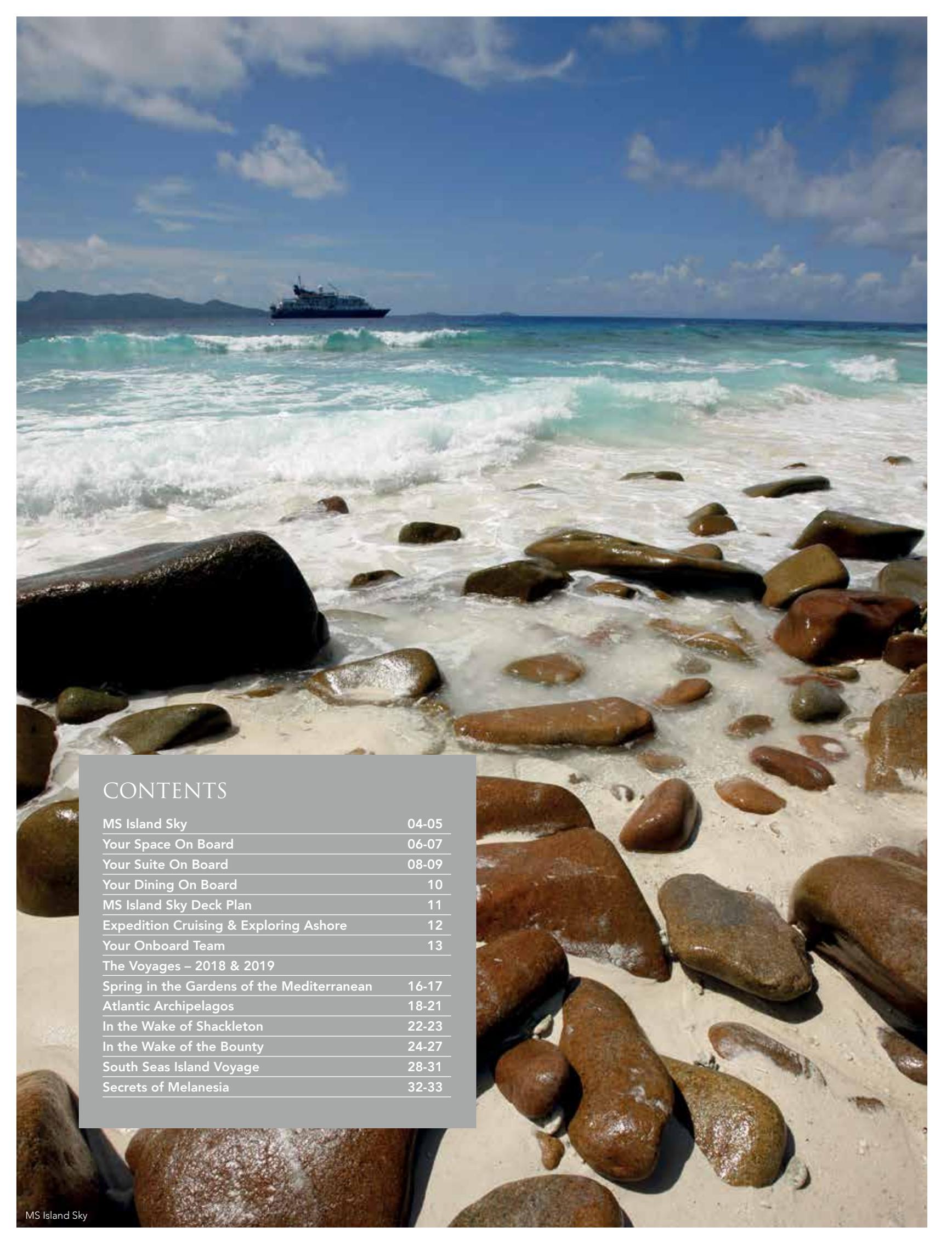


*Voyages aboard*  
**MS ISLAND SKY**  
2018 & 2019



**NOBLE CALEDONIA**



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# Dear Traveller

I trust you will enjoy browsing through our latest brochure detailing the cruises the MS Island Sky will undertake in 2018 and 2019. It features a diverse range of voyages and expeditions including explorations of the lesser known Canary Islands, the Mediterranean, Antarctic Peninsula and the wondrous islands of the South Pacific.

The MS Island Sky was the first of our three sister vessels and, although all three are similar, they each have their own character and for many of our regular travellers, the MS Island Sky continues to be their favourite of the fleet. In fact, the vessel has developed such a strong following that on any given cruise between 60-80% of those on board will have travelled on a previous voyage. Any ship has to be rather special to attract such a following and in the MS Island Sky we have the ultimate combination. Not only is she one of the most comfortable and well equipped small ships in the world, she is also one of the friendliest and most efficiently run. Our crew of over 70, many who have been with us for several years are dedicated to offering the best possible experience. It is this gentle, kind and efficient atmosphere on board more than anything else that has made MS Island Sky such a popular vessel.

Later this year, the MS Island Sky will be undergoing a refurbishment which will include the addition of two new suites on the Explorer Deck. The 'Island Suite' will be the most spacious on board measuring 32 square metres and will feature an extra-large balcony, complimentary mini bar, Wi-Fi and laundry. There will also be an additional Owner's Balcony Suite. Further to the two new suites, the windows in the suites on the Marco Polo Deck will be replaced with tinted, sliding doors allowing greatly enhanced viewing opportunities from your suite and quick access to the deck when a pod of whales or dolphins is spotted. The vessel will also benefit from a range of internal upgrades including new carpets for many of the public areas, some new soft furnishings and the artwork throughout the vessel will also be refreshed with several new pieces commissioned from members of our talented expedition team. Outside, we will be adding a new observation area, ideal for wildlife spotting and some heaters will be introduced to the Lido Deck ensuring that dining outside in cooler climes is even more enjoyable.

We look forward to welcoming you on board.



Tim Cochrane  
Managing Director

## NOBLE CALEDONIA CHARITABLE TRUST



NOBLE CALEDONIA  
CHARITABLE TRUST

During our worldwide explorations over the years, we have come across many situations where help is desperately needed, be it following a natural disaster, civil unrest, abject poverty or to save an endangered species. To this end we established the Noble Caledonia Charitable Trust in 2013 (NCCT). It is our vision to use the Noble Caledonia framework to improve economic, social and environmental conditions in the areas we work and visit. Our onboard teams are uniquely positioned to identify projects and lead fundraising initiatives, whilst many of our guests genuinely care about the people and places we visit and want to make a difference. 100% of all donations go directly to the beneficiaries as Noble Caledonia Ltd covers all the administration costs and donates a percentage of profits annually. Details of our projects can be found on our website [www.noble-caledonia.co.uk](http://www.noble-caledonia.co.uk)



Restaurant

## MS Island Sky



The much loved MS Island Sky is one of our three flagships and one 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 Island Sky has the benefit of unusually large suites, luxuriously appointed public areas and spacious outside decks. On board there is a high ratio of crew to passengers and our friendly crew of 75 are mainly Filipino and Eastern European and our European Captains are experienced mariners, having been in service aboard large 2000 plus passenger vessels and who now prefer a less frantic life aboard a small ship. If, like them and us, you prefer a more peaceful life at sea, you will find the MS Island Sky the perfect ship.

When choosing the vessel for your next voyage of discovery, you can select a ship with endless entertainment and impersonal service or come with us where peace, high quality service and attention to detail are the order of the day. There will be no organised entertainment, fancy dress, deck games or any of the usual big ship experiences. The atmosphere on board is more akin to a private yacht or country hotel. A little music in the lounge or bar after dinner, informative port briefings and presentations from our onboard team and Guest Speakers and of course good food which may be enjoyed leisurely in the attractive dining room, all contribute to making any voyage aboard the MS Island Sky a memorable experience. After a day ashore you will return to the comfort and peace of a well run and exceedingly comfortable ship.

The daily programme on board is in the capable hands of our Cruise Director or Expedition Leader and staff who coordinate with the Captain and Officers to make the most of each day. Briefings and talks will be provided throughout the



MS Island Sky Chefs



Dinner on the Lido Deck



Presentation in the Lounge

voyage together with a 'Daily Programme' that is distributed every evening to your suite outlining the next day's activities. Dress on board is casual and relaxed and there will be no 'black tie' evenings.

**For your Comfort, Security & Safety**

MS Island Sky is equipped with the latest safety, navigation and communications equipment along with roll stabilizers to minimize the ship's motion. During your voyage we hope to offer the opportunity to visit the Captain and Officers on the Bridge to check the vessels progress by charts and learn more about your journey. You will also find on your suite television a navigation channel showing the routing of the vessel as well as the view from the Bridge. On board you will also find a clinic and doctor and a lift that serves all decks. Smoking on board is restricted to a specific area on deck.

“ Not only is the MS Island Sky one of the most comfortable and well equipped small ships in the world, she is also one of the friendliest and most efficiently run. Our crew of over 70, many of whom have been with us for many years are dedicated to offering the best possible experience. ”



## Your Space

The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large lounge on the Columbus Deck featuring a selection of seating options from individual armchairs and sofas to side cushioned benches. Daily briefings and talks given by the Noble Caledonia onboard team take place in The Lounge which is fitted with the highest standard of presentation equipment including multiple screens. For your convenience, it is also possible to follow the onboard lectures from the comfort of your suite.

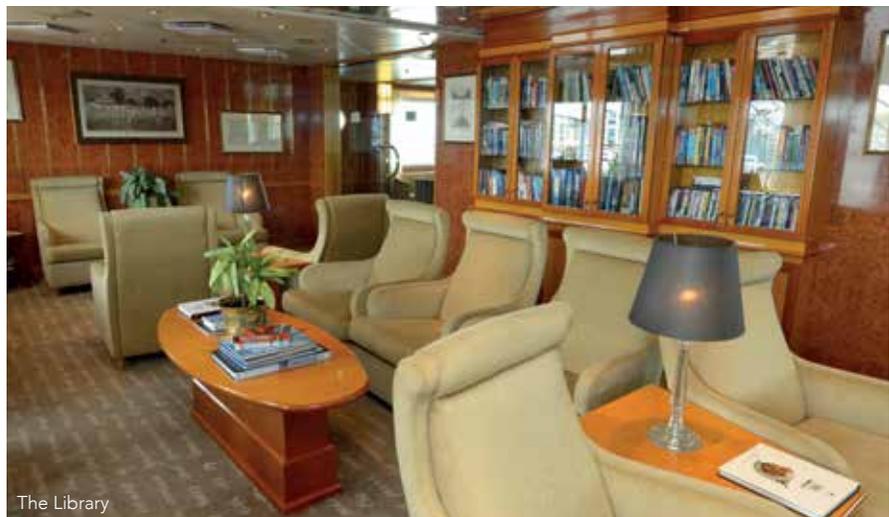
In addition to the main Lounge on the Columbus Deck, there is also The Club, located on the Marco Polo Deck which features the main bar where the onboard pianist plays periodically throughout the day. The Club also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. Towards the aft of the ship on the Marco Polo 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 selection of games and two computers complete with complimentary internet access can also be found in the Library. Daily newspapers and magazines are also placed in the library depending on local availability. Throughout the vessel you will find a fine selection of artwork and photography, many of which have been drawn or taken by members of our expedition team.

The main dining room which can seat all guests at one sitting is located on the Magellan Deck and outside there is a rear Lido deck located on the Erikson Deck, complete with deck tables and chairs where meals are served in warm weather under shade. Whilst heaters and blankets make dining al fresco comfortable in cooler



Reception



The Library

climates. Further to this on the top Explorer Deck the observation area complete with sun loungers is ideal for sun bathing, relaxing with a book or spotting wildlife. The walk around promenade on the Marco Polo Deck provides a unique circular view of the passing seascapes. There is also a small hairdressers on board offering a small selection of beauty treatments. For your comfort, there is also a clinic with doctor onboard and a lift which serves all decks.

As is the joy of small ship cruising, we hope to offer the opportunity to visit the Captain and Officers on the Bridge to check the progress of the vessel (subject to weather or security conditions).

“ A voyage aboard the MS Island Sky is as far removed from the traditional concept of big ship cruising as it’s possible to get. Imagine a sleek little ship, more akin to a yacht, with a cosy bar where the bartender knows how many slices of lime you prefer in your G&T. ”



Owner's Balcony Suite



## Your Suite

On board there are 59 exceptionally spacious and well designed suites. All feature a sitting room area and some have private balconies, whilst those on the Marco Polo Deck feature tinted, sliding glass doors allowing greatly enhanced viewing opportunities from your suite and quick access to the deck when a pod of whales or dolphins is spotted. 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. Each affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring marble-topped vanity unit with sink and walk-in shower, a large wardrobe, dressing table with large mirror

and stool and excellent storage. There is a mini-fridge, flat screen television with inbuilt DVD/CD player and a telephone in each suite. Bottled water, dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted Molton Brown toiletries, air-conditioning and heating. The suites on each deck have their own colour theme. Soft hues and blended tones enhance the traditional maritime style making the passenger accommodation an inviting and relaxing place to be. The comfortable beds in each suite can be configured as either double or twin.

