

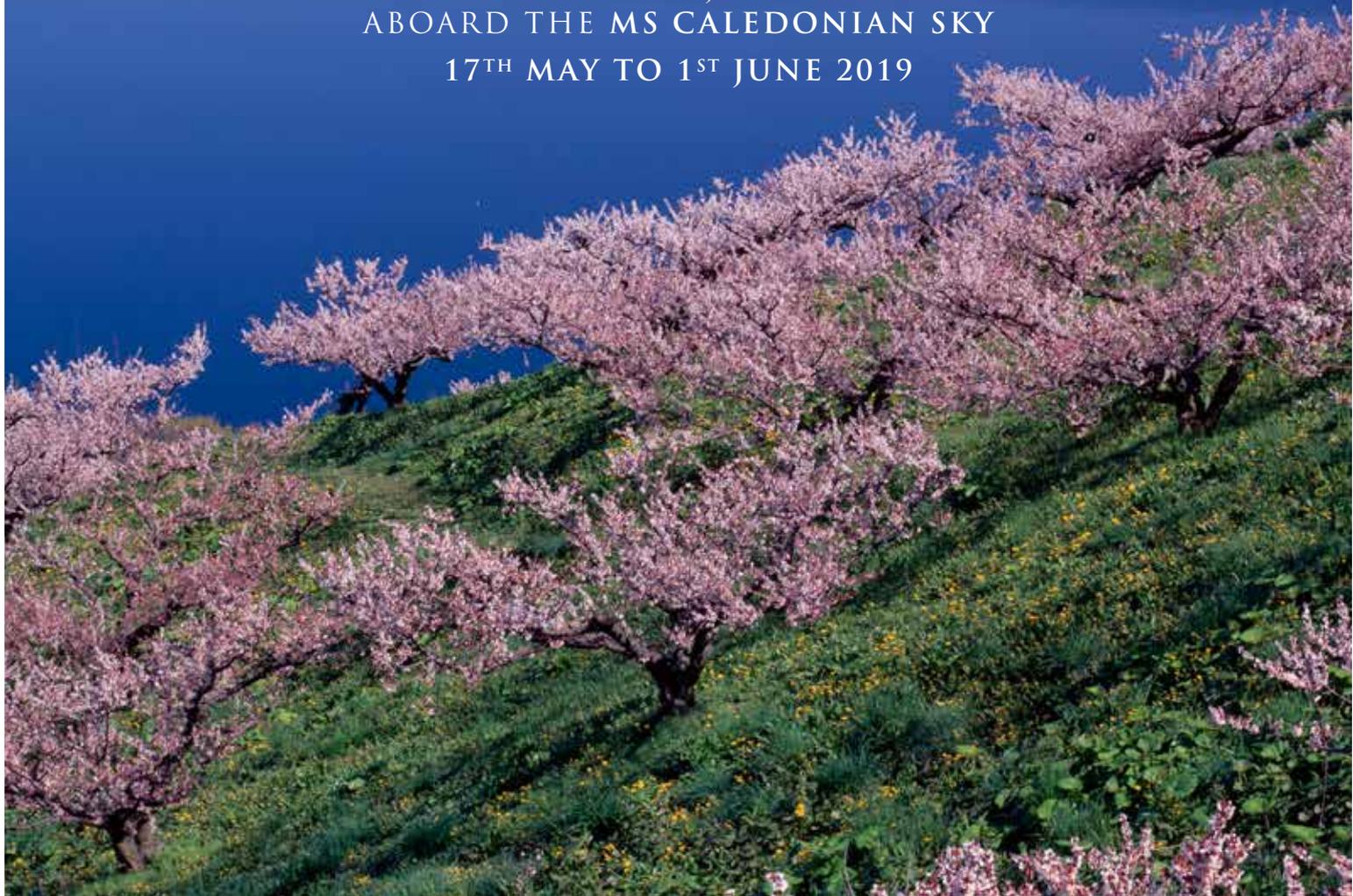
NOBLE CALEDONIA

SPECIAL
OFFER – SAVE
£500
PER PERSON

CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF HOKKAIDO

AN EXPLORATION OF JAPAN'S REMOTE ISLAND
WILDERNESS WITH JUDITH THOMAS
ABOARD THE MS CALEDONIAN SKY

17TH MAY TO 1ST JUNE 2019



Rishiri Island



Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost and least developed island is often considered by the Japanese to be the country's last frontier and is a world away from the traditional view of Japan. Every year the island emerges from a bitter Siberian winter into the warmth of spring, when the thaw reveals a glorious landscape littered with wild flowers. Only colonised by Japan in the past 150 years, we won't find a land of ancient temples and shrines or developed cities with skyscrapers during our visit, but what the island lacks in regard to 21st century development, it more than makes up for in natural wonders with large swathes of wild, open spaces, primeval forests, crystal clear lakes, beautiful alpine flowers, active volcanoes and bubbling hot springs. During our circumnavigation of this remarkable island, we will visit the outlying Rebun and Rishiri Islands, explore nature trails, watch for wildlife in the national parks, learn more of the indigenous Ainu people and hopefully see the multitude of colourful flowers that should be in bloom to coincide with our visit.

More than two million acres on Hokkaido are dedicated to national parkland and we will visit some of the most remarkable including the Shiretoko National Park located on the north eastern tip of the island and which in Ainu means 'end of the world'. UNESCO has called it one of the richest integrated ecosystems in the world and in 2005 designated it as a World Heritage Site. We will have a full day to explore the national park, home