

SPECIAL
OFFER - SAVE
£500
PER PERSON

INDIAN OCEAN ODYSSEY

AN EPIC VOYAGE FROM THE SEYCHELLES TO SOUTH AFRICA
INCLUDING MADAGASCAR ABOARD THE MS HEBRIDEAN SKY

8TH TO 25TH MARCH 2025

NOBLE CALEDONIA



Here is an extraordinary cruise for those who enjoy the natural world and all its wonders. Join us aboard the all-suite MS Hebridean Sky and enjoy the warmth and beauty of the Indian Ocean as she undertakes exactly the type of itinerary that suits her many talents best. Our journey incorporates some fascinating and exotic calls combining the stunning islands of the Seychelles including the magnificent Aldabra Group with the natural wonders of Madagascar before arriving in Southern Africa's wildlife-rich KwaZulu-Natal.

The first part of our adventure is dedicated to the Seychelles and some of the most idyllic islands in the world. Amongst the highlights of our time in the Seychelles will be the Aldabra Islands, the last breeding ground of the giant tortoise, and in addition to seeing some of these endearing creatures we should also encounter dolphins, turtles and whales as well as countless birds including the flightless rail, the last flightless bird in the Indian Ocean. To explore the abundant crystal-clear waters of the vast lagoon and to set foot on atolls which have never been exploited by the hand of man is a rare experience.

Our voyage continues to Madagascar, the world's 'eighth continent', where we have five days to explore this extraordinary country that is still relatively unknown amongst even the most serious of travellers. The term 'unique' is often an overused description in the travel world but certainly applies to the island of Madagascar where the animals, plants, landscapes and people that make up this thousand-mile-long island are unlike anywhere else in the world. Following a relaxing two days at sea, we arrive in South Africa where our final day will be spent in KwaZulu-Natal where we will learn of the Zulu Kingdom, visit the St Lucia Wetlands with its prolific birdlife and Hluhluwe-Imfolozi, Africa's oldest game reserve.

This itinerary is a veritable feast of beauty and the natural world and with the vessel's fleet of Zodiac landing craft we can land on remote beaches and during our expedition will experience walking through verdant rainforest and national parks, snorkelling in crystal clear waters and getting close to some unique flora and fauna. Your experience will be made all the more memorable by our expert crew and officers who, along with our expedition team of marine biologists, ornithologists and botanists have many years of experience in the Indian Ocean.

Giraffes, Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Park



Giant tortoise, Aldabra

What to Expect

Flexibility is the key to an expedition cruise; sometimes the whole day's schedule will be changed to maximise your experience, something that would not be possible on a large cruise ship. Each day holds something new and below are some extracts from the ship's log from previous expeditions which will provide you with an idea of what to expect.

Aride: Aride is a nature reserve famed for its birdlife. The keen birders set off at 0630, hoping to get the best of the birdlife and were rewarded with the sight of birds that were totally unafraid of man, many of them at very close range. The birds were certainly friendly as were the two species of skink. White-tailed tropicbirds swooped through the woodland and crash landed in the shrubbery on their way to their nests, their landing technique a stark contrast to their grace in flight. The fairy terns sat on their branches and met us eye to eye. Most people got to see the fluffy little chicks, hatched on a bare branch and now moving around, waiting for their feathers to grow so that they could fly. Seychelles fodies were everywhere while common moorhens ran around in the undergrowth, far away from water.



Nosy Tanihely: Instead of using the Zodiacs this morning, local boats ferried us to the shore of Nosy Tanihely, a small island rising steeply from the beautiful palm fringed beach on which we arrived. One highlight was being able to snorkel among the coral reef that was close to shore. The fish diversity of the relatively small reef was impressive and a friendly Hawksbill turtle swam by. The island was equally impressive. Walking up the concrete summit path was well worth it, and we were treated to an acrobatic display by a group of brown lemurs. The panoramic view from the lighthouse was stunning and only bettered by the white-tailed tropicbirds flying close by. Those that walked around the island were treated to seeing Rufus and Madagascar flying fox flying but also sleeping in the shade.



Bijoutier



Exploring by Zodiac



Chameleon



Avenue des Baobabs



Ring-tailed lemur



Frigate bird

The Itinerary

Day 1 London or Manchester to Mahe, Seychelles. Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

Day 2 Mahe. Arrive this afternoon and transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky in Port Victoria. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail to our overnight anchorage.

Day 3 Praslin & Aride. We spend the day exploring a couple of the islands of the Inner Seychelles. During our morning on Praslin we explore the 'Vallee de Mai', the last remnant of the original high canopied Seychelles palm forest and home to the coco de mer. We will walk its paths looking out for the rare black parrot and enjoying its natural beauty. Later we hope to anchor off Aride, one of the finest and most important seabird islands in the Indian Ocean. Over one million seabirds breed on the island including tropical shearwater, lesser noddie, frigatebirds and roseate tern and five of the species are unique to the Seychelles such as the Seychelles warbler and Seychelles magpie robin. The island is largely covered in native woodland including the endemic Wright's gardenia, a shrub with beautifully scented flowers found nowhere else in the world.