The impressive Island Suite located on the Explorer Deck features an extra large balcony stretching the length of the suite. Additional features of this marvellous suite include complimentary internet usage, complimentary minibar stocked with your preference of beverages and complimentary laundry.



Standard Suite, Magellan Deck



Corner Suite, Marco Polo Deck



## Your Dining On Board



It is quite a task to create a dining experience as that found on board MS Island Sky when you are cruising in far-flung corners of the globe, indeed it takes a team of highly talented chefs to deliver fresh, varied dishes no matter where you are at sea. Fortunately, our catering teams are well adapted to the world of small ship cruising where no two days are the same and the menus are often scheduled and tailored around the days' excursions.

With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the cuisine on board is of a consistent superior quality. Where possible and when it meets their high standards, our accomplished chefs will obtain local produce in markets. Such purchases enhance the well stocked larders and enable the chefs on board to exhibit their culinary skills and bring a local touch to the varied menus, emphasising the international expertise of the chefs on board. Afternoon tea and pre-dinner canapes take place every day 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.

In keeping with the informal atmosphere onboard, when dining you are able to choose your seating arrangements at your leisure. Whether that be joining a table of four to six other passengers outside on the Lido deck in the evening's sunshine or whether you prefer to enjoy meals in the à la carte restaurant. For those travelling alone, our onboard friendly restaurant staff will take care to ensure you are seated with other like-minded travellers. In the main elegant dining room, breakfast is served buffet-style, with certain items cooked to order on request. Lunch and dinner are à la carte with an excellent choice of dishes, with the menu reflecting the daily catch or local delicacies. To enhance your dining experience even further a selection of wines are included with both meals and there is also a comprehensive wine list with a wide selection of new and old world wines from which to choose.

The onboard catering and restaurant staff are experienced at sea and enthuse a passion for superb service. Whether it be ensuring you have an outdoor blanket as you enjoy the crisp sea breeze on the Lido Deck or sharing their knowledge of the characteristics of the days' wine selections, you will experience a service on board like no other. You may also enjoy sumptuous barbecues on deck whilst at times, the chef will make your dish to order at special pasta or stir fry stations.

## *Captain's Welcome Dinner*

### Sample Menu

#### **Appetizers**

Shrimp Cocktail with Rhode Island Dressing  
Oven Baked Fresh Figs wrapped in Parma Ham  
with Wild Rocket and Balsamic Reduction

#### **Soups**

"Crème Ninon"  
Green Pea Soup topped with Champagne and Chantilly Cream  
Tomato Consommé with Tomato Concasse

#### **Salad**

"Caesar Salad"  
Crisp Romaine Lettuce with Croutons, Anchovies, Parmesan Cheese  
and Caesar Dressing

#### **Sorbet**

Citrus Sorbet on Pink Grapefruit Granite

#### **Main Dishes**

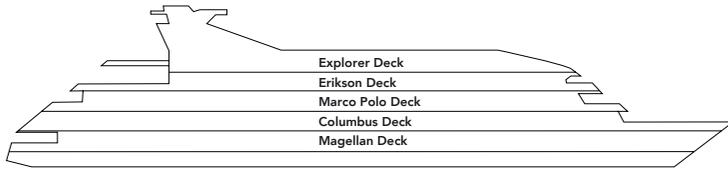
Fresh Local Catch of the Day  
  
Whole Oven Baked Fresh Sea Bass with Caramelized Lemon  
and Fresh Herbs, served with Pont Neuf Potatoes and Roasted  
Mediterranean Vegetables  
  
Slow Roasted Chateaubriand of Aberdeen Angus Tenderloin of Beef  
with a Truffle Sauce served with Cocotte Potato and  
Asparagus Wrapped in Bacon  
  
Roast Breast and Confit of Duck Leg with Cointreau Sauce,  
served with Potato and Braised Red Cabbage  
  
Goats Cheese, Spinach and Wild Mushroom Lasagne,  
served with Gruyère Cheese Sauce and Parmesan Crisp

#### **Desserts**

Grand Marnier Soufflé with Orange Flavoured Vanilla Custard Sauce  
Bitter Chocolate Marquise with Pistachio Ice Cream  
Seasonal Fresh Fruits  
Selection of International Cheese

# MS Island Sky

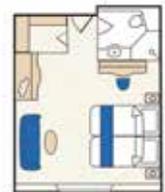
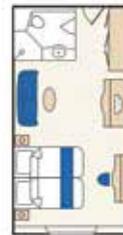
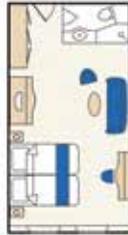
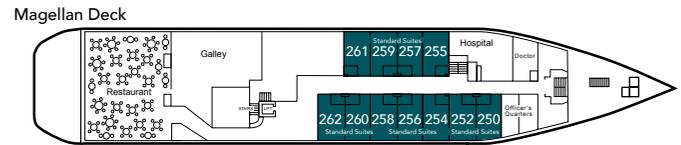
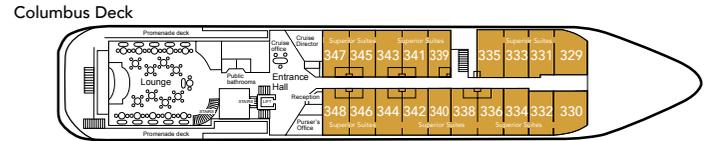
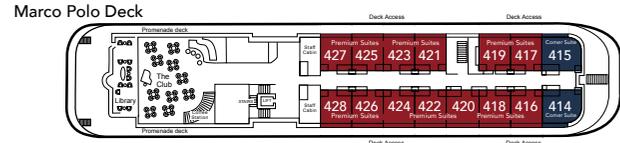
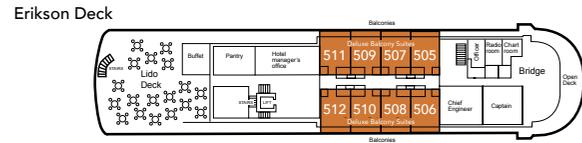
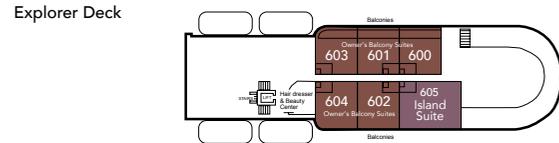
## Deck and Cabin Plans



### Technical Information

Cruising speed: 11.5 knots  
 Length overall: 90.6 m  
 Width overall: 15.3m  
 Draught maximum: 4.2m  
 Flag/Registry: Bahamas

Built: 1992  
 Tonnage: 4200  
 Guest capacity: 118  
 Classed by: BV  
 Upgraded: Due October 2017



### Magellan Deck – Standard Suites

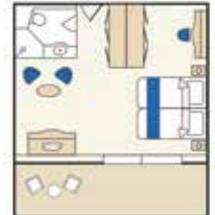
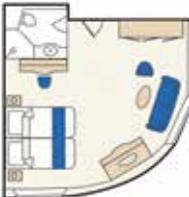
The Standard Suites located on the Magellan Deck measure approximately 21 square metres and feature large portholes.

### Columbus Deck – Superior Suites

The Superior Suites located on the Columbus Deck measure an average of 22 square metres with a large window.

### Marco Polo Deck – Premium Suites

The Premium Suites featured on the Marco Polo Deck measure approximately 21 square metres and feature tinted, sliding glass doors with direct deck access.



### Marco Polo Deck – Corner Suites

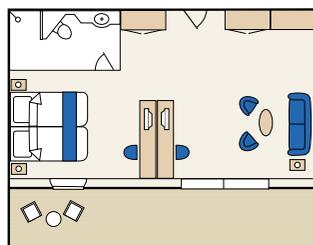
The two magnificent Corner Suites located on the Marco Polo Deck feature tinted, sliding glass doors with direct deck access and measure 22 square metres.

### Erikson Deck – Deluxe Balcony Suites

The Deluxe Balcony Suites located on the Erikson Deck measure 20.9 square metres and boast a 4 square metre private balcony with table and chairs.

### Explorer Deck – Owner's Balcony Suites

The Owner's Balcony Suites located on the Explorer Deck measure 22 square metres and feature a large private balcony measuring 8 square metres with table, chairs and sun loungers. Please note that the configuration of suite 600 varies slightly. Please refer to website for details.



### Explorer Deck – Island Suite

The spacious Island Suite located on the Explorer Deck measures approximately 32 square metres and boasts an extra large balcony with table, chairs and sun lounge.

# Exploring Ashore & Expedition Cruising

Our inclusive pricing policy means that the majority of shore excursions are included in the price of your cruise. It is our belief that you do not go on holiday to be part of the all engulfing masses which descend on a town when a number of large ships dock at the same time. Arriving at a port for the first time should be an invigorating experience and can certainly be so when the right place is chosen and your arrival is on a small ship. With a maximum of only 118 passengers, there is no queuing to disembark or embark the MS Island Sky for an excursion. When required there will only be three coaches waiting on the quayside to transport you to the day's attraction as opposed to a whole fleet waiting for the passengers travelling on the big ships. Due to its size, the MS Island Sky has the freedom of the seas and can come alongside in small docks or drop anchor in any suitable spot.



## Expedition Cruising

Some of the voyages undertaken by the MS Island Sky are expeditionary in nature and these will feature the expedition logo. On expedition cruises, in place of the customary Cruise Director and accompanying staff, you will be joined by an expedition team. These hand-picked experts are naturalists, historians and ecologists who will share their knowledge and enthusiasm during forays ashore and whilst on board. They will supervise the daily programme and hold talks and briefings throughout the cruise. The expedition teams have one aim, to make your trip as enjoyable, relaxing and informative as possible. We have over twenty five years of experience in designing trips to the hidden corners of the remotest places and yet every year we discover something new and, although we set sail with a set itinerary, it is sometimes the unscheduled events that become the highlight of the journey.

## Zodiacs

Expeditions are defined by the use of Zodiacs, our versatile, inflatable boats, which provide a unique platform for observing wildlife or enjoying majestic landscapes from sea level, or a fast and safe way of going ashore in remote places. Expedition cruising is about getting off the beaten track, out of the way of other ships, of other visitors; it is about leaving the infrastructures of civilisation behind. We may not be far from civilisation, but we will often be out of sight of it. Our fleet of onboard Zodiacs are invaluable for our expeditions. These inflatable craft offer marvellous manoeuvrability allowing us access to otherwise impossible landing places. With these we can explore inlets, fjords, bird sanctuaries, land in otherwise inaccessible places and be footloose in a way that would be totally impractical for larger groups of passengers. Zodiacs are safe, reliable and convenient boats that allow us to go from ship to shore, whether we land on a beach, on rocks, or on a concrete jetty. In many places which we visit during expedition cruises, they are the only way to go ashore. Zodiacs also enable the expedition team to offer Zodiac cruises during the voyage: near a seabird colony, next to a cliff, along a glacier front, or a beach where polar bears dwell. Zodiacs will also be used as platforms from where swimming and snorkelling can be conducted.

If you have any concerns or queries pertaining to expedition cruising and what it entails, please do not hesitate to contact one of our experienced travel consultants.



Corinth Canal

# Your Onboard Team



On all our voyages you will find informative staff on board and whilst exploring ashore you will be accompanied by excellent English-speaking local guides. Working with the Captain and crew, our cruise staff are responsible for the day to day organisation of the itinerary and briefings and they are in regular contact with the Noble Caledonia office. We have the very best in their field and they are also joined by Guest Speakers who are chosen for their in-depth knowledge of a specific subject or geographical area. Briefings by the cruise staff and informal talks by our Guest Speakers add an extra dimension to all we see and do. Below are just some of our excellent team. There are many more and full details of who will be joining you on board can be viewed at [www.noble-caledonia.co.uk](http://www.noble-caledonia.co.uk)



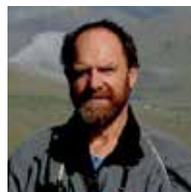
## **Pamela Le Noury – Expedition Leader**

Coming from South Africa, Pam is a marine scientist, PADI dive instructor, Zodiac skipper and sailor, and has worked in and on the ocean just about every day for the past 16 years. After leaving school she worked in the diving industry whilst studying a BSc in zoology and physiology, and started up her own whale watching charter and boat business. She has participated in several marine research cruises, has published 3 APPS for smartphones on sharks & rays and whales & dolphins and Antarctic Wildlife, and enjoys teaching people about the oceans and conservation through her travels. Pam started expedition cruising in 2008 and has been almost everywhere a small cruise ship can take you; 120 countries from the poles to the remote reaches of every ocean – loving life as a citizen of the sea.