to brown bears, Yezo shika deer and red fox whilst birders can keep an eye out for Steller sea eagles, Blakiston fish owl and white-tailed eagles. Whilst in the Kushiro Marshlands we visit the home of Hokkaido's resident red-crowned cranes, Japan's iconic bird, known as the bird of happiness. We hope you can join us for this rare circumnavigation of Japan's most enchanting isle.

Guest Speaker Judith Thomas



Judith has lived and worked in many countries including the USA, Indonesia,

New Zealand, the Middle East and Japan. Her early work as a Management Training specialist for overseas assignments developed her interest in globally mobile families and the cultural changes they confront. Her experience of Japan dates from the 70's up to the present day, including two extended periods of living and working there. Her expertise is Japanese Culture; gardens are a cultural expression in their own right. Traditional cultures adapting to the modern world are also of particular interest to her.

The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Sapporo, Japan.
Fly by scheduled flight via Tokyo.

Day 2 Otaru. Arrive today in Sapporo and transfer to Otaru on the west coast of Hokkaido Island. Transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay and spend the rest of the day at leisure to explore or relax in the hotel.

Day 3 Otaru. This morning is at leisure. You may wish to explore independently and visit Sakaimachi Street where you find seafood vendors, cafes, shops selling some of Otaru's famous glassware and the town's steam clock situated outside the Music Box Museum. In the early afternoon we will check out of the hotel and spend some time at the Otaru Art Base, a series of former office buildings that have been renovated to house exhibitions of Japanese and Western art, before continuing to the Tanaka