Day 4 Alphonse Islands. There are three islands in the Alphonse group and as we approach the islands over lunch you will understand why they are regarded by many to be the most beautiful of the 115 islands in the Seychelles archipelago. Our plan is to land on the tiny and idyllic island of Bijoutier. Rarely visited, it is a safe haven for a variety of seabirds. There will be the opportunity to swim and we hope to offer a snorkel platform in the crystal clear waters. Bijoutier sits between two larger atolls so the ocean current flows passing Bijoutier replenishing the coral reefs and making them especially rich in biodiversity.

Day 5 At Sea. Enjoy a relaxing day at sea as we head to the Outer Seychelles islands. Our lecture programme will continue and you can find a spot on deck to watch for wildlife.

Days 6 to 8 Aldabra Islands. We have two and a half days at the Aldabra Group of islands and our itinerary will be in the hands of our Expedition Leader and Captain who will monitor the local conditions to ensure we maximise our time here. Whilst our itinerary is flexible we plan to call at Aldabra, the island referred to by Sir Julian Huxley as "One of nature's treasures and should belong to the whole world". Aldabra is unique and every time we call at what is believed to be the world's largest atoll we find something new of interest. Sightings have been made of the extremely rare white-throated rail and the atoll is also home to the world's second

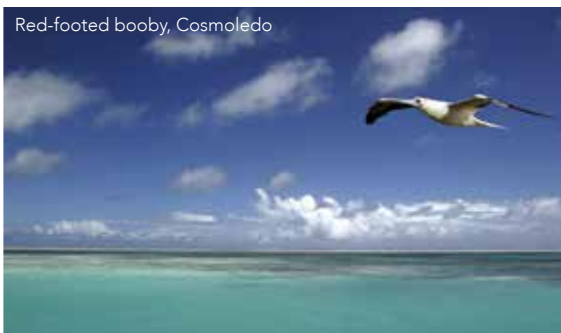
largest colony of frigate birds and the largest crab, the coconut crab. Whilst exploring by Zodiac it is difficult to know in which direction to look. The clear blue seas abound with colourful life, the skies are alive with varied birdlife and ashore giant land tortoises forage as they have done for millions of years. We will explore Picard Island with a short walk to see some of the thousands of tortoises and numerous robber crabs. We will include as much as possible during our time on Aldabra making landings on South Island and trips into the lagoon, a vast 17 mile stretch of shallow clear water. From our Zodiacs we can watch the everchanging undersea world and snorkel in colourful coral waters teeming with marine life. Also, see the island of Assumption. The island was ruthlessly plundered for its vast deposits of guano in the early 20th century but peace has returned and the wildlife of rare birds and green turtles are once again in abundance. Our time here will be spent beachcombing, on a nature walk or snorkelling. Meanwhile on Cosmoledo, a huge ring of twelve islands circle a lagoon. Many of the atolls are still to be surveyed and we will explore some of them by Zodiac. This is an important bird area with all three species of booby found in the Seychelles including the last breeding site for the brown booby. We also hope to spot sooty terns and great frigate birds.

Day 9 Nosy Tanihely, Madagascar. We arrive in Madagascar this morning and the Nosy Tanihely Island Marine Reserve, an uninhabited island which offers snorkelling opportunities and wonderful beaches. We will take the chance to either swim in the clear waters or snorkel over the corals keeping an eye out for reef fish, turtles and morays. Alternatively, explore the island where we may see the resident lemurs, skinks, fruit bats and hermit crabs and enjoy fantastic views from the 1908 lighthouse on the island's highest point.

Day 10 Mahajanga. Mahajanga is a major port in northwest Madagascar situated on the Betsiboka River and is our base for a full day tour of the surrounding area. We will commence with a drive to Lake Mangatsa, a sacred site of many legends where we will learn about local traditions as we search for lemurs, chameleons and birds in the trees. Lunch will be served at the Antsanitia Resort, set in 22 hectare of grounds and located on a stunning section of coastline, and there will be an opportunity to swim or enjoy a walk along the beach, see the local fishing boats and visit the village before we return to the MS Hebridean Sky.

Day 11 At Sea. Our lecture programme resumes as we continue our journey around the Madagascan coast.

Day 12 Morondava. From our anchorage off the town of Morondava, the capital of the Menabe region, we will use the Zodiacs to land on the local



beach. From here there will be a choice of excursions to explore the local region. This morning we will explore Zazamalala Forest, a protected area that is home to a number of species of lemurs, birds, reptiles and plants, and also the base for a breeding centre for critically endangered species of turtles and tortoises. It was initially set up in 2000 as a reforestation project and to promote sustainable use of the forest. We will then head to the Avenue des Baobabs. Of the eight baobab species in the world, six are endemic to Madagascar and here we will marvel at the majestic Grandidier's baobabs, a couple of dozen of which form a natural avenue. We will learn about the trees and their spiritual significance, as well as have the opportunity to contribute to local reforestation efforts by planting a young baobab ourselves. Alternatively, join a full day excursion to Kirindy Forest (subject to road conditions at time of visit). Situated approximately a two hour drive from Morondava, we will pass the Avenue des Baobabs as we travel north. Kirindy is a 10,000 hectare, dry deciduous forest, one of the most endangered in the world where the flora and fauna include many endemic species. Here we find three species of baobab, and many birds and reptiles including snakes, tortoises and lizards. Eight species of lemur reside here including the pale form marked lemur.