## **Rear Admiral John Lippiett – Guest Speaker**

John Lippiett had a 36 year career in the Royal Navy serving in a large number of ships from aircraft carriers to minesweepers and deployed to all of the world's operational theatres. He was second-in-command of the frigate HMS Ambuscade throughout the Falklands War. John commanded three ships, a Frigate Squadron, and then the School of Maritime Warfare. On promotion to Rear Admiral, he flew his Flag at sea as Flag Officer Sea Training before serving in Naples as Chief of Staff of the NATO maritime forces in the Mediterranean. His final posting was as the Commandant of the Joint Services Command and Staff College. John retired and for nearly 13 years was the Chief Executive of the Mary Rose Trust, during which time he led the project to build the award winning new museum.



## **Ian Bullock – Expedition Team**

Ian Bullock is a British biologist who lives in St. Davids, Pembrokeshire, on the south-western seaboard of Wales. Since 1978 he has specialised in seabird surveys, habitat management for endangered species and the conservation of remote island nature reserves. For 25 years he worked for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds as both research biologist and warden, establishing new reserves for conservation and managing offshore islands. In spare moments since 1990 he has worked as guide and lecturer on board expedition ships in the Indian, Pacific and Atlantic oceans, as well as Arctic and Antarctic environments. He loves the sea, wildlife and wilderness and relishes any opportunity to share this enthusiasm with fellow adventurers.



## **Colin Baird – Expedition Team**

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 Antarctica. When at home in Canada he leads whale watching tours from Victoria, B.C. during the northern summer to see his favourite of all the cetaceans – the orca.



## **Jane Wilson – Expedition Leader**

For the last 10 years Jane has worked on expedition cruise vessels (including some Russian polar ice strengthened and icebreaker vessels) as a Zodiac driver, lecturer and Expedition Leader in many remote corners of the world including South America, the Arctic and Antarctica, Europe, South-east Asia and the South Pacific. She also keeps her hand in the science pie as Voyage leader for the Australian Antarctic Division, being responsible for deploying support personnel, cargo and scientists to stations and field camps in Antarctica on the Australian research and re-supply icebreaker Aurora Australis. She is a keen skier and now calls the Rocky Mountains in Canada home.



## **Rosemary Legrand – Guest Speaker**

Rosemary is a former nursery owner and daughter of the late George Hyde, who was a hybridist of azaleas and rhododendrons. Many of his award winning hybrid plants can be seen at the Royal Horticultural Society's gardens at Wisley, Surrey, the de Rothschild rhododendron gardens at Exbury, Hampshire and the National Trust Gardens at Kingston Lacy in Dorset. Rosemary had the honour of presenting HM The Queen with a collection of her late Father's azaleas named after the Queen's former Head Gardener, Fred Nutbeam, at Chelsea Flower Show in 1996. Her enjoyment of photography is used to great effect in creating the atmosphere of the gardens she discusses in her range of illustrated talks. She has travelled extensively to gardens in many parts of the world to amass a substantial library of pictures. Rosemary is an experienced public speaker and has given presentations to a wide range of organisations since 1992. She is on the RHS Speakers Register, is a NAFAS Area Speaker, and wrote a number of contributions for the book, '1001 Gardens you must see before you die' and a recent article for the Royal Horticultural Society 'Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia 2014 Year Book'."



## **Neil James Horrocks – Cruise Director**

Neil has been at sea since 2001, a year after he graduated in Pure Maths from the University of Manchester. During his career to date he has experienced everywhere from the Arctic to Antarctica and due to his passion for small-ship cruising was delighted to be welcomed into the Noble Caledonia family. An accomplished pianist, Neil is very much an all-rounder, with a keen sense of humour and eye for detail. He is equally comfortable interviewing political heavyweights, driving Zodiacs ashore or even writing evening quizzes. When not at sea, Neil lives on the south coast of England and tries to enjoy following the misfortunes of his local football team, Brighton & Hove Albion, and visiting steam railways up and down the country.



# *The Voyages*

“

Ships, especially little ships, have auras like people and houses. The aura is built up of many things. Human encounter is the main brace; add to this the company and shared experience, bad days and good, achievement and disappointment, even moments of danger. All this rubs off on the ship, growing with the places that she visits like richly colored beads threaded with string.

*Keith Shackleton "Ship in the Wilderness"*

”



# Spring in the Gardens of the Mediterranean

A springtime voyage from Naples to Barcelona aboard the MS Island Sky with Rosemary Legrand  
1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Our springtime journey through the Mediterranean has been planned for those who appreciate an interesting mix of history, gardens and landscapes. We will steer clear, whenever possible, of the over-crowded sites and mega resort ships, yet include some of the most interesting and beautiful places in the ancient world. It is the most perfect time of year: verdant gardens and landscapes awash with blossoms make for an idyllic journey aboard the wonderfully comfortable MS Island Sky.

## The Itinerary

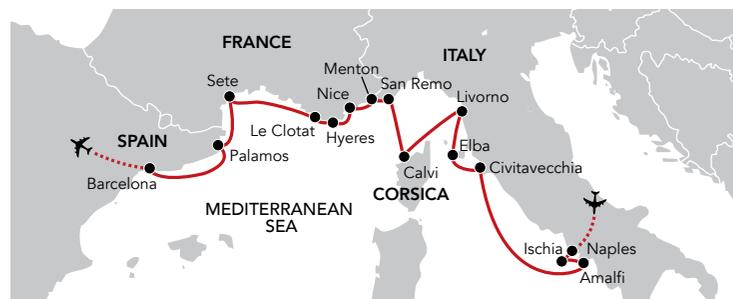
**Day 1 London to Naples, Italy.** Fly by scheduled flight. Arrive this afternoon and transfer to the MS Island Sky.

**Day 2 Naples & Ischia.** There will be a choice of excursions today and you may choose to take the ferry and spend the day on the garden island of Ischia. A tour of the island will focus on La Mortella, a wonderful garden designed by architect Russell Page for Lord and Lady William Walton. We will have lunch at a local restaurant before enjoying free time to explore the main town. Alternatively enjoy a day in Naples where a morning tour will take us to Herculaneum. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure in Naples.

**Day 3 Amalfi.** From our anchorage off Amalfi we will go ashore this morning to visit the nearby beautiful gardens of the Villa Cimbrone in Ravello. The villa was something of a Bohemian retreat in its early days and has had many illustrious former guests. Return to Amalfi and enjoy a free afternoon at leisure.

**Day 4 Civitavecchia.** Today we travel inland to visit two wonderful houses and gardens in Lazio. We will visit Castello Ruspoli which is owned by Princess Claudia Giada Ruspoli. Originally part of the papal estates, the castle was built in 847 AD by Benedictine monks. The garden, which still retains its original form, must be considered one of the most beautiful parterres in Italy. After lunch we continue to the beautiful gardens of Villa Lante Della Rovere. In the eyes of many, Villa Lante is the consummate example of the best period in the history of garden design: the Mannerist phase of the Italian Renaissance.

**Day 5 Elba.** Arrive this morning at the enchanting island of Elba, best known as Napoleon's island of exile from 1814 to 1815. Departing the island's busy capital Portoferraio we set out for a delightful drive exploring the southern region of this charming island with superb views over the coastline. The first stop will be Villa San Martino, the summer residence of



Napoleon Bonaparte, which has since been transformed into a museum. Continue to Porto Azzurro, a delightful town which is dominated by an ancient Spanish fortress and a picturesque harbour, before carrying on along the coast to the 17th century country wine farm, La Chiusa, beautifully nestled in a vineyard estate surrounded by olive trees and overlooking the ocean. Experience the estate's interesting cellar to learn how the wine is handled and produced. A delicious sampling of the local wine will be served in the garden facing the sea. Return to the MS Island Sky for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure in Portoferraio.

**Day 6 Livorno.** We will spend the day in the Tuscan countryside and Chianti wine region. This morning we will visit the 15th century Villa Poggio Torselli built by the Machiavelli family and known as the "Queen of Chianti Villas". The gardens here are made up of parkland and a terraced Italian style garden with a verdant expanse of vineyards, olive trees, roses, cypress and lemon trees. After our visit we will enjoy a lunch of local specialties and wines at a nearby villa before returning to the MS Island Sky. Alternatively spend the morning in the lovely town of Lucca.

**Day 7 Calvi.** Calvi is the capital of the prosperous Balagne region of the island. Enjoy the vista of the surrounding green hills which form a natural amphitheatre and is known as the 'Garden of Corsica'. A guided tour will lead us through the alleyways and cobbled streets before continuing to the imposing citadel. This afternoon there will be an opportunity to explore the flora of Corsica with a visit to the seven hectare Parc de Salecchia.



**Day 8 San Remo.** This morning enjoy time to explore the twisting labyrinth of lanes in the old town that lead up from the waterfront or maybe walk along the promenade to the gardens at Villa Ormond. This afternoon we will enjoy a choice of tours, maybe travel inland to the Medieval town of Dolceaqua which is made up of two villages connected by a Medieval humpback bridge which inspired Monet who defined it as "a jewel of lightness". Our walking tour will take us through the picturesque alleys of the Doria Castle and we will also enjoy a tasting of the village's famous Rossese red wine and olive oil in a local taverna. Alternatively take the journey to the French border and the Hanbury Gardens which were established in 1867 by Sir Thomas Hanbury as a coastal woodland garden at his property in Ventimiglia. After falling into disrepair they were restored by the University of Genoa in 1987 who maintain the 18 hectares of Mediterranean and exotic plants.

**Day 9 Menton, France.** Arrive this morning on the French Riviera in the small town of Menton. Spend the morning at the Val Rahmeh Botanical Gardens. Established in the late 19th century by Lord Radcliffe the garden contains subtropical and tropical plants including Sophora toromiro (a species of small trees since disappeared from Easter



Amalfi coastline



Island) exceptional olive trees (more than 400 years old) and collections of exotic plants. Returning to the ship for lunch you may wish to revisit the town for the afternoon or relax on board. Alternatively visit the Serre de La Madone, designed in the 1920s by Lawrence Johnston. Spread over nine hectares the garden is divided into compartments by hedges and walls and includes plants sourced from his travels around the world.

**Day 10 Nice.** Drive this morning along the dramatic road to St Jean Cap Ferrat which is home to some of the most sumptuous villas on the French Riviera and where we find the Rothschild Foundation and Gardens at Villa Ile de France. We will explore the villa which houses a priceless art collection. Return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon either explore Nice independently or join us as we explore two of the area's finest museums in the exclusive Cimiez Hill District. We will begin with a visit to the Musee National Marc Chagall. Established by the artist himself, the collection features the most important permanent exhibition of his work. We will continue to the Musee Matisse which is housed in the 17th century Arena Villa. The exquisite collection details the great master's development from the late 19th century through to 1954.

**Day 11 Hyeres.** Our journey along the French Riviera continues in Hyeres, which developed as a winter destination and health resort for wealthy Britons in the 18th and 19th century with Queen Victoria giving the royal seal of approval in 1892. The pleasant climate makes it home to some wonderful gardens that we will explore on a morning tour including

Castel Sainte Claire which overlooks the old town and the terraced park at Saint Bernard with wonderful views along the coast.

**Day 12 Le Ciotat.** Today we will anchor off the picturesque Provencal port of Le Ciotat where we have a morning free to explore independently. After lunch on board we spend the afternoon at the hilltop Medieval village of Le Castellet exploring the winding streets and enjoying a wine tasting.

**Day 13 Sete.** Enjoy a full day tour to the fortified city of Carcassonne which is for most the perfect idea of a Medieval castle. There will be a guided walking tour and free time before returning to the ship with lunch en-route. Alternatively, spend the morning at La Bambouseraie, a private botanical garden founded in 1856 by keen botanist Eugene Mazel and featuring exotic and rare plants, huge oak and cypress trees, giant bamboos and magnolias and Victorian greenhouses. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy the remainder of the afternoon at leisure.

**Day 14 Palamos, Spain.** Our first call in Spain will be on the Costa Brava and the old fishing port of Palamos. This morning we will head out to the 17 hectare Cap Rog Botanical Gardens situated on the cliffs with wonderful views of the coastline. The terraced gardens contain over 1000 botanical species and spread from the house on the cliffs down to the sea.

