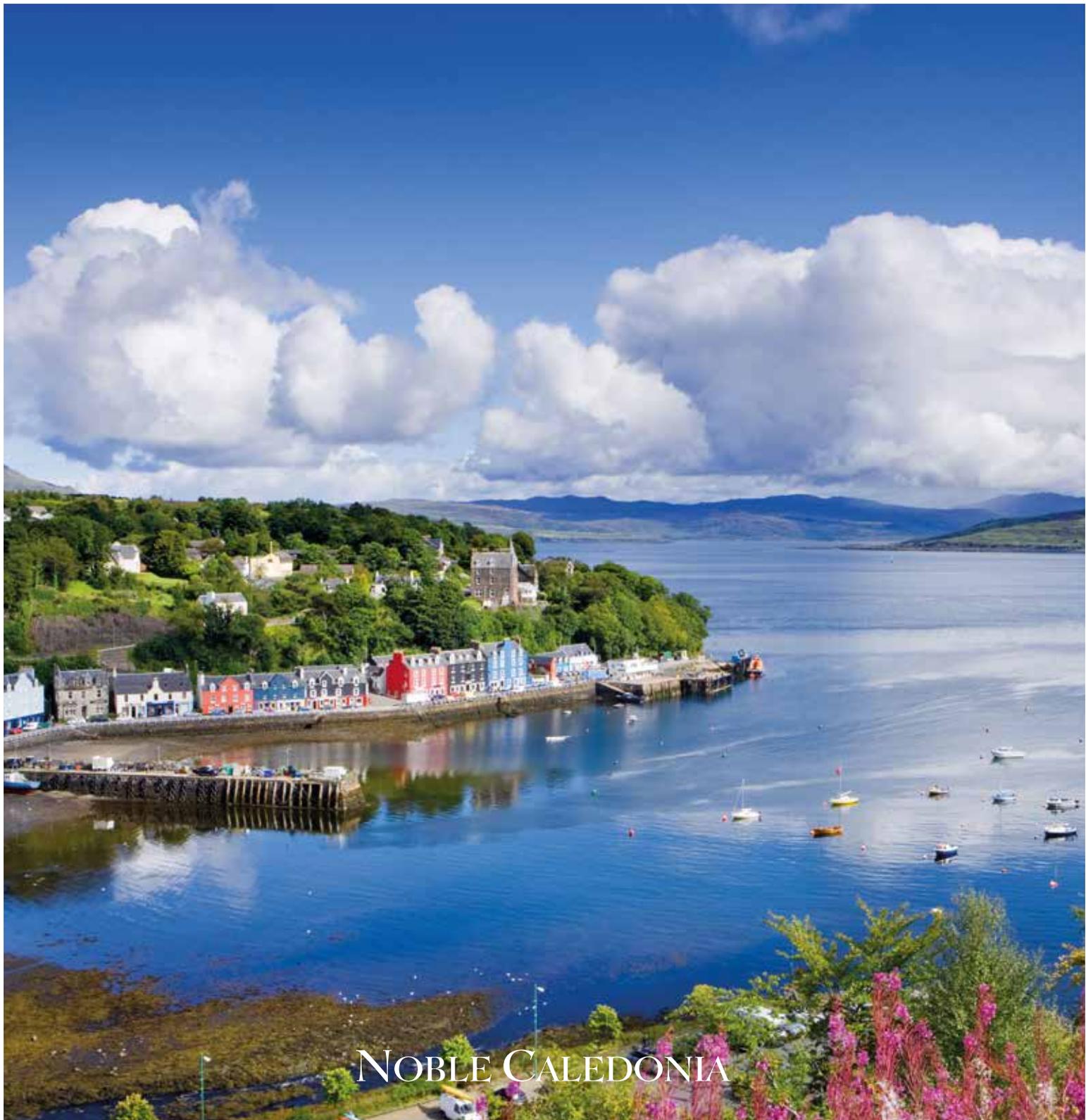


SMALL SHIP CRUISING AROUND THE  
**BRITISH ISLES**

ABOARD THE MS ISLAND SKY  
& MS HEBRIDEAN SKY

2023



NOBLE CALEDONIA

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# Dear Traveller

## Small Ships – Big Experiences in the British Isles with Noble Caledonia

We hope you enjoy browsing through the following pages and that they inspire you to make 2023 the year you become better acquainted with the treasures of the British Isles. Every year the popularity of small ship cruising in our own waters grows and now it has become the single most important area in the world for us.

Our two flagships, the MS Island Sky and MS Hebridean Sky which accommodate just 118 passengers are ideally suited for our sailings around the British Isles. They allow us access to places larger vessels are unable to venture and with our fleet of Zodiac landing craft we can explore inlets, fjords, bird sanctuaries and land in otherwise inaccessible places.

Our voyages include visits to both inhabited and uninhabited islands and places of great natural beauty, rich in wildlife and mystical history. There are a range of itineraries to choose from and we have included calls into some very special places such as the spiritual island of Iona, St Kilda, a remarkable uninhabited archipelago some fifty miles beyond the Outer Hebrides, the idyllic islands of Herm and St Agnes in the southwest with their crystal-clear waters and fine white sandy beaches, Tresco's famous subtropical Abbey Gardens, Ireland's magnificent Mount Stewart house and gardens, Lundy where we hope to see puffins and Rathlin Island, off the north coast of Ireland and home to hundreds of seals and nesting seabirds.

Each day of your expedition will be varied and there will be opportunities to explore coastal paths, see the resident wildlife, enjoy the wonderful views on offer and appreciate the ancient and Medieval history of the region. When exploring ashore with our local experts we will divide into small groups thereby enjoying a more comprehensive and peaceful experience, ensuring the solitude we find on some of the isles is not disturbed. You will be travelling with our onboard team of experts who will enhance your experience in so many ways. The added pleasure of cruising with experienced naturalists, ornithologists and marine biologists who have such a passion for the natural world is hard to describe. Every day they will highlight something of wonder and share their knowledge. There will be daily briefings, presentations and the team will always be available for informal chats.

We do hope you will enjoy discovering these very special places with us. The sheer diversity of the landscape and lifestyles will amaze you, as will the spirit and warmth of the small communities we will encounter. In an age of rapid centralisation and common identity, it is fortifying to know that life with its unique traditions and values still can be found on the edges of our islands. Whether you be an avid gardener, birdwatcher, amateur historian or simply enjoy sailing past and visiting some of the most enchanting places in the world then one of the expedition cruises featured in the following pages could be for you.

We look forward to welcoming you on board.

Yours sincerely



Tim Cochrane  
Managing Director



Throughout this brochure, you will find the majority of cruises feature an expedition cruising logo indicating that Zodiacs will be integral to the operation of the itinerary. These inflatable craft offer marvellous manoeuvrability allowing us access to otherwise impossible landing

places. With these we can explore inlets, fjords, bird sanctuaries, land in otherwise inaccessible places and be footloose in a way that would be totally impractical for larger groups of passengers. If you have any concerns or queries pertaining to expedition cruising and what it entails, please do not hesitate to contact one of our experienced travel consultants.



Exploring by Zodiac

# MS ISLAND SKY & MS HEBRIDEAN SKY



The 'Skys' at anchor off St Kilda

Noble Caledonia is very fortunate to have two of the finest small ships in the world, the MS Island Sky and MS Hebridean Sky. These ex-Renaissance Cruises sister vessels are not only two of the most comfortable and well equipped small ships, but also two of the friendliest and most efficiently run. With a maximum passenger capacity of only 118, vessels of their size are capable of carrying many more but instead the MS Island Sky and MS Hebridean Sky benefit from unusually large suites, luxuriously appointed public areas and spacious outside decks. Our crews of just over 70, many of whom have been with us for many years, are dedicated to offering the best possible experience. It is this gentle, kind and efficient atmosphere on board that makes our vessels so popular.

## Your Suite

On board there are 59 exceptionally spacious and well-designed suites. All feature a sitting area and some have private balconies (suites on the Marco Polo Deck aboard the MS Island Sky feature tinted, sliding glass doors allowing greatly enhanced viewing opportunities from your suite and quick access to the deck). The feeling of luxury is enhanced by the wood panelling and brass, which predominates throughout the vessels conveying the atmosphere of a private yacht. The passenger accommodation is arranged over five decks and all suites have outside views. Each suite affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring vanity unit with sink and walk-in shower, a large wardrobe, dressing table with large mirror and stool and excellent storage. There is a mini-fridge, television and a telephone in each suite. Refillable water bottles, dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted Molton Brown toiletries and individually controlled air-conditioning and heating. Soft hues and blended tones enhance the traditional maritime style making the passenger accommodation an inviting and relaxing place to be. The comfortable beds in each suite can be configured as either double or twin (with the exception of suites 601 and 602 on board the MS Hebridean Sky which feature a fixed double bed).

The impressive Island Suite aboard the MS Island Sky and the Hebridean Suite aboard the MS Hebridean Sky feature an extra large balcony stretching the length of the suite. Additional features of these marvellous suites include complimentary minibar stocked with your preference of beverages and complimentary laundry.

## Your Dining

With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the cuisine on board is of a consistent superior quality that befits such vessels. Fortunately, our catering teams are well adapted to the world of small ship cruising where no two days are the same and the menus are often scheduled and tailored around the days' excursions. In keeping with the informal atmosphere on board, when dining you are able to choose your seating arrangements at your leisure. Whether that be joining a table of four to six other passengers outside on the Lido Deck in the evening's sunshine or whether you prefer to enjoy meals in the à la carte restaurant. For those travelling alone, our onboard friendly restaurant staff will take care to ensure you are seated with other like-minded travellers. In the main elegant dining room, breakfast is served buffet-style, with certain items cooked to order on request. Lunch and dinner are à la carte with an excellent choice of dishes, and the menu reflecting the daily catch or local delicacies. You may also enjoy



Dining on the Lido Deck

sumptuous barbeques on deck whilst at times, the chef will make your dish to order at special pasta or stir fry stations. Afternoon tea and pre-dinner canapés take place every day in either the comfort of the Lounge or out on the Lido Deck when the weather is favourable. Tea and coffee are also available 24 hours a day. To enhance your dining experience even further a selection of wines are included with lunch and dinner and there is also a comprehensive wine list with a wide selection of new and old world wines from which to choose.

