

SPECIAL
OFFER – SAVE
£500
PER PERSON

ISLANDS OF WEST AFRICA & CAPE VERDE

AN ISLAND HOPPING EXPEDITION FROM
SENEGAL TO CAPE VERDE INCLUDING
THE BIJAGOS ARCHIPELAGO
ABOARD THE MS HEBRIDEAN SKY

10TH TO 21ST FEBRUARY 2028

NOBLE CALEDONIA



This wonderful island hopping itinerary visits the diverse islands off the West Coast of Africa, uniquely combining Senegal, The Gambia and the Bijagos Archipelago with the Cape Verde Islands. Much has changed since the Portuguese sailed along the West African coast in the 15th century. This region of Africa, rarely visited for more than a half-century, has opened up in recent years and we will enjoy an intimate exploration of the extraordinary diversity of landscapes and cultures as we travel between Senegal and Cape Verde. Without doubt the only comfortable means of experiencing the region's many wonders is by small ship and we are fortunate in having such a special vessel as the all-suite MS Hebridean Sky for our exploration.

Our journey begins in the Senegalese capital of Dakar, where reminders of the region's complex past stand alongside the vibrancy of a modern capital. From here there will be the opportunity to visit Ile de Goree where the poignant legacy of the Atlantic slave trade contrasts with peaceful colonial streets. Alternatively you can travel inland to the remarkable Bandia Reserve which is home to a diverse range of African mammals. In neighbouring The Gambia, you will be able to choose between exploring the bustling capital of Banjul or the tranquil waterways and welcoming rural communities before we sail south to the Bijagos Archipelago, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve off the coast of Guinea-Bissau which remains one of Africa's most rewarding and least explored destinations with its scattered islands, pristine beaches and unique island culture. Our three days here will be spent exploring secluded beaches, encountering diverse wildlife, and learning about the distinct traditions of the local island communities.

After a welcome and relaxing day at sea we arrive in Cape Verde for our exploration of the culture and lifestyle of the islands, some of which are arid and flat with extraordinary beaches contrasting with lush mountainous islands. The archipelago is a little world of its own, each island having a distinct culture and atmosphere and an ideal destination for small ship cruising.

Our voyage promises to be a rewarding experience and whilst on some islands the infrastructure is minimal, we will be able to use our nimble Zodiacs to land on the remotest of islands and explore on foot. Aside from the marvellous scenery we will encounter, there is of course a fascinating cultural heritage and human history to be discovered as we delve into the legacy of West Africa's transatlantic slave trade which we will learn about from local guides. The roads may be poor and the tourist infrastructure very much in its infancy in some places, but that is precisely why we believe the region presents such an array of exciting experiences for the adventurous traveller.





The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Dakar, Senegal. Fly by scheduled indirect flight. On arrival transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky and embark. Enjoy drinks and dinner as we moor overnight.

Day 2 Dakar & Ile de Goree. Today there will be a choice of excursions from the Senegalese capital. Our city tour will include Independence Square, the Presidential Palace and a local market before we take a ferry across to Ile de Goree. With its colonial style houses and wonderfully tranquil atmosphere, it is difficult to believe that this island was one of the busiest slave centres in West Africa during the 18th and 19th centuries. We will see the House of Slaves, now a museum, and the Historical Museum in the Fort d'Estrees. From the fort there are marvellous views of the island and over Dakar. Alternatively, visit Bandia Reserve, a 3,500-hectare nature reserve which is home to a wide range of African mammals including white rhino, zebras, giraffes, green vervet monkeys and jackals, along with over 120 bird species. Boarding safari jeeps, we will spend time in the nature reserve before driving to Lake Retba, or 'Pink Lake' as it is known for its vivid pink colour. The lake is separated from the Atlantic Ocean by a narrow strip of sand dunes and being so close to the ocean means the lake has a high salt content which the locals collect for preserving fish.

Day 3 Banjul, The Gambia. We will spend today in The Gambia, the 31 mile wide country that is surrounded on three sides by Senegal. It makes up for its size with its personality, being known as the 'Smiling Coast of Africa'. The country has a long history, with stone circles excavated which date back over 1200 years, to Arab traders setting up trade routes in the region for slaves, gold and ivory. The Portuguese took over the routes in the 15th century, and the area now known as The Gambia was colonised and reconolised by the British from the 16th century onwards, in various forms, until its independence in 1965. There will be a choice of tours today and the half day city tour will include the city mosque, market and museum with exhibits showcasing the culture and history. Alternatively, you can choose to visit the south of The Gambia which is rich in natural beauty with extensive waterways and tributaries home to a range of birdlife and wildlife amongst the lush green wilderness. Here villages and life continue to embrace traditions and offer insights into

the culture of different communities, through their art and food. Maybe join a small boat for a leisurely cruise amongst the mangroves or alternatively board 4x4 vehicles to visit some of the villages, the local school and markets before enjoying lunch at a beach restaurant.