**Day 15 Barcelona to London.** Disembark after breakfast and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

## Pre-Cruise Extension – Grand Hotel Villa Tuscolana 27th April to 1st May 2018



### The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Frascati.** Fly by scheduled flight to Rome. On arrival transfer to our hotel for a four night stay. Settle into your room before meeting for dinner tonight.

**Day 2 Villa Landriana.** After breakfast we head for the city of Ardea to visit the magnificent Gardens of Landriana which are considered one of the most

impressive gardens in Italy. Created in 1956, the 10 hectares of garden space were created by an English landscape designer named Russell Page who divided the garden into 32 different "rooms" with specific characteristics, such as the valley of ancient roses, the orange garden and the blue lawn. Return to the hotel for a free afternoon before meeting tonight for dinner.

**Day 3 Tivoli.** Today we visit two magnificent villas in Tivoli. The Villa Adriana is an exceptional complex of classical buildings created in the 2nd century A.D. by the Roman Emperor Hadrian. We will have time to enjoy some lunch in the town of Tivoli before we continue to Villa d'Este, masterpiece of the Italian Garden and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Return to the hotel this afternoon and enjoy a free evening.

**Day 4 Frascati.** Enjoy a full day at leisure. We will meet tonight for dinner.

**Day 5 Frascati to Naples.** After a leisurely breakfast in the hotel we will check out and drive to the MS Island Sky, stopping en-route for lunch.

### Prices per person based on double occupancy

Twin: £765 Single: £995

**Price Includes:** Four nights accommodation at the Grand Hotel Villa Tuscolana on a bed and breakfast basis, dinner on days 1, 2 and 4, lunches on days 2, 3 and 5, excursions, Tour Manager, gratuities.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance.



### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £400 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY			
Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Magellan	Standard	£6495	£6095
Columbus	Superior	£6695	£6295
Marco Polo	Premium	£6995	£6595
Marco Polo	Corner	£7395	£6995
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£8795	£8395
Explorer	Owner's Balcony	£8995	£8595
Explorer	Island Suite	£9995	£9595
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£6895	£6495
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£7295	£6895

**Price Includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel, 14 nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis, wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, shore excursions, gratuities, onboard team including Guest Speaker, transfers, port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance.

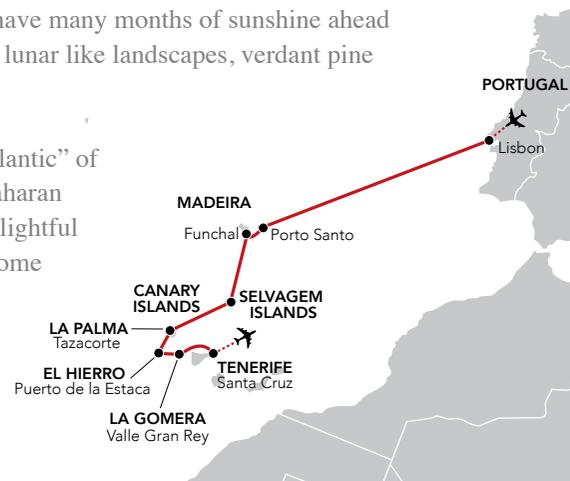
**Ship to Shore:** Please note that we will be at anchor at the following ports and will use local boats/Zodiacs to tender ashore: Amalfi, San Remo, Menton, Hyeres and La Ciotat.

# Atlantic Archipelagos

An exploration of the lesser known islands of Madeira and the Canaries aboard the MS Island Sky  
5<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Whilst back home autumn may be setting in, Madeira and the Canary Islands still have many months of sunshine ahead allowing us the chance to fully appreciate the diverse and intriguing topography, lunar like landscapes, verdant pine forests and stunning national parks.

Our voyage will begin in the city of Lisbon and then onto the “floating garden in the Atlantic” of Madeira before we make our way to the Canary Islands. Located some 700 miles off Saharan Africa, far from being a sun and fun package destination, there is much to see in this delightful Atlantic Archipelago. In fact, you do not have to stray far from the resorts to discover some marvellously varied landscapes and an absorbing, multifaceted culture. Exploring the hinterlands, back roads and villages brings you in touch with a unique side of Spanish culture, much removed from the mainland. The melting pot of Andalusian, Berber, Portuguese, Italian, French and British migration, together with los Guanches, the original inhabitants who were displaced by the Spanish conquest in the 15th century, have all left their mark, making this a unique destination.



The archipelago consists of seven main islands that are formed from the tips of a vast volcanic mountain range that lies beneath the Atlantic Ocean and we will start by visiting three of the lesser known islands: La Palma, El Hierro and La Gomera where we can enjoy nature at its very best. These volcanic islands impress with their unique flora and fauna and boast rugged rocky landscapes, evergreen cloud forests, metre high ferns and bizarre-looking dragon trees. Our final call will be to Santa Cruz de Tenerife where there will be the opportunity to explore the beautiful gardens of the city and spectacular Mount Teide.

Madeira and the Canary Islands have something to offer everyone and so our itinerary has been designed to try and offer a choice of excursion at each port of call. Whether your interests lie in gardens, geology or walking, we are confident that you will find this cruise the perfect antidote to the cold and grey October skies at home.



Funchal Botanical Gardens, Madeira

## The Itinerary

### Day 1 London to Lisbon, Portugal.

Fly by scheduled flight and upon arrival in Lisbon transfer to the MS Island Sky. Moor overnight.

### Day 2 Lisbon.

This morning explore Portugal's capital seeing the Gulbenkian Museum, Republic Avenue, Rossio and Commercial Square. We will drive along the Tagus River to the Monument to the Discoveries, erected in 1960 to mark the 500th anniversary of the death of Prince Henrique the Navigator and the Belem Tower, an elegant Manueline structure, built in the middle of the Tagus River. It was from this superb tower that Portuguese explorers were given a rousing send-off. Return to the vessel for lunch and set sail for Madeira.

### Day 3 At Sea.

A day of relaxation. Maybe join one of the onboard lectures or enjoy a book on deck.

**Day 4 Porto Santo, Madeira.** Today we arrive in Porto Santo. Although

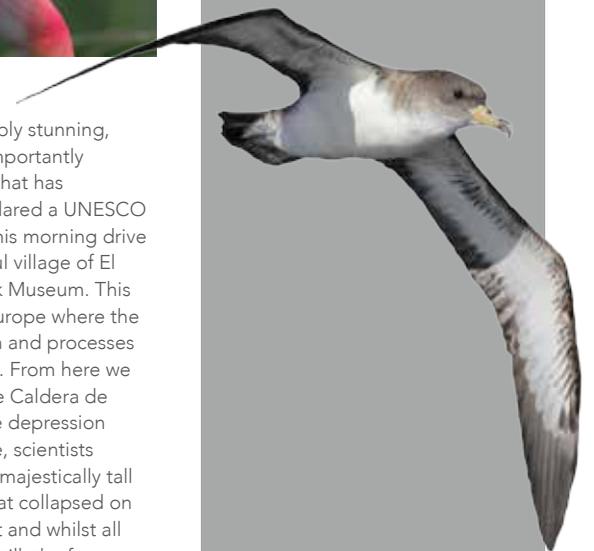
one of the islands constituting the archipelago of Madeira, Porto Santo and Madeira could not be more different. Whilst lush green predominates Madeira, Porto Santo is arid and the southern coast is bordered by a nine kilometre long beach of golden sand. Our morning tour will introduce us to the island and will include some beautiful vistas, a tasting of Porto Santo wine and a visit to the Christopher Columbus museum, where he once lived. After lunch on board perhaps enjoy some time on the beach, explore the local town or join a hike to the summit of Pico do Castelo offering spectacular views of the island.

### Day 5 Funchal.

This morning we arrive into Funchal and commence our day with a visit to Monte, a charming village high in the hills overlooking Funchal. We will reach Monte by cable car experiencing wonderful views along the way and visit the Monte Palace Tropical Gardens. This garden collection



“ These volcanic islands impress with their unique flora and fauna and boast rugged rocky landscapes, evergreen cloud forests, metre high ferns and bizarre-looking dragon trees. ”



has been enriched with plants from all over the world and about 100,000 plant species have been planted. The garden also features a collection of cycads (encephalartos) which, because of their age, are considered living fossils. Before returning to the ship for lunch we will make our way to the Botanical Gardens. Situated in the grounds of a former private house, the gardens are host to a profusion of plants and flowers, from all parts of the world, which thrive in the island's temperate climate. This afternoon will be at leisure to explore Funchal independently or perhaps join a guided Levada walk. Levada are irrigation channels that were created by the Portuguese settlers in the 19th century, who painstakingly carved them out of the rock by hand. Designed to carry fresh water from the north to the drier southern regions of the island, they helped to create many of the lush landscapes that can be seen today. The walk will follow the course of 'levadas' for over three miles, seeing the verdant plants,

mountain views and green farmland that cover Madeira. This evening we will dine ashore at the traditional Adega da Quinta Restaurant and enjoy a performance by a local folklore group.

**Day 6 Selvagem Islands.** After a morning at sea we will arrive at the Selvagem Islands, a small uninhabited archipelago and, since 1971, one of Portugal's first designated nature reserves. The scientific and natural interest of this tiny group of islands lies in its marine biodiversity, its unique flora and many birds that breed annually on its rock cliffs or use them on their stopover on normal migratory patterns. It is considered one of the best spots in the Atlantic for bird watching and we hope to see Cory's shearwater and Berthelot's pipit. *Please note that we will use the ship's Zodiacs to transfer ashore and will spend a few hours exploring these wild and rarely visited islands.*

**Day 7 Tazacorte, La Palma, Canary Islands.** La Palma is known by locals as the 'Beautiful Island', and it is easy

to see why, it is a simply stunning, peaceful and most importantly unspoilt destination that has deservedly been declared a UNESCO biosphere reserve. This morning drive inland to the beautiful village of El Paso and visit the Silk Museum. This is the only place in Europe where the 500-year-old tradition and processes have been preserved. From here we will continue onto the Caldera de Taburiente, a massive depression eight kilometres wide, scientists agree that this was a majestically tall volcanic mountain that collapsed on itself. Explore on foot and whilst all may seem stoic and still, the forces of erosion are hard at work and some geologists estimate that it will finally disappear in just 5,000 years. Alternatively, for those who would prefer a more energetic excursion there will be a guided trek on offer through the El Pilar area; see remains of volcanic eruptions, the magnificent views of the Valley of Aridane and the crater wall that surrounds the Taburiente National Park. This afternoon will be at leisure to relax on board the ship or a shuttle service

will run to Los Llanos de Aridane for independent exploration, the La Palma Archaeological Museum is well worth a visit.

**Day 8 Puerto de la Estaca, El Hierro.**

Probably the least known of the Canary Islands, and once considered to be the end of the world, El Hierro is unique and utterly captivating. On our morning island tour it will be impossible not to be entranced by the island's slow pace and simple style; by its craggy coast, where waves hurl themselves against lava-sculpted rock faces; by the pretty farmland and flower meadows of the interior; by the eerily beautiful juniper groves; and by the desolate volcanic badlands that stretch out like moonscapes in the south. We will also have the opportunity to sample some of El Hierro's excellent wine and visit the lizard house where the island's unique giant lizards are bred; near extinction they are protected by international law. Alternatively, opt for the La Llania hiking excursion which will take us through primeval forests, along ancient cisterns and mythical witches dance floors to El Hierro's top viewing point affording spectacular views of the western parts of the island. This afternoon will be at leisure to relax on the ship or a shuttle service will run to Valverde for independent exploration.

**Day 9 Valle Gran Rey, La Gomera.** La Gomera is a paradise of natural beauty with lush valley and awe-inspiring cliffs dotted with charming white washed villages and gives the impression of being lost in a time warp. On a full day tour we will explore the island including Garajonay National Park, home to the world's only surviving laurel forest and visit the villages of Hermiqua, Agulo and Las Rosas before making our way to a local restaurant for lunch. Before returning to the ship experience a demonstration of Silbo Gomero, the island's unique whistling language, and visit the magnificent rock formations

of Agando. Alternatively, you may wish to join a guided morning trek through the Garajonay National Park commencing in the village of El Cedro which offers some interesting examples of Canarias architecture. Return to the ship for lunch and the afternoon will be at leisure for individual exploration.

