

SPECIAL
OFFER – SAVE
£500
PER PERSON

JAPAN & HER ISLANDS

DISCOVER THE NATURAL & CULTURAL WONDERS OF JAPAN
WITH GUEST SPEAKER, REVEREND DR JUDITH THOMAS
ABOARD THE MS CALEDONIAN SKY

13TH TO 28TH MARCH 2020



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Hagi Toko ji temple



Okinawa

Join the MS Caledonian Sky for this unusual voyage which focuses on the small islands and ports of southern Japan. However, before our exploration of Japan begins, we spend some time in Taiwan. Sitting between China and Japan it is a surprisingly beautiful island about half the size of Scotland. Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese nationalist leader and Mao's great adversary crossed the sea from China with a million and more of his followers in 1949, together with many great treasures from the Forbidden City. These treasures are now housed in the magnificent National Palace Museum in the nation's capital of Taipei which we will explore. We will also visit one of Taiwan's natural wonders, the Taroko Gorge National Park.

After our time in Taiwan, we set sail cruising north and visit Japan's intriguing and diverse islands including the subtropical Yaeyama and Amami Islands where a slower pace of life is enjoyed which contrasts to mainland Japan where we spend a further seven days.

Over the course of just thirteen nights we will be able to see a variety of cultures, natural wonders and architectural styles. Amongst the many highlights will be the iconic gardens of Koraku-en and Ritsurin, arriving in early spring the gardens and cherry blossoms will be just coming into bloom and the shrines and pagodas at Miyajima and Himeji Castle which harks back to an era dominated by feudal lords. For the natural world enthusiasts we will explore the natural and underwater worlds of the southern archipelago and for those who prefer a historical perspective, we will see the Peace memorial at Hiroshima and the remnants of the World War II battle at Okinawa. Our expert Guest Speaker and local guides will provide an insight into Japanese culture and history along the way.



Guest Speaker



Reverend Dr Judith Thomas
Judith has lived and worked in many countries including the USA, Indonesia,

New Zealand, the Middle East and Japan. Her early work as a Management Training specialist for overseas assignments developed her interest in globally mobile families and the cultural changes they confront. Her earliest experience of Japan dates from the 70's up to the present day, including two extended periods of living and working there. Her expertise is Japanese Culture; gardens are a cultural expression in their own right. Traditional Cultures adapting to the modern world are of particular interest to her.

The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Taipei, Taiwan. Fly by scheduled flight.

Day 2 Taipei. Arrive today and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day is free to relax or explore independently.

Day 3 Taipei & Keelung. Meet this morning for a tour of the city including a visit to the outstanding National Palace Museum, a repository of over 600,000 priceless Chinese artefacts which is located in the green hills just outside the city as well as the Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall. After lunch we will transfer to Keelung to embark the MS Caledonian Sky and sail this evening.

Day 4 Hualien. From our berth in Hualien we will enjoy a full day

tour to the Taroko Gorge National Park. Taroko means "magnificent and beautiful" in the local Truku language and it is clear to see why the name was used. The gorge itself stretches for 20 kilometres with marble cliffs rising hundreds of metres above the Liwu River. We will see the Swallow Grotto and the Tunnel of Nine Turns, a 1.9 kilometre path cut into the cliffs following the route of the original tracks along the gorge and the Changuang Temple, a Buddhist monastery with commanding views of the river. Enjoy a local lunch before returning to the ship later in the afternoon. Alternatively explore the scenic eastern coast on a sightseeing drive.

Day 5 Ishigaki, Yaeyama Islands, Japan. Our first call in Japan will be at the Yaeyama Islands, a cluster of

coral reefs and forested mountains. This morning, from our base in Ishigaki we take the short journey by local ferry to neighbouring Taketomi. This tiny island, just 1500 metres at its widest point and home to 300 people still offers a traditional Ryuku way of life. We will be transported by traditional buffalo drawn carts to view the traditional bungalow style houses with low slung terracotta roofs and rocky walls covered in hibiscus and bougainvillea. We return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon is free to relax on board or ashore.

Day 6 Okinawa, Ryuku Islands. Spend the morning at sea arriving at lunchtime in the largest of the Ryuku Island archipelago, Okinawa. It is probably best known for the long and bloody battle of World



Koraku-en Gardens



Yakushima

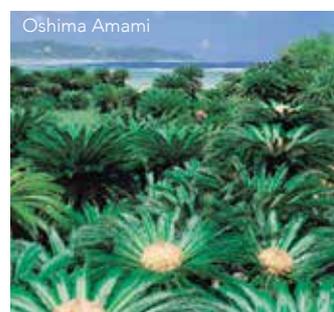


Memorial Park, Nagasaki

War II which lasted 82 days. There will be a choice of excursion this morning, either choose to learn more about this significant encounter when we visit the former Japanese Navy Underground Head Quarters, the Peace Memorial Park and Himeyuri Tower, which commemorates the fate of female high school students, who worked in army field hospitals in caves under horrendous conditions. Alternatively, stretch your legs as we walk through the Gangala Valley, a working excavation site with human pre-historic remains dating back some 18,000 years. We will walk past the "walking Banyan tree" and see the caves, the history of which our guides will explain. Before returning to the vessel we will see the Shuri Castle, perched on a hill overlooking Naha which used to be a centre of the Ryukyu Kingdom.

