

SPECIAL
OFFER - SAVE
£500
PER PERSON

FIRE & ICE

IN THE RUSSIAN FAR EAST

AN EXPEDITION FROM RUSSIA TO JAPAN INCLUDING
THE KAMCHATKA PENINSULA & KURIL ISLANDS
ABOARD THE MS CALEDONIAN SKY

1ST TO 16TH JUNE 2020



NOBLE CALEDONIA

The remote reaches of Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula and the distant and isolated Kuril Islands have fired the imagination of explorers and traders for centuries. Our past travellers have enthused about the spectacular scenery, the incredible array of wildlife and the native cultures known to only a few privileged visitors. The wildlife is some of the richest in the world and the region is truly a birdwatcher's paradise with puffins, guillemots, cormorants, Steller's sea eagle, brown-headed thrush, Siberian Ruby-throats, black legged kittiwakes, and crested or whiskered auklets just some of the species we hope to encounter as we cruise through a pristine environment that calls to nature lovers, history buffs, photographers and the intrepid explorer within.

The Kamchatka Peninsula, Russia's remote easternmost province is home to the brown bear and on arrival there we will be greeted by a dramatic landscape of fire and ice. Geysers, hot springs and active volcanoes set amidst towering mountains and fast flowing rivers make this area magnificently unique. Marvel at spouting whales, frolicking seals and huge populations of nesting and migratory seabirds. Following our time around the peninsula, we reach the Kurils, a necklace-like chain of volcanic islands where we will find vast forests and wildflower-dappled tundra, backdropped by soaring steam-breathing volcanoes. Basalt stacks rise from the sea, tailor-made resting and nesting spots for an unimaginable number of seabirds. Once inhabited by the Ainu, who are thought to be descendants of migrating Mongolians, these islands are home to over 100 volcanoes, 35 of which are active.

Using our fleet of Zodiacs we can explore inlets, bird sanctuaries and land in otherwise inaccessible places and, although we set sail with a set itinerary, it is often the unscheduled events that become the highlight. Sailing in June, we will take full advantage of the mid-summer sun, travelling on nature's terms, enjoying dramatic scenery and encountering the region's ancient cultures and fascinating people whose lives are rarely touched by outsiders. We will be joined onboard by an expert expedition team including naturalists, marine biologists and ornithologists who will share their knowledge and enthusiasm during forays ashore and whilst on board.



What to Expect

We have operated many voyages in the Russian Far East and whilst each expedition is different based on weather conditions and wildlife sightings, the extracts below from past ships' logs will provide you with an insight into what you can expect from a voyage in this fascinating region.



Zhupanova River: "We zigzagged our way through the channel arriving in the deeper area of the river. Here we soon spotted a Steller's sea eagle surveying the river from the shoreline, Aleutian terns, crows, the ever present gulls and many, common seals. With such a rich habitat full of trout, no wonder there was such a strong presence of these wonderful marine mammals."

"Later Colin spotted three bears. Spooked by the Zodiac

they quickly made haste up the hill and into the woodland however just a few moments later we spotted a lone bear feeding 20-metres or so from the shoreline. All Zodiacs approached at very slow speed and then switched the engines off entirely so as not only to avoid scaring the bear, but also just to listen to the sounds of the forest which included the regular call of a cuckoo. We stayed with the bear for some time as he was enjoying quite a feast just pausing from time to time to check we didn't pose a threat. After a little while we backed away using our Zodiac paddles before switching our engines back on and meandering back down the river. With our time almost up, we stopped by the Steller's sea eagle one more time then headed onwards to the ship."



Kamchatka Peninsula: "As Zodiacs started moving towards a waterfall at the north side of the bay to start the cruise, a bear was spotted almost straight away in one of the valleys. This bear moved off but minutes later a mother and two cubs were seen on the cliffs right above where we were cruising. Moving deeper into the bay we became aware that we were being watched by a pair of Steller sea eagles nesting in a tree at the top of the cliff."

"Three orcas flowed along with us for a while, coming close to the bow, and no sooner had they moved on than Brent spotted a sperm whale. The captain slowed down and gently manoeuvred the ship close, giving us spectacular views of this huge animal as he breathed for a while then fluked up for a deep dive."

"The river mouth was shallow and fast-flowing, and Sergey saw a bear near the huts when he went in to scout, so we stayed in the Zodiacs for a while to head upstream. After sighting a Steller's sea eagle and dozens of red-throated divers, we rounded a bend and sure enough, there was 'our' bear. For the next half hour or so, we stayed quiet and slowly edged the Zodiacs just a little further up the river until we were all against the bank watching this big bear, as he munched and snuffled in the vegetation."