**Day 10 Santa Cruz, Tenerife.** This morning will be dedicated to gardens. We will start with a visit to the Jardin Botanico that was founded in 1788 by Charles III of Spain. The purpose of the gardens was to create an area where the plants, shrubs and flowers brought back from the New World could acclimatise to Spanish soil. Many of the plants are the original specimens brought back for the opening of the gardens including the centre piece, an enormous South American fig tree. In contrast to the Botanical Gardens we will then explore the tropical oasis Risco Bello Aquatic Gardens, with its attractive waterfalls and colourful terraces of local flowers, and finally the Sitio Litre Garden which boasts a luscious orchid collection. After lunch on board we will drive inland, along the base of the mountain range through beautiful pine forests to the Parque Nacional del Teide. The area was declared a National Park in 1954 and includes 14 species of plant found nowhere else in the world. Geologically the park is fascinating; of the many different types of volcanic formations examples of more than 80% can be found here. Alternatively there will be a full day tour to Mount Teide on offer for those who wish to enjoy a hike, accompanied by a local guide, through this spectacular landscape.

**Day 11 Tenerife to London.** Disembark after breakfast and transfer to the airport for our return flight to London.



**PRICES PER PERSON**

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE UP TO £400 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY			
Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Magellan	Standard	£5095	£4895
Columbus	Superior	£5395	£4995
Marco Polo	Premium	£5595	£5195
Marco Polo	Corner	£5695	£5295
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£6295	£5895
Explorer	Owner's Balcony	£6495	£6095
Explorer	Island Suite	£7495	£7095
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£6625	£6225
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£7035	£6635

**Price Includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel, 10 nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis, wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, shore excursions, onboard team, gratuities, transfers, port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance.



# In the Wake of Shackleton



An expedition discovering the wonders of the Falkland Islands, South Georgia & Antarctica aboard the MS Island Sky with Rear Admiral John Lippiett  
9<sup>th</sup> November to 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018

In today's highly accessible world there are few places that still hold the power to enthral and enchant. Antarctica is certainly one of these. Mere words cannot do justice to the awe-inspiring spectacle of this most southern of continents, this desert of ice which is so unique and uncommon to man's experience, that even the most dramatic of photographs pale into insignificance when one is confronted by the sheer magnitude, beauty and wonder of the landscape. No amount of travel books, travelogues or travel films can prepare you for Antarctica. It is somewhere that has to be seen to be believed. Your first sighting of a great landscape of ice can leave you breathless and so it progresses as each day you encounter more marvellous sights of ethereal icescapes and a surprisingly abundant wildlife.



## The Itinerary

*Please note that flexibility is key to a successful expedition in Antarctica. Although we have outlined an itinerary below, this is only a preliminary plan, our exact route will depend on ice, weather conditions and the wildlife we encounter.*

**Day 1 London to Buenos Aires, Argentina.** Fly by scheduled flight.

**Day 2 Buenos Aires.** Arrive this morning and transfer to the centrally located Melia Hotel (or similar) for an overnight stay. Rooms will be available on arrival to rest. This afternoon choose to enjoy the hotel facilities or explore independently before meeting this evening for a tango show and dinner in a local restaurant.

**Day 3 Buenos Aires to Puerto Madryn.** After breakfast in the hotel we will enjoy a city tour of Buenos Aires before transferring to the airport for our scheduled flight to Trelew and transfer to Puerto Madryn. On arrival we will transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay.

**Day 4 Puerto Madryn.** Located in the Patagonian province of Chubut, Puerto Madryn is a popular destination for wildlife excursions. Today you have the chance to explore the town or join an excursion to the Reserva Faunistica Punta Loma, home to a colony of around 600 South American sea lions, which reside on the beach on the outskirts of the city. Our guide will educate us about the local flora as we walk towards the beach. November is traditionally the time when the

reproduction season begins and we may be lucky to see the males fight to form their harem. Return to Puerto Madryn this afternoon and embark the MS Island Sky. Sail this evening.

**Days 5 & 6 At sea.** Among the wildlife spotting opportunities as we sail south are albatrosses, prions and petrels that frequently follow the ship. Our expedition team will be out on deck looking for whales and dolphins that may also be seen in the area. During our two days of sailing, our onboard experts will begin their presentations with informative and entertaining talks on the wildlife, history and geology of the Falkland Islands and Southern Ocean.

**Days 7 & 8 Falkland Islands.** The Falkland Islands are isolated and windswept, a haven for wildlife. We hope to land on New Island, the westernmost island with one inhabitant and 40 species of breeding sea birds including rock hopper penguins. Weather and wind conditions allowing, we may also land on Steeple Jason, the north western outpost with the world's largest colony of black-browed albatross. We will make sure to visit some of the many historic sites on the island and to call at Port Stanley, the charming capital of the Falklands.

**Days 9 & 10 The Southern Ocean.** As we cruise towards South Georgia the richness of these waters will be evident in the marine mammal life, especially the fur seals on fishing forays. We have a good chance of

spotting whales such as fins and minkies whilst the birds circling our stern will be outstanding, especially the large albatrosses and numerous breeds of petrels.

**Days 11 to 13 South Georgia.** We have three days of expedition cruising in and around South Georgia, a paradise island with snow-clad mountain peaks rising 9000 feet and with 165 glaciers tumbling down towards the sea. We arrive early in the season when parts of the island are still covered by a thin layer of snow. For anyone interested in wildlife, South Georgia is a true

oasis. In November the beaches will be covered by elephant seal bulls and females with feeding pups. They share the beach with a myriad of nesting King penguins. Most of the other sea birds have arrived and started nesting. November is also the time when the great arrival of the fur seals starts. Millions of fur seals will, over a few weeks, return to the beaches to breed. During our time here we hope to visit Salisbury Plain where we will find enormous elephant seals which crowd the beaches alongside thousands of pairs of King penguins. On Prion Island we visit the nesting place of





King penguins



Crab eater seals



Humpback Whale

the world's largest flying seabird, the wandering albatross and in Fortuna Bay we will see nesting light mantled sooty albatrosses and hope to witness their gracious courting flights. A few thousand King penguins nest here and it is not unusual to see a herd of South Georgia reindeer wandering through the penguin colony. Meanwhile in Grytviken we will visit the old whaling station and of course pay our respect at the grave of 'the boss' – Ernest Shackleton.

**Days 14 & 15 At sea.** The waters between South Georgia and the Antarctic Peninsula are rich with fin whales, where in good conditions we have seen as many as a hundred in a day. If not whale-watching, lookout for Antarctic Petrel, Kerguelen Petrel and one of the most beautiful birds of the Southern Ocean, the snow petrel. The icebergs will also become more plentiful as we sail south. Alternatively join the lecture programme as we learn more about the wildlife and history of the region.

**Days 16 to 20 Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetland Islands.** We have five days of exploration around the Peninsula which will include many of the best places for wildlife and magnificent scenery. Whilst we arrive with a planned itinerary the final schedule will be determined by our Captain and the Expedition Leader based on sea, weather and ice conditions. Using our Zodiacs we will make daily landings for unique close encounters with animals such as adelic and gentoo penguins, fur seals and petrels. We hope to visit the

collapsed volcanic cone of Deception Island for a chance to visit Whalers Bay, Petermann Island, home to numbers of Adelie penguins, picturesque Neko Harbour, the Lemaire Channel where towering icebergs rise from the sea and Half Moon Island with its rookery of chinstrap penguins. We also hope to sail through the breathtaking Antarctic Sound, also known as 'iceberg alley', where massive icebergs drift north from the continent.

**Days 21 & 22 Drake Passage.** Two days to relax on board and reminisce with your fellow travellers about all you have seen and experienced during our expedition. Enjoy a lecture, look for wildlife or simply relax as we make our way across the Drakes Passage toward Ushuaia. Named after the 16th century English seaman, Sir Francis Drake, the Drake Passage separates the southernmost tip of South America from Antarctica. This is a particularly good area to spot royal albatross and blue petrel and we will also be on the lookout for pods of sperm whales.

**Day 23 Ushuaia to Buenos Aires.** Disembark after breakfast and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to Buenos Aires. On arrival transfer to the Melia Hotel (or similar) for an overnight stay. The evening is free for independent arrangements.

**Day 24 Buenos Aires to London.** After breakfast in the hotel we will transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

**Day 25 London.** Arrive this morning.

## Pre-Cruise Iguazu Falls Extension 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> November 2018



Before joining our group in Buenos Aires, we are offering the opportunity to visit the Iguazu Falls, considered one of the most dramatic waterfalls in the world.

### The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Buenos Aires.** Fly by scheduled flight.

**Day 2 Buenos Aires.** Arrive this morning and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. Remainder of day at leisure.

**Day 3 Buenos Aires to Iguazu Falls.** After breakfast in the hotel transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to Iguazu Falls. On arrival transfer to the hotel and this afternoon enjoy a guided tour of the falls. Today we will explore the Brazilian side of the falls walking through the tropical rainforest.

**Day 4 Iguazu Falls.** Enjoy a full day at the Iguazu Falls on a series of guided walks seeing the upper and lower circuits and also the triple frontier the meeting point of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. Highlights today include the 80 metre fall 'Garganta del Diablo' (Devil's Throat).

**Day 5 Iguazu Falls to Buenos Aires.** Return to the airport this morning for our scheduled flight to Buenos Aires. On arrival transfer to the Melia Hotel and join our fellow travellers continuing with the main itinerary shown from day 2.

### Prices per person based on double occupancy

Twin: **£1245** Single: **£1595**

**Price Includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel, overnight hotel accommodation in Buenos Aires and two nights hotel accommodation in Iguazu Falls on a bed and breakfast basis, guided tours at the Iguazu Falls, lunch and dinner on days 3 and 4, transfers, airport taxes.

**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
Magellan	Standard	£11995	£11495
Columbus	Superior	£12995	£12495
Marco Polo	Premium	£13995	£13495
Marco Polo	Corner	£14595	£14095
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£16295	£15795
Explorer	Owner's Balcony	£17495	£16995
Explorer	Island Suite	£18495	£17995
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£15995	£15495
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£17995	£17495

**Price Includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel, two nights hotel accommodation in Buenos Aires and overnight accommodation in Puerto Madryn on a bed and breakfast basis, 19 nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis, wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner onboard, shore excursions, transfers, port taxes, gratuities, expedition team, expedition log, use of a parka jacket and rubber boots on board the MS Island Sky.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, visas.





Rangiroa



Exploring by Zodiac



Haka dancers, Marquesas Islands

**Day 4 Easter Island.** Today we enjoy a full day tour, visiting many of the different areas where moais (statues) can be found. We will see the volcano of Rano Raraku, the site where 95% of all moais were carved and today you will find nearly 400 statues in various stages of completion. A hike to the top of the volcano's crater will not only reveal many statues but also a beautiful fresh water lake. We continue our exploration of the island with Ahu Tongariki, the largest ceremonial site in Polynesia restored in 1996 and Ahu Akivi where we find 7 maoi built around 1460B.C and which face out to sea. Lunch will be a specially arranged barbecue on Anakena beach, home of Easter Island's ancient paramount chiefs and one of the prettiest coves in the South Pacific. We sail during dinner to start our epic journey across the South Pacific.

**Days 5 & 6 At Sea.** We have two days to spend relaxing on deck and listening to the lectures from our onboard experts.

**Day 7 Ducie Island, Pitcairn Islands.** After a morning at sea we will experience expedition cruising at its finest as we hope to land on one of wildlife sanctuaries. A remote coral atoll with good snorkelling and birding, Ducie Island is so remote that no threats to its native wildlife exist, and it is one of the rare places in the world where wildlife is relatively unaffected by man's presence. Our expedition team will lead a series of walks on the island.

**Day 8 Henderson Island.** We arrive at Henderson Island at lunchtime and will look for a suitable landing place. This upraised former coral atoll has fascinating eroded rock formations, with giant blowholes flinging up tremendous sea spray. Very rare birds inhabit the

island, including the Henderson Island rail and Stephen's Lori. Numerous underwater ravines and crevices support a great diversity of fish whilst walks on the island or along the beach will come across coconut crabs.