Day 7 Amami Oshima, Amami Islands. After a morning at sea we arrive on Amami Oshima, a natural sub-tropical, paradise situated in the Amami Islands and surrounded by transparent waters, brightly coloured coral reefs and tropical fish. The island is almost entirely covered in forest and mangrove and offers fantastic bird watching and wildlife sightings. We have the afternoon to explore and will visit the Nature Observation Park where we can walk through the forest and hope to see the Amami jay, ruddy kingfisher, Ryukyu akashobin, butterflies and possibly the rare black hare. We will also see local industry and watch the process of making tsumugi and kasuri silk-cotton fabrics, used for making kimonos, at the Oshima Tsumugi Village, a craft complex in a beautiful hillside setting amongst flowers. Many of the local plants are used in dyeing.

Day 8 Yakushima. Arrive this morning at the very south of Kyushu and the island of Yakushima which became Japan's first UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993 and has a particularly diverse flora. We will spend the morning on a choice of nature walks in Yakusugi Land, a nature park populated by a number of the island's ancient cedar trees, such as the Buddhasugi, Futagosugi and Sennensugi, which are over 3000 years old. The afternoon is free to relax.



Oshima Amami

Day 9 Nagasaki & Dejima. Arrive this morning in Nagasaki, the second city destroyed by an A-bomb in World War II. We will tour the Peace Memorial Park, Atomic Bomb Museum and Dejima Island which was built during the Edo Period to accommodate Portuguese Christian missionaries and prevent the propagation of their religion. It was also the residential quarters of the Dutch, the only foreigners allowed to trade in Japan during the Sakoku (Isolation) Period. For 200 years, until Japan reopened the country in the 19th century, Dejima was its only window to the world. With the reopening of the port to Westerners in the latter half of the 19th century, Nagasaki flowered as a prosperous and sophisticated international city. Suitable housing was required for

the sudden influx of foreigners who made their homes here. Many of the comfortable stone and clapboard residences that were built during this period survive today and are preserved in Glover Garden which we will visit this afternoon. The best known European-style residence here is Glover House. Built in 1863, it was the setting for Puccini's opera Madame Butterfly.

Day 10 Hagi. Hagi was a minor fishing port until Mori Terumoto fortified it in 1604 and it was Mori Samurai that helped spark off the anti-Tokugawa revolt in the mid-19th century. Today it is better known for its traditional pottery making traditions. On our morning tour we will explore the Teramachi District with its temples and shrines, the Jokamachi District, where we find the old samurai houses and also take time to explore Hagi Castle, Shizuki Park and Tokoji Temple. Return to the vessel for lunch and this afternoon is free to relax or perhaps travel to the outskirts of the city and the Yoshika Taibi Memorial Museum which is dedicated to a large collection of Hagi-yaki pottery which was highly prized in the Edo Period as wares for tea ceremonies.

Day 11 Ube, Yamaguchi. We continue our exploration of Japan and visit some sites of historic, southern Yamaguchi prefecture. From our base at the port of Ube we will travel inland to visit the picturesque five-storied Pagoda of Rurikoji Temple and the surrounding park. Dating back to 1442, the pagoda was built in memory of Yoshihiro Mori Terumoto who ruled this area during this period. We also hope to visit the Fujigochi Tea Plantation and enjoy a tour of the tea factory and plantation where the local Ono Tea is produced

from 70 hectares of gentle rolling countryside.

Day 12 Miyajima & Hiroshima. Considered one of Japan's top scenic wonders, Miyajima provides a picture postcard vista of the scarlet Torii gate, the giant camphor wood gates at the entrance to the Shinto Shrine. We will use the vessel's Zodiacs to go ashore and explore the Itsukushima Jinja Shrine, founded in the 6th century and dedicated to three sea goddesses. The shrine is a designated World Heritage Site. Over lunch we sail to Hiroshima for our visit to the compelling Peace Memorial Park. The park is dotted with memorials, including the cenotaph which contains the names of all the known victims of the A-bomb and the permanently lit "Flame of Peace". Just outside the park, the A-Bomb Dome is a haunting reminder of the destructive forces that were unleashed on the city being one of the few original buildings to survive. In the museum we will see photos, videos and victim's personal effects relating to the bomb.

