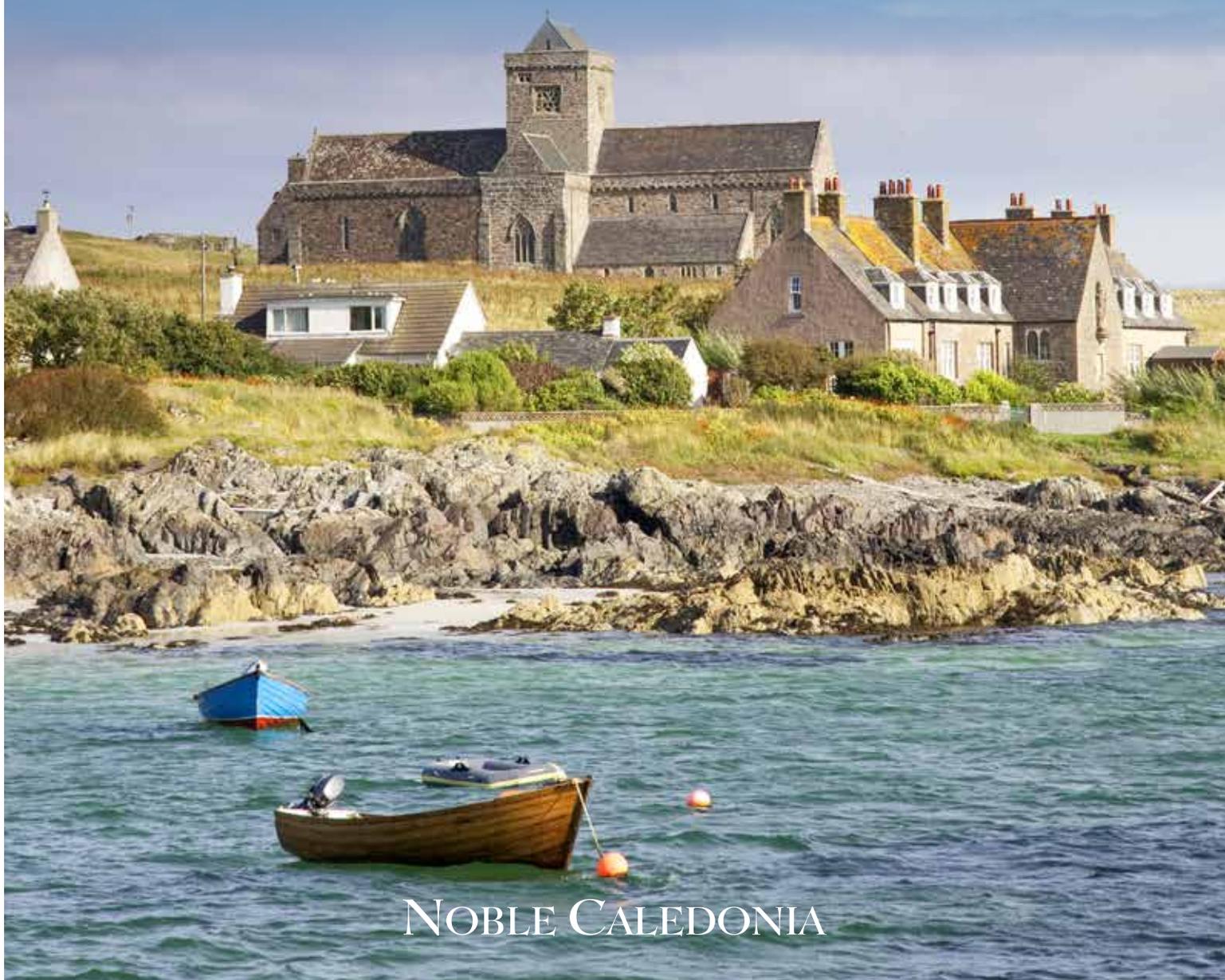


# HIGHLANDS TO THE ISLANDS

AN ISLAND HOPPING EXPEDITION FROM OBAN TO PORTSMOUTH  
ABOARD THE MS SERENISSIMA  
29<sup>TH</sup> JULY TO 6<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2022



