

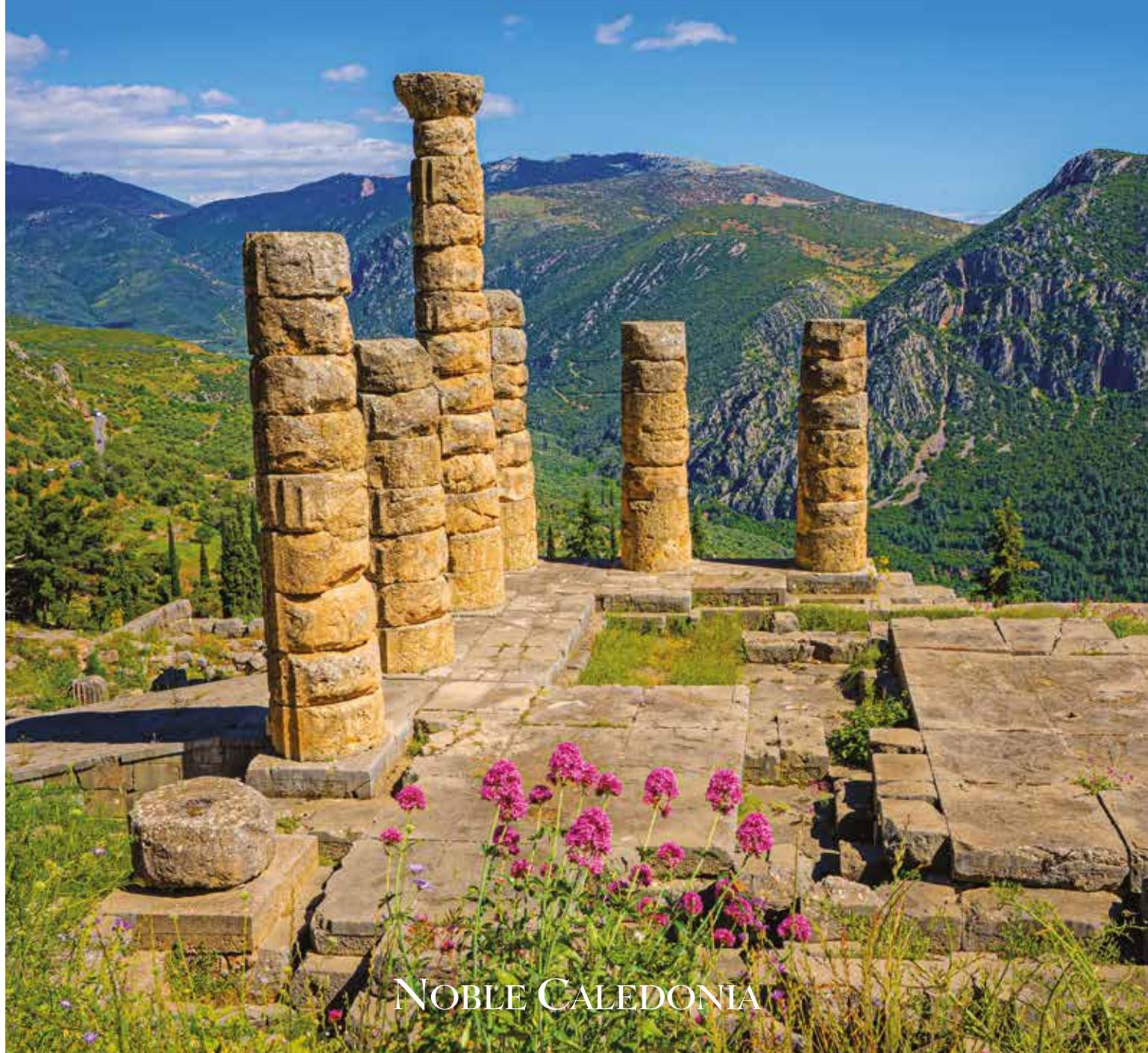
ALBANIA & GREECE

THROUGH
THE EYES OF BYRON

SPECIAL
OFFER - SAVE
£200
PER PERSON

A journey along the Ionian Sea coast
aboard the MS Monet with Guest Speaker George Hart

