

SPECIAL
OFFER - SAVE
£500
PER PERSON

ISLANDS ON THE EDGE

AN ISLAND HOPPING VOYAGE FROM PORTSMOUTH TO ABERDEEN
ABOARD THE MS ISLAND SKY

23RD MAY TO 3RD JUNE 2024
& 16TH TO 27TH MAY 2025



NOBLE CALEDONIA



This expedition voyage will appeal to those who wish to visit some of the most remote and inaccessible islands in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. We have many years of experience in designing trips to the hidden corners of our remotest places and yet, every year we discover something new. Although we set sail with a fixed itinerary it is the unscheduled events that often become the highlight of the journey.

This is a truly unique voyage visiting as it does the remarkable islands on the edge of the British Isles. With the MS Island Sky as our base we have the advantage of being able to reach these remote ports and, with the use of Zodiacs, we will be able to explore in small groups. We will sail from Portsmouth and during our cruise visit both inhabited and uninhabited islands and places of great natural beauty, rich in wildlife and mystical history. We have also included a number of gardens from the Isles of Scilly to the Hebrides and for the keen birders, there are numerous highlights including cruising past one of the largest gannetries in the world at Stac Lee.

This is not a cruise in the traditional sense, more an exploration with 100 or so fellow travellers who wish to enjoy the peace, beauty and tranquility of the islands. The sheer diversity of the landscapes and lifestyles will amaze you as will the spirit and warmth of the small communities we will encounter. Learn something of their history, see the abundant bird and marine life, but above all revel in the timeless enchantment that these islands exude to all those who appreciate the natural world.



Our View

"The islands around the edge of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland are home to remote communities, wonderful wildlife and a history that dates back thousands of years. Difficult to visit independently, our cruise is devised to access some of these places where we can meet the locals be they farmers or landlords, puffins or seals. From the historic naval town of Portsmouth we visit the Channel Islands, Isles of Scilly, Lundy Island, the Hebrides and the Shetland Islands on our quest to visit the outlying islands. We will find beautiful blooming gardens, see wildflowers on the islands and watch in wonder as thousands of birds fill the sky as we cruise past their breeding grounds. We will also appreciate the history of the region from the archaeological site of Jarlshof to the more modern history of St Kilda. Join us as we take this wonderful opportunity to explore the islands on the edge."



Loch Scavaig



Castle Cornet, Guernsey



Exploring by Zodiac

The Itinerary

Day 1 Portsmouth, England. Embark the MS Island Sky in the afternoon. Transfers will be provided from Portsmouth Harbour Railway Station at a fixed time. Sail this evening for the Channel Islands.

Day 2 Guernsey & Herm, Channel Islands. Anchor this morning off Guernsey, the 'Island of Flowers'. There will be the option of a walking tour of St Peter Port including a visit to Castle Cornet, a 12th century battlement which guards the entrance to St Peter Port Harbour. Alternatively, enjoy a panoramic island drive during which we will see the beautiful coastline and beaches and also visit the Little Chapel, built in 1914 as a miniature version of the famous basilica at Lourdes and covered in fragments of shattered china. Over lunch we sail the short distance to Herm, the smallest inhabited Channel Island and, at just one and a half miles long and half a mile wide, perfect for discovering on foot. You will have free time to explore, perhaps take a stroll over to Shell or Belvoir Beach. Alternatively, join our naturalists on the lookout for wildflowers and birds.

Day 3 Tresco & St Martin's, Isles of Scilly. Spend the morning on traffic-free Tresco, walking its idyllic lanes from the beach to the famous sub-tropical Abbey Gardens. Defying the Atlantic weather, this miracle of a garden is home to more than 20,000 species of plants from over 80 countries. Enjoy time to wander at your own pace along the paths, maybe visit the Valhalla collection of ship figureheads from ships wrecked on the islands or relax in the café. This afternoon we see the northernmost island of the group, St Martin's, a small island community of just 120 residents. Enjoy time to explore independently, climb to one of the viewpoints for vistas over the islands and the offshore seal colonies, join one of our expedition team on a guided walk or make a visit to the local vineyard for a tasting.

Day 4 Lundy Island & Skomer Island, Wales. We have scheduled a morning on Lundy, a remote island in the Bristol Channel. Although small, just three miles long by half a mile wide, its isolation has made it a home for a range of wildlife whilst there is also a clutch of listed buildings and monuments. The towering cliffs and rocky shoreline are a haven for migrating seabirds and Sika deer, red deer and Soay sheep can also be seen as we walk along its traffic-free lanes and paths. Spend the morning being as active as you wish, maybe explore the wide bays and coves by way of hanging valleys, see ancient burial chambers, climb the lighthouse or buy the island's 'puffin stamps' at the shop. Be on deck this afternoon as we pass Skomer Island, one of the most important wildlife sites in Northern Europe. It is a marvellously peaceful and scenic island with fantastic birdlife including 6000 pairs of puffins and the elusive Manx shearwater and storm petrel. We may also see the seal colony hauled out over the rocks and weather permitting will explore by Zodiac.

