

# IN THE WAKE OF THE DHOWS

A passage from Mumbai to Doha  
aboard the MS Hebridean Sky  
with Guest Speaker Stuart Laing

1<sup>st</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> March 2025

SAVE  
£500  
PLUS NO SINGLE  
SUPPLEMENT

NOBLE CALEDONIA



Gateway of India, Mumbai



Jabrin Castle, Nizwa

For those looking for something a little different, our voyage from Mumbai to Doha offers a wonderful opportunity to escape to warmer climes and explore in some depth a region which has fascinated travellers for centuries and some places that have thankfully been mostly neglected by the tourism world.

Our journey begins with an overnight stay in the vibrant city of Mumbai followed by time exploring some fascinating places in the state of Gujarat, places which are off the well-trodden tourist path and difficult to explore independently including Porbandar from where you can choose to visit the Gir National Park with its diverse wildlife and the former Portuguese island of Diu. Leaving India, we spend two relaxing days at sea as we head for the Arabian Gulf, our journey mirroring countless past voyages of Arab dhows that have sailed between all points of India and Arabia, trading spices, materials and all manner of luxurious and exotic goods.

Experiences during our voyage are many and varied and we will explore impressive forts, grand palaces, bustling bazaars, remote villages and desert landscapes combined with the modern metropolises of Dubai and Doha. All this will be achieved with great ease aboard the MS Hebridean Sky, an ideal vessel for serious exploration. With just over 100 or so like-minded travellers we are able to explore in a way that is impossible from aboard a large cruise vessel.



## Guest Speaker – Stuart Laing

Stuart Laing was Master of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge from 2008 to 2018, responsible for the College's leadership and its strategic direction, after a first career in the British Foreign Service. As well as service in Brussels and Prague, he specialised in Arab and Middle Eastern affairs, serving in Saudi Arabia and in Cairo, and then as High Commissioner in Brunei, Ambassador in Muscat, and then in Kuwait. He is co-author of a book on Omani-British history, *Unhook Till the End of Time*, took an MPhil at Cambridge in 2012 on the abolition of slave trading in the Indian Ocean, and has published a biography of Tippu Tip, the Arab ivory trader of the late 19th century. He now researches, writes and lectures on Arab, Mediterranean, Iberian and African history.

## The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Mumbai, India.** Fly by scheduled flight.

**Day 2 Mumbai.** Arrive and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day is free to relax before we meet for dinner.

**Day 3 Mumbai.** Mumbai is a cluster of seven islands which were first home to the 'Koli' fisherman who still occupy parts of the city shoreline today. First ceded to Portuguese, the British Government took possession of the islands in 1665 before leasing them to the English East India Company who founded the port and saw the city grow in size and importance. This morning we explore the city and see the prominent landmarks visiting the Gateway of India, Mani Bhavan, the former residence of Mahatma Gandhi and Dhobi Ghat where we can observe the vast open air Indian laundry. After lunch we transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky and sail this evening.

**Day 4 Diu.** Arrive this morning in Gujarat and the former Portuguese island colony of Diu which was the first landing point of the Parsis who fled from Persia. The island was an important trading post from the 14th to 16th centuries when the Ottoman Turks controlled the shipping routes in the Arabian Sea and before being ceded to the Portuguese. Diu was a Portuguese colony from 1531 to 1961

and is now part of the Union Territories. The relaxed atmosphere and tranquil streets reflect its colonial history and contrasts with other Indian towns. Enjoy a morning exploring the impressive coastal Portuguese fort, the Baroque church of St Paul and the colourful morning market. After lunch on board maybe return out to one of the local beaches or wander the quiet streets of Diu old town. Alternatively, for those wishing to visit Gir National Park, an optional overnight excursion will depart from the vessel today.

**Day 5 Porbandar.** Continuing our exploration of Gujarat we arrive in Porbandar which was a thriving port during the Mughal period before being taken by the Portuguese in the 16th century. Today it is better known as the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi in 1869. On a morning tour we will discover Kirti Mandir, the family house where Gandhi was born and enjoy a tuk-tuk ride to visit the Hindu temple dedicated to Sudama, a friend of Lord Krishna. Alternatively, the keen birders can enjoy time at the Gosabara Wetlands Bird Sanctuary on the city's outskirts which offers a breathtaking view of large flocks of flamingos, Dalmatian and demoiselle pelicans, cranes, pintails and various other duck varieties. Gosabara has recorded 225 different varieties of birds, a large number of them migrating during the winter months and attracted to the flooded marshlands in the region.





**Days 6 & 7 At Sea.** Spend a leisurely two days at sea.

**Day 8 Sur & Wahiba Sands, Oman.** The port of Sur has been on seafarers' maps for centuries, as both an important port and historic shipbuilding centre. Dhows built here traded and plundered the East African coastline and islands of the Indian Ocean. Today, it is a quiet and picturesque town with a peaceful air. Our tour will take us to a dhow yard where vessels are still made without a plan or blueprint as well as the fish market and the impressive restored Sineslah Fort where you can enjoy views over the town and coastline. The afternoon is free to explore further at your own pace or join a 4x4 jeep tour to the Wahiba Sands desert where we can view the impressive sand dunes.