25th May to 3rd June 2020



NOBLE CALEDONIA

In 1809 Lord Byron set sail on his two year Grand Tour which ultimately took him to Albania and Greece with his great friend John Cam Hobhouse. He fell in love with the region and the people and whilst on tour he began work on the poem 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' which when published on his return shot him to literary stardom. Byron was the ideal Romantic poet, gaining notoriety for his scandalous private life, described by Lady Caroline Lamb as "mad, bad and dangerous to know". From his letters written whilst touring we gain an insight into the man, his perceptions and the times as well as the excitement he felt on his first journey to the 'Orient'. As we travel down the coast of Albania and Greece we will visit many places Byron explored and learn of the colourful characters he encountered including the formidable tyrant Ali Pasha of Tepelena.

Byron's passion for Greece never faltered and in 1823 he returned to the island of Cephalonia, spent £4000 refitting the Greek Fleet and took command of a Greek unit of freedom fighters against the Ottoman Empire. His short but chaotic and fascinating life ended in Messolonghi in 1824 where he died of a fever. Looking at a beautiful region such as this through the eyes of someone who lived two hundred years ago does add an extra dimension to the geography and history and introduces us to more recent events in a corner of Europe with a deeply complicated past.

Our fascinating itinerary combines some 'must see' historical wonders together with little known and rarely visited places that are perfectly suited for our vessel. With a maximum of just 50 guests, our trips ashore will be a pleasure as we explore with our Guest Speaker and local guides, adding immeasurably to our knowledge of the region. Towards the end of our voyage, ensure you are on deck for our transit of the Corinth Canal which, whilst only built in the 19th century, was conceived as long ago as the 7th century BC, a wonderful end to our cruise and only possible aboard a small ship such as the MS Monet.



Lord Byron arrives at Messolonghi (The National Gallery of Athens)

Guest Speaker – George Hart



George Hart graduated with degrees in Classics and Egyptian Art and Archaeology from University College London and joined the staff of the British Museum in 1973. He organised a diverse programme of Courses and Lectures on the Antiquities Collections which encompassed the Bronze Age and Classical Civilisations of the Mediterranean World, the Levant and Egypt.

He has accompanied tours to all the major archaeological sites in Greece and Albania. His interest in the allusions to classical antiquity in the Romantic Poets is long-standing but he regards Byron as the most important since his travels and adventures took him much further afield than Keats and Shelley – reaching into Ottoman Europe. While like many others his admiration for Byron's passion for Greek Independence is unshakable, he has also, during three decades at the British Museum of lecturing on Classical Athens, had to discuss the question of Byron's relentless onslaught on the removal of sculptures from Greek monuments and the subsequent thorny issue of restitution. He fully expects to be confronted with supporters of Byron's wish "to immolate Elgin to Minerva and Nemesis" on this cruise.

