and fields bursting with wildflowers. The active may wish to climb Watch Hill, where in the past islanders would keep watch for ships in distress or alternatively take a stroll to one of the beautiful beaches

Day 4 Waterford, Ireland. From our berth in the town of Waterford we will drive 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 and is particularly stunning in spring when the gardens are awash with magnificent sweeps of flowering azaleas, camellias, magnolias and rhododendrons. Enjoy time to walk the numerous paths bordered with wisterias or bluebells and visit the vantage points with views over the landscape and meadows beyond. Return to the MS Serenissima for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore Waterford independently.

Day 5 Portmeirion & Bodnant Gardens, Wales. From our berth at Holyhead we will embark on a full day tour visiting Portmeirion, Sir Clough Williams-Ellis' extraordinary Mediterranean village in the shadows of Snowdonia. After acquiring the site for Portmeirion in 1925 the village was developed over the next 50 years into a wonderfully eccentric style, while at all times staying in harmony with the natural surroundings. We will have free time to explore before driving through the magnificent landscape of the Snowdonia National Park and enjoying lunch in a local hotel. The afternoon will be spent at Bodnant Garden, situated above the River Conwy, where the gardens have stunning views across Snowdonia. Begun in 1875, Bodnant Garden is the creation of four generations of Aberconways and features huge Italianate terraces and formal lawns on its upper level, with a wooded valley, stream and wild garden below. There are dramatic colours throughout the season, with herbaceous borders, roses, hydrangeas, water lilies, and clematis that delight throughout the summer.

Day 6 Peel, Isle of Man. Arrive this morning on the Isle of Man where there will be a choice of excursions. Maybe take the trip to Tynwald Hill, located in the little village of St John's. This grass-topped, tiered hill is made from

the soil and stones from each of the island's 17 parishes and is the point from which, each 5th July all the laws enacted in the year preceding are promulgated to the gathered government officials and the public at large, both in Manx and English languages. Continue to Castletown and the magnificent Castle Rushen, one of the best examples of a Medieval castle in Europe which was the former seat of the Kings and Lords of Mann. We end our tour at Castletown station and board the vintage steam train for a delightful and traditional journey to Douglas. Dating from 1874, the Isle of Man Steam Railway is the island's oldest Victorian rail system and this narrow gauge railway still runs with its original locomotives and carriages. Alternatively, join a tour to the 16th century Milntown Estate. It was once the residence of the Christian family, of which the most famous is the HMS Bounty's Fletcher Christian. Maybe spend some time inside the house before we explore the 15 acres of gardens and woodlands with rhododendrons, magnolias and camellias providing colour during the spring. Return to the MS Serenissima for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure.

Day 7 Belfast, Northern Ireland. This morning 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. The formal areas exude a strong Mediterranean feel and resemble an Italian villa landscape; the wooded areas support a range of plants from all corners of the world which are particularly vibrant in spring. There will be time to explore the opulent house which reveals a fascinating heritage and historic world-famous artefacts and artwork.



Gardens of Achamore House, Gigha



Do not leave without taking in the magnificent views of Strangford Lough from Temple of the Winds. Return to the ship for lunch and the afternoon is free to relax on board, explore the city of Belfast at your own pace or maybe take an independent visit the Titanic Experience. Located by the site of the ship's construction, this museum tells the story of the Titanic from her conception through her construction and launch in 1911.

Day 8 Holy Loch & Isle of Bute, Scotland. Our first call in Scotland is the Cowal Peninsula where we find the magnificent Benmore Botanic Garden situated in a mountainside setting. During springtime, there is a blaze of colour as the 300 species of rhododendrons put on a spectacular display. Take time to walk the paths, see the Victorian Fernery and walk along Redwood Avenue, a line of 50 Sierra redwoods planted in 1862. During lunch we sail the short distance to the Isle of Bute where we will visit one of Britain's most astounding Victorian Gothic mansions, Mount Stuart House. After the original building was destroyed by fire the mansion was rebuilt between 1880 and 1912 using the finest craftsmen of the time. After viewing the house, we will visit the wonderful grounds made up of over 300 acres of pasture, woodland and gardens combining exotic and native plants. Maybe enjoy one of the trails that pass through the woodland down to the shoreline or visit the Rock Garden and Kitchen Garden situated closer to the house. Alternatively, you may prefer to stay in Rothesay and explore the small town and its impressive 13th century castle.

Day 9 Arduaine & Jura, Scotland. Sail this morning along the Argyll Coast to our anchorage at Ardfern. From here we will visit Arduaine Gardens a 20-acre woodland garden beside the sea. The garden enjoys the benefits from the warming effect of the North Atlantic Drift and is a paradise for plant lovers. Here you will see the magnificent collection of rhododendron species as well as azaleas, magnolias and many other shrubs and trees creating scents and splashes of colour throughout. Take a walk through the woodland to the coastal viewpoint and enjoy superb views of the Sound of Jura or just spend some time relaxing at the water garden. Return to the ship for lunch as we sail the short distance to Jura. Dominating the views of Jura are the three hills called 'The Paps of Jura', the highest being Beinn an Oir at 785 metres (2576 feet). We will go ashore at Craighouse and will be welcomed in the cooperage where we will be given an introduction to the Jura Distillery and an opportunity for a dram. Alternatively enjoy some free time to explore Craighouse, join one of the naturalists on a walk or join an island drive.

