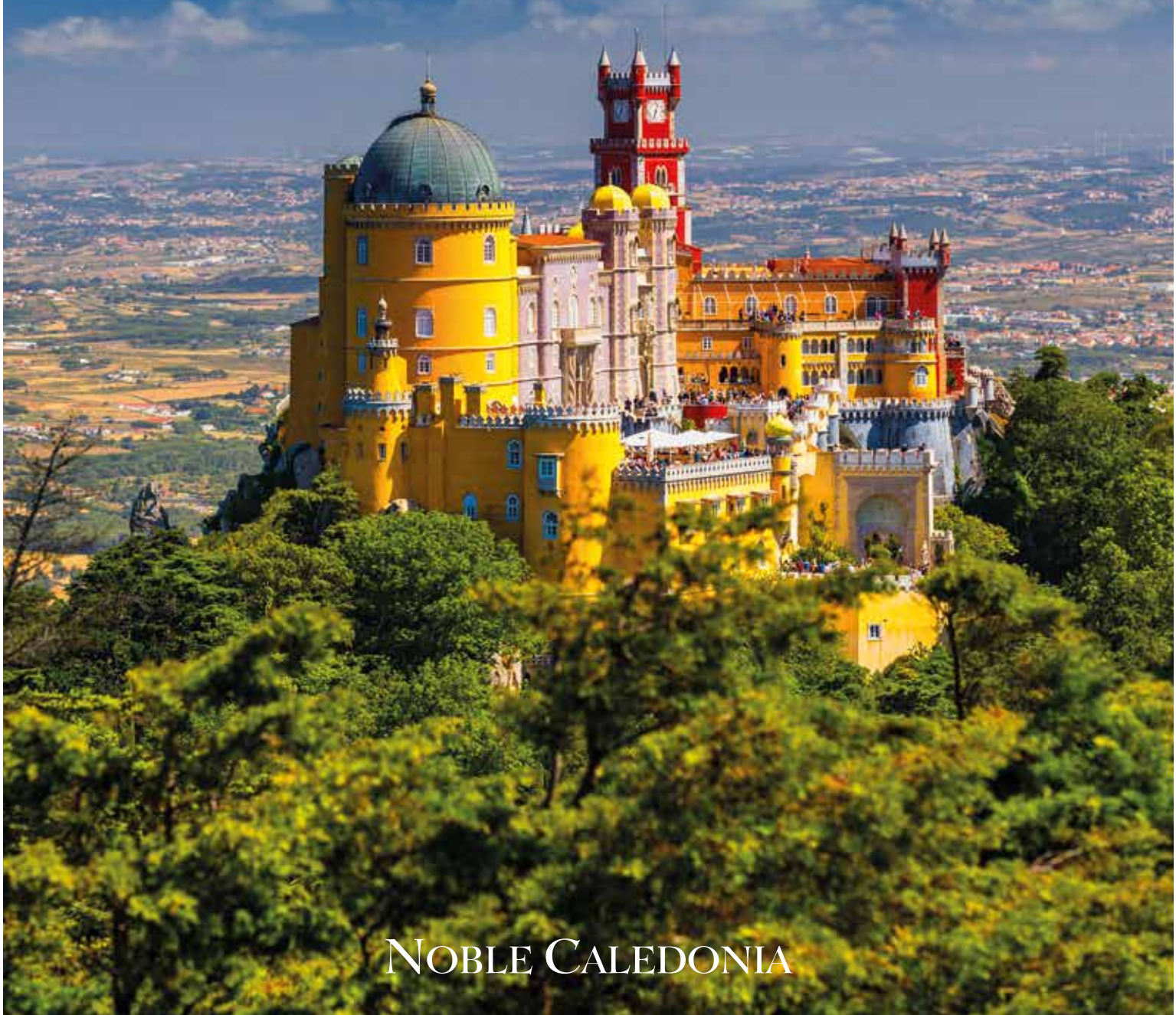


SPECIAL  
OFFER - SAVE  
**£500**  
PER PERSON

# IBERIAN STEPPING STONES

DISCOVER THE HISTORY, GARDENS & WINES OF IBERIA  
ON A SPRINGTIME VOYAGE FROM MALAGA TO PORTSMOUTH  
ABOARD THE MS HEBRIDEAN SKY