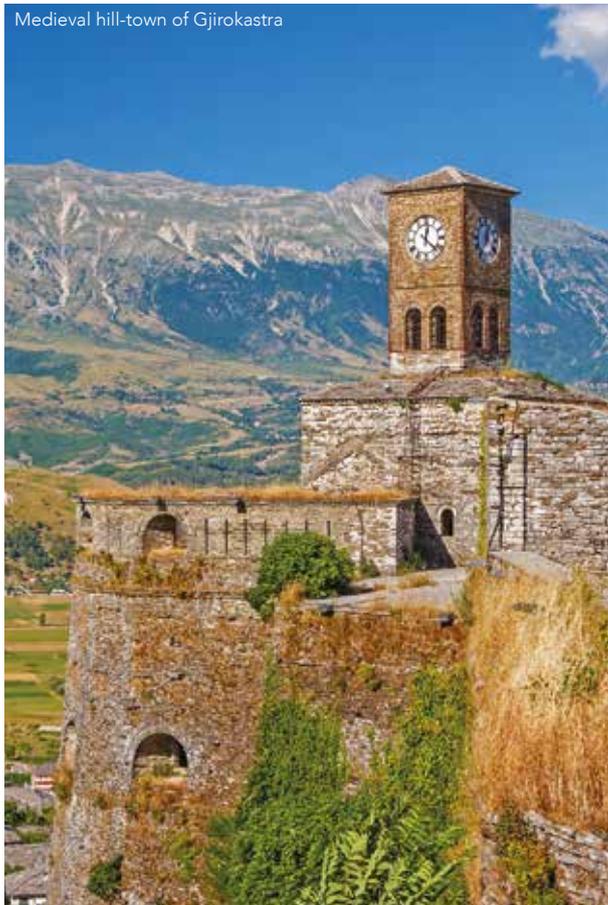
The Itinerary

Day 1 London Gatwick to Tirana, Albania. Fly by scheduled flight. Arrive this afternoon and transfer to the MS Monet moored in Durres. We sail later this evening.

Day 2 Vlore. On a full day tour, drive two hours inland to Gjirokastra, a charming hillside town which is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Set in wooded hills overlooking the Drinos Valley, Byron spent time here and its cobbled streets and fortified Ottoman houses have changed little since his time. We will visit the interesting museum learning about Ali Pasha and Byron's time in this historic town. After lunch in a local restaurant take a stroll through the 17th century Ottoman Bazaar before heading to Tepelena. Enjoy the scenery as the wide fertile valley with its wildflowers gives way to the mountains in the east and the River Vjosa which meanders through sandbanks along the valley floor. It was here that Byron stayed as a guest of Ali Pasha of Tepelena, the so-called Lion of Janina. In a letter to his mother Byron provides a description of his host, ending with, 'He has been a mighty warrior, but is as barbarous as he is successful roasting rebels'. We will see the castle built by Ali Pasha to enclose his palace. Alternatively, enjoy a morning tour to nearby Apollonia followed by an afternoon at leisure. Apollonia, the ancient city of Illyria reached its zenith around the 4th to 3rd centuries BC when it is believed the population numbered over 70,000. See the city council building with its surviving facade, the library, triumphal arch and Temple of Artemis. On the same site there is also a delightful Byzantine walled monastery within which we can visit the Apollonia Museum.

Day 3 Sarande. From the port of Sarande we drive to the nearby historic UNESCO site of Butrint. Founded as a Greek colony, a Roman city and Bishopric, Butrint enjoyed a period of prosperity under a Byzantine administration and then the Venetians. Abandoned in the late Middle Ages the site today offers a remarkable glimpse of all its past. It is thanks to the Butrint Foundation, founded by Lord Rothschild and Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover, that we can appreciate this remarkable site which has over the past 25 years been conserved, preserved and developed far beyond what Byron witnessed. On a guided tour we will explore the Hellenistic temples, promenade and the 4th century BC theatre as well as the Roman public baths, gymnasium and fountains. Further into the site, from the Byzantine era, we see chapels and the large Basilica of St Peter and St Paul, whilst the Venetians are represented