Day 13 Takamatsu. The MS Caledonian Sky will berth in Takamatsu located on Shikoku Island on the northern shores of the Seto Inland Sea. This morning we visit Kinashi Town preserving a rich history of producing bonsai for 250 years. We will explore the town, visit a Bonsai nursery and make our way to Ritsurin Garden, recognised as one of the most beautiful in Japan and built by feudal lords in the early Edo Period. With a backdrop against the wooded Mount Shiun, we will wander along the paths of this historic landscape garden dotted with ponds, historic trees and pavilions. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure exploring Takamatsu town.



Day 14 Koraku-en & Kurashiki.

From the port of Uno-Ko we will visit one of Japan's most famed gardens, Korakuen, which translates as "Garden of pleasure after". This 17th century formal garden has 28 acres of walking trails, ponds, plum and cherry trees, and a classic teahouse where we will experience a traditional tea ceremony. After a Japanese lunch in a local restaurant we will continue to Kurashiki where we explore the old merchant quarter and its fine 17th century wooden warehouses painted white with traditional black tiles, along a canal framed with weeping willows and filled with koi.

Day 15 Himeji. Today we arrive at Himeji where we will visit the recently renovated Himeji Castle. Built in the 16th century, Himeji Castle is a World Heritage Site and a national treasure being one of the few original feudal era fortresses remaining. The castle's

name means "white egret," and the gleaming white walls that soar high above the plains below justify its name. A guided tour will take us through the castle, past the main keeps walls featuring "ishiotoshi", narrow openings that allowed defending soldiers to fire arrows or pour boiling oil onto anyone trying to scale the walls. From the top of the keep there are wonderful views to the inland sea. Continue to the Himeji Koko-en, a reconstruction of the former samurai quarters containing nine Edo period style homes and gardens including koi ponds and intricately pruned trees. Return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon is free to explore further independently.

Day 16 Kobe to London.

Disembark this morning in Kobe and transfer to Osaka airport for the return scheduled indirect flight to London. Arrive this evening.

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 |
|------------|----------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Castle | Standard | £8295 | £7795 |
| Caledonian | Superior | £8495 | £7995 |
| Promenade | Premium | £8795 | £8295 |
| Bridge | Deluxe Balcony | £9295 | £8795 |
| Promenade | Premium Balcony | £9595 | £9095 |
| Promenade | Owners Corner Suite with balcony | £10795 | £10295 |
| Castle | Standard for sole use | £9995 | £9495 |
| Caledonian | Superior for sole use | £10395 | £9895 |

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Overnight accommodation in Taipei on bed and breakfast basis • 13 nights aboard the MS Caledonian Sky on a full board basis • Wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch & dinner • Shore excursions • Noble Caledonia onboard team • Group transfers • Gratuities • Port taxes.
Not Included: Travel insurance.

Taiwan Pre-Cruise Extension

8th to 14th March 2020

Tainan



If you would like to explore Taiwan before joining the main group in Taipei, we are offering an escorted tour providing the opportunity to explore the scenery, culture, history and cuisine of this fascinating land.

The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Taipei. Fly by scheduled flight.

Day 2 Taipei. Arrive today and transfer to our hotel. Remainder of day at leisure.

Day 3 Taipei to Taroko Gorge. Drive to Taroko Gorge National Park where we will enjoy walks and stunning scenery. Overnight in Taroko Gorge.

Day 4 Taroko Gorge to Sun Moon Lake. Drive across the central mountain range enjoying impressive mountain scenery. Arrive to Sun Moon Lake later in the afternoon and visit Wen Wu Temple. Overnight at Sun Moon Lake.

Day 5 Tainan. Drive south to the historic town of Tainan in Southern Taiwan for a two night stay. Enjoy an afternoon tour including the Confucius Temple and Chihkan Tower.

Day 6 Tainan. Visit the Buddha Memorial Centre and Fougansan Monastery. Remainder of day at leisure.

Day 7 Tainan to Taipei. Return to Taipei visiting Lukang historic town en-route. Arrive into Taipei and check into our hotel mid-afternoon. Continue with main itinerary from day 2.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£995** Single: **£1495**

Price Includes: Five nights hotel accommodation with breakfast, 5 lunches, 4 dinners, excursions as listed, Tour Manager, transfers, gratuities.

Not Included: Travel insurance.

Please note that this tour involves two to four hours driving on most days. Small, winding roads can be expected in mountainous regions and midi coaches will be used.

Kyoto Post-Cruise Extension

28th March to 1st April 2020

Kinkakuji Temple



If you would like to spend some time in Kyoto after your cruise we are offering a four night extension which should coincide with the early flowering cherry blossom depending on local conditions.

The Itinerary

Day 1 Kobe to Kyoto. Disembark in Kobe and join a tour of Kyoto and Nara, before transferring to your hotel for a four night stay.