**Days 9 & 10 Pitcairn Islands.** We arrive this morning on the island of Pitcairn, famous as the final destination of the Bounty in the late 18th century. Meet the Anglo-Tahitian descendants of the mutineers of the Bounty, who arrived here 200 years ago and see the ship's anchor outside the courthouse. We will have time to explore this inspiring island setting and visit with islanders who display memorable stamps and handicrafts. We will have a Pitcairn welcome in the Town Hall before exploring the capital of Adamstown. We will set up a number of walks with our expedition staff to explore the highlights of the island. We will stay overnight or if weather permits will sail to Oeno Atoll, three uninhabited islands situated around 75 nautical miles from Pitcairn, and spend a morning. It is an important bird area due to the colony of 12,500 pairs of Murphys petrels that nest here alongside sooty tern and brown noddy. *Please note that access to the Pitcairn Islands is very weather dependent.*

**Day 11 Mangareva, Gambier Islands.** Mountainous Mangareva is capital of the Gambier group of islands and home to the remarkable St Michael's cathedral with a stunning mother-of-pearl altar. On a full day call, we will have the chance to join an island nature walk, take a hike up the 440 metre Mount Duff, named after the first European vessel to visit the island in 1797, or you can simply wander around the small village. If weather permits we may also set up a snorkelling platform

on the surrounding coral reef.

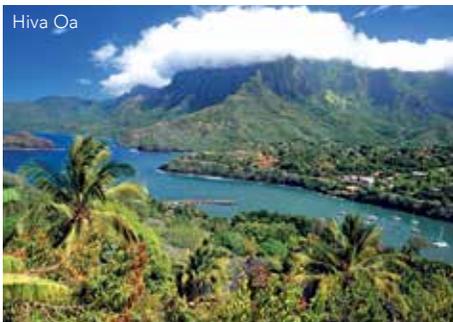
**Day 12 Expedition Day.** As we make our way towards the Tuamotu Islands we will pass by the Acteon Group of islands. These remote, uninhabited atolls were named after the HMS Acteon who sighted the islands in 1837. Landing on the islands is very weather dependent but we hope that we can spend time on Tenararo which, whilst small, is an important habitat for Tuamotu sandpipers, curlews and Murphy's petrel which are not threatened by predators. We may also have the chance to snorkel or swim from the beach.

**Day 13 Pukarua, Tuamotu Islands.** Located on the outer fringes of French Polynesia, Pukarua faces thousands of miles of open ocean. Onshore, its small population lives in a spirit of cooperation and friendship, living largely on coconuts and the bounty of the sea. As we visit this small community, we will be enthusiastically greeted with genuine friendliness and lively music. We will have the chance to walk through the village or enjoy a swim in the lagoon before sailing at lunch time and continuing our cruise westward.

**Day 14 Pukapuka.** This morning we visit Pukapuka. To honour you and fellow guests, the islanders proudly decorate their tidy village with green palm fronds and flowers, and welcome you with a fragrant flower lei and entrancing dances. Sample traditional coconut treats and watch a demonstration of how copra – the dried meat of the coconut – is prepared for its various uses. Travel to the centre of the island past coconut plantations to swim in the turquoise waters of the inner lagoon.

“ With our fleet of Zodiac landing craft we will explore inlets, bird sanctuaries and land in otherwise inaccessible places accompanied by an expert expedition team ”





Hiva Oa



Indigenous flora

**Day 15 Fatu Hiva, Marquesas Islands.**

After a morning at sea we arrive in the Marquesas Islands, far removed from the rest of the South Pacific in everything from language and culture to geology. With a landscape of spectacular pinnacles towering over the cobalt Bay of Virgins, Fatu Hiva is one of the most floral and pristine islands. Villagers will perform their traditional dances and demonstrate their handicrafts of wood carvings and tapa making. Afterwards our expedition team will run a series of nature walks either climbing to the view point, searching for birds with our ornithologist or a nature walk to the waterfall. Meanwhile a snorkel platform will be set up for those who wish to swim.

**Day 16 Hiva Oa.** At first light we arrive at volcanic Hiva Oa. We will anchor off Atohuna where if we are lucky we may find mantarays before ashore. Our morning will be dedicated to Gauguin, the iconic artist of the South Pacific. We will visit his museum and make a pilgrimage to his final resting place, soaking up the landscape that inspired him to leave it all behind and go native. This afternoon we reposition the ship to Puamau and visit the Oipona me'ae temple, one of the best preserved archaeological sites in French Polynesia and home to the eight foot tall Tiki Takali. On our return to the ship you may wish to enjoy a swim from the beach.

**Day 17 Nuku Hiva.** Our last day in the Marquesas will be at Nuka Hiva, the largest of the Islands and the island group's economic capital. Today we will immerse ourselves in local culture and geography. Traditional Marquesan dancers welcome us to their village. We will visit the archeological centres at Kamuihei and Hikoku'a and see the temples, petroglyphs and tiki. Meanwhile a series of island walks will investigate the nature of the island whilst there will also be a chance to swim from the beaches. Return to the ship for lunch as we sail this afternoon.

**Day 18 At Sea.** Spend the day relaxing on board, maybe join the lecture programme or find a spot on deck.

**Day 19 Rangiroa, Tuamotu Islands.** As one of the world's largest coral atolls, Rangiroa has a magnificent lagoon surrounded by small islets or motus, stretching as far as the eye can see. Today, a variety of activities await. There will be a chance to tour a black pearl farm, enjoy free time in the enchanting local village of Avatoru or have a last chance to snorkel or swim.

**Day 20 Tahiti to London.** Disembark after breakfast and transfer to the airport for the return indirect scheduled flight to London.

**Day 21 En Route.**

**Day 22 London.** Arrive this morning.

**Post-Cruise Moorea Extension  
21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019**



Extend your time in Tahiti with our two night stay on the island of Moorea, the heart shaped island situated close to the main island of Tahiti and renowned as one of the most beautiful in the world. From our hotel base there will be the opportunity to enjoy water sports or alternatively you may wish to explore the island seeing the plantations of cotton, coffee, sugarcane and pineapples and the majestic mountains with views over the island and wonderful waterfalls.

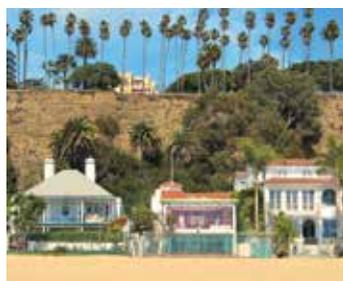
**Prices per person based on double occupancy**

Twin: **£695** Single: **£945**

**Price Includes:** Two nights hotel accommodation in Moorea on a bed and breakfast basis, transfers from the MS Island Sky to hotel and hotel to airport using local boats and vehicles, half day island tour.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, gratuities, visas.

**Post-Cruise Santa Monica Extension  
22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> April 2019**



Break your journey back to the UK with a two night stay in Santa Monica, Los Angeles. Enjoy two nights at JW Marriott Le Merigot (or similar) on a bed and breakfast basis with time at leisure to explore at your own pace.

**Prices per person based on double occupancy**

Twin: **£595** Single: **£945**

**Price Includes:** Two nights hotel accommodation in Santa Monica on a bed and breakfast basis, airport transfers.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, gratuities, US visa.

**PRICES PER PERSON**

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £300 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY			
Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Magellan	Standard	£11295	£10995
Columbus	Superior	£11795	£11495
Marco Polo	Premium	£12295	£11995
Marco Polo	Corner	£12995	£12695
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£13495	£13195
Explorer	Owner's Balcony	£13695	£13395
Explorer	Island Suite	£14695	£14395
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£15495	£15195
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£16495	£16195

**Price Includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel for international flights, overnight hotel accommodation on bed and breakfast basis in Santiago, 17 nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis, house wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, expedition team, shore excursions, gratuities, group transfers, port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, visas.



Fairy Tern



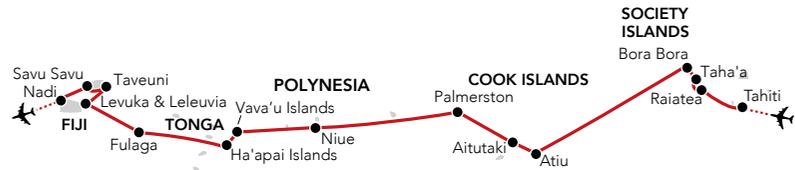
# South Seas Island Voyage



An island hopping expedition from Tahiti to Fiji aboard the MS Island Sky  
19<sup>th</sup> April to 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019

By wind, wave and star the ancient people of Polynesia ventured to the farthest reaches of the South Pacific. Isolated by miles of ocean over thousands of years, these, the world's first island cultures, developed a pantheon of gods, myths and legends.

This voyage tells the story of Polynesia and uncovers its history and legends as we sail through the South Seas and visit the captivating islands. The real age of European exploration did not take place until the 18th century and many of the islands we will visit have changed little since that time. Their sheer isolation has been their saving grace and apart from an influx of missionaries in the late 19th century, western culture has made few inroads into most of the islands. You are invited to join us aboard the MS Island Sky to explore the Pacific in all its vastness, diversity and warmth. To experience the description-defying beauty of its islands, its culture and its ambience which have attracted generations of adventurers, explorers and travellers to its magical shores. With our fleet of Zodiac landing craft 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. We will be joined by a hand-picked expedition team, consisting of naturalists, marine biologists and ecologists who will share their knowledge and enthusiasm during forays ashore and whilst on board.



## The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Tahiti, French Polynesia.** Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

**Day 2 Tahiti.** Arrive this morning and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. The afternoon and evening will be at leisure to relax and enjoy the hotel facilities or explore independently.

**Day 3 Tahiti.** After breakfast in the hotel we will embark on a full day tour of Tahiti. We will start at the Arahoho Blow Hole. This lava tube, designed by liquid lava flowing under cold and hard lava, has created a channel. When waves crash against the rocks and enter the channel the result is a powerful sea water geyser. We will enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before visiting the Museum of Tahiti And Her Islands.

Later this afternoon we transfer to the MS Island Sky and sail tonight.

**Day 4 Raiatea & Taha'a.** Raiatea is recognised throughout Tahiti as its "Sacred Island", the cultural heart of all Tahiti Polynesia. Local Polynesian legends say Raiatea, formerly known as "Havai" was the island of origin of great voyaging canoes that took the people as far as Hawaii. This,

the second largest Tahitian isle, was the centre of religion and culture over 1000 years ago and still lends enchantment to ancient legends told to this day. This morning's island tour will include a visit to the Taputapuatea marae which dates back over 1000 years. This afternoon we sail over to the neighbouring island of Taha'a where we plan to visit a vanilla plantation. With the rich



Hawksbill turtle



Palmerston Island, Cook Islands



Local fishing boat



Chattering kingfisher, Atiu

aroma of vanilla lingering heavily in the air, Taha'a offers a glimpse of the traditional, tranquil life of the Tahitians.

**Day 5 Bora Bora.** One of the most stunning islands on the planet, Bora Bora's interior is crowned by majestic eroded volcanic formations and a distinctive black basaltic peak. A tour of the island will take you past colourful villages, archaeological sites and World War II relics. This afternoon explore independently or alternatively take the chance to swim from the beach or enjoy our first snorkelling opportunity in the clear waters.

**Day 6 At Sea.** Relax on board as we sail to the Cook Islands.

**Day 7 Atiu, Cook Islands.** Our first stop in the Cook Islands is the small island of Atiu. With only 560 residents we will be guaranteed a special welcome. There will be the chance to join the local expert "Birdman George" on a walking tour to search for the Rarotonga monarch, chattering kingfisher, Cook Islands fruit dove and Atiu swiftlets. Alternatively, discover the island on a tour which will include James Cook's landing site from 1777, the coffee plantations and a visit to some of the local houses. After lunch on board there will be the chance to return to Atiu for a relaxing afternoon exploring from the beach or maybe enjoy a taste of the local Tumunu, a traditional drink brewed from fermented oranges.

**Day 8 Aitutaki.** This lovely lagoon is famous for its fascinating coral formations and bountiful brightly hued tropical fish. After a lively welcome, choose this morning from an island drive which will explore the sleepy village of Arutanga seeing the oldest church in the Cook Islands. We will see the lush forest of Nikaupara and from the top of Mount Piraki will see the bunkers built during World War II. From the top of Maunga Pu we are treated to breathtaking views of the island and lagoon. Alternatively, you may wish to join our naturalists for a cruise and snorkel in the lagoon. We sail after lunch and enjoy an afternoon on board as we cruise to our next island.

**Day 9 Palmerston.** The engaging history of the William Masters family comes alive as we meet the descendants of this eccentric 19th century Englishman who took three native brides. We will be welcomed by the local officials before enjoying a walk through the village. Extremely fine handicrafts are made on this island and here the birdwatchers could catch sight of the red-tailed tropic birds. This afternoon we will have a chance to swim or snorkel from the beach where large coral blocks team with goatfish, boxfish, groupers, stingray and turtles.

**Day 10 At Sea.** Enjoy a day at sea, maybe join a lecture in the lounge or simply find a spot on deck and watch the world go by.

