

SPECIAL  
OFFER - SAVE  
**£500**  
PER PERSON

# MARVELS OF MADAGASCAR

SPEND CHRISTMAS ABOARD THE MS CALEDONIAN SKY  
DISCOVERING THE WONDERS OF MADAGASCAR

16<sup>TH</sup> TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2021



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Nosy Hara

The term ‘unique’ is often an overused description in the travel world but certainly applies to the island of Madagascar. The animals, plants, landscapes and people that make up this thousand mile long island are unlike anywhere else in the world. This extraordinary country long remained obscure as a destination and is still relatively unknown amongst even the most serious of travellers. There is minimal infrastructure in many parts of the island and for those wishing to explore the island in some depth, doing so by small ship, especially one as well-suited as the MS Caledonian Sky is far preferable to exploring by any other means.

Our expedition includes eight days on the island and opportunities to explore rainforests full of wildlife including lemurs, chameleons and indigenous birdlife as well as seeing the underwater world and village life. Our days will be spent exploring ashore, often traversing over rugged terrain and walking through spectacular rainforests and each evening we will have the benefit of returning to our comfortable ship to relax and look forward to the next adventure. With the vessel’s fleet of Zodiacs for forays ashore, allowing access to the wonderful places denied to larger ships, you can enjoy encounters with fabulous endemic wildlife in this immensely rich and timeless corner of the Indian Ocean. Our onboard experts will greatly enrich your expedition and ensure that we make the most of our time on the world’s “eighth continent”.



## Guest Speaker



Daniel Austin

Daniel is a travel writer, naturalist, photographer and tour lecturer who specialises in the exotic Indian Ocean island of Madagascar. His fascination with this enigmatic country extends not only to its unique flora and fauna, but also to its people, culture, history, geology and beyond. He has written three books about Madagascar and also

presents lectures on the country, including at the Royal Geographical Society. Daniel is Secretary of the Anglo-Malagasy Society, a UK-based organisation founded in 1961, to promote knowledge of Madagascar amongst British people and to foster relations between the two countries. He is also founder of the Madagascar Library, a private collection of some 3,000 books, maps and other documents about the country. Daniel studied linguistics and cognitive science at the University of Cambridge and at UCL in London, as well as engineering science at the University of Oxford.

## The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Mauritius.** Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

**Day 2 Port Louis.** Arrive today and transfer to Port Louis to embark the MS Caledonian Sky.

**Day 3 Port Louis.** After a leisurely morning enjoy a sightseeing tour including Pamplémousse Botanical Gardens which are home to over 500 species of plants. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail tonight.

**Day 4 Port Est, Reunion.** We arrive at breakfast in Reunion where we have a choice of excursions. On a full day tour we will visit the central highlands

where spectacularly rugged peaks of dormant or extinct volcanoes cradle huge amphitheatres known as cirques, where mountains tower to over 10,000 feet and beautiful waterfalls plummet hundreds of feet. The rich soil and mellow climate produce a lush and verdant landscape which is dotted with villages and towns with a uniquely French atmosphere. We will enjoy views from the Nez des Boeufs and see the Piton de la Fournaise crater. After enjoying a creole lunch in a local restaurant visit the “Cite du Volcan” museum. Alternatively enjoy a morning tour to a vanilla plantation in St Andre where we learn about the



Landing by Zodiac



Nosy Hara



Nosy Tanikely



Mantella frog



Panther Chameleon

history and culture of this integral part of Reunion's heritage. We will also enjoy some free time in St Denis before returning to the MS Caledonian Sky for lunch and an afternoon at leisure before we set sail this evening.

**Day 5 At Sea.** Enjoy a leisurely day at sea as we sail to Madagascar.

**Days 6 & 7 Nosy Mangabe & Masoala National Park, Madagascar.** Over breakfast we arrive at Nosy Mangabe, a 520 hectare island reserve in Antongil Bay. Here we find one of the most diverse areas of virgin rainforest in Madagascar which has also been an important research centre since the mid-1960s when several aye-ayes and lemurs were released into the forest. We will use our Zodiacs to land on the beach next to the forest and will offer a series of nature walks looking at the varied trees, plants and ferns and also hope to spot chameleon, lizards and black and white ruffed lemur. For the birders, keep an eye out for Madagascar buzzard, kingfisher and paradise flycatchers. We remain in Antongil Bay overnight to visit Madagascar's largest protected area, the Masoala National Park which comprises coastal rainforest, flooded forests and marsh and mangroves. Mammal species encountered include the red-ruffed lemur, the red-fronted brown lemur and the ring-tailed mongoose. The park is also home to various species of brightly coloured Mantella frogs and all manner of extraordinary chameleons. We will

run a series of walks for all levels during our time here whilst you also have the option to swim off the beach or perhaps visit the local village.