Day 10 Gigha & Colonsay. Gigha is a place apart; heather-covered hills, deserted beaches and a single lane verged with wildflowers that meander for some six miles between cottages and farms. Privately

owned by its 120 inhabitants, it is a gem of a place and somewhere not easily forgotten. After landing by Zodiac, we will walk to the gardens of Achamore House where the Horlick family have created a lovely garden with their collection of azaleas, rhododendrons and exotic plants. Lying between Mull and Islay, we will spend the afternoon exploring the island of Colonsay, with her craggy, heather-backed hills and sparse woodland yet impressive array of plant and birdlife. Near Colonsay House, built in 1722 by Malcolm MacNeil and bought by Lord Strathcona in 1904, we will visit the attractively dilapidated wooded gardens which protect the tiny, enigmatic 8th century St Oran's Cross.

Day 11 Oban. Disembark this morning. Transfers will be provided to Glasgow Central Station and airport 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 for transport ashore. The use of the Zodiacs will therefore be key to the operation of the itinerary as shown. If you have any queries pertaining to the use of Zodiacs or the level of fitness required for this voyage please do not hesitate to ask one of our experienced travel consultants.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

| Cat | Cabin Description | |
|-----|--------------------|-------|
| 2 | Standard Stateroom | £4195 |
| 3 | Classic Stateroom | £4395 |
| 4 | Superior Stateroom | £4895 |
| 5 | Deluxe Stateroom | £5195 |
| 6 | Junior Suite | £5695 |
| 7 | Owner's Suite | £6195 |
| 8 | Serenissima Suite | £6195 |
| 10 | Standard Single | £4595 |

PRICE INCLUDES: 10 nights aboard the MS Serenissima on a full board basis • House wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch and dinner on board • Noble Caledonia onboard team • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance.

Please note: To best enjoy your experience of this voyage you should be in good physical condition. The shore excursions may require walking on uneven paths and standing for extended periods of time. On some of the islands the paths will be muddy and uneven and some of the garden visits will involve walking over hilly terrain.

MS SERENISSIMA



Harald Jarl Lounge



On Deck



The Restaurant

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, 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. Bottles of still and sparkling water are provided and replenished daily. There are eight different grades of cabin arranged over five decks, and all feature either windows or portholes. Because of the very nature of the ship, the cabins do vary in shape and size, adding to the vessel's overall charm.



Your Dining

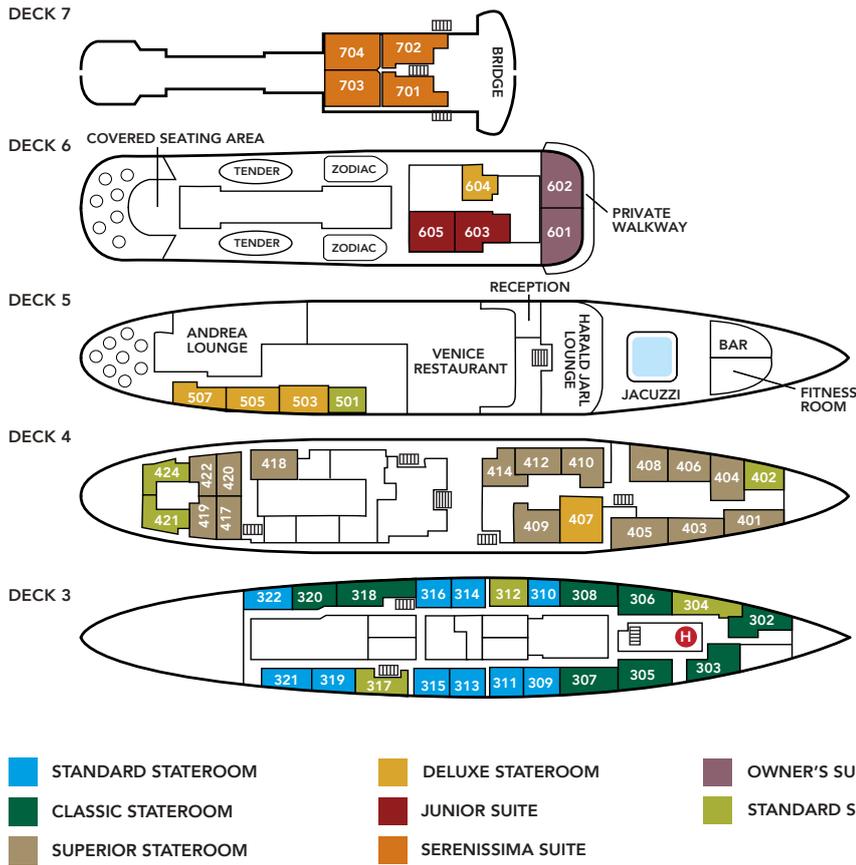
The free seating Venice Restaurant accommodates all guests in one sitting and, with its Deck 5 location, all of the tables benefit from great views. The picture windows also make the restaurant wonderfully light and airy. Breakfast is served buffet-style with cooked dishes available and eggs to order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

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, soft drinks, and water 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 Gustavian style interior. This bright Swedish 18th century influenced, country house style 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



SERENISSIMA SUITE
(25 square metres)



OWNER'S SUITE
(22 square metres)



JUNIOR SUITE
(21 square metres)

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



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

NOBLE CALEDONIA

2 Chester Close, Belgravia, London, SW1X 7BE
+44 (0)20 7752 0000 | info@noble-caledonia.co.uk | www.noble-caledonia.co.uk



Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request. Ports and itinerary subject to change.
Cover image: Tresco Abbey Sub Tropical Gardens in the Isles of Scilly, Cornwall