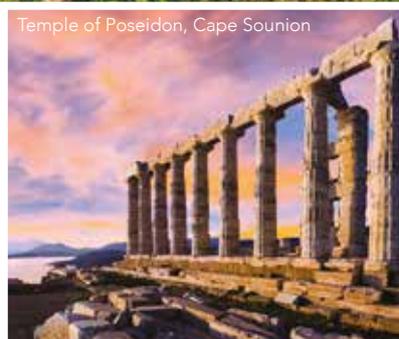
Medieval hill-town of Gjirokastra



Picturesque fishing village of Assos, Cephalonia



Roman Theater, Butrint

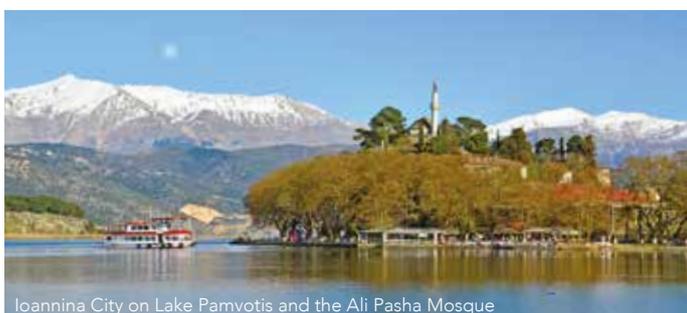


Temple of Poseidon, Cape Sounion

by a hilltop watchtower and a small castle with commanding views over the Straits of Corfu. We enjoy some refreshments in a local café before returning to the MS Monet for lunch and an afternoon at leisure.

Day 4 Igoumenitsa, Greece. Today we visit, on a full day tour, one of the loveliest of Greek cities, Ioannina. Set on the western shore of Lake Pamvotis it is one of the most atmospheric places in Greece. The walls of its old fortified city enclose an old quarter that Byron would recognise, spiked with minarets. He spent about a month in the region much taken with the scenery 'many a mount sublime'. It was in Ioannina that Byron probably first saw himself as the future saviour of Ottoman controlled Greece and began composing Child Harold's Pilgrimage. The highlight today will be Ali Pasha's fortress and from its ramparts we will gaze across the lake just as it had impressed Byron and John Hobhouse in 1809. Visit the Ali Pasha Museum and later walk in this enchanting capital of the Epirus region with its strictly pedestrian streets past the old Jewish stoas (arcades), shops and cafés. We enjoy a local lunch and also plan a stop to visit the remote and impressive Ancient Theatre and Oracle of Dodoni. This area was a site of worship and pilgrimage from 2000BC until Roman times dedicated at one time to the Mother Goddess Gaia and then to Zeus.

Day 5 Argostoli, Cephalonia, Ionian Islands. We will spend the day here on the largest of the Ionian islands. From our base in the capital Argostoli, we visit the village of Metaxata; Byron spent four months here in 1823 and a statue of remembrance sits proudly in the main square of the village, near where the house he occupied once stood. The devastating earthquake of



Ioannina City on Lake Pamvotis and the Ali Pasha Mosque

1953 destroyed much of the island's buildings. A drive across the island brings us to the delightful, quiet coastal village of Assos. Choose to take the steep climb up to the castle of Assos, stroll along the front or swim from beach.

Day 6 Messolonghi. Situated on the northern shore of the Gulf of Patra, this picturesquely sited small city sits between craggy mountains and Europe's largest lagoon. It is a little visited corner of Greece, its vast lagoon teems with fish and birdlife. In January 1824 Byron journeyed to Messolonghi leading a force of Suliote troops he had funded with the aim of recapturing the Turkish occupied fortress of Lepanto. But his plans were interrupted by the arrival of the Ottoman navy. With the help of the Messolonghi Byron Society our exploration here will include a visit to the Garden of Heroes. Here, just inside the Gate of Exodus where the Ottoman forces massacred fleeing Greeks sits a prominent statue of Lord Byron. After his death his embalmed body was returned to England but it is said that his heart and lungs lie buried beneath the statue.

Day 7 Delphi. We arrive in the early morning over breakfast in Itea. From here we spend the morning exploring the archaeological treasures of the ancient, hillside site of Delphi and one of Greece's most important sites of antiquity. Byron visited in 1809, carving his name on a column in the gymnasium: 'Yet there I've wandered by the vaulted rill Yes! Sighed over Delphi's long deserted shrine, Where, save that feeble fountain, all is still.' It was nearly one hundred years after Byron's visit that serious excavations began revealing some major buildings and structures of the sanctuary of Apollo and of Athena Pronoia including thousands of objects, many of which are housed in the Archaeological Museum. We will see the site of the sacred Delphic Oracle, walk along Delphi's Sacred Way, visit the Treasury of the Athenians and the 5000 seat theatre dating from the 4th century BC. Return to the MS Monet for lunch and enjoy an afternoon sailing along the Gulf of Corinth before mooring at the port of Corinth for the evening and overnight.