### Your Space

The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large Lounge featuring a selection of seating options from individual armchairs and sofas to side cushioned benches. Daily briefings given by the Cruise Director and talks from Guest Speakers and expedition staff take place in the Lounge and for your convenience, it is also possible to follow the onboard lectures from the comfort of your suite.

In addition to the main Lounge, there is also The Club, which features the main bar and a 24-hour tea and coffee station. Towards the aft of the ship is the Library. Well stocked with reference books pertaining to the destinations the vessel is visiting and a selection of essential reads, you will not find yourself short of something to read on board. A collection of games as well as devices to access the internet via the ship's satellite can also be found in the Library. Access to the ship's satellite Wi-Fi via your own device is complimentary on board (signal strength varies depending on location and demand). Further to this on the top deck there is an observation area, complete with sun loungers for sunbathing, relaxing with a book or catching up with fellow travellers. The Promenade Deck wraps around the whole ship providing outstanding views.

### Your Life On Board

If large resort-style vessels accommodating many thousands of passengers are your ideal, then our ships are not for you as you will not find endless entertainment, round the clock buffets and the people management which is so much a part of today's big ship on board style. However, if like you prefer a more peaceful life at sea

you will find our flagships the perfect vessels where high quality service and attention to detail are the order of the day.

The atmosphere on board is warm and convivial and more akin to a private yacht or country hotel in which you can learn more about the wonders of nature, culture and ancient civilisations in the company of like-minded people. A little music in the lounge or bar after dinner, Guest Speakers and informative port briefings from our Expedition Leader or Cruise Director and of course good food with wine included at lunch and dinner, all contribute to make any voyage aboard these wonderful vessels a memorable and joyful experience. After a day ashore you will return to the comfort and peace of an exceedingly comfortable ship.

There is a high ratio of crew to passengers and our friendly crew of 75 are mainly Filipino and Eastern European and our Captains are experienced mariners. The daily programme on board is in the capable hands of our Cruise Director or Expedition Leader and staff who coordinate with the Captain and Officers to make the most of each day. Briefings and talks will be provided throughout the voyage together with a 'Daily Programme' that is distributed every evening to your suite outlining the next day's activities.

### For your Comfort, Security & Safety

Our vessels are equipped with the latest safety, navigation and communications equipment along with roll stabilizers to minimise the ship's motion. During your voyage we hope to offer the opportunity to visit the Captain and Officers on the Bridge to check the vessels progress by charts and learn more about your journey. There is also a dedicated channel on your television in your suite showing the routing of the vessel along with technical information and estimated times of arrival and departure from port. On board you will find a clinic and Doctor and a lift that serves all decks.

### Our All Inclusive Policy

On board the MS Island Sky and the MS Hebridean Sky, you do not need to worry about tipping staff as we have included this in your holiday price. In addition we tip all our guides and drivers along the way. We also include shore excursions, drinks with meals on board and complimentary Wi-Fi.



The Restaurant (MS Hebridean Sky)



Owner's Balcony Suite (MS Hebridean Sky)

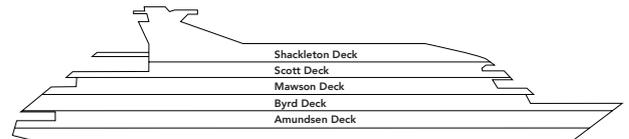


Superior Suite (MS Hebridean Sky)

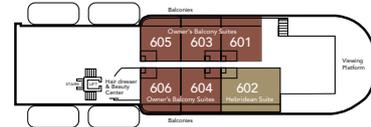


The Club (MS Hebridean Sky)

## MS HEBRIDEAN SKY DECK PLAN



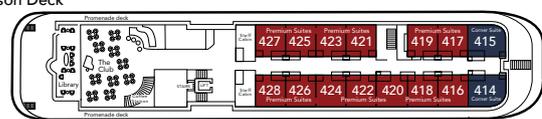
### Shackleton Deck



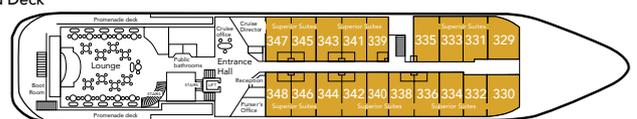
### Scott Deck



### Mawson Deck



### Byrd Deck



### Amundsen Deck



- Standard Suites
- Superior Suites
- Premium Suites
- Corner Suites
- Deluxe Balcony Suites
- Owner's Balcony Suites
- Hebridean Suite

Please note that beds in each suite can be configured as double or twin with the exception of suites 601 and 602 which feature a fixed double bed.



Luxury cuisine



Alfresco Dining (MS Island Sky)



The Club (MS Island Sky)



Lounge (MS Hebridean Sky)



Deluxe Balcony Suite (MS Island Sky)

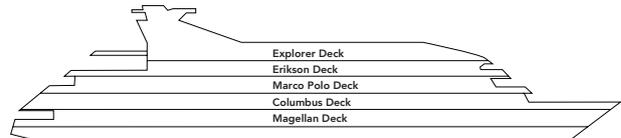


Premium Suite with deck access (MS Island Sky)

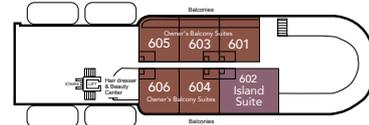


The Library (MS Island Sky)

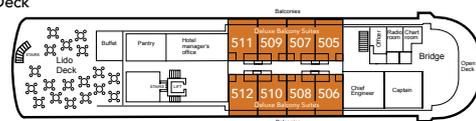
## MS ISLAND SKY DECK PLAN



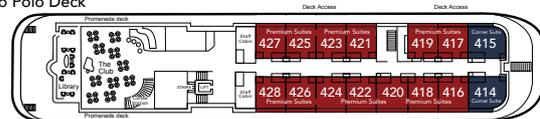
### Explorer Deck



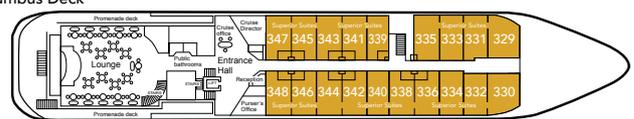
### Erikson Deck



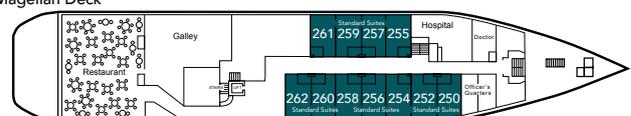
### Marco Polo Deck



### Columbus Deck



### Magellan Deck



- Standard Suites
- Corner Suites with Deck Access
- Owner's Balcony Suites
- Superior Suites
- Deluxe Balcony Suites
- Island Suite
- Premium Suites with Deck Access

# Island Hideaways



Discover the Channel Islands & Isles of Scilly with a visit to Lundy Island  
aboard the MS Hebridean Sky

3<sup>rd</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Join us aboard the MS Hebridean Sky for our island voyage which includes the charming Channel Islands, the remote island of Lundy and the beautiful Isles of Scilly. Our voyage will be a leisurely one visiting some truly idyllic islands where you can be as active and footloose as you choose. Sailing distances are short allowing us to visit multiple isles and on each island there will be organised walks with members of our expedition team as well as ample time for you to explore independently.

We will be visiting some of the most bewitching of places in the UK and arriving at the Isles of Scilly you will witness the grey Atlantic dissolving miraculously into turquoise, and white sandy beaches giving way to verdant islands and palm trees. The nurturing warm waters of the Gulf Stream have helped to create a microclimate endowing the islands with great botanical and ornithological diversity.

This is not a cruise which could be offered aboard a large cruise ship, but is an ideal itinerary for one the size of the all-suite MS Hebridean Sky with her ability to drop anchor and transfer guests ashore by Zodiac or local tender. With just over 100 passengers, we will not overrun the islands but instead will be absorbed into island life.

There is so much to see on the islands whether your interest lies in botany, ornithology, horticulture, maritime history or archaeology and the joy of many of the islands we will visit are the gentle walks along car-free lanes and paths, absorbing the flora and birdsong without the background hum of traffic and modern-day life. The islands are small, the walks undemanding and, instead of hopping on and off coaches, our transport will be provided by Zodiacs or local tenders.



St Agnes



## The 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. Alternatively car parking facilities are available at the port. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail this evening.

### Days 2 to 4 Alderney, Herm, Guernsey & Sark, Channel Islands.

Our island hopping voyage begins on the islands of the Bailiwick of Guernsey. On Guernsey, the 'Island of Flowers' there will be the option of a walking tour of St Peter Port including a visit to Castle Cornet, a 12th century battlement which guards the entrance to St Peter Port harbour. Alternatively, enjoy a panoramic drive during which we will see the beautiful coastline and beaches and visit the Little Chapel, built in 1914 as a miniature version of the famous basilica at Lourdes and covered in fragments of shattered china, or join a cliff walk along the scenic coastline. We will sail

the short distance to Herm, the smallest inhabited Channel Island and, at just one and a half miles long and half a mile wide, perfect for exploring on foot. Here, you will have free time to explore, perhaps take a stroll over to Shell or Belvoir Beach whilst our naturalists will be ashore on the lookout for wildflowers and birds. On Alderney, visit the island's only town, St Anne, which has all the old-world charm of a Normandy village with tiny squares and pastel shaded cottages and shops. Maybe join a short walk to see the German fortifications or a longer walk with our naturalists heading to the cliffs to see the birdlife. At Sark we will use our Zodiacs to land on this peaceful traffic-free island. Horse-drawn carriages take us along the narrow lanes alive with the songs of chaffinches, skylarks and mistle thrush as we see the narrow isthmus which joins Little Sark and Big Sark and the enchanting gardens at La Seigneurie. Those feeling active may wish to hire a bicycle and explore independently.