1<sup>ST</sup> TO 11<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024



NOBLE CALEDONIA





Santiago de Compostela, Galicia

Join the all-suite MS Hebridean Sky for this coastal journey along the Atlantic shores of Spain and Portugal as we sail from Malaga to the UK visiting some marvellously historic and special places along the way. These are perfect sailing waters and ashore we will be able to appreciate the contrasting cultures of the Iberian Peninsula enjoying the art, architecture and of course the wines. Early May is an ideal time for our voyage as we can expect moderate temperatures with the absence of the high season crowds and our itinerary has been planned to ensure that the balance is just right between exploring ashore, relaxing on board and time at leisure in picturesque ports for individual exploration.

Setting sail from Malaga, we sail south to Morocco for our visit to the port city of Tangier, Europe's gateway to Africa where our exploration will include a visit to the newly created Donabo Gardens, a botanical oasis by the sea with ten distinct sections within the main garden. Added to this we spend time discovering Portugal's Algarve coast including a visit to the charming town of Lagos, and enchanting Oporto with its splendid port wines. Continuing to Northern Spain we will meander through the Galician countryside visiting the most beautiful Pazos and their gardens, sample the local wines and step into the pilgrimage cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Our final days are spent sailing to Portsmouth with calls in the idyllic Isles of Scilly and Cornwall including visits to Tresco Abbey Gardens and the magnificent Caerhays Castle and Garden along the way.

Sailing in the company of just over 100 fellow travellers, we have the added benefit of excellent local guides and our knowledgeable Guest Speaker who will add much to your experience and knowledge of this fascinating region. Few itineraries in Europe can offer such a wide ranging and endlessly fascinating cultural experience and all of this combined with the rich maritime history of the region and the sheer beauty of the coastal landscapes makes for an endlessly fascinating cultural experience.



St Martin's



Caerhays Castle, Cornwall





Abbey Gardens, Tresco



## The Itinerary

### Day 1 London to Malaga, Spain.

Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky and enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail this evening.

**Day 2 Tangier, Morocco.** Having passed the Strait of Gibraltar we arrive in North Africa and the port of Tangier. A short drive will bring us to the Donabo Gardens located on the coast with wonderful sea views. Divided into ten sections we can explore the Moroccan garden that celebrates the tradition of tea, the maze of mints where multiple varieties blend their fragrances along the alleys, a rose garden thriving in the cool shade and a pollinator's garden purposely designed to attract bees. Later we can explore the city where on a walking tour we will visit

the Medina, enjoy the views from the Kasbah situated at the highest point of Tangier, and wander through the Grand Souk.

**Day 3 Portimao, Portugal.** Arrive this morning on the Algarve Coast at the fishing port of Portimao on the banks of the Arade River. From here we head west to explore the more rugged Algarve and discover its place in history. Visit the historic town of Lagos, its sturdy Medieval walls testifying to its importance as a 15th century ship building and trading post whilst at nearby Sagres, Henry the Navigator built his school of navigation and it was from here that many sailors set out and ushered in the Age of Discovery. We visit the fort which, largely destroyed in the 1755 earthquake, has commanding views over the ocean and served to protect the coast from Barbary pirates. For those interested in the wines of the region we will visit the Morgado do Quintao. Founded in 1810, the vineyard has been in the same family ever since and specializes in indigenous Algarve grapes such as Negramole and Crato Branco. We will learn about the growing processes before enjoying a tasting amongst the vines.