Ariy Kamen & Nikolskoye, Bering Island, Commander Islands: "When we arrived we found a tiny columnar basalt island absolutely covered in seabirds. Thousands of black-legged kittiwakes were joined by hundreds of their smaller, dainty red-legged relatives. Every ledge was packed, clusters of kittiwakes and clusters of common and Brunnich's guillemots, interspersed with glossy black red-faced and pelagic shags. A handful of horned puffins seemed to almost pose for us on some of the ledges, and higher up on the grass we could see auklets."

Expedition Cruising aboard the MS Caledonian Sky - When Small is most certainly Best

The MS Caledonian Sky is the perfect small expedition ship for those who wish to truly see and experience the natural wonders of the Russian Far East, both in terms of the educational experience on board and the number of opportunities to explore ashore. For this expedition, our onboard team will comprise of ten experts and, in addition you will be in the company of only 90 like-minded, English speaking fellow travellers. This number allows for a convivial atmosphere on board and most importantly, the advantage of being able to disembark all passengers into nine Zodiacs when we arrive at our destinations or when wildlife is spotted that warrants a closer look. Unlike the larger ships, there will be no waiting around to access the Zodiacs and therefore a greater amount of time will be spent ashore. After a day of exploring exhilarating and exciting locations on land, back on board the all-suite MS Caledonian Sky you can expect the highest standards of comfort and service.



Travelling with you

In addition to the excellent officers and crew, you will be joined on board by our expedition team composed of experts in the culture, history and wildlife of the Russian Far East. The expedition team will add greatly to your experience through informal talks on board, guided Zodiac landings and during the small group explorations ashore. The daily programme will be in the capable hands of the Expedition Leader who will coordinate with the Captain and Officers on board to make the most of each day, the weather and wildlife sightings. Members of the Expedition Team joining you for this voyage include:



Cheli Larsen
Expedition Leader

Cheli is a seasoned veteran when it comes to exploring the rich, breathtaking nature and animal life of the ever-changing environment and

has led passengers on more than 120 voyages to the Polar Regions. She got her first taste of polar adventure when she left her native New Zealand for the Russian Far East and continued on, leading expeditions to both well-known and "secret gem" locations across Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Svalbard, the North Pole, South Georgia, Antarctica and the South Sandwich Islands. A PADI Master Dive Instructor who also holds a Commercial Launch master Skippers Ticket, Cheli has been involved in orca studies, and worked as a field assistant with TVNZ Natural History Unit's filming of the orca documentary Killers I Have Known, commissioned by The Discovery Channel, as well as on The Blue Planet.



Dmitri Banin
Ornithologist

Born in Moscow, Dmitri studied biology at Moscow State University where he completed his Ph.D. in Zoology and then continued

his work in MSU's Laboratory of Ornithology. His research expeditions have taken him

to many remote areas and led to various adventures, such as crossing the Kamchatka Peninsula by foot and covering more than 1000 kilometres by kayak along Siberia's Tunguska river. Dmitri also studied migratory birds in the White Sea, Sea of Japan, Sakhalin and Kuril Islands. Because of his achievements, Dmitri was invited to work for the USSR Ministry of Natural Resources as the Head of the Department of Science where he established research programs for all Natural Reserves of the former Soviet Union. Now at the University of Washington, Dmitri is able to pursue a lifelong interest in comparing high mountain ecosystems with those of the Polar Regions. Dmitri enjoys sharing his knowledge of birds and mammals with passengers through his informative presentations.



Tony Crocker
Ornithologist

Tony has spent many years living and travelling through the length and breadth of Europe, in the course of an extensive career in travel

and tourism, including over a year spent in the High Arctic. He has a lifelong interest in ornithology and, in his native New Zealand, is acknowledged as one of the best birders. He was editor of the OSNZ magazine Southern Bird for nine years and council member for six. Tony is regularly active in various projects, especially involving research and monitoring of waders and seabirds, including a number of significant international expeditions. In his spare time, he has recently been involved with predator eradication on a mammal-free island, and publishing on oystercatcher hybridisation. Tony has a MA in French and GradDipSc in History and Philosophy of Science. These days he spends most of his time at sea, as ornithologist/lecturer/Zodiac driver on expedition ships and was most recently manager of Educational Travel programmes at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, NZ.



Chris Edwards
Geologist

Chris Edwards, a native of Scotland, graduated from the University of Glasgow. He then worked for the British Antarctic Survey and

spent two and a half years in Antarctica as a field geologist. On returning to the UK, via a tour of South America, he obtained a PhD and published scientific papers based on his Antarctic work. He then spent twelve years working in the oil exploration industry, initially based in Aberdeen working both offshore and onshore, before postings to South America and the Far East, and working in London, Aberdeen and Glasgow. Since 1989 he has been the horologist in his own antique clock restoration business and has the flexibility of leaving the workshop for several months a year to work as an Expedition Leader and lecturer on expedition ships in the Antarctic, the Arctic and North-West Europe. Passionate about environmental and natural history matters, he is also a lichenologist, bookbinder and keen photographer.