Lundy



Alderney



Bryher



Tresco Abbey Gardens

**Day 5 Lundy.** Arrive this morning on Lundy, a remote island in the Bristol Channel. Although small, just three miles long by half a mile wide, its isolation has made it a home for a range of wildlife as well as a selection of listed buildings and monuments. The towering cliffs and rocky shoreline are a haven for migrating seabirds, whilst sika deer, red deer and Soay sheep can also be seen as we walk along its traffic-free lanes and paths. Spend the day being as active as you wish, maybe explore the wide bays and coves by way of hanging valleys, see ancient burial chambers, climb the lighthouse, have a drink or lunch at the tavern or buy the island's 'puffin stamps' at the shop.

**Days 6 to 8 Tresco, Bryher, St Martin's, St Agnes & St Mary's, Isles of Scilly.** Arrive this morning in the Isles of Scilly for two and a half days of exploration. From our central anchorage, we will use our Zodiacs and local tenders to visit a number of the islands in the group. We will visit traffic-free Tresco, walking its idyllic lanes from the beach to the famous subtropical 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 café. On St Agnes we find the most south westerly community in the UK. Surrounded by rocks and reefs this delightful tiny island offers marvellous coastal walks. The small island of Gugh lies across a narrow sandbar and here we find a single stone monolith called the 'Old Man of Gugh' which dates back to the Bronze Age. We will tender ashore to Bryher, the smallest of the inhabited Isles of Scilly where you can wander along the tracks that cross the island amongst hedgerows and fields bursting with wildflowers. Those feeling 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. Visit the northernmost island of the group, St Martin's, a small island community of just 120 residents. Enjoy time to explore independently, climb to one of the viewpoints for vistas over the islands and the offshore seal colonies or maybe join one of our expedition team on a guided walk. On St Mary's, the largest island in the archipelago (yet still only six square miles), you can enjoy some time in the shops in Hugh Town, or walk the historic Garrison Walls.

**Day 9 Portsmouth.** Disembark this morning. Transfers will be provided to Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station at a fixed time.



Oystercatcher, St Agnes

#### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

#### SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £300 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Amundsen	Standard	£4295	£3995
Byrd	Superior	£4495	£4195
Mawson	Premium	£4995	£4695
Mawson	Corner	£5495	£5195
Scott	Deluxe Balcony	£5995	£5695
Shackleton	Owner's Balcony	£6495	£6195
Shackleton	Hebridean	£7495	£7195
Amundsen	Standard for sole use	£5585	£5285
Byrd	Superior for sole use	£5845	£5545

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Eight nights aboard the MS Hebridean Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia expedition team • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance.



# Coastal Gardens of Britain & Ireland

A voyage from Portsmouth to Oban aboard the MS Hebridean Sky with  
Guest Speaker Mike Nelhams  
11<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023

**D**uring 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 Treseco; some delightful Irish gardens which have a unique quality, the 'soft' weather and green mountain backdrops making for lovely views; and the splendid gardens of Gigha, which defy the Atlantic elements so admirably. 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. Over the course of eleven days we will visit all of the UK's four countries and, in the company of just 100 or so fellow guests, we will be able to discover many fascinating yet little-visited destinations that are otherwise inaccessible to the larger ships.



Bodnant House & Garden



## Guest Speaker – Mike Nelhams



Mike trained for three years at the Royal Horticultural Society Garden, Wisley and first went to Tresco on a Studley Trust Scholarship as a student in 1976. After managing a woodland garden in Sussex for five years he returned to Tresco Abbey Garden in 1984 as Head Gardener and then in 1994 took the post of Garden Curator which was established for

him. He is an RHS judge on the Tender Plants Committee, judging regularly at Chelsea, Hampton Court and London RHS shows and also is a frequent lecturer throughout the English speaking world. He has published a book, "Tresco Abbey Garden" and has made many appearances on national TV and radio, as well as having written many articles for the horticultural press. Mike has a particular interest in plants from the Mediterranean and associated coastal regions of the world. A Fellow of the Institute of Horticulture and an Associate of Honour of the Royal Horticultural Society, Mike regularly leads garden tours.

## The 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. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail this evening.

### Day 2 Guernsey & Sark, Channel Islands.

Arriving in the Channel Islands on the island of Guernsey, we take a panoramic drive during which we will see the beautiful coastline, rocky cliffs and wild sandy bays. Along the coast we will also see the Martello Towers built during the Napoleonic wars and the fortifications built by the Germans during the occupation in the Second World War. Return to the ship via country lanes and the Little Chapel, built in 1914 as a miniature version of the famous basilica at Lourdes and covered in fragments of shattered china, seashells and pebbles. Over

lunch we sail to Sark where we will use our Zodiacs to land on this peaceful traffic-free island. Horse-drawn carriages take us along the narrow lanes alive with the songs of chaffinches, skylarks and mistle thrush as we see the narrow isthmus which joins Little Sark and Big Sark and the enchanting gardens at La Seigneurie.

**Day 3 Fowey.** Anchor this morning in the River Fowey, our base for a day exploring this picturesque part of Cornwall. We will make our way to Caerhays Castle and Garden. Situated between St Mawes and Mevagissey in a secluded valley above Porthluney Cove, this is one of the great gardens of Cornwall. The estate is one of the oldest in the country and home to a National Magnolia Collection. The origins of the historically important collection of magnolias

can be traced back to the work of the great plant hunters, Ernest Wilson and George Forrest and the 120 acre woodland gardens are a springtime wonderland. This afternoon you may wish to explore the town at your own pace or join one of our expedition team on the Fowey Hall Walk, a circular four mile hike through woodland and across the tranquil Pont Creek which offers wonderful views over Fowey Harbour. Alternatively, we hope to explore the river with our Zodiacs and heading north we will see the town of Golant and tranquil Penpol Creek.

### Day 4 Tresco & Bryher, Isles of Scilly.

From our central anchorage, we will use our Zodiacs to visit traffic-free Tresco, walking its idyllic lanes from the beach to the famous subtropical 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 café. This afternoon we tender ashore to Bryher, the smallest of the inhabited Isles of Scilly where you can wander along the tracks that cross the island amongst hedgerows and fields bursting with wildflowers. Those feeling 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 5 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 early summer 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 ship for lunch and a free 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.

### Day 6 Dun Laoghaire.

After breakfast we will drive out into the Wicklow Mountains and the wonderfully sited gardens of Powerscourt. Spread out over 47 acres we will explore the Italianate Terraces, the Japanese Garden, where the azaleas should be in bloom, and maybe take a walk through the wooded Tower Valley. We will enjoy lunch before continuing to Mount Usher, a lovely romantic garden on the banks of the River Vartry with over 5,000 species of plants and shrubs. We hope to see magnolias and crocuses line the pathways as we stroll through the grounds. Alternatively, you may prefer to spend the day in Dublin and our onboard staff will be able to advise on travel arrangements to the city centre.

**Day 7 Llandudno, Wales.** Spend the morning at Bodnant Garden,



Caerhays Castle

which is situated above the River Conwy and has 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 and in spring we can enjoy swathes of daffodils, camellias, magnolias, and rhododendrons. This afternoon maybe explore Llandudno at your own pace. Developed as an upmarket holiday town for Victorian visitors, this seaside town still retains much of its 19th century grandeur, with graceful wedding-cake architecture lining its sweeping waterfront promenade. Alternatively, join a tour to Plas Cadnant, a hidden historic garden that is slowly being uncovered. Three different gardens have been discovered: an unusual walled garden; a secret valley garden with three waterfalls; and an upper woodland garden with stone outcrops and the remains of a 19th century folly. Work started on restoring the gardens and grounds in 1997 and large parts of the gardens have undergone a spectacular transformation and have been restored to their former glory.

**Day 8 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. There will be time to explore the opulent house which reveals a fascinating heritage and historic world-famous artefacts and artwork. Do not leave without taking in the magnificent views of Strangford Lough from the 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 make an independent visit to 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 9 Gigha, Scotland.** Spend the morning at sea as we sail to Scotland, arriving on Gigha over lunch. 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 and eclectic garden with their collection of azaleas, rhododendrons and exotic plants.

**Day 10 Arduaine Gardens & Colonsay.**

Sail this morning along the Argyll coast to our anchorage at Ardfern. From here we will drive to Arduaine, a special National Trust for Scotland garden. This delightful woodland garden enjoys the benefits from



Llandudno

the warming effect of the North Atlantic Drift and is a paradise for plant lovers. Take a walk through the woodland to the coastal viewpoint and enjoy superb views of the Sound of Jura or spend some time relaxing at the water garden. Lying between Mull and Islay, we will spend the afternoon exploring the island of Colonsay with her craggy, heather-clad hills and sparse woodland yet impressive array of plants and birdlife. Near

Colonsay House, built in 1722 by Malcolm MacNeil and bought by Lord Strathcona in 1904, we will visit the attractively dilapidated woodland gardens which protect the tiny, enigmatic 8th century St Oran's Cross.

**Day 11 Oban.** Disembark this morning after breakfast. Transfers will be provided to Glasgow International Airport and Glasgow Central Railway Station at a fixed time.



Gardens of Achamore House

**PRICES PER PERSON**

Based on double occupancy

Deck	Suite Category	Price
Amundsen	Standard	£5095
Byrd	Superior	£5295
Mawson	Premium	£5595
Mawson	Corner	£5995
Scott	Deluxe Balcony	£6495
Shackleton	Owner's Balcony	£6795
Shackleton	Hebridean	£7795
Amundsen	Standard for sole use	£6495
Byrd	Superior for sole use	£6795

**PRICE INCLUDES:** 10 nights aboard the MS Hebridean Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia expedition team including Guest Speaker • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.  
**Not Included:** Travel insurance.