Day 5 Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland. After a morning at sea we arrive at Rathlin Island. Located just a few miles from the North Antrim coast, Rathlin Island has been settled for more than 6000 years. Today, there are only 80 or so souls, whereas before the famine there were 1200 inhabitants. History is everywhere with historic buildings and ruins. Enjoy a guided walk which will also take in the prolific sea bird life with astonishing numbers of auks, kittiwakes and grey seal. Also see the unique "upside down" Rathlin West Light, a great feat of engineering and one of the Great Lighthouses of Ireland. In the evening sail past the magnificent cliffs to the north of the island which are home to the largest sea bird colony in Ireland.

Day 6 Staffa & Iona, Scotland. Awake this morning as we approach and anchor off Staffa, where the perpendicular rock face features an imposing series of black basalt columns, known as the Colonnade, which have been cut by the sea into cathedralesque caverns, most notably Fingal's Cave. Weather permitting, we will use our Zodiacs to explore closer. We then plan to cruise the short distance to the Isle of Iona which has been occupied for thousands of years and has been a place of pilgrimage and Christian worship for several centuries. It was to this flat, Hebridean island that St Columba fled from Ireland in 563 and established a monastery. Here his followers were responsible for the conversion of much of pagan Scotland and Northern England. No less than 62 Scottish Kings are buried in the Abbey. Visit the Abbey or perhaps walk along the white sandy beaches or go in search of the corncrake amongst the irises.

Day 7 Canna & Loch Scavaig. Strategically placed between the mountains of Rum and the Outer Hebrides, the island of Canna and its adjoining neighbour Sanday are bound together like some rare text that reveals over 60 million years of Hebridean geology and history. They have an amazingly rich archaeological landscape with remains dating to all periods of settled occupation in Scotland. Canna is run as a single farm and bird sanctuary by the National Trust for Scotland and enjoys the best harbour in the Small Isles, a hornshaped haven. The fertile soil and its diversity of habitats mean that the island has an incredibly rich plant life with 248 native flowering plants recorded. We will see Canna House and wander across grassy basalt plateaus to the 600 foot cliffs on the north shore. Over lunch we cross to the lovely Loch Scavaig on the island of Skye. Just beyond is the freshwater Loch Corruisk with its breathtakingly beautiful view over the Cuillins. This is great walking country and our expedition team will run a series of hikes for all interests. For those who prefer a less energetic afternoon our Zodiacs will explore the coast looking out for seals.

Day 8 St Kilda & Stac Lee. We spend the morning at St Kilda, a remarkable uninhabited archipelago some fifty miles beyond the Outer Hebrides. Dominated by the highest cliffs and sea stacks in Britain, Hirta, St Kilda's main



island was occupied on and off for at least two thousand years, with the last 36 Gaelic speaking inhabitants evacuated at their own request in 1930. Immediately after the evacuation, the island was bought by the Marquess of Bute to protect the island’s thousands of seabirds including puffin and fulmars and in 1957 it was bequeathed to The National Trust for Scotland. St Kilda is one of the few UNESCO World Heritage Sites with dual status reflecting its natural and cultural significance. The local ranger will join us on board before our expedition staff lead guided walks on the island. Later, we will cruise past one of the largest gannetries in the world at Stac Lee. The impressive stacs rise 170 metres from the sea and are home to up to 60,000 breeding pairs of northern gannet.

Day 9 Foula, Shetland Islands. Spend the morning at sea as we sail to the Shetland Islands arriving on Foula, one of Britain’s most remote inhabited islands. Apart from a narrow coastal strip of more fertile croftland, Foula is an expanse of peat and moorland rising steeply to five dramatic peaks. In summer, Foula’s wildflowers provide a glorious burst of colour. Translated as “Bird Island” from Old Norse the island is a designated as a Special Protection Area for birds and is home to the world’s largest colony of Great skuas, known locally as bonxies, which compete fiercely with Arctic skuas for breeding territories. Join our expedition team on a series of walks on the island this afternoon.

Day 10 Lerwick. From the Shetland capital, we will visit the remarkable archaeological site of Jarlshof. The site was uncovered by a violent storm in the winter of 1896/7, revealing an extraordinary settlement site embracing at least 5000 years of human history. The site contains a remarkable sequence of stone structures – late Neolithic houses, a Bronze-Age village, an Iron-Age broch and wheelhouses, several Norse longhouses, a Medieval farmstead and the 16th century laird’s house. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy a free afternoon to explore this historic port. Perhaps wander through its narrow stone lanes or maybe visit the excellent Shetland Museum, containing artefacts from shipwrecks and the whaling era. Tonight we will enjoy the company of local musicians on board.