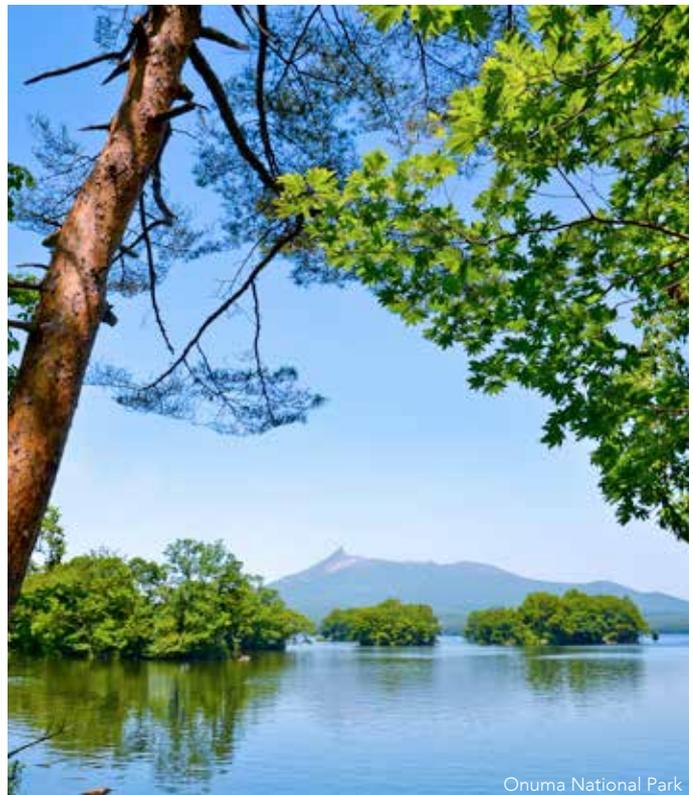
Sake Brewery to learn more about this famous Japanese drink. After our visit we will transfer to the MS Caledonian Sky for embarkation and enjoy Welcome Dinner and Drinks as we sail this evening.

Day 4 Teuri-Jima & Rishiri Island. At dawn we arrive at the tiny island of Teuri Jima, part of the Shokanbetsu-Teuri-Yagishiri National Park and an important sanctuary for nesting seabirds including common murre and black-tailed gulls. We will use our ship to sail by the cliffs and, if time permits, we will use the Zodiacs for a closer look. Later this morning we continue our journey to the Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu National Park, arriving at lunchtime. At Rishiri Island the skyline is dominated by the dormant volcano of Mount Rishiri which climbs to 1721 metres. On an afternoon tour we will see the beautiful scenery and alpine wildflowers in bloom at



Himenuma Pond and Kutsugata Cape Park whilst we hope to see Black Woodpecker during a walk at the Forest Park.

Day 5 Rebun Island. We remain at anchor overnight in the National



Park and will spend the day at neighbouring Rebun Island which is famous for its rich flora, including many alpine flowers, some of which cannot be found anywhere else in the world, and which carpet the island from late April to mid September. Today we will take a series of walks around the coastline offering views over to Rishiro Volcano and Cape Gorota. Return to the ship for lunch and sail this afternoon. We will clear immigration formalities from Japan this evening as we sail to Russia.

Day 6 Korsakov, Russia. Arrive this morning at Korsakov where we will clear into Russia. Once the formalities are concluded we will explore part of this city which was founded in 1853 as Sakhalin's first Russian military post. From here we drive to Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, the capital of the island with a population of just over 160,000. Founded as a small Russian settlement in the 1880s, the city became a Japanese prefect capital when the southern half of Sakhalin was declared a Japanese colony in 1905; after World War II it was returned to Russia. Highlights include a visit to the Russian Orthodox Church, the Regional Museum housed in an impressive former Japanese mansion, and the bustling market. Return to the ship this afternoon as we return to Japanese waters.

Day 7 Shiretoko National Park, Japan. We return to Hokkaido this morning at the port of Abashiri where we will spend a day and a

half. From here we will make a full day excursion to the Shiretoko National Park which covers the majority of the Shiretoko Peninsula. This remote and untouched park combines rivers, forests, mountains and waterfalls and is home to an array of wildlife including brown bears, Yezo shika deer and red fox whilst birders can keep an eye out for Steller sea eagles, Blakiston fish owl and white-tailed eagles. If weather permits we will also take the Shiretoko pass offering stunning views of Mount Rausu. We will return to the ship via the Koshimizu Gensai-kaen, an eight kilometre long dune covered in over 40 varieties of wildflowers against a backdrop of the Sea of Okutsk. Return to the ship this evening as we moor overnight in Abashiri.