# Islands on the Edge



An island hopping voyage from Portsmouth to Aberdeen aboard the MS Island Sky  
12<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2023

This expedition voyage will appeal to those who wish to visit some of the most remote and inaccessible islands in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. We have many years of experience in designing trips to the hidden corners of our remotest places and yet, every year we discover something new. Although we set sail with a fixed itinerary it is the unscheduled events that often become the highlight of the journey.

This is a truly unique voyage visiting as it does the remarkable islands on the edge of the British Isles. With the MS Island Sky as our base we have the advantage of being able to reach these remote ports and, with the use of Zodiacs, we will be able to explore in small groups. We will sail from Portsmouth and during our cruise visit both inhabited and uninhabited islands and places of great natural beauty, rich in wildlife and mystical history. We have also included a number of gardens from the Isles of Scilly to the Hebrides and for the keen birders, there are numerous highlights including cruising past one of the largest gannetries in the world at Stac Lee.

This is not a cruise in the traditional sense, more an exploration with 100 or so fellow travellers who wish to enjoy the peace, beauty and tranquility of the islands. The sheer diversity of the landscapes and lifestyles will amaze you as will the spirit and warmth of the small communities we will encounter. Learn something of their history, see the abundant bird and marine life, but above all revel in the timeless enchantment that these islands exude to all those who appreciate the natural world.



## Our View

*"The islands around the edge of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland are home to remote communities, wonderful wildlife and a history that dates back thousands of years. Difficult to visit independently, our cruise is devised to access some of these places where we can meet the locals be they farmers or landlords, puffins or seals. From the historic naval town of Portsmouth we visit the Channel Islands, Isles of Scilly, Lundy Island, the Hebrides and the Shetland Islands on our quest to visit the outlying islands. We will find beautiful blooming gardens, see wildflowers on the islands and watch in wonder as thousands of birds fill the sky as we cruise past their breeding grounds. We will also appreciate the history of the region from the archaeological site of Jarlshof to the more modern history of St Kilda. Join us as we take this wonderful opportunity to explore the islands on the edge."*

## The Itinerary

**Day 1 Portsmouth, England.** Embark the MS Island Sky this afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station at a fixed time. Sail this evening for the Channel Islands.

**Day 2 Guernsey & Herm, Channel Islands.** Anchor this morning off Guernsey, the 'Island of Flowers'. There will be the option of a walking tour of

St Peter Port including a visit to Castle Cornet, a 12th century battlement which guards the entrance to St Peter Port Harbour. Alternatively, enjoy a panoramic island drive during which we will see the beautiful coastline and beaches and also visit the Little Chapel, built in 1914 as a miniature version of the famous basilica at Lourdes and covered in fragments of shattered china. Over lunch we sail the short distance



to Herm, the smallest inhabited Channel Island and, at just one and a half miles long and half a mile wide, perfect for discovering on foot. You will have free time to explore, perhaps take a stroll over to Shell or Belvoir Beach. Alternatively, join our naturalists on the lookout for wildflowers and birds.

**Day 3 Treco & St Martin's, Isles of Scilly.** Spend the morning on traffic-free Treco, 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 café. This afternoon we see the northernmost island of the group, St Martin's, a small island community of just 120 residents. Enjoy time to explore independently, climb to one of the viewpoints for vistas over the islands and the offshore seal colonies, join one of our expedition team on a guided walk or make a visit to the local vineyard for a tasting.

**Day 4 Lundy Island & Skomer Island, Wales.** We have scheduled a morning on Lundy, a remote island in the Bristol Channel. Although small, just three miles

long by half a mile wide, its isolation has made it a home for a range of wildlife whilst there is also a clutch of listed buildings and monuments. The towering cliffs and rocky shoreline are a haven for migrating seabirds and Sika deer, red deer and Soay sheep can also be seen as we walk along its traffic-free lanes and paths. Spend the morning being as active as you wish, maybe explore the wide bays and coves by way of hanging valleys, see ancient burial chambers, climb the lighthouse or buy the island's 'puffin stamps' at the shop. Be on deck this afternoon as we pass Skomer Island, one of the most important wildlife sites in Northern Europe. It is a marvellously peaceful and scenic island with fantastic birdlife including 6000 pairs of puffins and the elusive Manx shearwater and storm petrel. We may also see the seal colony hauled out over the rocks and weather permitting will explore by Zodiac.

**Day 5 Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland.** After a morning at sea we arrive at Rathlin Island. Located just a few miles from the North Antrim coast, Rathlin Island 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. Enjoy a guided walk which will also take in the prolific sea bird life with astonishing numbers of auks,



kittiwakes and grey seal. Also see the unique "upside down" Rathlin West Light, a great feat of engineering and one of the Great Lighthouses of Ireland. In the evening sail past the magnificent cliffs to the north of the island which are home to the largest sea bird colony in Ireland.

**Day 6 Staffa & Iona, Scotland.** Awake this morning as we approach and anchor off Staffa, where the perpendicular rock face features an imposing series of black basalt columns, known as the Colonnade, which have been cut by the sea into cathedralesque caverns, most notably Fingal's Cave. Weather permitting, we will use our Zodiacs to explore closer. We then plan to cruise the short distance to the Isle of Iona which has been occupied for thousands of years and has been a place of pilgrimage and Christian worship for several centuries. It was to this flat, Hebridean island that St Columba fled from Ireland in 563 and established a

monastery. Here his followers were responsible for the conversion of much of pagan Scotland and Northern England. No less than 62 Scottish Kings are buried in the Abbey. Visit the Abbey or perhaps walk along the white sandy beaches or go in search of the corncrake amongst the irises.

**Day 7 Canna & Loch Scaivaig.** Strategically placed between the mountains of Rum and the Outer Hebrides, the island of Canna and its adjoining neighbour Sanday are bound together like some rare text that reveals over 60 million years of Hebridean geology and history. They have an amazingly rich archaeological landscape with remains dating to all periods of settled occupation in Scotland. Canna is run as a single farm and bird sanctuary by the National Trust for Scotland and enjoys the best harbour in the Small Isles, a hornshaped haven. The fertile soil and its diversity of habitats mean that the island has an incredibly rich plant life with 248 native



St Kilda



Kittiwakes, Rathlin Island



Stac Lee



Exploring by Zodiac



Jarlshof, Lerwick

flowering plants recorded. We will see Canna House and wander across grassy basalt plateaus to the 600 foot cliffs on the north shore. Over lunch we cross to the lovely Loch Scaavaig on the island of Skye. Just beyond is the freshwater Loch Corruisk with its breathtakingly beautiful view over the Cuillins. This is great walking country and our expedition team will run a series of hikes for all interests. For those who prefer a less energetic afternoon our Zodiacs will explore the coast looking out for seals.

#### Day 8 St Kilda & Stac Lee.

We spend the morning at St Kilda, a remarkable uninhabited archipelago some fifty miles beyond the Outer Hebrides. Dominated by the highest cliffs and sea stacks in Britain, Hirta, St Kilda's main island was occupied on and off for at least two thousand years, with the last 36 Gaelic speaking inhabitants evacuated at their own request in 1930. Immediately after the evacuation, the island was bought by the Marquess of Bute to protect the island's thousands of seabirds including puffin and fulmars and in 1957 it was bequeathed to The National Trust for Scotland. St Kilda is one of the few UNESCO World Heritage Sites with dual status reflecting its natural and cultural significance. The local ranger will join us on board before

our expedition staff lead guided walks on the island. Later, we will cruise past one of the largest gannetries in the world at Stac Lee. The impressive stacs rise 170 metres from the sea and are home to up to 60,000 breeding pairs of northern gannet.

#### Day 9 Foula, Shetland Islands.

Spend the morning at sea as we sail to the Shetland Islands arriving on Foula, one of Britain's most remote inhabited islands. Apart from a narrow coastal strip of more fertile croftland, Foula is an expanse of peat and moorland rising steeply to five dramatic peaks. In summer, Foula's wildflowers provide a glorious burst of colour. Translated as "Bird Island" from Old Norse the island is designated as a Special Protection Area for birds and is home to the world's largest colony of Great skuas, known locally as bonxies, which compete fiercely with Arctic skuas for breeding territories. Join our expedition team on a series of walks on the island this afternoon.

**Day 10 Lerwick.** From the Shetland capital, we will visit the remarkable archaeological site of Jarlshof. The site was uncovered by a violent storm in the winter of 1896/7, revealing an extraordinary settlement site embracing at

least 5000 years of human history. The site contains a remarkable sequence of stone structures – late Neolithic houses, a Bronze-Age village, an Iron-Age broch and wheelhouses, several Norse longhouses, a Medieval farmstead and the 16th century laird's house. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy a free afternoon to explore this historic port. Perhaps wander through its narrow stone lanes or maybe visit the excellent Shetland Museum, containing artefacts from shipwrecks and the whaling era. Tonight we will enjoy the company of local musicians on board.

**Day 11 Fair Isle.** This morning we arrive at the remote island of Fair Isle. Located midway between the Shetland and Orkney islands, the tiny population of sixty or so islanders always extend us a warm welcome. Enjoy a walk across the island searching out the puffin slopes, visit the community hall for a cup of tea or maybe purchase some of the famous knitwear.

**Day 12 Aberdeen.** Disembark the MS Island Sky after breakfast. Transfers will be provided to the Railway Station and Aberdeen Airport at a fixed time.

#### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Deck	Suite Category	Price
Magellan	Standard	£5995
Columbus	Superior	£6195
Marco Polo	Premium	£6495
Marco Polo	Corner	£6995
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£7295
Explorer	Owner's Balcony Suites	£7495
Explorer	Island Suite	£8495
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£7995
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£8195

**PRICE INCLUDES:** 11 nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia expedition team • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance.