Day 2 Kyoto. Afternoon visit to Kiyomizu Temple.

Day 3 Kyoto. Full day excursion to visit Arashiyama and Tenryuji Temple.

Day 4 Kyoto. Day at leisure followed by Gala Dinner.

Day 5 Kyoto to London. Check-out this morning and transfer to Osaka airport for the return scheduled indirect flight to London.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£2195** Single: **£2795**

Price Includes: Four nights hotel accommodation in Kyoto with breakfast, three lunches, four dinners, excursions as listed, Tour Manager, transfers, gratuities. excursions as listed, transfers. **Not Included:** Travel insurance.

MS CALEDONIAN SKY



Deluxe Balcony Suite



On Deck



The Restaurant

The MS Caledonian Sky is one of our three flag ships and sister vessel to the MS Island Sky and MS Hebridean Sky. All three vessels were built in the same ship yard in Italy at similar times and share the same excellent attributes that make them three of the finest small ships in the world. With a maximum passenger capacity of only 114, a vessel of her size is capable of carrying many more but instead the MS Caledonian Sky has the benefit of unusually large suites, luxuriously appointed public areas and spacious outside decks.



Your Suite

On board there are 57 exceptionally spacious and well designed suites. The passenger accommodation is arranged over four decks and all suites have outside views. All feature a sitting area and some have private balconies. Each affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring a country style wash basin, heated towel rail, vanity unit and walk-in shower and/or bath tub. Facilities in the suites also include walk-in or spacious wardrobes, dressing table

with large mirror and stool or desk, mini-fridge, flat screen television, telephone, programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted Molton Brown toiletries, air-conditioning and heating. Bottled water, dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort.

Your Dining

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



Standard Suite



Panorama Lounge



The Lounge

Your Space

The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large Lounge where daily briefings and talks will be provided throughout the voyage and an elegant bar where a pianist plays periodically throughout the day. The bar also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. In addition there is the Lounge on the Panorama Deck which has a bar, library with two computers offering complimentary internet access and further seating ideal for watching the world go by. Outside there is a rear Lido Deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade. On the top deck there is a further observation and Sun Deck with bar service and comfortable deck furniture for sun bathing or relaxing with a book. There is also a small beauty salon with appointments made on request. Throughout the vessel carefully chosen artwork and photos reflect the destinations we sail to.

Your Comfort

The MS Caledonian 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.

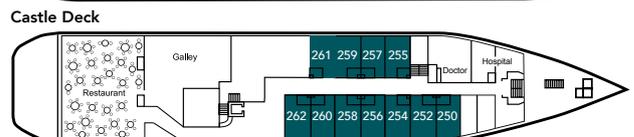
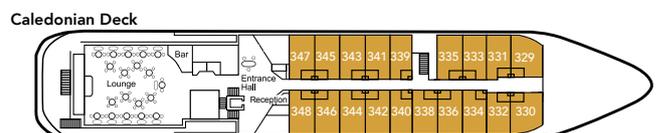
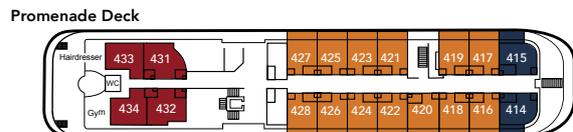
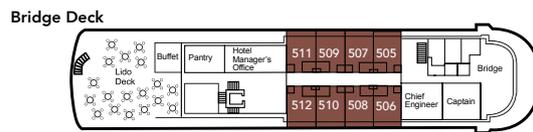
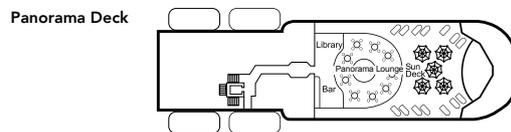
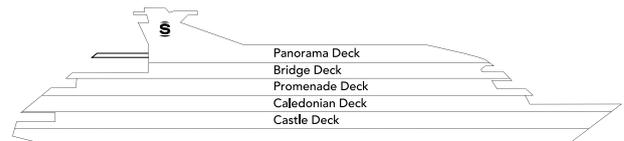
Your Life On Board

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. Dress on board is casual and relaxed and there will be no "black tie" evenings. On board there is a high ratio of crew to passengers. Our friendly crew of 75 are mainly Filipino and Eastern European and our Scandinavian 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 from our Expedition Leader or Cruise Director and of course good food, all contribute to make any voyage aboard this wonderful vessel a memorable and joyful experience.

MS CALEDONIAN SKY DECK PLAN



- Standard Suites
- Premium Suites
- Premium Balcony Suites
- Superior Suites
- Deluxe Balcony Suites
- Owner's Corner Suites with Balcony

Please note that all suites on Castle Deck feature a minimum of two portholes.



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: Himeji Castle