Day 8 Abashiri. There will be a choice of activities this morning. Chose to take a trip to Lake Kussharo, a beautiful caldera lake where we can enjoy the scenery or join a nature walk and maybe take a dip in one of the hot spring baths. We return to the ship via the eight hectare Shibzakura Park in Ozora where we hope to see it covered in the tiny red, pink, white and purple flowers of spring. Alternatively spend a more leisurely morning in Abashiri and learn more about the Ainu at the Hokkaido Museum of Northern Peoples and visit the Okhotski Sea Ice Museum which offers insight into the sea ice that surrounds the city during the winter. Return to the ship for lunch and spend the afternoon on deck as we sail this afternoon around the

Shiretoko Peninsula and into the Nemuro Channel where we will keep an eye out for wildlife, the abundant birdlife and minke, orca and sperm whales who inhabit these waters.

Day 9 Kushiro. Today we will visit Kushiro Marshlands, Japan's largest wetland and marsh habitat and home to the only known population of Japan's sacred red-crowned cranes. The cranes were thought to have been made extinct due to overhunting and habitat destruction. However in 1926 a group of 20 birds were discovered in this area and with conservation efforts now number more than 1000. We will visit the observatory with displays of the fauna and flora of the region and views over the marshlands before taking the walking trails. Return to the ship via the small but excellent Kushiro City Museum that offers an insight into Ainu culture and natural history of the area.

Day 10 Tomakomai. Spend the morning at sea as we arrive into Tomakomai in the early afternoon. Choose to visit Nibutani, one of the country's best museums about the Ainu people, the indigenous people of Hokkaido. See some of the traditional clothing and hunting implements, learn about their legends and literature and see displays of traditional dancing. Alternatively, visit Hokkaido's capital city of Sapporo where we can explore the colourful botanical gardens, visit the small Ainu museum displaying around 2500

artefacts and enjoy a tour of the famous brewery.

Day 11 Muroran. We will spend our morning around the Shikotsu-Toya National Park, named after the two caldera lakes which offer wonderful scenery and excellent hiking and walking opportunities. This is still an active area and a geological wonder with the volcano Showa Shin-zan only created in the 1940s. Our day will be flexible around the weather but if clear we may take the cable car to the top of Mount Usu for the wonderful views to Lake Toya, visit Jigokudani, "Hell Valley", a steaming lunar like valley of steam vents and sulphurous streams formed over 10,000 years ago or enjoy scenic walks in the volcanic peaks that surround Lake Shikotsu. Return to the ship for lunch and spend the afternoon at leisure in Muroran, maybe visit the scenic cape and lighthouse or the active may wish to walk up Mount Sokuryu offering views to the city below.

Day 12 Hakodate. Our final day in Hokkaido will be at the southern port of Hakodate. We will make our way to Onuma Park, on the outskirts of the city and known for its picturesque, island-dotted lakes and majestic dormant volcano, Mount Komagatake. We have the option to take a series of walks around the lake's peninsulas and islands, several of which are connected with each other by small bridges and surrounded by birch and maple forests. Return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon either relax on board or join a city



tour including the 19th century Fort Goryokaku, built as a citadel but now a public park. We will remain in Hakodate till late for anyone who wishes to take an after dinner stroll or perhaps even the cable car up Mount Hakodate for the spectacular night views.

Day 13 Aomori. This morning we arrive on the northern coast of Honshu. From our berth in Aomori we offer a choice of options. Maybe join the tour to Towada Hachimantai National Park which involves a scenic drive through the Kayano plateau, Hakkoda mountains and scenic Oirase Valley. We will take the Hakkoda cable car which climbs to 1324 metres above sea level and offers stunning views before continuing to Lake Towada, a magnificent ancient caldera lake surrounded by deciduous forests. Enjoy walking along the paths and through the woodlands to the viewpoints around the lake. Alternatively, visit the former Feudal town of Hirosaki which was the political capital of the region in the Edo Period. A tour of the city will include the three story castle, which was the focal point of the old city and the base of the powerful Tsugaru Clan. Surrounding the castle was the samurai and

merchant district where we can visit the preserved houses and the Fujita Kinen Teien, a Japanese landscape garden built in 1919.