Day 8 Corinth. In the summer of 1810 Byron visited Corinth with his friend Lord Sligo. His rhymed, tragic narrative poem, 'The Siege of Corinth' was published in 1816 and was inspired by the Ottoman massacre of the Venetian garrison holding the Acrocorinth in 1715. On a morning tour we will visit the extensive remains of ancient Corinth including the Temple of Apollo and from here we can see the hill of Acrocorinth where stood a Medieval fort, the inspiration of the poem. Return to the MS Monet for lunch



Statue of Lord Byron, Messolonghi

and enjoy a leisurely afternoon. Be on deck later this afternoon as we navigate the narrow Corinth Canal bound for Lavrio. Completed in 1893 and only 6.4 kilometres long and 21.5 metres wide, it is only small ships like the MS Monet which can now make this journey.

Day 9 Lavrion. This morning, weather permitting, we may get our first glimpse of the Temple of Poseidon perched majestically on a headland above the Aegean. From the port of Lavrion it is a short drive to Cape Sounion and the Temple of Poseidon, one of the major monuments of the Golden Age of Athens. Nearby, see the Temple of Athena and a fortress built in 413 BC during the Peloponnesian War against the Spartans. Whilst spending several months in Athens in 1810-11 Byron visited Sounion; his name is carved on one of the columns and in his poem 'Isles of Greece' he mentions Sounion. We depart in the early evening to sail along the coast of the Athenian Riviera to the port of Piraeus where we moor overnight.

Day 10 Athens to London Heathrow. Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £200 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Cat	Cabin Description	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
D	Twin/Double with portholes on Camille/Parisien Deck	£3495	£3295
C	Twin/Double with windows on Parisien/Lumiere Deck	£3695	£3495
B	Superior Double with windows of Lumiere Deck	£3995	£3795
A	Deluxe Twin with windows on Lumiere Deck	£4495	£4295
D	Twin/Double with portholes on Camille/Parisien Deck for sole use	£3995	£3795

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Nine nights aboard the MS Monet on a full board basis • House wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia onboard team • Shore Excursions • Guest Speaker • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance.

PRE-CRUISE TIRANA EXTENSION

23rd to 25th May 2020

Kruje Castle



If you would like to spend some additional time in Albania before embarking the MS Monet, we are offering a two night hotel stay in the capital city of Tirana.

The Itinerary

Day 1 London Gatwick to Tirana, Albania. Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival transfer to your centrally located hotel for a two night stay.

Day 2 Tirana. After breakfast join a full day tour. We drive to Kruje, renowned as the birthplace of Skanderbeg, a military commander who defended the country against the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century. We will visit the 6th century castle perched above the city before visiting the Skanderbeg Museum. After a local lunch we continue our exploration of Tirana and see the fascinating nuclear bunker built by the dictator Enver Hoxha in the 1970s and only recently opened to the public. This underground building is packed with original artefacts from the communist period. Afterwards continue to the National Museum where we will learn of Albanian history from ancient to modern before walking through the city centre to see the mosque, Clock Tower and the "Bloku" area of the city. Return to the hotel and enjoy an evening at leisure.

Day 3 Tirana to Durres. After a leisurely morning, we travel to the coast and explore the port city of Durres which was colonised by the Greeks in 627 BC and still has the remains of a 15,000 seat amphitheatre, the second largest in the Balkans. We will explore the Medieval city and the Archaeological Museum and also enjoy a local lunch before embarking the MS Monet later in the afternoon.

Prices per person based on double occupancy

Twin: £330

Single: £380

Price Includes: Two nights hotel accommodation with breakfast, Noble Caledonia Tour Manager, lunch on days 2 & 3, gratuities, transfers.