**Day 9 Muscat.** Muscat became the capital of Oman in 1793 and the focus of Oman's great seafaring empire of the 18th and 19th centuries. The sea has always been at the centre of Muscat's identity and the historic ports of Old Muscat and Mutrah constitute a major part of the city. A morning city tour of Muscat will include the imposing Grand Mosque and the fascinating Bait al Zubair Museum situated in a converted townhouse which exhibits Omani Heritage with photos and traditional handicrafts and furniture. We also pass the Sultan's Palace 'Al Alam'. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure, perhaps stroll along the corniche or visit the Mutrah Souk.

**Day 10 Nizwa.** Today on a full day excursion we will drive inland through fascinating scenery to see one of the most impressive forts in Oman starting at the sultanate of Nizwa, Oman's ancient capital where we find the 17th century fort which has a unique 40 metre tall round tower. We will continue to Jabrin Castle built in 1675 as a centre of learning for astrology, medicine and Islamic Law. After exploring one of the oldest souqs in the country we will take lunch in a nearby restaurant before we return to Muscat and sail this evening.

**Days 11 Kumzar.** Spend the morning cruising to the isolated village of Kumzar located in the far north of Oman and only accessible by boat. This region of Oman is so isolated that the inhabitants speak their own language, 'Kumzari' which has influences of Arabic, Farsi, English, Hindi and Portuguese. Take the chance to swim from the beach or take a walk in the village and meet the locals. Sail over dinner to Khasab where we moor overnight.

**Day 12 Musandam Peninsula.** From our berth in Khasab, we discover the beautiful Musandam Peninsula, often referred to as the 'Norway of Arabia'. This is without doubt the most dramatic of all mountainous locations in the Gulf and a difficult region to visit other than by sea. Here, Bedouin boatmen will take us upon their dhow to explore the spectacular arid, fjord-like landscapes. We hope to see cormorants and terns whilst if we are lucky dolphins may accompany us on the journey. We will visit Telegraph Island, where the British laid the first cable in the region in 1864 before anchoring off Seebi Island.

**Day 13 Dubai, United Arab Emirates.** Arriving into the ultramodern city of Dubai we will visit the historical districts spending time in the Al Fahidi Historical neighbourhood where we walk the labyrinthine lanes lined with century old buildings built by textile and pearl merchants. Today the area

is a haven for artists with small galleries and shops. We will then take a local abra water taxi across the creek to Beira where we will explore the lanes of the spice and gold souqs. The afternoon is free to explore further.

**Day 14 Abu Dhabi & Al Ain.** Arriving into Abu Dhabi we have a choice of excursions today. A morning city tour will drive along the waterfront promenade before we arrive at the magnificent Sheikh Zayed Mosque, one the largest in the world, with capacity to accommodate an astonishing 30,000 worshippers. Afterwards continue to the Louvre Abu Dhabi and walk through twelve galleries curated masterfully in partnership with the Louvre in Paris. Returning to the ship for lunch, the afternoon will be at leisure to explore further independently. Alternatively take a full day excursion to the oasis city of Al Ain, the birthplace of Sheikh Zayed with its markets, forts, museums and a famous date palm oasis. We will see the Al Ain Palace Museum which was Sheikh Zayed's residence from 1937 to 1966, explore the courtyards and see the rooms where he received guests. Also discover the archaeological park, the ancient irrigation systems and walk in the water green oasis. We end at the chaotic camel market, an immersion into traditional Arabic culture.

**Day 15 Doha, Qatar.** Arriving over breakfast we discover Doha, the capital of Qatar. After driving along the corniche, we visit the National Museum of Qatar, designed in the shape of a desert rose and dedicated to bringing alive the story of Qatar and its people. At the heart of the museum lies the Sheikh Abdulla Bin Jassem Palace. We will continue to the charming fishing village of Al Wakrah and the atmospheric Souq Wakrah where the traditional architecture, old clay structures, stables and mosque all tell a unique story about Qatar's history and here we will enjoy some traditional Arabic sweets and freshly brewed tea at a seafront café. The afternoon and evening is at leisure.

**Day 16 Doha to London.** Disembark and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London. Arrive this afternoon.

## SHIP TO SHORE

Please note that we will be at anchor for three days of this itinerary (Diu, Sur and Kumzar) when we will utilise the vessel's Zodiacs to tender ashore.





Grand Mosque, Muscat

## Optional Overnight stay at Gir National Park, Gujarat



Asiatic lions

During our time in Gujarat there will be an option for an overnight visit to Gir National Park. Created as a wildlife sanctuary in 1965 to conserve the Asiatic lions, this is the only place in the world outside Africa to see lions in their natural habitat. The park is also home to sambar deer, jackal, hyenas and crocodile as well as 425 species of bird. We will drive from Diu (on Day 4 of the itinerary) to the park (two hour drive) for an afternoon safari before overnighting at a lodge. On Day 5, a morning safari will be followed by a transfer (3.5 hour drive) to re-embark the MS Hebridean Sky in Porbandar.

### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£795** Single: **£995**

**NB.** Spaces for the excursion to the Gir National Park are limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis. If you would like to join the excursion please advise at the time of booking.

## Agra & Jaipur Pre-Cruise Extension 24<sup>th</sup> February to 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025



Taj Mahal

If you would like to spend some time in India before embarking the MS Hebridean Sky, we are offering a five night escorted extension which will include the Taj Mahal and the 'pink city' of Jaipur.

### The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Delhi, India.** Fly by scheduled flight.

**Day 2 Delhi.** Arrive today and transfer to our hotel. The remainder of the day is free to relax before we meet for dinner in the hotel. (D)

**Day 3 Delhi to Agra.** Spend the morning driving to Agra (approximately 4 hours). Agra's history dates back to the Mughals who proclaimed it their capital in 1565. Today the city is a kaleidoscope of India with various communities living in harmony. After lunch we visit Agra Fort, built by the Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1565 before continuing to the city including the bazaars. We stay overnight in Agra and will have dinner in the hotel this evening. (B, L, D)

**Day 4 Agra.** After breakfast we see the legendary beauty and the white marble domes of the elegant Taj Mahal which was built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan as an exquisite mausoleum for his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. After our visit we will have lunch and a free afternoon to relax in the hotel or partake in some independent sightseeing. (B, L, D)

**Day 5 Agra to Jaipur.** This morning we drive to Jaipur (4.5 hours) our base for the next two nights. Almost the entire city was given a coat of pink paint in 1876 to coincide with the visit of the Prince of Wales (King Edward VII) thus giving it the name 'The Pink City'. This afternoon we will visit the Birla Temple and Albert Hall before we return to the hotel for dinner. (B, L, D)

**Day 6 Jaipur.** Located near the deserts of Rajasthan, the movement and collection of water plays an important role for the city. This morning our guide will show us the ancient channels, Roman aqueducts and reservoirs and explain about their history and creation. After lunch we will visit the Observatory and the City Palace which maintains the Maharaja's private collection of textiles and arms. Return to the hotel for free time before dinner. (B, L, D)

**Day 7 Jaipur to Mumbai.** After breakfast in the hotel we transfer to airport for our flight to Mumbai and follow the main itinerary from day 2. (B)

### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£2895** Single: **£3495**

**Price Includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel from Jaipur to Mumbai, two nights hotel accommodation in Jaipur and Agra, overnight hotel accommodation in Delhi, meals as described (B - Breakfast, L - Lunch, D - Dinner), Noble Caledonia Tour Manager, tours as described, gratuities, transfers, airport taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance.

### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

#### SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £500 PER PERSON PLUS NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Amundsen	Standard	£9995	£9495
Byrd	Superior	£10395	£9895
Mawson	Premium	£10595	£10095
Mawson	Corner	£10995	£10495
Scott	Deluxe Balcony	£12295	£11795
Shackleton	Owner's Balcony	£12795	£12295
Shackleton	Hebridean	£13795	£13295
Amundsen	Standard for sole use	£9995	£9495
Byrd	Superior for sole use	£10395	£9895

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Economy class scheduled air travel • Overnight hotel accommodation in Mumbai • Dinner in Mumbai • 13 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 • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Airport taxes • Port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, Indian visa, optional excursion to Gir National Park.



# 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.

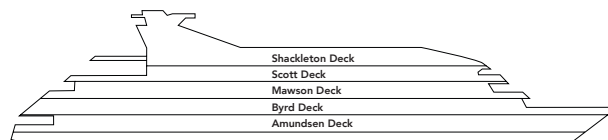
## Your Comfort

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.

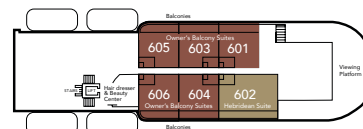
## Your Life On Board

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.

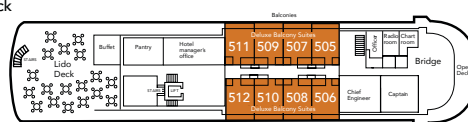
## MS HEBRIDEAN SKY DECK PLAN



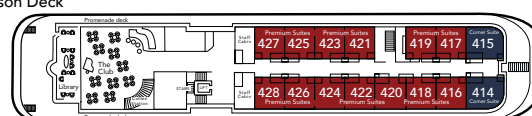
### Shackleton Deck



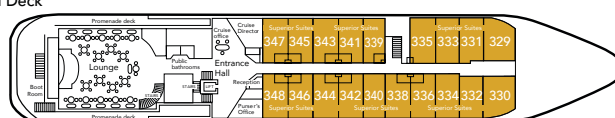
### Scott Deck



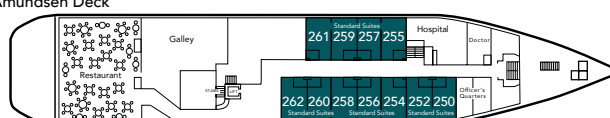
### Mawson Deck



### Byrd Deck



### Amundsen Deck



- Standard Suites
- 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.



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