Colin Baird
Marine Biologist

Colin grew up on the west coast of Canada and developed a love for the sea at an early age, sailing and scuba diving the local waters

off Vancouver Island. He spent 10 years as a marine mammal trainer working with seals, sea lions and orca (perhaps better known as Killer Whales). In 2002 he was hired by Jean Michel Cousteau as the director of field operations for the Free Willy/ Keiko Project in Iceland and Norway. This was and remains today the only attempt to release a previously captive orca back into the wild. Since then, Colin has been expedition cruising to many out of the way places; including Iceland, Norway, Svalbard, the High Arctic and Antarctic. When at home in Canada he leads whale watching tours from Victoria, B.C. during the northern summer.



Brown bears



Kuril Islands



Horned puffin



Wild flowers, Kamchatka

The Itinerary

Please note that flexibility is key to a successful expedition. Although we have outlined an itinerary below, this is subject to change. Our exact route will depend on weather conditions, the wildlife we encounter and permissions from the Russian authorities.

Day 1 London to Seoul, South Korea. Fly by scheduled flight.

Day 2 Seoul. Arrive today and transfer to the Grand Hyatt Incheon (or similar) for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day and evening are at leisure.

Day 3 Seoul to Petropavlovsk, Russia. After breakfast in the hotel we will transfer to the airport to join our specially chartered flight to Petropavlovsk. On arrival transfer to the MS Caledonian Sky and embark. Enjoy Welcome Drinks and Dinner this evening.

Day 4 Petropavlovsk. Petropavlovsk, town of Peter and Paul, derives its name from the two sailing ships used by Vitus Bering when the great explorer reached Avacha Bay in 1740. It is the only

major city on the peninsula and one of the oldest towns in the Russian Far East. A tour of the city will include the museum of ethnography and natural history, the art school, the gold-domed Orthodox Cathedral and the marketplace. Return to the ship for lunch as we sail this afternoon.

Day 5 Kamenistaya Bay, Kamchatka. Our exploration of Kamchatka will start this morning in Kamenistaya Bay located in the Kronotsky State Nature Reserve. The reserve was established in 1934 and is one of the oldest in Russia covering an area of almost 11,000 square kilometres which contains forest, tundra, taiga, mountains, volcanoes and geysers, a hugely diverse habitat for the abundant wildlife. The reserve is home to brown bears as well as caribou, otters, seals and multiple species of birds. If conditions permit we will offer walks with our expedition teams on land or Zodiac cruises to view the wildlife.

Day 6 Ariy Kamen & Nikolskoye, Commander Islands. The Komandorskiye or Commander Islands are named after famed

Commander Vitus Bering who had been commissioned by the Russian Tsar to search for a land bridge between Asia and America. After having been to Alaska he was forced to overwinter here. He was buried on the island, but some of the crew managed to return to Petropavlovsk. Our experiences will be determined by weather, wildlife and sea conditions. We intend to visit Nikolskoye, which was established in 1826 by fur traders. This fishing village on Bering Island has a small museum where we will learn about the Aleut people and their culture. During our visit we will enjoy a concert and be entertained by a presentation of local games. After lunch we hope to take a Zodiac ride to tiny Ariy Kamen Island, a habitat for vast numbers of birds.

Days 7 & 8 Kamchatka Peninsula. This morning we will cruise back to Kamchatka for a further day and a half of exploration including the Zhupanova River. The Zhupanova River Estuary is a scenic maze of moist bogs, serpentine river channels and ponds against a snowy backdrop.

The tall volcanic cone of Kronoskaya Sopka (3528 metres) stands above this predominantly uninhabited land. The river is one of the most productive trout rivers in the world and is home to the richest rainbow trout habitat on Kamchatka. This afternoon we have the opportunity to take a long Zodiac cruise along the river looking for wildlife including Steller's sea eagles, Aleutian terns, seals and of course the iconic Kamchatka brown bears. We hope to Zodiac cruise at Cape Kekurnyy, well known for the population of Steller sea lions that haul onto the rocks and maybe also make a landing in Tikhirka Bay.