Day 11 Fair Isle. This morning we arrive at the remote island of Fair Isle. Located midway between the Shetland and Orkney islands, the tiny population of sixty or so islanders always extend us a warm welcome. Enjoy a walk across the island searching out the puffin slopes, visit the community hall for a cup of tea or maybe purchase some of the famous knitwear.

Day 12 Aberdeen. Disembark the MS Island Sky after breakfast. Transfers will be provided to the Railway Station and Aberdeen Airport at a fixed time.



PRICES PER PERSON
Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £500 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY					
Deck	Suite Category	2024		2025	
		Brochure Price	Special Offer Price	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Magellan	Standard	£6495	£5995	£6495	£5995
Columbus	Superior	£6695	£6195	£6795	£6295
Marco Polo	Premium	£6995	£6495	£7095	£6595
Marco Polo	Corner	£7495	£6995	£7595	£7095
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£7795	£7295	£8095	£7595
Explorer	Owner's Balcony Suites	£7995	£7495	£8295	£7795
Explorer	Island Suite	£8995	£8495	£9295	£8795
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£8495	£7995	£8495	£7995
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£8695	£8195	£8795	£8295

PRICE INCLUDES: 11 nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia expedition team • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.
Not Included: Travel insurance.

MS ISLAND SKY



Friendly Service



Deluxe Balcony Suite



The Restaurant

The much loved MS Island Sky is one of our two flagships and sister vessel to the MS Hebridean 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 Island 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 seating area and some have private balconies, whilst those on the Marco Polo Deck feature tinted, sliding glass doors allowing greatly enhanced viewing opportunities and quick access to the deck. 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 each suite affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring marble-topped vanity unit with sink and walk-in shower, a large wardrobe, dressing table and excellent storage. There is a mini-fridge, flat screen television with inbuilt DVD/CD player and a telephone in each suite. Refillable water bottles, dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a safe, hairdryer, assorted Molton Brown toiletries, air-conditioning and heating. The comfortable beds in each suite can be configured as either double or twin.

Your Dining

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



Superior Suite



The Club



The Library

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 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 Marco Polo 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 Columbus 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 as well as 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 Magellan Deck, and outside there is a rear Lido Deck located on the Erikson Deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade. Further to this on the top Explorer Deck there is an observation area ideal for spotting wildlife, complete with sun loungers for sunbathing, relaxing with a book or catching up with fellow travellers. The Promenade Deck wraps around the whole ship giving outstanding views. There is also a small beauty salon on board with appointments made on request.

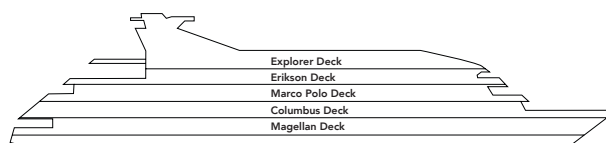
Your Comfort

The MS Island 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.

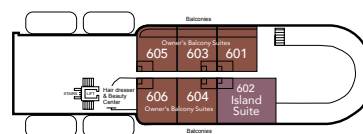
Your Life On Board

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 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 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.

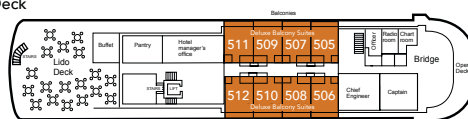
MS ISLAND SKY DECK PLAN



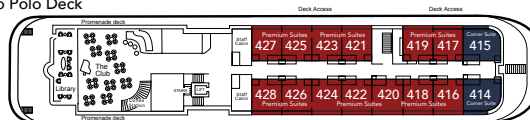
Explorer Deck



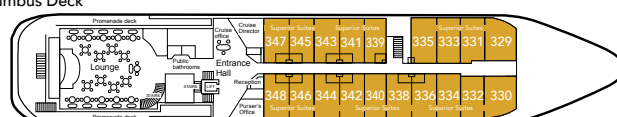
Erikson Deck



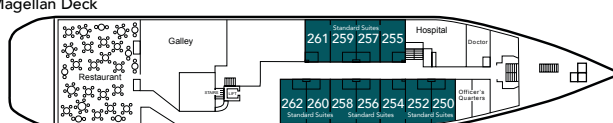
Marco Polo Deck



Columbus Deck



Magellan Deck



- Standard Suites
- Superior Suites
- Premium Suites with Deck Access
- Corner Suites with Deck Access
- Deluxe Balcony Suites
- Owner's Balcony Suites
- Island Suite



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



NOBLE CALEDONIA

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All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Puffin slopes, Fair Isle.