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Giant's Causeway

This expedition has been devised to celebrate the stunning scenery of the British Isles from the highlands of Scotland to the outlying islands off the English coast. Sailing from Oban we will spend eight nights island hopping including a day in the beautiful Hebrides and visits to Tory Island, the Isle of Man and Lundy, rarely visited gems which are almost never included in cruise schedules. Our time will be spent walking the nature trails, seeing the abundant birdlife and flowers and experiencing life in these remote communities. Continuing south to the Isles of Scilly and the Channel Islands we visit amazing little contained worlds including the subtropical Abbey Gardens of Treseo and St Martin's, Guernsey and Herm with their crystal clear waters and fine white sandy beaches that would not disgrace a Caribbean island.

A voyage like this would be difficult to arrange independently and, with a maximum of just 95 passengers, the MS Serenissima is the perfect ship for our venture. Such a voyage is only possible aboard a small ship with the ability to reach these remote ports and, with the use of our Zodiacs, we will be able to explore in small groups, ensuring the solitude we find on these isles is not disturbed. Our journey offers a portrait of life in our islands and is a wonderful opportunity to see some of our most beautiful places, meet some interesting inhabitants and learn more about both the past and present of Britain.



## The Itinerary

**Day 1 Oban, Scotland.** Embark the MS Serenissima this afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Glasgow International Airport and Glasgow Central Railway Station at a fixed time. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail this evening and anchor overnight off Colonsay.

**Day 2 Colonsay & Iona.** Lying between Mull and Islay, we will spend the morning 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. We continue to 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 cornrake amongst the irises.

### Day 3 Tory Island, Ireland.

Located off the northwest coast of Ireland and home to 150 or so Gaelic speakers, Tory Island is the most remote inhabited Irish island; although only 14 miles offshore, it feels like many more and island life here is full of traditions. Meet some of the local community in the village hall and enjoy some of their legendary storytelling, music and dance. Tory Island is also famous for its migratory birds; seabirds nest here in large numbers and a puffin colony nests on the northern cliffs. Look out for guillemots, kittiwakes, fulmars, storm petrels and Manx shearwaters and we hope to hear the calls of the cornrake for which the island is known.

### Day 4 Rathlin Island & Portrush, Northern Ireland.

Just a few miles from the North Antrim coast, Rathlin Island 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. Enjoy a guided walk which will also take in the seabird life with puffins, kittiwakes, fulmars as well as grey and harbour seals. 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 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 Skomer, Wales & Lundy, England.** Be on deck this morning 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 6,000 pairs of puffins

and the elusive Manx shearwater and storm petrel. We may also see the seal colony hauled out over the rocks. Continue to 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 it is also home to a clutch 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 afternoon 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 at the tavern or buy the island's 'puffin stamps' at the shop.

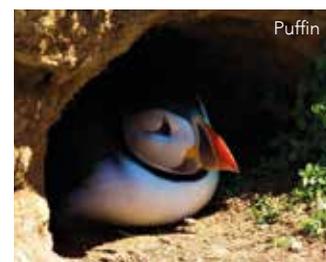
**Day 7 Tresco & St Martin's, Isles of Scilly.** We will spend the day exploring the beautiful Isles of Scilly. From our central anchorage, we will use our Zodiacs to visit traffic-free Tresco, walking its idyllic lanes from the beach to the famous subtropical Abbey Gardens. Defying the Atlantic weather, 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. Later we will tender ashore to 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 birders on a guided walk.

**Day 8 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. There will be 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 9 Portsmouth, England.** Disembark this morning. Transfers will be provided to Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station at a fixed time.



### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Cat	Cabin Description	Price
2	Standard Stateroom	£3695
3	Classic Stateroom	£3895
4	Superior Stateroom	£4195
5	Deluxe Stateroom	£4495
6	Junior Suite	£4995
7	Owner's Suite	£5395
8	Serenissima Suite	£5695
10	Standard Single	£4395

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Eight nights aboard the MS Serenissima 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.