# Scottish Island Odyssey



An expedition through the Shetland, Orkney & Hebridean Islands aboard the MS Island Sky  
23<sup>rd</sup> July to 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023

Join us aboard the 118 passenger MS Island Sky for this wonderful journey around Scotland's magnificent coastline, an indented landscape of enormous natural splendour with offshore islands forming stepping stones into the Atlantic. If you have always had a hankering to visit some of the remotest and most inaccessible islands in Scotland, this is the ideal opportunity. Few cruise ships offer the chance to explore in-depth the islands off the northern coast of Scotland and this unique itinerary ventures far north to the Shetland and Orkney Islands as well as the magical Hebridean islands. We will visit both inhabited and uninhabited islands and places of great natural beauty rich in birdlife, wildlife and mystical history, many with a long history dating back to the Iron Age.

Such a trip would be almost impossible to arrange independently but with the aid of our nimble Zodiac craft, and in the company of our naturalists and local guides, we will explore the most remote islands that surround the Scottish Coast such as the Shiant Islands and St Kilda, land on remote beaches and cruise close to shorelines and cliffs dotted with birdlife. We will witness vibrant colours, explore deserted villages and learn of the history and ancient culture of unique island life. Whether your interest lies in the natural world, history or bird watching or simply being there to witness the timeless beauty of the islands, this trip will lift the spirits and gladden the heart.



Callanish Standing Stones



St Kilda

## The Itinerary

### Day 1 Aberdeen, Scotland.

Embark the MS Island Sky this afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Aberdeen Airport and Railway Station at a fixed time. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner this evening as we sail.

**Day 2 Fair Isle & Noss Head, Shetland Islands.** This morning we anchor off the remote island of Fair Isle. Located midway between the Shetland and Orkney Islands, the tiny population of sixty or so islanders always extend us a warm welcome. Enjoy a walk across the island searching out the puffin slopes, visit the community hall for a cup of tea or maybe purchase some of the famous knitwear. Return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon we hope to sail around Noss Head. Here the cliffs will be full of nesting gannets, guillemots and fulmars whilst we may also see skuas in the skies above. This evening we moor overnight in Lerwick.

**Day 3 Lerwick.** From the Shetland capital, we will visit the remarkable archaeological site of Jarlshof. The site was uncovered by a violent storm in the winter of 1896/7, revealing an extraordinary settlement site embracing at least 5000 years of human history.

The site contains a remarkable sequence of stone structures – late Neolithic houses, a Bronze-Age village, an Iron-Age broch and wheelhouses, several Norse longhouse, a Medieval farmstead and the 16th century laird's house. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy a free afternoon to explore this historic port. Tonight we will be entertained by local musicians.

**Day 4 Westray & Papa Westray, Orkney Islands.** During our day in the Orkney Islands we will explore two of the islands to the north of the mainland. On Westray we will visit Noup Head, an RSPB reserve on the sea cliffs and Notland Castle, an incomplete fortress built in the 16th century by Gilbert Balfour, Master of the Royal Household to Mary Queen of Scots, Sheriff of Orkney. Meanwhile in the main village of Pierowall we find the Westray Heritage Centre housing Neolithic carvings. Over lunch we sail the short distance to Papa Westray where there will be the opportunity for a number of island walks. You can also visit the 3500-year-old Knap of Howar, a Neolithic farm building that claims to be the oldest standing house in Europe and the 12th century St Boniface Kirk. In the



Noup Head, Westray



Lunga



Great Skua

north of the island is the North Hill Reserve, home to Arctic terns and skuas and also the extremely rare Scottish primrose. In the early evening we will meet at the Papay pub for a well-deserved pre-dinner drink.

**Day 5 Isle of Lewis & Shiant Islands, Outer Hebrides.** Arrive today on the Isle of Lewis. On leaving the island capital of Stornoway, we will head across the island to the beautiful west coast. Described as Scotland's Stonehenge, the Callanish Standing Stones date from around 3000 BC. There are a total of 32 stones in a circular and avenue design. The stones stand like a petrified forest on the flat top of a peninsula which reaches out into East Loch Roag. We also visit the Dun Carloway Pictish Broch, probably built sometime in the last century BC, it would have served as an occasionally defensible residence for an extended family complete with accommodation for animals at ground floor level. Our final stop is the Gèarrannan Blackhouse Village, a reconstructed settlement of traditional black houses which were made using dry stone masonry and have thatched roofs, distinctively weighted down with rocks. Visit the small museum, enjoy a display of a typical crofting activity such as weaving and take in the views of this dramatic site on the wild Atlantic coast. This afternoon we will board the Zodiacs for a cruise around the spectacular basalt cliffs of the Shiant Islands, a group of little islands located a few miles off the shores of Lewis. This is an excellent place to spot puffins, razorbills, guillemots, seals and hopefully white-tailed eagles.

**Day 6 Inverewe & Handa.** This morning we will visit one

of Scotland's premier gardens, Inverewe. This botanical garden in the northwest Highlands presents an amazing collection of exotic trees and shrubs that are sheltered by well-positioned windbreaks of native pine. After a guided tour of the gardens, we will return to the MS Island Sky for lunch as we sail to Handa. Here we will use our Zodiacs to explore the magnificent sea cliffs of Torridonian sandstone which rise from the Atlantic. The island comes alive each summer when nearly 100,000 seabirds gather to breed including internationally important numbers of guillemot, razorbill, puffins and great skua.

**Day 7 St Kilda & Stac Lee.** Arrive over breakfast at St Kilda, a remarkable uninhabited archipelago some fifty miles beyond the Outer Hebrides. Dominated by the highest cliffs and sea stacks in Britain, Hirta, St Kilda's main island was occupied on and off for at least two thousand years, with the last 36 Gaelic speaking inhabitants evacuated at their own request in 1930. Immediately after the evacuation, the island was bought by the Marquess of Bute to protect the island's thousands of seabirds including puffin and fulmars, and in 1957 it was bequeathed to The National Trust for Scotland. St Kilda is one of only a few UNESCO World Heritage Sites with dual status reflecting its natural and cultural significance. The local ranger will join us on board before our expedition staff lead a number of guided walks on the island. This afternoon we will cruise past two of the largest gannetries in the world at Stac Lee and Stac an Armin. These impressive stacs rise 170 metres from the sea and are home to up to 60,000 breeding pairs of northern gannet.

**Day 8 Loch Scavaig, Isle of Skye.** Spend the morning at sea as we return to the Inner Hebrides and the Isle of Skye. Arrive in the early afternoon at the lovely Loch Scavaig. Just beyond is the freshwater Loch Corruisk with its breathtakingly beautiful view over the Cuillins. This is great walking country, but for those who prefer a less energetic afternoon our Zodiacs will explore the coast looking out for seals.

**Day 9 Staffa & Lunga, Inner Hebrides.** Awake this morning at Staffa, the south side where the perpendicular rock face features an imposing series of black basalt columns, known as the Colonnade, which has been cut by the sea into cathedralesque caverns, most notably Fingal's Cave. Weather permitting, we will use our Zodiacs to explore closer. We continue to the Treshnish Isles, an archipelago of uninhabited volcanic islets. The island of Lunga is the largest of the Treshnish Isles in Argyll and Bute. Of volcanic origin, Lunga has been described as 'a green jewel in a peacock sea' and is a summer nesting-place for hundreds of seabirds.

**Day 10 Iona & Colonsay.** Iona has been occupied for thousands of years and has been a place of pilgrimage and Christian worship for several centuries. It was to this flat, Hebridean island that St Columba fled from Ireland in 563 and established a monastery. Here his followers were responsible for the conversion of much of pagan Scotland and Northern England. No less than 62 Scottish Kings are buried in the Abbey. Visit the Abbey or perhaps walk along the white sandy beaches or go in search of the corncrake amongst the irises. Spend the afternoon exploring the island of Colonsay, with her craggy, heather-clad hills and sparse woodland yet impressive array of plants and birdlife. Near Colonsay House, built in 1722 by Malcolm MacNeil and bought by Lord Strathcona in 1904, we will visit the attractively dilapidated woodland gardens which protect the tiny, enigmatic 8th century St Oran's Cross.

**Day 11 Troon.** Disembark this morning after breakfast. Transfers will be provided to Glasgow International Airport and Glasgow Central Railway Station at a fixed time.

## PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Deck	Suite Category	Price
Magellan	Standard	£5095
Columbus	Superior	£5295
Marco Polo	Premium	£5595
Marco Polo	Corner	£5995
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£6495
Explorer	Owner's Balcony Suites	£6795
Explorer	Island Suite	£7795
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£6595
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£6995

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

**Not Included:** Travel insurance.

# Hebridean Secrets



Discover the majestic Hebrides & the Isle of Man aboard the MS Island Sky  
4<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023

If ever an archipelago was made for expedition cruising it is the islands off Scotland's west coast that form stepping stones into the Atlantic. Here you will find magnificent scenery, fascinating history and enormous natural splendour. Europe's true last remaining wilderness areas affords the traveller a marvellous island hopping journey through stunning scenery accompanied by spectacular sunsets and wonderful wildlife. During this eight night expedition aboard the 118 passenger MS Island Sky we will explore the spectacular beauty, rich wildlife and fascinating history of the Inner and Outer Hebrides and with our fleet of Zodiacs we will be able to visit some of the most remote islands including the Isle of Lewis, uninhabited St Kilda, and the small island community of Iona.

With our naturalists and local guides we will explore the length and breadth of the isles, and with our nimble Zodiac craft be able to reach some of the most remote and untouched places. There is no better way to explore this endlessly fascinating and beautiful region than by our small ship, and ashore with our local experts we divide into small groups thereby enjoying a more comprehensive and peaceful experience. Whether your interest lies in wildlife, gardens, photography, ancient history or simply an appreciation of this corner of the kingdom, this unique voyage has something for everyone.



Tobermory



Loch Scavaig

## The Itinerary

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

**Day 2 Peel, Isle of Man.** Arrive this morning on the Isle of Man at the main fishing port of Peel. Settlements have been here since the Mesolithic Age and the island also claims to have the longest continuous parliament which was founded in 979 AD. Leaving Peel we will visit 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 of 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 language. Continue to Castletown where we 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. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore Peel at your own pace.