Day 13 Tulear. We arrive in Tulear at lunchtime. This afternoon choose to visit the Antsokay Arboretum which is entirely devoted to the conservation of the plants from the southwest of Madagascar. After more than 30 years of hard work, it offers a densely kept selection of flora presenting a typical sub-arid thicket with baobab trees towering over the smaller plants. We will see the four hectare botanical garden which comprises over 900 species of plants of which 90% are endemic to the region. Alternatively, visit the Reniala Private Reserve, a small area of just 60 hectares but containing a spiny forest which is unique to southeastern Madagascar. The park is home to 200 plant species including baobabs as well as being a haven for birders with sightings of paradise flycatchers, Madagascar hoopoe and Madagascar crested drongo.

Days 14 & 15 At Sea. Spend two days at sea as we cross the Mozambique Channel sailing towards South Africa. Spend time listening to the informative lectures and spotting wildlife from the outer decks.

Day 16 Richards Bay, South Africa. Set up as a makeshift harbour, during the Anglo Zulu War in 1879, Richards Bay has flourished into one of the main ports of South Africa. Leaving the port we drive north to the Narrows of the St Lucia Estuary which forms part of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site. Upon arrival in St Lucia town we join a boat ride on the lake which is dotted with marshy, sandbank-islands that are home to thousands

of birds. Over 526 different bird species can be found in the St Lucia Wetlands Reserve. The echo of the fish eagle's haunting cry can be heard while you view the basking and nesting sites of the Nile crocodile and the hundreds of hippos that make their homes in the estuary; the greatest occurrence of both crocodile and hippo in Southern Africa. After our visit choose to return to the ship or continue to Hluhluwe-Imfolozi, the oldest game reserve in all of Africa. Set in the heart of KwaZulu-Natal, the park extends itself over 96,000 hectares, has an immense variety of flora and fauna and is hugely popular not only for its "Big Five" but for the vast birdlife with more than 300 species existing within the reserve. As the home of Operation Rhino in the 1950s and 1960s, the Park became world renowned for its white rhino conservation. In addition to rhino, the reserve has a spectacular variety of bird and animal life, including elephant, lion, leopard, buffalo, blue wildebeest, zebra, giraffe, cheetah, mountain reedbuck, kudu and warthog.

Day 17 Richards Bay to London or Manchester. Disembark this morning and transfer to Durban airport to join our scheduled indirect flight.

Day 18 London or Manchester. Arrive this morning.

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	£11395	£10895
Byrd	Superior	£11695	£11195
Mawson	Premium	£11995	£11495
Mawson	Corner	£12395	£11895
Scott	Deluxe Balcony	£13395	£12895
Shackleton	Owner's Balcony	£13995	£13495
Shackleton	Hebriidean	£15095	£14595
Amundsen	Standard for sole use	£14495	£13995
Byrd	Superior for sole use	£15295	£14795

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • 15 nights aboard the MS Hebridean Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch & dinner • Noble Caledonia expedition team • Gratuities • Shore excursions • Transfers • Airport taxes • Port taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance, Madagascar visa.

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.

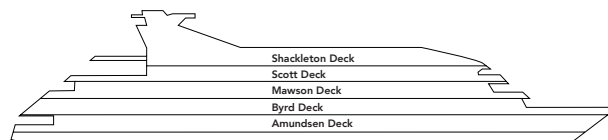
Your Comfort

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.

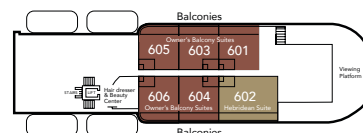
Your Life On Board

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.

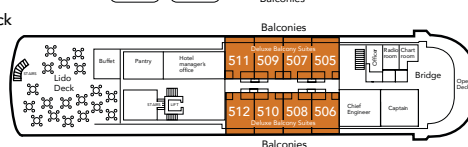
MS HEBRIDEAN SKY DECK PLAN



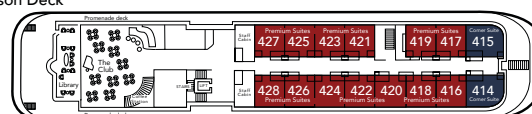
Shackleton Deck



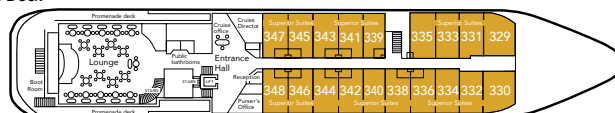
Scott Deck



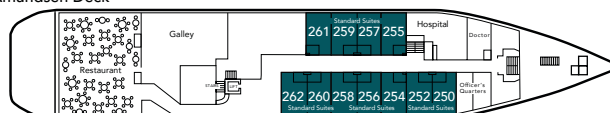
Mawson Deck



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.



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.
Cover image: Praslin.