**Day 4 Lisbon & Sintra.** Set on seven hills on the banks of the River Tagus, Lisbon has been the capital of Portugal since the 13th century. It is a city famous for its majestic architecture, old wooden trams, Moorish features and more than twenty centuries of history. Following

disastrous earthquakes in the 18th century, Lisbon was rebuilt by the Marquis de Pombal who created an elegant city with wide boulevards and a great riverfront and square. Today there are distinct modern and ancient sections, combining great shopping areas with culture and sightseeing in the Old Town, built on the city's terraced hillsides. During our panoramic tour we will see the Monument to the Discoveries, Belem Tower and visit the famous Jeronimos Monastery. Alternatively spend the day in the hill town of Sintra where we will visit the 15th century Royal Palace before heading to the Regaleira Gardens, an exotic and theatrical early 19th century creation and by complete contrast visit the Quinta Torre de Ribafria, with its Medieval origins. After lunch we will visit the Monserrate Gardens, a wonderfully romantic place designed by Sir Francis Cook in the mid-19th century.

**Day 5 Oporto.** After a morning at sea we arrive into Leixoes, our base for an afternoon around Oporto. A choice of excursions includes a visit to the Quinta de Aveleda, located in the heart of the Vinho Verde Demarcated Region which creates a young fresh wine with low alcoholic content and a lightly fruity flavour. After exploring the beautiful park and gardens with rare specimens of trees, shrubs and flowers which surround the Manor House, we will learn about the wine which has been produced here since 1947. Alternatively, explore Oporto

including the impressive St Francis Church and the Ribeira, a riverside quarter made up of narrow, twisting streets and shadowy arcades. We will end at one of the many port wine cellars where we hear all about the wines and how they are produced.

### Day 6 Vilagarcia de Arousa, Spain.

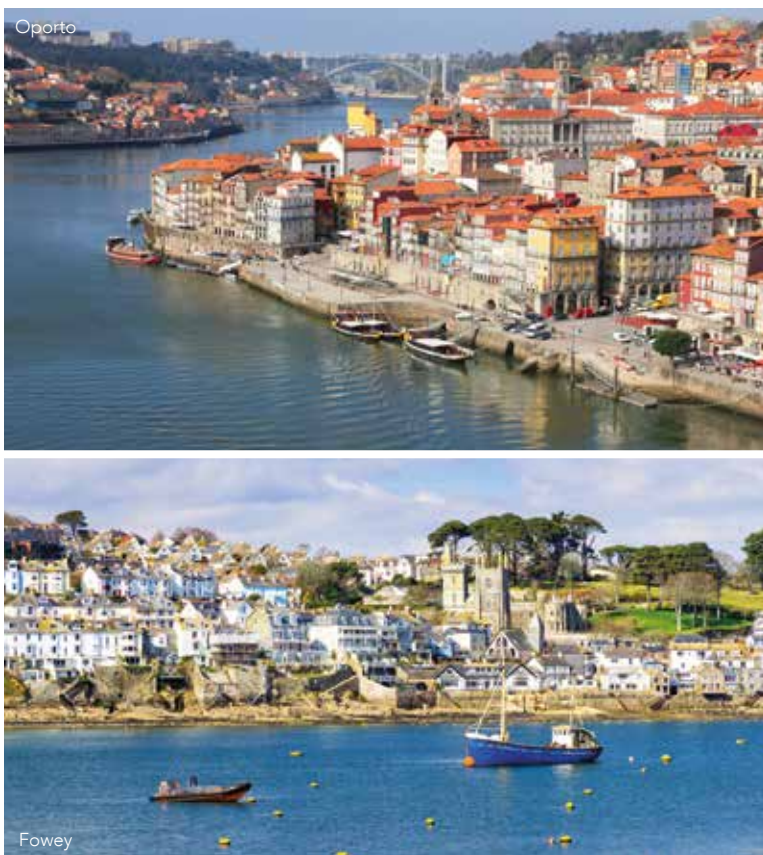
From our berth in Vilagarcia de Arousa we spend the day at some of the wonderful houses and gardens of the Galicia region. Visit the Pazo de Oca, a Baroque stately home known as the 'Galician Versailles' and 'El Generalife of the north' due to the beauty of its gardens. See Pazo de Ribadulla which dates from the 16th century and is set in a beautiful location on the shores of the Ulla Valley. The garden was developed by the Armada family in the 1870s and is today renowned for its outstanding collection of camellia trees, giant magnolias, olive trees and lirioidendrons. Also see the 15th century Pazo de Rubianes where we find one of the three official lordships in Spain. Visit the 11 hectare garden before we learn about local wine production and techniques and enjoy a tasting.