Owner's Suite



Restaurant



Harald Jarl Lounge



Andrea Lounge



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.

## MS SERENISSIMA

The charming MS Serenissima began her career as the Harald Jarl, cruising the Norwegian coastline and fjords. Since 2003, when she was extensively renovated, she has been operating as a classic cruise ship. With her small size she can navigate into small, remote ports inaccessible to the big cruise ships and with her fleet of Zodiacs, she is capable of both destination and expedition cruising.

### Your Cabin/Suite

Accommodating no more than 95 passengers, there are eight different grades of cabins arranged over five decks, and all feature either windows or portholes. The cabins are attractively designed for comfort and convenience. All cabins are fully air conditioned and equipped with telephone, flat screen television, safety deposit box and other thoughtful appointments. Due to the very nature of the ship, the cabins vary in shape and size, adding to the vessel's overall charm.

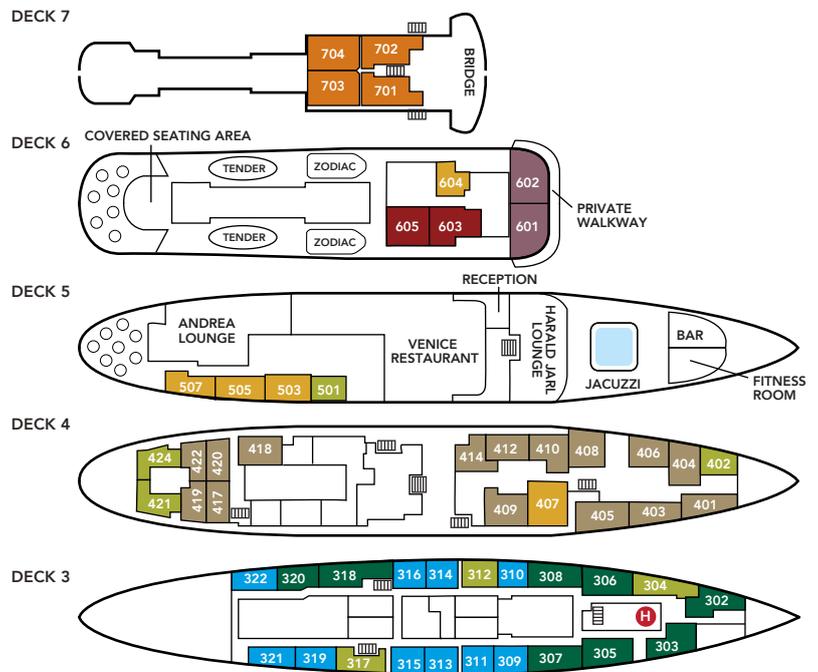
### Your Dining

The free seating Venice Restaurant accommodates all guests in one sitting and, with its Deck 5 location, all of the tables benefit from great views. Breakfast is served buffet-style with cooked dishes available and eggs to order by the ship's accomplished chef. Lunch is also served buffet-style with hot and cold dishes available and dinner is served à la carte.

### Your Space

There are two lounges on board in addition to the outside areas which include a spacious observation deck, a lido area with Jacuzzi, outside bar and a covered seating area. During the major refit in Sweden the then owners commissioned Swedish interior designers to create a country house style which has recently been updated with some Art Deco styling which works particularly well on a vessel of this vintage, providing intimacy and a classic nautical sensibility often lacking in larger vessels.

## DECK PLAN



- STANDARD STATEROOM
- CLASSIC STATEROOM
- SUPERIOR STATEROOM
- DELUXE STATEROOM
- JUNIOR SUITE
- OWNER'S SUITE
- SERENISSIMA SUITE
- STANDARD SINGLE

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



## NOBLE CALEDONIA

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



Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.  
 Cover image: Saint Columba's Abbey, Iona.