Day 14 Akita. Spend the day in the Akita Prefecture, known for its rice farming, traditional festivals, and treasured dog breed of the same name. This morning we will drive inland to Kakunodate which was established in 1620 by the Lords of Akita as a military outpost with a castle built on Mount Furishiroyama. Two distinct areas were then developed, one for samurai and the other for merchants. Today it remains one of the best examples of a castle town in Japan and the Uchimachi samurai quarter maintains a number of the original wooden houses and well maintained gardens which we can explore. The afternoon is free to explore Akita. At the centre lies Senshu Park, built from the ruins of Kubota Castle, a former samurai fortress. Lotus flowers now fill the remnants of old moats, and tree-lined walking trails lead to its watchtower, temple, and shrine. You may also wish to visit the Akita Museum of Art which includes a large collection of work by Fujita Tsuguharu including his giant "Annual Events in Akita" mural.

Day 15 Niigata to Tokyo.

Disembark this morning and take the bullet train to Tokyo. On arrival we enjoy an afternoon city tour including Meiji Shrine, Sensoji Temple and the Imperial Palace Plaza. We then transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay.

Day 16 Tokyo to London. After breakfast in the hotel we transfer

to the airport for our scheduled flight to London. Arrive this evening.

SHIP TO SHORE

The ship will be at anchor at Teuri Jima and Rebun Island and Zodiacs or tenders will be used to transport passengers ashore.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £500 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Castle	Standard	£7995	£7495
Caledonian	Superior	£8295	£7795
Promenade	Premium	£8795	£8295
Bridge	Deluxe Balcony	£9295	£8795
Promenade	Premium Balcony	£9595	£9095
Promenade	Owners Corner Suite with balcony	£10595	£10095
Castle	Standard for sole use	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Caledonian	Superior for sole use	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Overnight hotel accommodation in Otaru and Tokyo on bed and breakfast basis • 12 nights aboard the MS Caledonian Sky on full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner on board • Noble Caledonia onboard team • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Permits • Port taxes • Group Russian Visa.

Not Included: Travel insurance.

MS CALEDONIAN SKY



Deluxe Balcony Suite



On Deck



The Restaurant

The MS Caledonian Sky is one of our three flag ships and sister vessel to the MS Island Sky and MS Hebridean Sky. All three vessels were built in the same ship yard in Italy at similar times and share the same excellent attributes that make them three of the finest small ships in the world. With a maximum passenger capacity of only 114, a vessel of her size is capable of carrying many more but instead the MS Caledonian Sky has the benefit of unusually large suites, luxuriously appointed public areas and spacious outside decks.



Your Suite

On board there are 57 exceptionally spacious and well designed suites. The passenger accommodation is arranged over four decks and all suites have outside views. All feature a sitting area and some have private balconies. Each affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring a country style wash basin, heated towel rail, vanity unit and walk-in shower and/or bath tub. Facilities in the suites also include walk-in or spacious wardrobes, dressing table

with large mirror and stool or desk, mini-fridge, flat screen television, telephone, programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted Molton Brown toiletries, air-conditioning and heating. Bottled water, dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort.

Your Dining

With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the cuisine on board the MS Caledonian Sky is of a consistent superior quality that befits such a vessel. In keeping with the informal atmosphere on board, when dining you are able to choose your seating arrangements and choice of restaurants at your leisure; whether that be joining a table of four to six other passengers in the elegant à la carte Restaurant or outside buffet-style on the Lido Deck in the evening sunshine. In the main Restaurant, breakfast is served buffet-style, with certain items cooked to order on request. Lunch and dinner menus offer plenty of choice, often reflecting the daily catch and local delicacies. The Welcome and Farewell dinners are a sumptuous five course affair. To enhance your dining experience further a selection of wines is included with both meals. Afternoon tea and pre-dinner canapés take place 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. Special diets can be catered for with sufficient notice.