**Day 8 Diego Suarez.** After a morning at sea we enter dramatic Diego Suarez, a stunning natural harbour with a cosmopolitan mix of inhabitants. This afternoon choose from a city tour visiting the Commonwealth Cemetery and Place Joffre, or the Malagasy rainforest at the Mount Amber National Park. Dividing into short and long walk parties we will go in search of lemurs and chameleons as we explore the rainforest. In the towering vegetation, we may spot several species of lemurs and chameleons as well as endemic birds, including parrots.

**Day 9 Nosy Hara.** Sail overnight around the northern tip of Madagascar where strangely shaped limestone islets dot the aquamarine-coloured sea. The expedition team will decide on the most suitable island for landing, such as Nosy Hara, with its abundant birdlife and a great beach to swim from. There will be walks through the dense woodland to observe the unusual vegetation. We will also offer a Zodiac cruise around the islands and a chance to snorkel over the coral. Tonight we enjoy some Christmas Carols in the Lounge.

**Day 10 Nosy Tanikely.** We arrive this morning at the Nosy Tanikely Island Marine Reserve, an uninhabited island which offers

excellent snorkelling opportunities and wonderful beaches. We will take the opportunity to either swim in the clear waters or snorkel over the corals keeping an eye out for reef fish, turtles and morays. Alternatively, our naturalists will lead guided walks on the island where we may see the resident lemurs, fruit bats and hermit crabs and enjoy fantastic views from the lighthouse on the island's highest point. Enjoy an afternoon at sea to celebrate Christmas Day on board.

**Day 11 Mahajanga.** Mahajanga is a major port in northwest Madagascar situated on the Betsiboka River and is our base for a full day excursion to Ankarafantsika National Park located a couple of hours drive inland. This deciduous forest is a haven for birds, lemurs and reptiles and we will explore with our guides on a choice of walks. Eight species of lemur have been observed here including the famous Microcebus, the smallest primate in the world. Meanwhile over 120 species of birds nest here and we will keep an eye out for the Madagascan fish eagle and banded kestrel whilst the 44 species of reptile include chameleon, turtles and crocodiles that live in Lake Ravelobe.

**Day 12 At Sea.** Relax on board and enjoy our lecture programme as we continue our journey along the Madagascan coast.

**Day 13 Morondava.** From our anchorage off the town of Morondava, we will use the Zodiacs to land on the local beach. From

here we have a choice of excursions to explore the local region. A half day morning tour will visit the Avenue de Baobabs. Of the eight baobab species in the world, six are endemic to Madagascar. Here we see the *Adansonia grandidieri* species with a row of 20 to 25 trees which border the gravel road. Learn about the trees and their spiritual significance before returning to Morondava and exploring the local market. Alternatively, join a full day excursion to Kirindy Forest. Situated approximately a two hour drive from Morondava, we will pass the Avenue de Baobabs as we travel north. Kirindy is a 10,000 hectare, dry deciduous forest, one of the most endangered in the world where the flora and fauna includes many endemic species. Here we find three species of baobab, many birds and reptiles, eight species of lemur including the rare pale fork-marked lemur and other mammals including giant jumping rat, fosa and narrow-striped mongoose.

**Day 14 Tulear.** Our last call in Madagascar will be Tulear on the southwest coast. Arriving at lunchtime we have a choice of activities this afternoon. Maybe drive to the Antsokay Arboretum which is entirely devoted to conservation of the plants from the southwest of Madagascar and, after more than 30 years of hard work, offers a densely kept selection of flora presenting a typical sub-arid thicket with baobab trees towering over the smaller plants. We will see the four hectare botanical



garden which comprises over 900 species of plants of which 90% are endemic to the region. Alternatively visit the Reniala Private Reserve, a small area of just 60 hectares but containing a spiny forest which is unique to South Eastern Madagascar. The park is home to 200 plant species including baobabs as well as being a paradise for birders with sightings of paradise

flycatchers, Madagascan hoopoe and Madagascan crested drongo.

**Day 15 Tulear to Johannesburg, South Africa.** Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our specially chartered flight to Johannesburg. Connect here with our scheduled onward flight to London.

**Day 16 London.** Arrive today.

## 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	£9495	£8995
Caledonian	Superior	£9795	£9295
Promenade	Premium	£9995	£9495
Bridge	Deluxe Balcony	£10995	£10495
Promenade	Premium Balcony	£11295	£10795
Promenade	Owners Corner Suite with balcony	£13495	£12995
Castle	Standard for sole use	£11495	£10995
Caledonian	Superior for sole use	£11795	£11295

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Economy class scheduled air travel • 13 nights aboard the MS Caledonian 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, Madagascan visa.

**Please note** that the walks during this expedition can be up to two hours in hot, humid and possibly wet conditions. Paths will be uneven and rough underfoot. Transport ashore will be in small coaster or 4x4 vehicles and whilst journeys are not long in distance, the roads can be bumpy adding to the time the journeys take. Zodiacs are integral to the operation of this expedition.