**Day 3 Staffa & Tobermory, Inner Hebrides.** Awake this morning at the south side of Staffa where the perpendicular rock face features an imposing series of black basalt columns, known as the Colonnade, which has been cut by the sea into cathedral-like caverns, most notably Fingal's Cave. Weather permitting, we will use our Zodiacs to explore closer. Over lunch we sail to the Isle of Mull and the picturesque port of Tobermory. Spend time at leisure in the town walking amongst the colourful buildings, visit the town's distillery or maybe take the coastal walk to the Rubha nan Gall lighthouse.

**Day 4 Stornoway, Outer Hebrides.** Spend the morning at sea as we sail to the Outer Hebrides, landing over lunch on the Isle of Lewis. On leaving the island capital of Stornoway, we will head across the island to the beautiful west coast. Described as Scotland's Stonehenge, the Callanish Standing Stones date from around 3000 BC. There are a total of 32 stones in a circular and avenue design. The stones stand like a petrified forest on the flat top of a peninsula which reaches out into East Loch Roag. We also visit the Dun Carloway Pictish Broch, probably built sometime in the last century BC, it would have served as an occasionally defensible residence



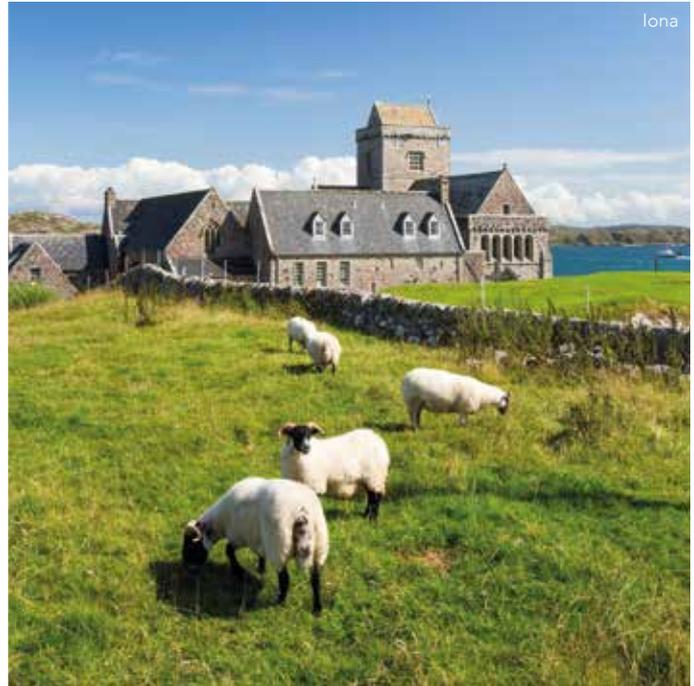
Peel waterfront



Exploring by Zodiac



St Kilda



Iona

for an extended family complete with accommodation for animals at ground floor level. Our final stop is the Gearrannan Blackhouse Village, a reconstructed settlement of traditional black houses which were made using dry stone masonry and have thatched roofs, distinctively weighted down with rocks. Visit the small museum, enjoy a display of a typical crofting activity such as weaving and take in the views of this dramatic site on the wild Atlantic coast.

**Day 5 St Kilda.** Arrive over breakfast at St Kilda, a remarkable uninhabited archipelago some fifty miles beyond the Outer Hebrides. Dominated by the highest cliffs and sea stacks in Britain, Hirta, St Kilda's main island was occupied on and off for at least two thousand years, with the last 36 Gaelic speaking inhabitants evacuated at their own request in 1930. Immediately after the evacuation, the island was bought by the Marquess of Bute to protect the island's thousands of seabirds including puffin and fulmars, and in 1957 it was bequeathed to The National Trust for Scotland. St Kilda is one of only a few UNESCO World Heritage Sites with dual status reflecting its natural and cultural significance. The local ranger will join us on board before our expedition staff lead a number of guided walks on the island.

**Day 6 Canna & Loch Scavaig, Isle of Skye.** Strategically placed between the mountains of Rum

and the Outer Hebrides, the island of Canna and its adjoining neighbour Sanday are bound together like some rare text that reveals over 60 million years of Hebridean geology and history. They have an amazingly rich archaeological landscape with remains dating to all periods of settled occupation in Scotland. Canna is run as a single farm and bird sanctuary by the National Trust for Scotland and enjoys the best harbour in the Small Isles, a horn-shaped haven. The fertile soil and its diversity of habitats mean that the island has an incredibly rich plant life with 248 native flowering plants recorded. We will see Canna House and wander across grassy basalt plateaus to the 600 foot cliffs on the north shore. Over lunch we sail into lovely Loch Scavaig. Just beyond is the freshwater Loch Coruisk with its breathtakingly beautiful view over the Cuillins. This is great walking country, but for those who prefer a less energetic afternoon our Zodiacs will explore the coast looking out for seals.

**Day 7 Armadale & Inverie.** From our anchorage at Armadale we will visit the Clan Donald Centre, a 20,000 acre Highland estate which includes the ruins of Armadale Castle and the Museum of the Isles which showcases 1500 years of history and culture of the area. We will also explore the restored historical gardens and the beautiful walking trails through the 40 acres of woodland which surround the castle and may see

some of the resident wildlife including red deer. This afternoon we arrive at the Knoydart Peninsula and the village of Inverie which is the largest settlement in mainland Britain without a road connection. Our expedition team will lead walks in the surrounding forest with great views down to Loch Nevis. Alternatively, choose to explore the town and visit the Old Forge which is listed as mainland Britain's most remote pub.

**Day 8 Iona & Colonsay.** Iona has been occupied for thousands of years and has been a place of pilgrimage and Christian worship for several centuries. It was to this flat, Hebridean island that St Columba fled from Ireland in 563 and established a monastery. Here his followers were responsible for the conversion of much of pagan Scotland and

Northern England. No less than 62 Scottish Kings are buried in the Abbey. Visit the Abbey or perhaps walk along the white sandy beaches or go in search of the comcrake amongst the irises. Spend the afternoon exploring the island of Colonsay, with her craggy, heather-clad hills and a sparse woodland yet impressive array of plants and birdlife. Near Colonsay House, built in 1722 by Malcolm MacNeil and bought by Lord Strathcona in 1904, we will visit the attractively dilapidated woodland gardens which protect the tiny, enigmatic 8th century St Oran's Cross.

**Day 9 Troon.** Disembark this morning after breakfast. Transfers will be provided to Glasgow International Airport and Glasgow Central Railway Station at a fixed time.

## PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Deck	Suite Category	Price
Magellan	Standard	£4195
Columbus	Superior	£4495
Marco Polo	Premium	£4695
Marco Polo	Corner	£4995
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£5595
Explorer	Owner's Balcony Suites	£5995
Explorer	Island Suite	£6495
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£5195
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£5495

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Eight nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia expedition team • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.  
**Not Included:** Travel insurance.

# September in the Isles

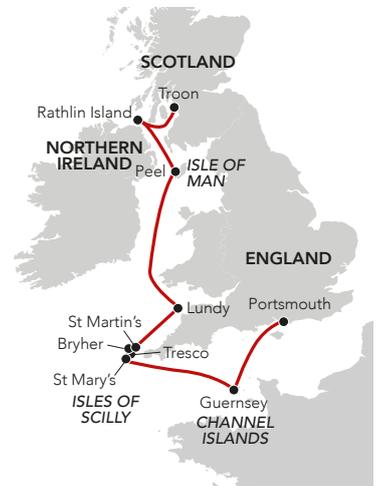


Island Hopping from Troon to Portsmouth aboard the MS Island Sky  
12<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Join us for a leisurely voyage from Troon to Portsmouth visiting both inhabited and uninhabited islands and places of great natural beauty where you can be as active or as footloose as you choose. Sailing distances are short allowing us to visit multiple isles and on each island there will be organised walks with members of our expedition team as well as ample time for you to explore independently. This is not a cruise that could be offered aboard a large cruise ship but is an ideal itinerary for one the size of the all-suite MS Island Sky with her ability to drop anchor and transfer guests ashore by Zodiac or local tender.

This unique itinerary offers the rare opportunity to focus exclusively on islands and we will visit some of the most bewitching including the Isle of Man, the island of Lundy in the Bristol Channel and the Isles of Scilly where we have the benefit of two full days to explore. Here the grey Atlantic dissolves miraculously into turquoise, white sandy beaches give way to verdant islands and palm trees and the nurturing warm waters of the Gulf Stream have helped to create a microclimate endowing the islands with great botanical diversity. We will also visit Guernsey the 'Island of Flowers' where we explore its beautiful coastline and fascinating history.

With just over 100 passengers, we will not overrun the islands but instead will be absorbed into island life. Everything about this captivating corner of the kingdom is to be relished and our voyage will provide you with the opportunity to revel in the timeless enchantment, peace and serenity that so often evades us in this modern way of life.



## The Itinerary

**Day 1 Troon, Scotland.** Embark the MS Island Sky this afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Glasgow International Airport and Glasgow Central Station at a fixed time. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner this evening as we sail.

**Day 2 Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland.** Located just a few miles from the North Antrim coast, Rathlin Island 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 and on a guided walk we will discover historic buildings and ruins as well as the unique "upside down" Rathlin West Light, a great feat of engineering and one of the Great Lighthouses of Ireland.

**Day 3 Peel, Isle of Man.** Arrive this morning on the Isle of Man at the main fishing port of Peel. Settlements have been here since the Mesolithic Age and the island also claims to have the longest continuous parliament which was founded in 979 AD. Leaving Peel we will visit 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 of 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 language. Continue to Castletown where we 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. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore Peel at your own pace.