Days 4 to 6 Bijagos Archipelago, Guinea Bissau. We have three days in the Bijagos Archipelago which comprises a group of 88 small islands, spread over 5000 square miles, many of which are uninhabited and rarely visited by foreigners. These islands offer a unique blend of culture, history, wildlife and natural beauty and were declared a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1996. Our programme will be determined by tidal and weather conditions but we hope to use our Zodiacs to land on Carache Island, which boasts tropical rainforests and a stunning coastline. Visiting the local village we will learn about their rituals and subsistence farming projects and will have the opportunity to buy some handicrafts or relax on the golden beaches. Meanwhile on Caravela Island we will join the local women as they harvest oysters and shellfish before a performance of traditional Bijagos dancing. We may also visit Bolama Island which was the capital during Portuguese rule and retains colonial era architecture.

Day 7 At Sea. Spend a relaxing day at sea as we cross to the Cape Verde Islands.

Day 8 Praia, Santiago, Cape Verde. Arriving in the Cape Verde Islands we explore the historic capital of Praia on the island of Santiago. Praia has a wonderful African feel and we will visit Cidade Velha, the former Portuguese capital which has a rich history and was once the centre of the slave trade. See the fort and cathedral which dominate the narrow, cobbled lanes and stone houses. Enjoy a traditional performance of Batuco dance before we continue into the green interior, climbing the steep mountains and enjoying the colours as we make our way to Rui Vaz where we enjoy a lunch of local produce in the shadow of Pico da Antonia. We will see local farms and drive past the only water dam in Cape Verde before returning to the MS Hebridean Sky and sailing this evening.

Central Mosque, Banjul

Cidade Velha, Santiago

Porto Novo, Santo Antao

Lake Retba

Pico de Fogo, Fogo

Day 9 Sao Filipe, Fogo. Fogo is an extraordinary island. It is a volcano that rises steeply out of the Atlantic and has become an island, the summit reaching some 3000 metres. Known as the 'Mother Island' it has its own unique character and people. An island drive will take us through dramatically contrasting areas of fertile valleys that are dominated by the massive grey volcanic cone of Pico de Fogo. Enjoy lunch in a local restaurant with locally cultivated wines whilst we listen to our guides speak about the eruptions of 1995 and 2014. There will then be the option to return to the MS Hebridean Sky or visit the main town of Sao Filipe, a gracious town of faded grandeur with its pretty squares and wide boulevards of colonial houses.

Day 10 Porto Novo, Santo Antao. We have a full day on the most beautiful of Cape Verde's islands, Santo Antao. Driving up the old trading route, we will pass the volcanic crater 'Cova' with its agricultural plantations and enjoy panoramic views of the island. After lunch in the seaside village of Ponta do Sol, we will take the coastal road towards the greenest valley in the archipelago, the valley of Paul. Here we will enjoy a coffee break whilst learning about the production of sugarcane on the island. Also discover 'Grogue', the national drink of the islands and have a taste of it at the oldest traditional Grogue distillery on the island. We will drive back to the MS Hebridean Sky along the coast to the southern side of the island. This evening we sail the short distance to Mindelo where we moor overnight.

Day 11 Mindelo, Sao Vicente. Enjoy a full day in Mindelo, one of the most attractive of all the Cape Verde towns with its colonial buildings, cobbled streets, cafes and lively restaurants. Our morning discovery tour will include the lively markets and the secret corners of the harbour town followed by a coffee break in a typical Cape Verdean bar. The afternoon is free to explore the vibrant town further independently. This evening we will be entertained by local music and capoeira on board before we sail to Sal.

Day 12 Sal to London. Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled indirect flight to London.



Exploring by Zodiac

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £500 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Amundsen	Standard	£9495	£8995
Byrd	Superior	£9795	£9295
Mawson	Premium	£9995	£9495
Mawson	Corner	£10295	£9795
Scott	Deluxe Balcony	£10995	£10495
Shackleton	Owner's Balcony	£11495	£10995
Shackleton	Hebridean	£11995	£11495
Amundsen	Standard for sole use	£10895	£10395
Byrd	Superior for sole use	£11795	£11295

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • 11 nights aboard the MS Hebridean Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch & dinner • Noble Caledonia expedition team • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Airport taxes • Port taxes.
Not Included: Travel insurance, Cape Verde airport security fee, Guinea Bissau visa.

MS HEBRIDEAN SKY



The Restaurant



Deluxe Balcony Suite



Alfresco Dining

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

Your Suite

On board there are 59 exceptionally spacious and well-designed suites. All feature a sitting area and some have private balconies. The feeling of luxury is enhanced by the wood panelling and brass, which predominates throughout the vessel conveying the atmosphere of a private yacht. The passenger accommodation is arranged over five decks and all suites have outside views with those on the Scott and Shackleton Decks featuring private balconies. Each suite affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring vanity unit with sink and walk-in shower, large wardrobes, dressing table with large mirror and stool and excellent storage. There is a mini-fridge, television and a telephone in each suite. Refillable water bottles, towelling dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted Molton Brown toiletries and individually controlled air-conditioning and heating. Soft hues and blended tones enhance the traditional maritime style making the passenger accommodation an inviting and relaxing place to be.