## New Year in Kruger National Park Extension 30<sup>th</sup> December 2021 to 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2022



After your expedition around Madagascar, we are offering the opportunity to explore the wildlife of the Kruger National Park.

### The Itinerary

**Day 1 Johannesburg, South Africa.** Arrive by our chartered flight from Madagascar and overnight at a Johannesburg hotel. Meet tonight for dinner. (D)

**Day 2 Johannesburg to Kruger National Park.** After breakfast we return to the airport for our scheduled flight to Nelspruit's Kruger Airport. The Kruger National Park is South Africa's largest game reserve with nearly two million hectares of land that stretches for 352 kilometres from north to south along the Mozambique border and is given over to an almost indescribable wildlife experience. This is the land of baobabs, fever trees, knob thorns, marula and mopane trees underneath which lurk the Big Five (buffalo, elephant, leopard, lion and rhino), the Little Five (buffalo weaver, elephant shrew, leopard tortoise, ant lion and rhino beetle), the birding Big Six (ground hornbill, kori bustard, lappet-faced vulture, martial eagle, pel's fishing owl and saddle-bill stork) and more species of mammals than in any other African game reserve. We will transfer to our Safari Lodge where we enjoy lunch before embarking on our first game drive this afternoon. Return to the lodge for a traditional Boma dinner this evening. (B, L, D)

**Day 3 Kruger National Park.** Hot and cold beverages will be waiting for us after our early morning wake up call. Enjoy a morning game drive showcasing the wildlife and nature of the southern region of Kruger National Park bordered by the Crocodile River in the south and the Sabie River in the north; the southern region is also host to the jagged ridge of the Lebombo Mountains and the highest point in the park, Khandzalive. The valleys are home to trees rarely found in other parts of the Kruger Park such as the Cape chestnut, coral tree and lavender fever-berry. After breakfast enjoy some free time and following a leisurely lunch there is the option of another game drive before dinner at the lodge. (B, L, D)

**Day 4 Kruger National Park to London.** After another dawn game drive we will enjoy breakfast and check out of the lodge before driving to Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport for our short flight to Johannesburg. Connect here with our onward flight to London. (B)

**Day 5 London.** Arrive this morning.

## PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£1995** Single: **£2345**

**Price Includes:** Overnight accommodation in Johannesburg • Meals as indicated (B - Breakfast, L - Lunch, D - Dinner) • Scheduled air travel between Johannesburg and Kruger National Park • Two nights accommodation at Kruger National Park • Game drives • Gratuities • Transfers • Taxes. **Not Included:** Travel insurance, visas.

**NB.** Please note that places for the Kruger extension are limited so we recommend reserving your place as soon as possible.

# MS CALEDONIAN SKY



Deluxe Balcony Suite



Dining 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. Refillable water bottles, 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 briefings are given by the onboard team and talks from Guest Speakers take place. Also in the Lounge is a 24-hour tea and coffee station along with an elegant bar. In addition there is the Lounge on the Panorama Deck which has a bar, library and further spacious seating arrangements, ideal for watching the world go by as you cruise to your next destination. The Travel Library is the perfect place to relax with a good book and is well stocked with reference books pertaining to the destinations the vessel is visiting. A selection 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). 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.

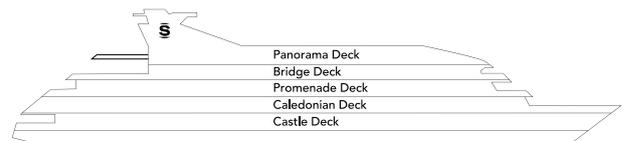
## Your Comfort

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.

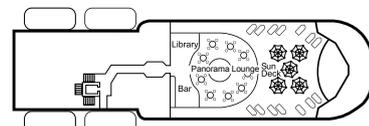
## Your Life On Board

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 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.

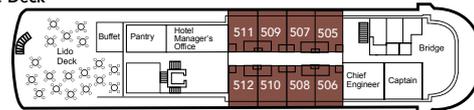
## MS CALEDONIAN SKY DECK PLAN



### Panorama Deck



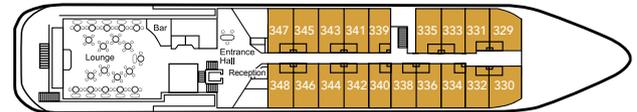
### Bridge Deck



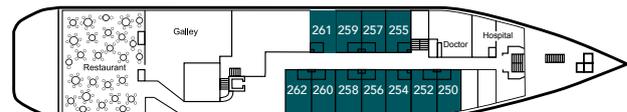
### Promenade Deck



### Caledonian Deck



### Castle Deck



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

Cover image: Red-ruffed lemur