**Day 7 La Coruna for Santiago de Compostela.** Today we visit Santiago de Compostela, the capital of the autonomous community of Galicia. The city's cathedral is the destination of the important Medieval pilgrimage route, the Way of St James (in Spanish the 'Camino de Santiago'), which is still walked today. For those keen to



Belem Tower, Lisbon





walk some of the route there will be the chance to hike a short section towards Santiago. Otherwise transfer directly to the site where we will visit the Conventual de San Francisco, the Faculty of Medicine and the world-famous Plaza del Obradoiro. Inside the cathedral, we will visit the Romanic crypt and see the facade of Platerias, the Quintana Plaza, House of Parra, the facade of Azabacheria, and the facade of San Martin Pinario. Enjoy lunch at a parador and some free time before returning to the ship and sailing this evening.

**Day 8 At Sea.** Enjoy a relaxing day at sea as we make our way to the Isles of Scilly. Maybe join a lecture in the lounge or find a spot on deck.

**Day 9 Tresco & St Martin's, Isles of Scilly, England.** This morning we arrive at the traffic-free island of Tresco, walking its idyllic lanes from the beach to the famous sub-tropical Abbey Gardens. Defying the Atlantic weather, this miracle of a garden is home to more than 20,000 species of plants from over 80 countries. Enjoy time to wander at your own pace along the paths, maybe visit the Valhalla collection of ship figureheads from ships wrecked on the islands or relax in the café. Later, we will 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 birders on a guided walk

or make your way for a tasting at the local vineyard and winery. *Please note that we will be at anchor today and the ship's Zodiacs or local tenders will be used to transfer from ship to shore.*

**Day 10 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. *Please note that we will be at anchor today and the ship's Zodiacs will be used to transfer from ship to shore.*

**Day 11 Portsmouth.** Disembark this morning. Transfers will be provided to Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station and our London departure airport at a fixed time.

## Pre-cruise Seville Extension

29<sup>th</sup> April to 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024

If you would like to spend some time in Seville before embarking the MS Hebridean Sky we are offering a two night hotel extension.



### The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Seville, Spain.** Fly by scheduled flight. Arrive and transfer to our hotel where we have free time before we meet for dinner tonight. (D)

**Day 2 Seville.** On a morning walking tour we will explore the city's greatest monuments. Visit the Alcazar Palace with its ornate Moorish interiors and exotic terraced garden and the imposing La Giralda, Seville's cathedral which is reputed to be the largest Gothic style church in the world with its distinctive Moorish tower. The remainder of the day is free for independent exploration. Meet this evening as we take in a flamenco show with dinner. (B, D)

**Day 3 Seville to Malaga.** Check out after breakfast as we drive to Malaga where our first call will be at the Botanical Gardens which features more than 25,000 species of plants. After lunch we have some time in the town, maybe see La Merced Square, the birthplace of Pablo Picasso, or the impressive 16th century cathedral which was built on the remains of a mosque. In the late afternoon we transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky for embarkation. (B, L)

### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£1095** Single: **£1295**

**Price Includes:** Two nights hotel accommodation, meals as indicated (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner), tours as described, Noble Caledonia Tour Manager, gratuities, transfers.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance.

### 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
Amundsen	Standard	<b>£5995</b>	<b>£5495</b>
Byrd	Superior	<b>£6395</b>	<b>£5895</b>
Mawson	Premium	<b>£6595</b>	<b>£6095</b>
Mawson	Corner	<b>£6995</b>	<b>£6495</b>
Scott	Deluxe Balcony	<b>£7495</b>	<b>£6995</b>
Shackleton	Owner's Balcony	<b>£7995</b>	<b>£7495</b>
Shackleton	Hebridean	<b>£8495</b>	<b>£7995</b>
Amundsen	Standard for sole use	<b>£6995</b>	<b>£6495</b>
Byrd	Superior for sole use	<b>£7395</b>	<b>£6895</b>

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Economy class scheduled air travel from London to Malaga • 10 nights aboard the MS Hebridean Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia onboard team including Guest Speaker • Gratuities • Transfers • Shore excursions • Airport taxes • Port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance.