Not Included: Travel insurance.



Cathedral of Saint Paul and Saint Astius in Durres



MS MONET

We are delighted to have chartered the MS Monet for a series of cruises through the Adriatic and Aegean in 2020. Launched in 1998, fully renovated in 2016 and upgraded again in 2018, she is a 220 foot motor yacht accommodating a maximum of 50 guests. If you find large resort style vessels accommodating many thousands of passengers attractive then of course this isn't the vessel for you. However, if you prefer an informal and warm atmosphere more akin to a private yacht combined with an itinerary dedicated to both discovery and relaxation then you need look no further.



Category A Cabin



Category C Cabin

Your Cabin

All the cabins on board the MS Monet are designed for comfort and have a warm and inviting feel with light fabrics and wood trimmings. Cabins range in size from 9 to 22 square metres and Categories A, B & C are equipped with windows, while those in Category D have portholes. Cabins 104-107, 112, 119, 205 and 210-215 feature twin beds and all other cabins have fixed double beds. Facilities include en-suite bathroom with shower, television, minifridge, safety deposit box, air-conditioning and hairdryer.

Your Space

The public areas include a main lounge and bar with comfortable sofas on the Lumiere Deck, a restaurant located on the Parisian Deck and the Lumiere Open Deck al fresco dining area where meals can be enjoyed when weather permits. The gym can be found on the Parisian Deck and the Lumiere Sun Deck provides a delightful sun exposed space with sun loungers and a Jacuzzi, ideal for relaxation and wonderful views.

Your Dining

Located on the Parisian Deck, the glass enclosed indoor dining room seats all passengers in a single sitting with unassigned seating and allows for wonderful panoramic views of the stunning scenery as we sail. The Lumiere Open Deck provides a generous covered area where guests can enjoy meals al fresco, weather permitting. Food is served at the table or displayed on the hot and cold buffet stands. The menu is international, with a focus on local specialties. A choice of house wine, beer and soft drinks are served with lunch and dinner.



Lumiere Open Deck



Lounge



Restaurant



Lounge

Life On Board

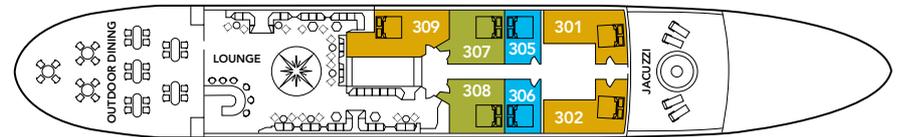
During the day, life on board focuses around the indoor lounge area, and the indoor and outdoor dining spaces, as well as the open and inviting deck areas including the Jacuzzi. These are natural gathering places and perfect for enjoying your meals al fresco, relaxing in a comfortable chair with a good book or socialising with your fellow passengers and enjoying the views.



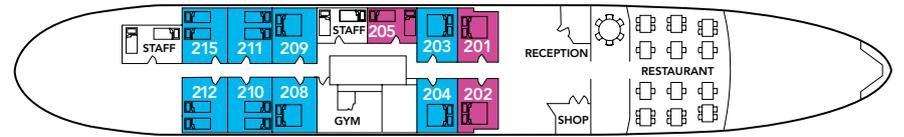
MS Monet

DECK PLAN

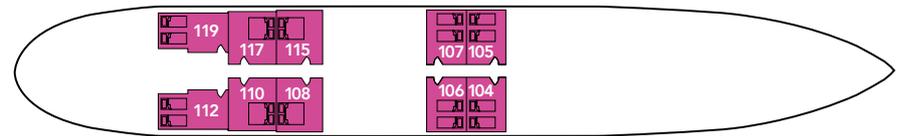
LUMIERE DECK



PARISIAN DECK



CAMILLE DECK



■ CATEGORY A
 ■ CATEGORY B
 ■ CATEGORY C
 ■ CATEGORY D

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