Days 9 to 12 Kuril Islands. The Kuril Islands consist of a volcanic archipelago that stretches 1300 kilometres, through the Sea of Okhotsk, from northern Japan to the Kamchatka Peninsula. Our itinerary for these four days will be flexible as our Captain and Expedition Leader will plan landings based on weather and sea conditions. However we hope to visit Chirpoy Island. The origin of the names is uncertain,



Humpback Whale Breach

Exploring by Zodiac

Church, Petropavlovsk

Steller sea eagle, Zhupanova river

Arctic fox, Kuril islands

the original Ainu language name of the island was Repunmshiri, a word meaning “place of many small birds”. During a Zodiac cruise we search along the coast for the profusion of wildlife that lives in the area including Steller sea lions, fulmars, kittiwakes, puffins and auklets. Yankicha Island is impressive, accessible only by Zodiac and only during high tide, it is actually a sinking volcanic caldera. Inside the magnificent lagoon with its fumaroles and hot springs, we can still see traces of the tremendous forces that created the island long ago. The number of auklets which breed here is truly incredible. Alaid on Atlasova Island is the highest volcano in the Kurils with a height of over 2000 metres. Together with our expedition staff, we will land by Zodiac on the black lava beach of the island from where we will begin our walk to see the remains of the Taketomi tufa cone.

Day 13 Tyuleniy Island. We arrive later in the morning to explore Tyuleniy Island. Tyuleniy means “seal” in Russian, and during the summer months the

island is home to literally tens of thousands of northern fur seals and Steller sea lions. Our visit, at the height of the breeding season is well timed to see not only the seals and sea lions, but also tens of thousands of common guillemots and blacklegged kittiwakes that have made their nests in the cliffs above. Our lecture programme continues on board when we depart around mid-afternoon.

Day 14 Korsakov. Our last call in Russia will be at the port of Korsakov where we see Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk’s beautiful Cathedral of the Resurrection. The church was only completed in 1995 and the gold on the onion domes has very recently been laid, shining brilliantly. From the church continue to the Sakhalin Regional Museum, which is housed in a beautiful Japanese style structure, due to the previous ruling of its southern neighbour. The museum covers all the facets of Sakhalin Island, from its flora and fauna, to its geology and history. Return to the MS Caledonian Sky for lunch as we clear Russian formalities and sail this afternoon towards Japan.

Day 15 Otaru to Tokyo, Japan. Disembark this morning and transfer to Sapporo airport for our scheduled internal flight to Tokyo. On arrival transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. This afternoon we will have a brief city tour before

an evening at leisure to explore independently.

Day 16 Tokyo to London. After breakfast in the hotel we transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London. Arrive this afternoon.

PRICES PER PERSON
Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £500 PER PERSON PLUS NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT FOR STANDARD & SUPERIOR SUITES FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Castle	Standard	£13495	£12995
Caledonian	Superior	£13895	£13395
Promenade	Premium	£14395	£13895
Bridge	Deluxe Balcony	£14995	£14495
Promenade	Premium Balcony	£15495	£14995
Promenade	Owners Corner Suite with balcony	£15995	£15495
Castle	Standard for sole use	£13495	£12995
Caledonian	Superior for sole use	£13895	£13395

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Overnight hotel accommodation in Seoul on bed & breakfast basis • 12 nights aboard the MS Caledonian Sky on a full board basis • Wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch & dinner • Overnight hotel accommodation in Tokyo on bed & breakfast basis • Shore excursions • Noble Caledonia expedition team • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance, Russian visa.

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.



Library



Standard Suite



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 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.

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.

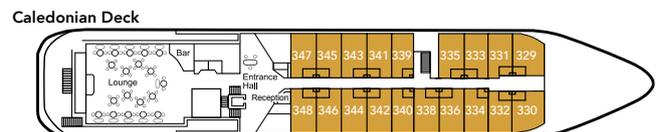
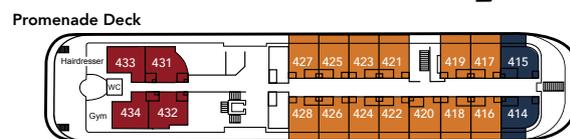
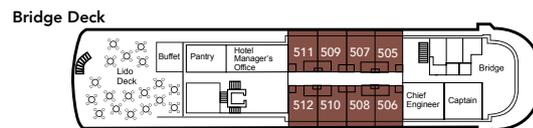
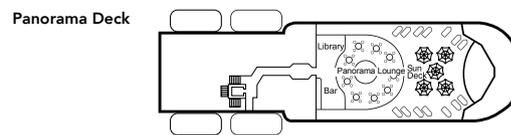
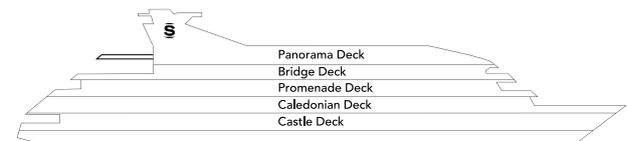


Alfresco Dining



Panorama Lounge

MS CALEDONIAN SKY DECK PLAN



During this voyage you will be visiting out of the way destinations and will be accompanied by an expedition team. Landings and excursions will be made by Zodiac landing craft. This cruise will appeal to the more adventurous and those who enjoy the natural world.



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. Ports subject to change.
Cover image: Crested Auklets