**Day 4 Lundy Island, England.** Spend the morning at sea as we continue our journey south. Over lunch we arrive at Lundy, a remote island in the Bristol Channel. Although small, just three miles long by half a mile wide, its isolation has made it a home for a range of wildlife as well as a selection of listed buildings and monuments. The towering cliffs and rocky shoreline are a haven for migrating seabirds, whilst Sika



Zodiacs heading ashore to Lundy Island



Little Chapel, Guernsey



St Martin's



Peel Castle

deer, red deer and Soay sheep can also be seen as we walk along its traffic-free lanes and paths. Using our Zodiacs to land ashore, spend the afternoon being as active as you wish, maybe explore the wide bays and coves by way of hanging valleys, climb the lighthouse, have a drink or lunch at the tavern or buy the island's 'puffin stamps' at the shop.

**Days 5 & 6 Tresco, St Martin's, Bryher & St Mary's, Isles of Scilly.**

We have two days to explore the idyllic Isles of Scilly. From our central anchorage, we will use our Zodiacs and local tenders to visit a number of the islands in the group. We will visit traffic-free Tresco, walking its idyllic lanes from the beach to the famous subtropical 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 café. See the northernmost island of the group, St Martin's, a small island community of just 120 residents. Enjoy time to explore independently, climb one of the viewpoints for vistas over the islands and the offshore seal colonies, join one of our expedition team on a guided walk or maybe visit the island's vineyard. We will tender ashore to Bryher, the smallest of the inhabited Isles of Scilly. Take the chance to

wander along the tracks that cross the island amongst hedgerows and fields bursting with wildflowers. Those feeling 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. On St Mary's, the largest island in the archipelago (yet still only six square miles), you can enjoy some time in the shops in Hugh Town or walk the historic Garrison Walls.

**Day 7 Guernsey, Channel Islands.**

We spend our last day exploring Guernsey and during a panoramic drive will see the beautiful coastline, rocky cliffs and wild sandy bays. Along the coast we will see the Martello Towers, built during the Napoleonic wars, and the fortifications built by the Germans during the occupation in the Second World War. Return to the ship via country lanes and the Little Chapel, built in 1914 as a miniature version of the famous basilica at Lourdes and covered in fragments of shattered china, seashells and pebbles. This afternoon is free to explore St Peter Port at your own pace or to join a cliff walk where, if the weather is fine, we should be able to see the nearby Channel Islands and possibly the French coast.

**Day 8 Portsmouth.** Disembark this morning after breakfast. Transfers will be provided to Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station at a fixed time.



Abbey Gardens, Tresco

**PRICES PER PERSON**

Based on double occupancy

Deck	Suite Category	Price
Magellan	Standard	£3895
Columbus	Superior	£4195
Marco Polo	Premium	£4395
Marco Polo	Corner	£4695
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£5295
Explorer	Owner's Balcony Suites	£5695
Explorer	Island Suite	£6195
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£4895
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£5195

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Seven nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia expedition team • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.  
**Not Included:** Travel insurance.

# The Best of British

A Circumnavigation of the United Kingdom aboard the MS Hebridean Sky  
24<sup>th</sup> August to 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023

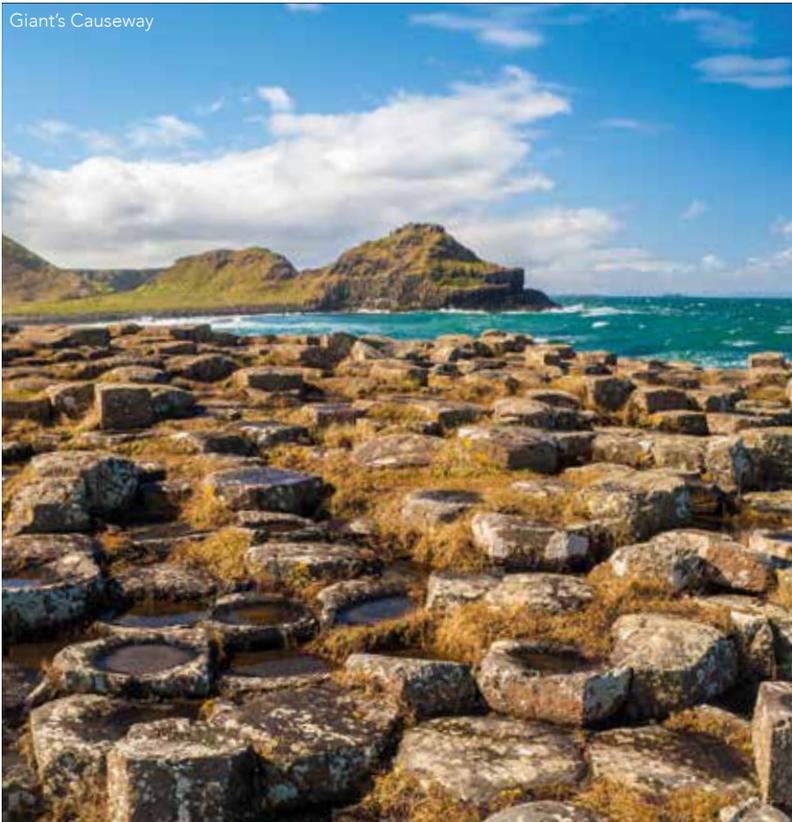
Drawing on our considerable experience of operating cruises around the British Isles, we have devised this circumnavigation of the UK which offers a wonderful portrait of life on our islands. The voyage is a celebration of the very best of what we offer and it is a wonderful opportunity to return to some of our favourite places to see some of the most beautiful scenery, meet some interesting inhabitants and learn more about both the past and present of the United Kingdom.

We will sail from Portsmouth and during our cruise visit remarkable places of great natural beauty, rich in wildlife and history. From the idyllic islands of Herm and St Agnes in the southwest with their crystal-clear waters and fine white sandy beaches to Unst, the northernmost inhabited island and St Kilda, we will enjoy the peace and tranquillity which these charming islands exude. During our circumnavigation we will visit many special places including Tresco's famous subtropical Abbey Gardens, St Davids, Britain's smallest city, Rathlin Island and the Giants Causeway in Northern Island. From Berwick-upon-Tweed, England's most northerly town we will explore Northumberland including Lindisfarne Castle and from Lowestoft, England's easternmost town, we will discover some of Suffolk's many highlights.

Over the course of 15 days we will visit all of the UK's four countries, as well as the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, and with the all-suite MS Hebridean Sky as our base, in the company of just over 100 fellow guests, we will be able to visit many fascinating yet little-visited destinations that are otherwise inaccessible to the larger ships. All of this makes for a most appealing sea journey whether you be an avid gardener, nature-lover or simply enjoy sailing past and visiting some of the most enchanting places in the world.



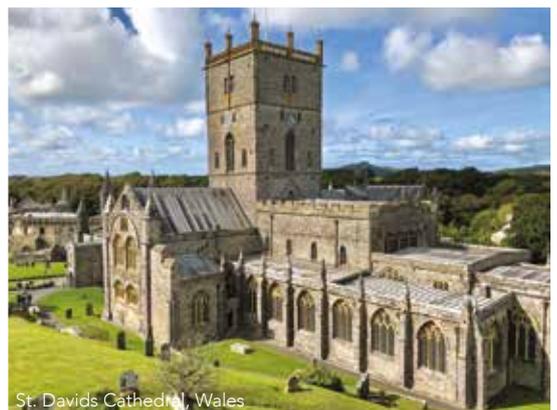
Giant's Causeway



Abbey Gardens, Tresco



St. Davids Cathedral, Wales





Helmingham Hall, Suffolk



St Kilda



Castle and gardens of Mey

## The 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. Alternatively car parking facilities are available at the port.

**Day 2 Guernsey & Herm, Channel Islands.** This morning we arrive on Guernsey, the 'Island of Flowers' where there will be the option of a walking tour of St Peter Port including a visit to Castle Cornet, a 12th century battlement which guards the entrance to St Peter Port harbour. Alternatively, enjoy a panoramic drive during which we will see the beautiful coastline and beaches and visit the Little Chapel, built in 1914 as a miniature version of the famous basilica at Lourdes and covered in fragments of shattered china. Over lunch we sail the short distance to Herm, the smallest inhabited Channel Island and, at just one and a half miles long and half a mile wide, perfect for exploring on foot. Here, you will have free time to explore, perhaps take a stroll over to Shell or Belvoir beach or join our naturalists for a walk.

**Day 3 Isles of Scilly.** Spend the morning on traffic-free Tresco, walking its idyllic lanes from the beach to the famous subtropical 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. We spend the

afternoon on St Agnes, the most southwesterly community in the UK. Surrounded by rocks and reefs this delightful tiny island offers marvellous coastal walks. The small island of Gugh lies across a narrow sandbar and here we find a single stone monolith called the 'Old Man of Gugh' which dates back to the Bronze Age.

**Day 4 Fishguard & St Davids, Wales.** From our berth in Fishguard we will take a scenic drive to St Davids, Britain's smallest city. Explore the magnificent 12th century cathedral and see the Bishop's Palace before enjoying some free time in the city. Return to the ship for lunch and either choose an afternoon at leisure or join our naturalists for a walk along the Pembrokeshire coastal path. The path covers 186 miles around the Welsh coast and we will join a section to enjoy the wonderful scenery.

**Day 5 Peel, Isle of Man.** Arrive this morning on the Isle of Man at the main fishing port of Peel. Settlements have been here since the Mesolithic Age and the island also claims to have the longest continuous parliament which was founded in 979 AD. Leaving Peel we will visit 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 of 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 where we 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. Return to the ship for lunch and a free afternoon to explore Peel at your own pace.

**Day 6 Rathlin Island & Portrush, Northern Ireland.** Arrive this morning at 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 140 or so souls, whereas before the Great Famine there were 1200 inhabitants. History can be seen everywhere here amongst the historic buildings and ruins. Also see the unique "upside down" Rathlin West Light, a great feat of engineering and one of the Great Lighthouses of Ireland. Over lunch we sail to Portrush, our base for a visit to 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 - it is estimated that there are around 40,000 in total.