# MS HEBRIDEAN SKY



Alfresco Dining



Owner's Balcony Suite



The Restaurant

The much loved MS Hebridean Sky is one of our two flagships and sister vessel to the MS Island Sky. Both vessels were built in the same shipyard in Italy at similar times and share the same excellent attributes that make them two of the finest small ships in the world. With a maximum passenger capacity of only 118, a vessel of her size is capable of carrying many more but instead the MS Hebridean Sky has the benefit of unusually large suites, luxuriously appointed public areas and spacious outside decks.

## Your Suite

On board there are 59 exceptionally spacious and well-designed suites. All feature a sitting area and some have private balconies. The feeling of luxury is enhanced by the wood panelling and brass, which predominates throughout the vessel conveying the atmosphere of a private yacht. The passenger accommodation is arranged over five decks and all suites have outside views with those on the Scott and Shackleton Decks featuring private balconies. Each suite affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring vanity unit with sink and walk-in shower, large wardrobes, 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, towelling 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.

## Your Dining

With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the cuisine on board the MS Hebridean 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.





The Library



Superior Suite



The Club

## Your Space

The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large Lounge on the Byrd Deck 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. In addition to the main Lounge, there is also The Club, located on the Mawson Deck which features the main bar. The Club also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. Towards the aft of the ship on the Mawson Deck 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 excellent literature on board. A collection of games and 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*). The main Restaurant, which can seat all guests at one sitting, is located on the Amundsen Deck, and outside there is a rear Lido Deck located on the Scott Deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade. Further to this on the top Shackleton 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. There is also a small beauty salon on board with appointments made on request.

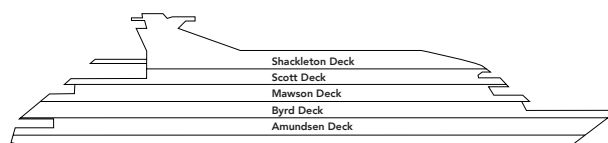
## Your Comfort

The MS Hebridean 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.

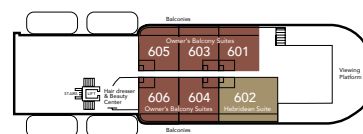
## Your Life On Board

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. 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. 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 or bar after dinner, Guest Speakers and informative port briefings and of course good food, all contribute to make any voyage aboard this wonderful vessel a memorable and joyful experience.

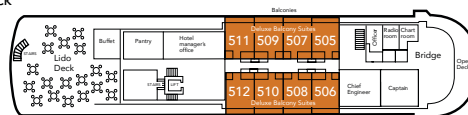
## MS HEBRIDEAN SKY DECK PLAN



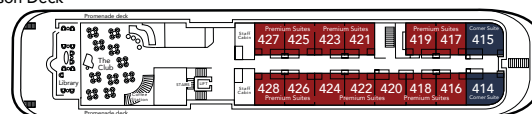
### Shackleton Deck



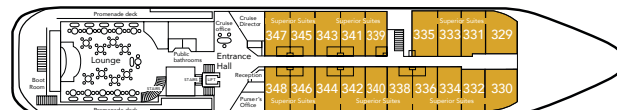
### Scott Deck



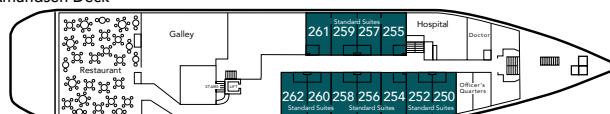
### Mawson Deck



### Byrd Deck



### Amundsen Deck



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

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.



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