**Day 11 Niue.** Niue is one of the

smallest independent nations on earth at just 260 square kilometres with a population of just 1200 people. Populated since the 10th century the first European to sight Niue was Captain Cook in 1774 but his attempts to land were refused by the inhabitants. Today we will visit the capital, Alofi Village, and stop at the Philatelic Bureau, where some of the world's most sought after stamps may be purchased. We will continue to Matapa Chasm, a secluded cleft in the sea cliffs, where we discover the perfect swimming hole. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at sea

**Day 12 Vava'u, Tonga.** After crossing the International Date Line (so it is now 1st May), we arrive this morning in the Vava'u islands part of the kingdom of Tonga and the pretty port of Neiafu. Spend the morning independently exploring the town, maybe visit the local market or enjoy a drink in a harbourside cafe.

**Day 13 Ha'apai Islands.** Today we arrive at the Ha'apai group which consists of 62 islands comprising of lagoons, barrier reefs and active volcanoes. The islands have a rich maritime history with Abel Tasman being the first European to visit the islands in 1643 whilst Captain James Cook visited twice in the 1770s. However, the most famous event was Mutiny of the HMS Bounty which occurred between the islands of Lifuka and Tofua. It was on the island of Tofua that Captain William Bligh landed after being cast off from the Bounty with limited provisions

“

This comprehensive voyage explores the diverse cultures and beautiful islands of the South Pacific between the mysterious islands of Polynesia and the Melanesian islands of Fiji.

”



and nautical equipment. A hostile reception from the islanders meant they quickly fled to sea again. Tropical forests grow along gentle slopes here and at the centre of the island is the volcanic crater, with a clear blue lake at its base. During the morning we hope to offer a hike on the slopes of the volcano through a spectacular forest full of birds, unique tree ferns and ironwood or, depending on conditions, a Zodiac cruise and snorkel. This afternoon we continue our journey towards Fiji.

**Day 14 Fulaga, Fiji.** Our first call at a Fijian island will be on Fulaga, famous for its woodcarving and the making of large outrigger canoes. Over 100 tiny islands in the Fulaga Lagoon have been undercut into extraordinary mushroom shapes and the surrounding waters are tinged with striking colours by the dissolved limestone. On arrival we hope to meet with the village elder to welcome us to the island before spending the morning using our Zodiacs to explore the rocks or find a suitable beach to land for swimming, snorkelling or beachcombing.

**Day 15 Levuka & Leleuvia.** The island of Levuka and the town of Ovalau has a special place in Fijian history as it was here in 1874 that the Fiji islands were ceded to the British and also where in 1970 Fiji was declared independent again. The town in unlike any other Fijian town having retained the colonial buildings which made it the first Fijian site to be granted UNESCO status. Join a walking tour around Nasova village on the shores of the bay and visit the museum and Cession Monument, the site where Chief Cakobau signed the deed ceding Fiji to Great Britain. This afternoon we will relocate to Leleuvia where we can relax on the beach or join an organised snorkelling trip.

**Day 16 Tavenui Island.** We have a choice of excursions this morning. The nature lovers can take a four-wheel drive to Dos Voeux Peak. At the summit we will be treated to fantastic views of Taveuni and across to Lake Tagimoucia. Here we will see the tropical plants, palms and rainforest and hope to spot spectacular birdlife such as orange-breasted doves, ferntails and the elusive siltail or local parakeet. Alternatively, join a walking trip to the Bouma Heritage Park to see some of the waterfalls and enjoy a swim. The view from the highest waterfall is spectacular. Our cultural tour will give the opportunity to witness lifestyles in a traditional Fijian village and see cooking demonstrations. In the afternoon we will head to one of the neighbouring islands for some swimming and snorkelling opportunities.

**Day 17 Savu Savu.** Often referred to as Fiji's hidden paradise, Savusavu is much the same as it was 30 years ago. It was originally established as a centre for sailing ships trading in sandalwood and copra. It is a small bustling town with an interesting heritage and the surrounding landscape is stunning. This morning choose to either join a nature walk in the Waisali Rainforest, home to Fijian Kauri trees and thirty species of orchid and birdlife including the collared lory and the red shining parrot. Alternatively, a village visit will take us to the chief of Savu Savu where we partake in a cava ceremony before learning more about village life, local crafts and culture. This afternoon will be free to explore the town independently before we sail in the evening.

**Day 18 Fiji to London.** Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled indirect flight to London.

**Day 19 London.** Arrive today.

### Pre-Cruise Moorea Extension 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> April 2019



Extend your time in Tahiti with our two night stay on the island of Moorea, this heart shaped island is situated close to the main island of Tahiti and is renowned as one of the most beautiful in the world. From our hotel base there will be the opportunity to enjoy water sports or alternatively you may wish to explore the island seeing the plantations of cotton, coffee, sugarcane and pineapples and the majestic mountains with views over the island and wonderful waterfalls.

**Prices per person based on double occupancy**  
Twin: **£595** Single: **£795**

**Price Includes:** Two nights hotel accommodation in Moorea on a bed and breakfast basis, transfers from airport to hotel and from hotel to the MS Island Sky using local boats and vehicles, half day island tour.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, gratuities.

### Post-Cruise Fiji Extension 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> May 2019



If you would like to extend your time in Fiji, we are offering a relaxing three night stay at the Lomani Island Resort. Lomani is located in the Mamanuca group of islands which are offshore west of Fiji's main island, Vitu Levi. The Mamanuca islands are famous for their white sand beaches and this boutique hotel features just 24 suites.

**Prices per person based on double occupancy**  
Beachfront Bure: Double - **£1095**; Sole Occupancy - **£1795**  
Beachfront Pool Bure: Double - **£1195**; Sole Occupancy - **£1845**

**Price Includes:** Three nights accommodation on half board basis (breakfast and dinner), orientation tour, transfers to and from the resort using local boats.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, gratuities.

## 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
Magellan	Standard	<b>£11295</b>	<b>£10795</b>
Columbus	Superior	<b>£11595</b>	<b>£11095</b>
Marco Polo	Premium	<b>£11995</b>	<b>£11495</b>
Marco Polo	Corner	<b>£12495</b>	<b>£11995</b>
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	<b>£13495</b>	<b>£12995</b>
Explorer	Owner's Balcony	<b>£13695</b>	<b>£13195</b>
Explorer	Island Suite	<b>£14695</b>	<b>£14195</b>
Magellan	Standard for sole use	<b>£15495</b>	<b>£14995</b>
Columbus	Superior for sole use	<b>£16495</b>	<b>£15995</b>

**Price Includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel for international flights, overnight hotel accommodation on bed and breakfast basis in Tahiti, 15 nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis, house wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, expedition team, shore excursions, gratuities, transfers and port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, visas.



Bouma waterfall, Taveuni, Fiji



# Secrets of Melanesia



A voyage from Fiji to Cairns including Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea aboard the MS Island Sky with Rear Admiral John Lippiett  
4<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Travelling independently in Melanesia can be difficult, with little infrastructure in place to accommodate for tourists and information about getting around often scarce. This of course makes the region alluring to the genuine traveller who will encounter beautiful islands with unique features and customs that remain relatively unscathed by the modern world. The region is ideal for exploring by small ship, especially one as perfectly suited as the MS Island Sky.

For our unique exploration we begin in Fiji from where we head to the Vanuatu archipelago, home to rainforests bursting with a magnificent array of flora and fauna and a mesmerising underwater world of tropical fish and vibrant coral. From here our island hopping adventure continues to the Solomon Islands which were thrust on to the centre stage of world history when the Allied forces took the offensive in the South Pacific and air, land and sea battles ensued for their control. We will visit the outer islands of Vanikoro and Santa Ana before arriving in Honiara where we explore the war sites and head west to Tetepare and Morovo Lagoon. From these remote island paradises we will have the opportunity to visit tribal villages little changed for centuries, see astonishing ceremonial dances, enjoy nature walks inland or swim in the warm waters from isolated palm-fringed beaches.

Before arriving in Australia, the final part of our expedition takes us to Papua New Guinea, a land of striking natural beauty and a hybrid of diverse and unique cultures, with more than 1000 tribal groups, each with different traditions. The region possesses exotic wildlife, turquoise seas, tropical rainforest and steep sided volcanoes with breathtaking islands scattered to its east and north. In this land of contrasts we will witness an astonishing array of cultural ceremonies, enjoy fascinating underwater experiences and we hope to explore the beautiful D'Entrecasteaux Islands.

This voyage has something for everyone, whether your interest lies in natural history, military history, bird watching, the undersea world or simply just being one of the privileged few who are able to set foot on islands of astonishing richness and beauty. Afloat and ashore, our adventure will be filled with unforgettable images, remote idyllic islets, kaleidoscopic reefs and soaring white-tailed tropic birds. We hope you can join us in this faraway haven for an unparalleled opportunity to explore one of the most intriguing regions on the map.

## The Itinerary

**Days 1 & 2 London to Fiji.** Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

**Day 3 Fiji.** Arrive this morning and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day is free to relax after our long journey.

**Day 4 Fiji.** Enjoy a relaxing morning at the hotel. After lunch we will transfer to the MS Island Sky moored in Lautoka and sail this evening.

**Day 5 Yasawa Islands.** This morning we will drop anchor amongst the twenty islands of the Yasawa group. In 1789 when Captain Bligh was set adrift from the HMS Bounty he passed by the Yasawa Islands from where two

war canoes were sent to pursue them. They escaped and the waters are still known as Bligh Water. Today we can expect a friendlier welcome as we find a spot on a secluded beach to relax or enjoy a first opportunity to snorkel and swim. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at sea.

**Day 6 At Sea.** Join a lecture or find a spot on deck as we cruise towards Vanuatu.

**Day 7 Tanna, Vanuatu.** Our first call in Vanuatu is the island of Tanna, meaning earth in the local Kwamera language. Captain Cook was the first European to visit the island in 1774, landing at Port Resolution, having been attracted by



Traditional dance, Solomon Islands



Blue Hole, Espiritu Santo

the glowing light of Mount Yasur. This 361 metre active volcano is situated in the south east of the island and dominates the landscape. The more adventurous amongst us may wish to join a journey to the crater taking local trucks through the rainforest that covers the mountain before walking to the rim. Alternatively, we hope to have the chance to visit local villages where traditional lifestyles are maintained and the local culture has been largely unaffected by western influences. We will learn of the customs, traditional medicines, crafts and cooking styles.

**Day 8 Port Havannah.** Awake this morning off Port Havannah, situated on the north coast of Efate Island and our base for today's activities. There are a number of outer islands that we may be able to explore depending on weather and sea conditions. Lelepa Island is 160 acres of unspoilt tropical rainforest and palm fringed beaches. On a nature walk we will see the herbs used in local medicines before exploring Feles cave, thought to be the resting place of the legendary Polynesian Chief, Roi Mata. Meanwhile on Moso Island we meet the volunteers at the Tasiriki Turtle Sanctuary who will teach us about the rehabilitation of the Hawksbill turtles and the attempts to increase their numbers. If time and weather permit, we will also set up a snorkelling

platform or offer a chance to swim from the beach.

**Day 9 Pentecost Island.** Named after the day on which it was first sighted by Europeans, Pentecost is a mountainous, tropical island. There are no towns on Pentecost and many areas remain relatively untouched by Western influences, where local traditions are strong. The island is also the home of nanggol (land diving) - the original bungee jump - which is known throughout the world. The nanggol ceremony takes place between April and June to celebrate the first yam crop emerging and we hope to coincide our call with one of these events. From tall towers constructed of saplings and branches held together with forest vines, the men leap forward and down to touch the earth below. A good jump helps ensure a bountiful yam harvest.

**Day 10 Espiritu Santo Island.** Espiritu Santo is the largest of Vanuatu's islands with some of the most beautiful white sand beaches, amazing blue holes, caves and renowned snorkelling. It was also a huge military base during World War II. This morning join an island tour including the Nekar Custom Village where we will learn about local traditions and customs, including their unique water music and cava making, before

enjoying time to swim in the nearby Riri Blue Hole. Return to the ship for lunch and in the afternoon snorkel amongst the corals and fish of the region at Million Dollar Point, named after the value of the military equipment dumped into the sea.

**Day 11 Mota Lava & Rah Island.** Our final call in Vanuatu will be the island of Mota Lava and Rah Island in the Banks Island group. These tiny island communities are still off the main tourist routes but the locals are happy to share their culture, stories and ways of life with the visitors that make the journey to their islands. From our anchorage point we will Zodiac ashore and see a traditional snake dance where the men paint themselves black and white as sea snakes before being welcomed into the village. We also hope to have the chance to snorkel on the reef and enjoy nature walks on the island.