**Day 7 St Kilda.** This morning we arrive at St Kilda, a remarkable uninhabited archipelago some fifty miles beyond the Outer Hebrides. Dominated by the highest cliffs and sea stacks in Britain, Hirta, St Kilda's main island was occupied on and off for at least two thousand years, with the last 36 Gaelic speaking

inhabitants evacuated at their own request in 1930. Immediately after the evacuation, the island was bought by the Marquess of Bute to protect the island's thousands of seabirds, including puffin and fulmars that nest here in the spring, and in 1957 it was bequeathed to The National Trust for Scotland. St Kilda is one of only a few UNESCO World Heritage Sites with dual status reflecting its natural and cultural significance. The local ranger will join us on board before our expedition staff lead guided walks on the island.

**Day 8 Scrabster.** Spend the day in Scrabster, the most northerly port on the Scottish mainland. This morning we will visit the Castle and Gardens of Mey, built between 1566 and 1572 by George Sinclair, 4th Earl of Caithness. The castle was purchased by Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, in 1952, who renovated and restored it and created the beautiful gardens which we will see today. After lunch on board, enjoy a leisurely afternoon or choose to take a drive along the coast to John O'Groats, the most northerly town on mainland Britain. After some free time here we will return to the ship via Dunnet Bay, a glorious crescent of sand and dunes, and Dunnet Head to see the lighthouse, built in 1831 by Robert Stevenson, taking in the views over the Pentland Firth to the Orkney Islands.

**Day 9 Unst, Shetland Islands.** After a morning at sea we arrive over lunch in Unst, Britain's most northerly inhabited island and



Lerwick



Atlantic grey seals



Whitby Abbey

at the Heritage Centre we learn about how the islanders have lived over the centuries and the industries that have prospered. We will visit the Unst Boat Haven, dedicated to the history of the island's distinctive wooden boats which descend from Viking craft and Saxa Vord. Admire the views over Hermaness National Nature Reserve and Muckle Flugga stacks.

**Day 10 Lerwick.** From the Shetland capital, we will visit the remarkable archaeological site of Jarlshof. The site was uncovered by a violent storm in the winter of 1896/7, revealing an extraordinary settlement site embracing at least 5000 years of human history. The site contains a remarkable sequence of stone structures – late Neolithic houses, a Bronze-Age village, an Iron-Age broch and wheelhouses, several Norse longhouses, a Medieval farmstead and the 16th century laird's house. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy a free afternoon to explore this historic port. Perhaps wander through its narrow stone lanes or maybe visit the excellent Shetland Museum, containing artefacts from shipwrecks and the whaling era.

**Day 11 Montrose.** Spend the morning at sea before we arrive in Montrose, the gateway to Angus and known as the birthplace of Scotland. It was the Battle of Dunnichen, between the Picts and Northumbrians in 645 AD which led to the creation of the Kingdom of Alba and in 1320 the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath marked Scotland's creation as an independent country. This afternoon we visit nearby Glamis Castle, the childhood home of the Queen Mother. One of the most famous rooms in the castle

is Duncan's Hall, the legendary setting for Shakespeare's Macbeth. There will be some time to explore Montrose independently before we sail this evening.

**Day 12 Berwick-upon-Tweed, England.** England's northernmost town is our base for today's exploration of Northumberland. To the south lies Holy Island, also known as Lindisfarne, home to a monastic community which was established in 635 AD by Irish evangelist St Aidan. Viking raids forced the monks to leave in 875 AD, but in 1082 St Cuthbert rebuilt the Priory, the remains of which we can visit today. Also walk up to Lindisfarne Castle perched atop a rocky crag on the island. After our visit choose to either return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at leisure in Berwick or to continue to Alnwick Castle. The second largest inhabited castle in England, it has been home to the Percys, Earls and Dukes of Northumberland since 1309. After lunch there will be the opportunity to visit the castle, see the fine collection of artwork and explore the wonderful gardens.

**Day 13 Whitby.** This morning we will call into Whitby, where on the east cliff the ruins of St Hilda's Abbey dominate the skyline. This charming fishing port, which was once an important whaling station, is also the town where 18th century explorer Captain James Cook lived as an apprentice seaman and where Lewis Carroll wrote some of his work. We will visit the ruins of Whitby Abbey and its museum as well as the unique parish church of St Mary's. Take some time to

enjoy the wonderful panoramic views from above the old town with its delightful collection of red roofed pantile cottages and narrow cobbled streets before descending to the old town. There will also be a chance to ride a section of the North Yorkshire Moors Heritage Railway which travels through the beautiful countryside of the North York Moors National Park using historic carriages and steam locomotives.

**Day 14 Lowestoft.** The Suffolk town of Lowestoft is the easternmost town in Britain and our base for the day. There will be the opportunity to visit Helmingham Hall, the home of the Tollemache family since 1510. The Hall appears to float on the surface of its broad surrounding moat and we have time to wander around the extensive and beautiful gardens. Alternatively, visit the Anglo Saxon royal burial site at Sutton Hoo where, in 1938

the archaeologist Basil Brown discovered the remains of a 90 foot burial-ship of an Anglo-Saxon warrior king. The exhibition tells the compelling story of Anglo-Saxon warriors, treasure and kings, with a full-size reconstruction of the burial chamber. After the excursion, choose to either return directly to the ship or spend some time in the seaside town of Southwold before we sail this afternoon.

**Day 15 Portsmouth.** Disembark this morning. Transfers will be provided to Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station at a fixed time.

### SHIP TO SHORE

Due to the many small ports that we will be visiting during this voyage, whilst we will be alongside in some, on a number of days we will be at anchor and the vessel's Zodiacs will be utilised for transportation ashore.

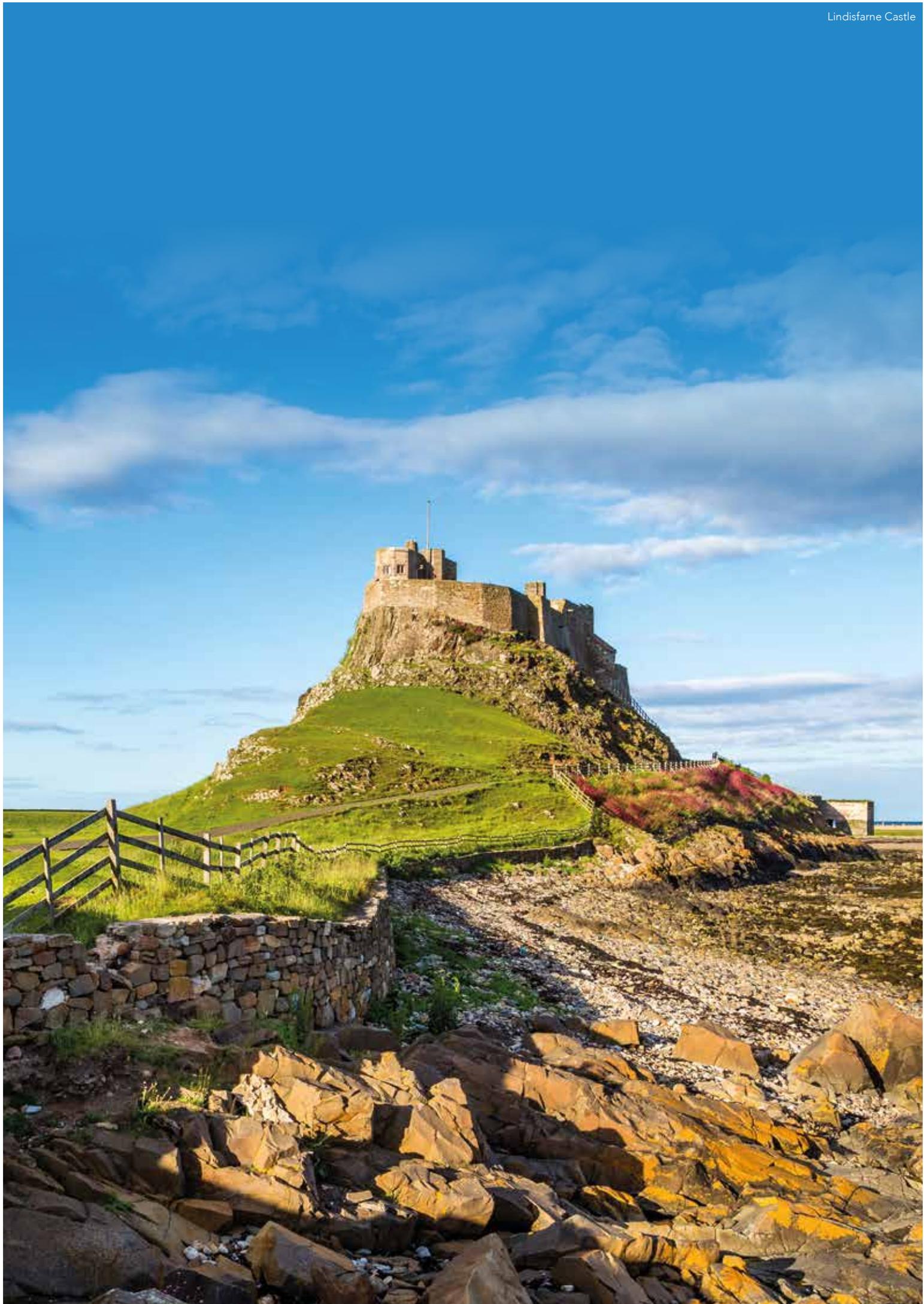
### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

#### SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £300 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Amundsen	Standard	£7295	£6995
Byrd	Superior	£7595	£7295
Mawson	Premium	£7995	£7695
Mawson	Corner	£8495	£8195
Scott	Deluxe Balcony	£8995	£8695
Shackleton	Owner's Balcony	£9495	£9195
Shackleton	Hebridean	£10495	£10195
Amundsen	Standard for sole use	£9485	£9185
Byrd	Superior for sole use	£9875	£9575

**PRICE INCLUDES:** 14 nights aboard the MS Hebridean Sky on a full board basis • Wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch & dinner • Shore excursions • Noble Caledonia onboard team • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.  
**Not Included:** Travel insurance.





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# NOBLE CALEDONIA

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All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.  
Cover image: Tobermory, Scotland.