Standard Suite



Panorama Lounge



The Lounge

Your Space

The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large Lounge where daily briefings and talks will be provided throughout the voyage and an elegant bar where a pianist plays periodically throughout the day. The bar also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. In addition there is the Lounge on the Panorama Deck which has a bar, library with two computers offering complimentary internet access and further seating ideal for watching the world go by. Outside there is a rear Lido Deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade. On the top deck there is a further observation and Sun Deck with bar service and comfortable deck furniture for sun bathing or relaxing with a book. There is also a small beauty salon with appointments made on request. Throughout the vessel carefully chosen artwork and photos reflect the destinations we sail to.

Your Comfort

The MS Caledonian Sky is equipped with the latest safety, navigation and communications equipment along with roll stabilisers to minimise the ship's motion. During your voyage we hope to offer you the opportunity to visit the Captain and Officers on the Bridge to check the vessel's progress by charts and learn more about your journey. On board you will also find a clinic and Doctor and a lift that serves all decks. When at anchor our nimble Zodiacs will ferry you ashore or, on select cruises, enjoy Zodiac cruises getting you closer to the natural world.

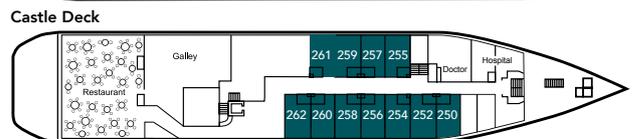
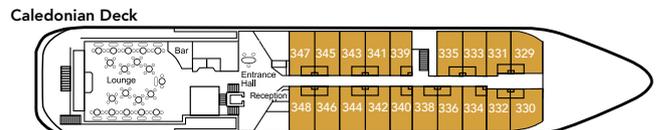
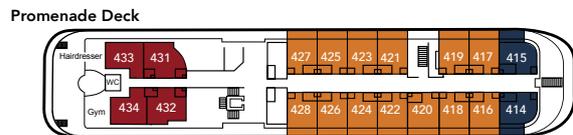
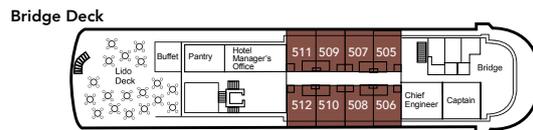
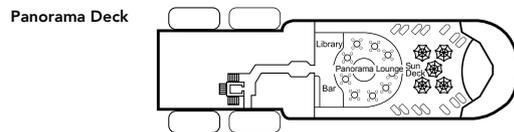
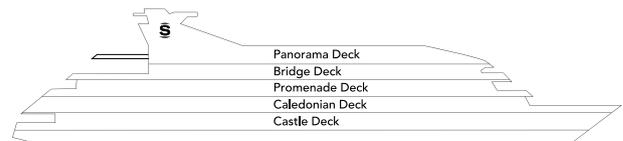
Your Life On Board

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 wonderful destinations you are visiting in the company of like-minded people. Dress on board is casual and relaxed and there will be no "black tie" evenings. On board there is a high ratio of crew to passengers. Our friendly crew of 75 are mainly Filipino and Eastern European and our Scandinavian Captains are experienced mariners. After a day ashore you will return to the comfort and peace of a well-run and exceedingly comfortable ship



where peace, high quality of service and attention to detail are the order of the day. A little music in the Lounge after dinner, Guest Speakers and informative port briefings from our Expedition Leader or Cruise Director and of course good food, all contribute to make any voyage aboard this wonderful vessel a memorable and joyful experience.

MS CALEDONIAN SKY DECK PLAN



- Standard Suites
- Premium Suites
- Premium Balcony Suites
- Superior Suites
- Deluxe Balcony Suites
- Owner's Corner Suites with Balcony

Please note that all suites on Castle Deck feature a minimum of two portholes.

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: Lake Toya.