**Day 12 Vanikoro, Solomon Islands.** This morning we arrive in the Solomon Islands and the island of Vanikoro. Situated in the Temotu Province, Vanikoro was where French explorer Jean-Francois de la Perouse became stranded after both his vessels, La Boussole and the Astrolabe, hit the then unknown reefs of the island in 1788. Learn more about the island's history and the mystery of the lost La Perouse expedition that captured the imagination of the European public. We will be welcomed ashore by the local villagers before choosing to explore the village further, join a nature walk where we can look out for the endemic birds, the Vanikoro Monarch and Vanikoro White-eye, or enjoy a swim or snorkel from the beach. Return to the MS Island Sky for lunch and enjoy a relaxing afternoon at sea.

**Day 13 Santa Ana.** After a morning cruising, over lunch we anchor off Port Mary on Santa Ana Island. We will be welcomed with a stunning dance by the villagers with spears and mud face masks. After the performance we have the opportunity to explore the town further with its plethora of local handicrafts, join a nature walk through the forests, meet the students at the village school or swim from the local beach.

**Day 14 Honiara.** During World War II the British founded Honiara as a military base. The town and Mataniko River, which runs through it, were the front for many months during the battle of Guadalcanal. Today, this is a bustling town with lovely hibiscus and palm tree lined avenues. After breakfast we will join a city tour of Honiara including the central market, parliament building and National Museum where we get an insight into the history of the Solomon Islands. Enjoy lunch before continuing



Solomon Eclectus parrot



Marovo Lagoon

to the World War II sites including Henderson Field, the Japanese Peace Park and the US Memorial at Skyline Ridge. This evening we will cruise through Iron Bottom Sound, the site of intense naval battles during World War II and so named for the large numbers of Japanese and American ships and aircraft that sank beneath the sea.

**Day 15 Tetepare Island.** Tetepare is the largest uninhabited tropical island in the Southern Hemisphere and home to one of the Solomon Islands leading conservation projects. Managed by the Tetepare Descendants Association, they have ensured the island was saved from the threat of loggers and many areas remain untouched. A wide variety of plants and animals live in the 120 square kilometres of lowland rainforest that blankets the island. A total of 76 bird species, 25 reptile and 13 mammal species have been recorded here including skinks, dugongs and the endemic Tetepare White Eye whilst the beaches support three species of turtle including the endangered leatherback. Today we will enjoy guided walks in the rainforest with the local conservationists who will educate us on the work they are doing on the island.

**Day 16 Marovo Lagoon.** Marovo Lagoon is the largest double barrier lagoon in the world. Thousands of islands scatter the lagoon, from tiny coral islets on the fringing reef to massive 1600 metre volcanic islands. Inside the lagoon, the islands are surrounded by spectacular coral formations and white sand beaches, the lagoon waters shimmering in every shade of blue, turquoise and jade green. We have a full day here to explore the villages which produce some of the finest wood carvings in the region. We will also find a suitable

spot to snorkel and swim from the beaches as well as enjoying nature walks in the local forests.

**Day 17 At Sea.** Enjoy a relaxing day at sea.

**Days 18 & 19 Papua New Guinea.** We have two days in the islands of this fascinating country. Our itinerary will be in the hands of our Expedition Leader and Captain and the local weather conditions but during our time here we hope to visit the the D'Entrecasteaux islands. We will use our Zodiacs to land on Fergusson Island, the largest of the chain, in a small fishing village. From here we will walk to the local hot springs and bubbling mud pools surrounded by lush vegetation and birders can keep a lookout for parrots and cockatoos. A welcome dance will be accompanied by local foods cooked in the hot pools. We may cruise through the spectacular Dobu passage and use our Zodiacs to explore and snorkel or alternatively we will land to meet the villagers and visit the local

church. On the island of Bonarua, in Milne Bay, we may go ashore to view fishing and weaving demonstrations and to wander through the enchanting village, sampling local delicacies. Birders will have the chance to trek into the thicket whilst the warm inviting waters of the Coral Sea offer a perfect chance to explore the underwater world. We may also visit Alotau, the provincial capital. As the centre for Milne Bay many of the islanders come here to sell their wares and the vibrant local market is a trove of local artefacts including Trobriand carvings. We will have time to explore the town whilst our naturalists will lead walks to explore the surrounding rainforest.

**Day 20 At Sea.** Relax on board as we sail towards Australia.

**Day 21 Cairns, Australia to London.** Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled indirect flight to London.

**Day 22 London.** Arrive this morning.

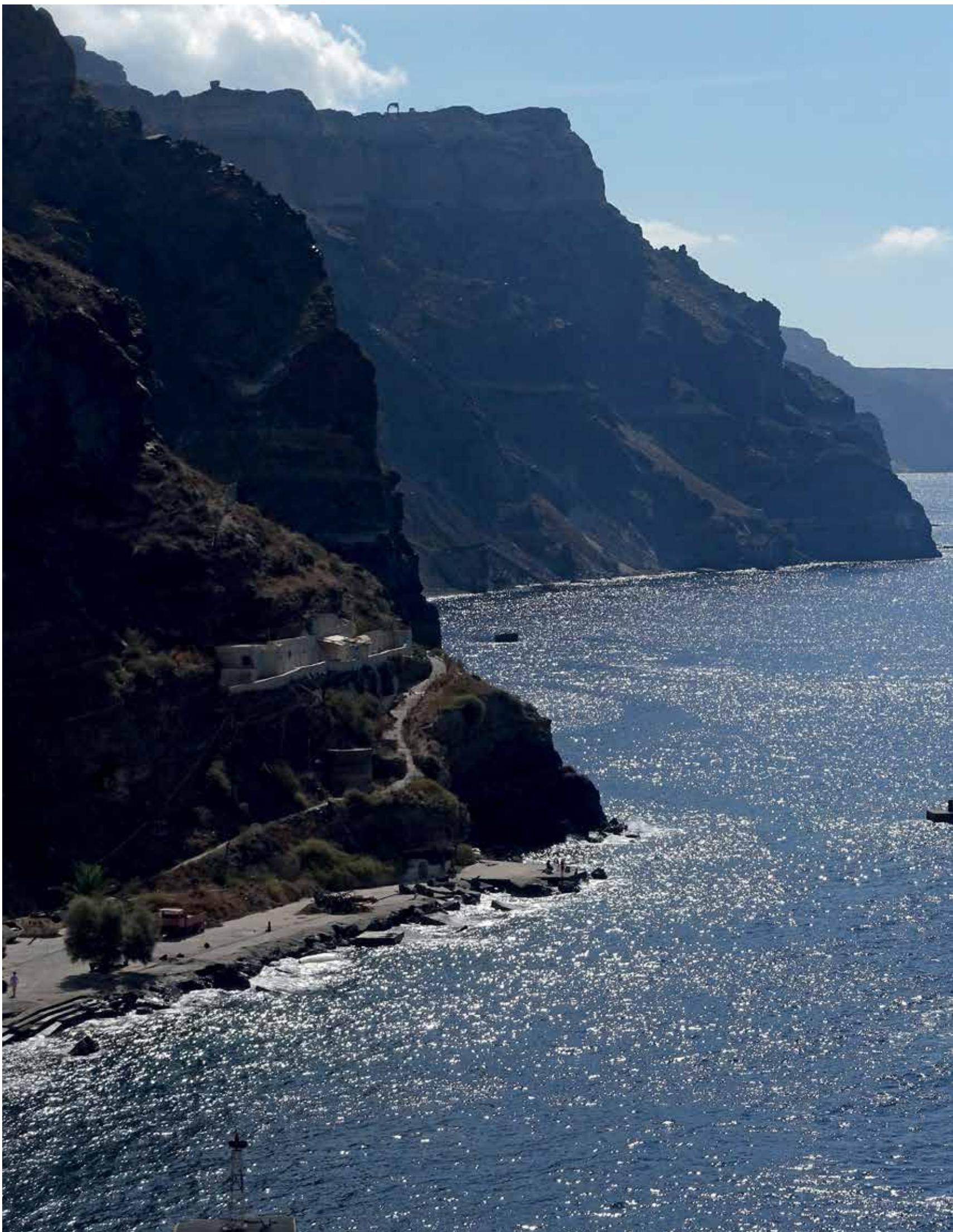
## PRICES PER PERSON

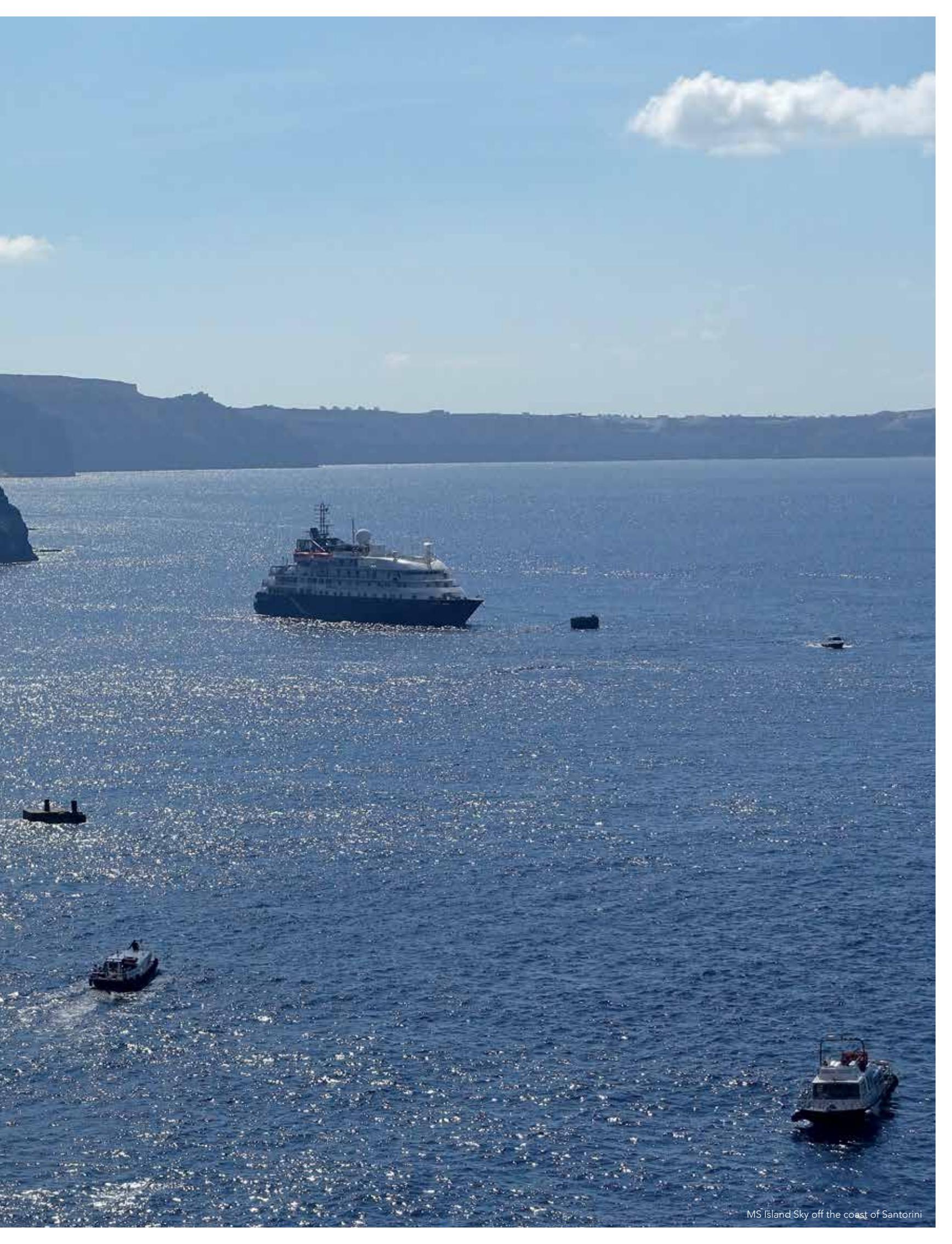
Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £500 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY			
Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Magellan	Standard	£12295	£11795
Columbus	Superior	£12595	£12095
Marco Polo	Premium	£12795	£12295
Marco Polo	Corner	£12995	£12495
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£13795	£13295
Explorer	Owner's Balcony	£13995	£13495
Explorer	Island Suite	£14995	£14495
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£15495	£14995
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£16495	£15995

**Price Includes:** Economy class scheduled air travel, overnight hotel accommodation on bed and breakfast basis in Fiji, 17 nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis with house wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, expedition team, shore excursions, gratuities, group transfers and port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, visas.





MS Island Sky off the coast of Santorini



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Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.