Your Dining

With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the cuisine on board the MS Hebridean Sky is of a consistent superior quality that befits such a vessel. In keeping with the informal atmosphere on board, when dining you are able to choose your seating arrangements and choice of restaurants at your leisure; whether that be joining a table of four to six other passengers in the elegant à la carte Restaurant or, outside buffet-style on the Lido Deck in the evening sunshine. In the main Restaurant, breakfast is served buffet-style, with certain items cooked to order on request. Lunch and dinner menus offer plenty of choice, often reflecting the daily catch and local delicacies. The Welcome and Farewell dinners are a sumptuous five course affair. To enhance your dining experience further a selection of wines is included with both meals. Afternoon tea and pre-dinner canapés take place in either the comfort of the Lounge or out on the Lido Deck when the weather is favourable. Tea and coffee are also available 24 hours a day. Special diets can be catered for with sufficient notice.



The Library



Standard Suite



The Lounge

Your Space

The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large Lounge on the Byrd Deck featuring a selection of seating options from individual armchairs and sofas to side cushioned benches. Daily briefings given by the Cruise Director and talks from Guest Speakers and expedition staff take place in the Lounge. In addition to the main Lounge, there is also The Club, located on the Mawson Deck which features the main bar. The Club also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. Towards the aft of the ship on the Mawson Deck is the Library. Well stocked with reference books pertaining to the destinations the vessel is visiting and a selection of essential reads, you will not find yourself short of excellent literature on board. A collection of games and devices to access the internet via the ship's satellite can also be found in the library. Access to the ship's satellite Wi-Fi via your own device is complimentary on board (*signal strength varies depending on location and demand*). The main Restaurant, which can seat all guests at one sitting, is located on the Amundsen Deck, and outside there is a rear Lido Deck located on the Scott Deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade. Further to this on the top Shackleton Deck there is an observation area, complete with sun loungers for sunbathing, relaxing with a book or catching up with fellow travellers. The Promenade Deck wraps around the whole ship providing outstanding views. There is also a small beauty salon on board with appointments made on request.

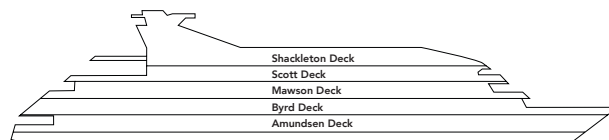
Your Comfort

The MS Hebridean Sky is equipped with the latest safety, navigation and communications equipment along with roll stabilisers to minimise the ship's motion. During your voyage we hope to offer you the opportunity to visit the Captain and Officers on the Bridge to check the vessel's progress by charts and learn more about your journey. On board you will also find a clinic and Doctor and a lift that serves all decks. When at anchor our nimble Zodiacs will ferry you ashore or, on select cruises, enjoy Zodiac cruises getting you closer to the natural world.

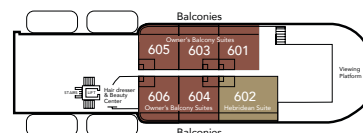
Your Life On Board

The atmosphere on board is warm and convivial and more akin to a private yacht or country hotel in which you can learn more about the wonderful destinations you are visiting in the company of like-minded people. There is a high ratio of crew to passengers and our friendly crew of 75 are mainly Filipino and Eastern European and our Captains are experienced mariners. After a day ashore you will return to the comfort and peace of a well-run and exceedingly comfortable ship where peace, high quality of service and attention to detail are the order of the day. A little music in the Lounge or bar after dinner, Guest Speakers and informative port briefings and of course good food, all contribute to make any voyage aboard this wonderful vessel a memorable and joyful experience.

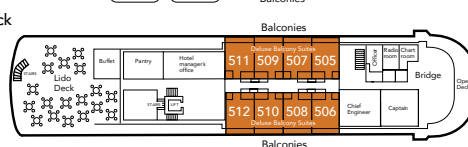
MS HEBRIDEAN SKY DECK PLAN



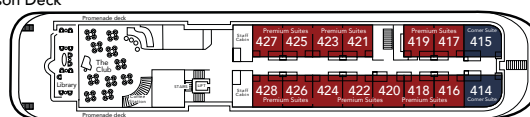
Shackleton Deck



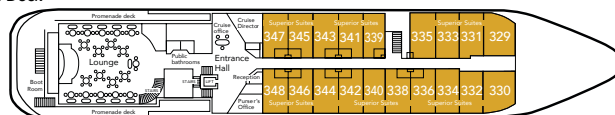
Scott Deck



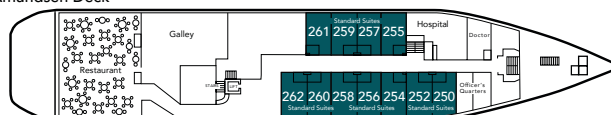
Mawson Deck



Byrd Deck



Amundsen Deck



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

Please note that beds in each suite can be configured as double or twin with the exception of suites 601 and 602 which feature a fixed double bed.



During this voyage you will be visiting out of the way destinations and will be accompanied by an expedition team. Landings and excursions will be made by Zodiac landing craft. This cruise will appeal to the more adventurous and those who enjoy the natural world.



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All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Bijagos Archipelago, Guinea Bissau.