

SAILING THE SPANISH MAIN

DISCOVER THE ANCIENT AND NATURAL
WONDERS OF CENTRAL AMERICA
ABOARD THE MS HEBRIDEAN SKY

22ND APRIL TO 14TH MAY 2019

SPECIAL
OFFER - SAVE
£400
PER PERSON

NOBLE CALEDONIA



San Blas Islands

Our voyage from Colombia to Florida by way of Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Belize, Mexico and Cuba is certainly an odyssey to some of Central America's most picturesque and enthralling destinations. We will begin in the charming, colonial walled town of Cartagena from where we sail to some little known, pristine and remote islands including Panama's San Blas archipelago, Colombia's Isla Providencia, Guanaja Island in Honduras and Livingstone in Guatemala.

Our time spent on these island paradises will be interspersed with visits to some of the region's most fascinating Mayan sites including the opportunity to explore Copan in Honduras, Chichen Itza in Mexico and the lesser known Lamanai Archaeological Reserve in Belize with its massive pyramids. Not forgetting the incredible biodiversity of the region, we also visit some national parks to view endemic and diverse flora and fauna including the Cahuita National Park in Costa Rica. Before reaching the United States we spend two days in the vibrant Cuban capital of Havana.

If you have been contemplating a visit to Central America, then this captivating voyage offers you the perfect opportunity with its mix of cultural and natural wonders. Such a comprehensive and in-depth itinerary would be difficult to comprehend or undertake by any other means than a cruise and with the MS Hebridean Sky as our base, we are able to visit some remarkable places which the larger cruise vessels simply cannot access.



The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Cartagena, Colombia. Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

Day 2 Cartagena. Arrive into Cartagena this morning and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day is free to relax. Later this evening we will meet for dinner in a nearby restaurant.

Day 3 Cartagena. This morning we will explore the colonial walled city of Cartagena on a guided tour including the 16th century Fort of San Felipe and Monastery of San Pedro Claver. After lunch in a local restaurant there will be some free time before transferring to the MS Hebridean Sky. Enjoy Welcome Drinks and Dinner as we sail this evening.

Day 4 San Blas Islands, Panama. Spend the morning at sea before we arrive at the stunning San Blas Archipelago during lunch. The archipelago is made up of over 400 islands which line the north coast of Panama with white sandy beaches set in a turquoise sea. The islands are home to the indigenous Kuna Indians who gained self-rule from the government of Panama in the 1920s and maintain their traditional way of life including the production of colourful fabric art known as 'molas'. This afternoon choose to explore the market, local museum or maybe enjoy a swim from the beach.

Day 5 Colon for the Panama Canal. From our berth in Colon we will take a full day tour to see the famous Panama Canal. The first attempt to build the canal was made by

a French company, but ended in failure in 1889. The American government eventually bought out the French for 40 million dollars, and their attempt to build the Canal started in 1904. Through the efforts of over 80,000 workers and the loss of more than 30,000 lives, the greatest single construction project ever undertaken was completed. The canal finally opened in 1914 and it is now a vital artery of international trade, with nearly 14,000 ships travelling through it every year. We will visit the Panama Canal Observation Centre and learn about the expansion of the canal before visiting the Miraflores Locks Visitor Centre where we can watch the ships as they pass through. Also discover the historic old town of Panama, declared a UNESCO Historical Monument. We will stroll along the cobblestone streets of

the Casco Viejo visiting the colonial mansions and 17th century churches and convents before continuing to Panama Viejo and the original ruins of the city founded in 1517 and burnt to the ground by British pirate Henry Morgan.

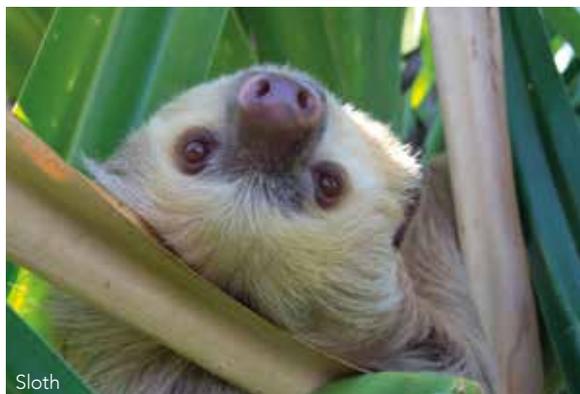
Day 6 Bocos del Toro. Arrive this morning in the Bocas del Toro archipelago and the island of Isla Colon. After breakfast we will head the short distance to the Finca Los Monos, a privately run garden managed by David and Lin Gillingham. Over the years Finca Los Monos has evolved from a lush rainforest to a magnificently planned garden with large collections of heliconias, gingers, palms, flowering trees, fruits, spices and ornamentals whilst new plants are constantly being added. With such an abundance



Chichen Itza, Mexico



French Angelfish



Sloth



Livingston

of fruit and flowers, a wide variety of birds reside here including parrots, tanagers, woodpeckers, orioles, flycatchers, green ibis and many more. One may be lucky enough to see the small nests of the hummingbirds or the pendulous nests of the montezuma oropendulas. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at leisure to explore the small town.

Day 7 Puerto Limon, Costa Rica. This morning we head south to the Cahuita National Park. The area is filled with wildlife that includes howler monkeys, white-faced capuchin monkeys, raccoons, sloths, otters, coatis, agoutis, armadillos and porcupines. Several avian species also live in the swamp forest, including the green ibis, the green kingfisher, the yellow crowned night-heron, the frigate bird and the boat-billed heron, among others. Our naturalist guides will lead us through the trails of the rainforest, sharing their vast knowledge of this fragile ecosystem. After lunch on board the MS Hebridean Sky the afternoon is free to relax or join a restored passenger train and travel through beautiful scenery to catch a glimpse of some more of Costa Rica's amazing wildlife such as sloths and monkeys. The train track is part of the 3' 6" gauge Atlantic Railway, opened in 1890 to link San José with the country's east coast but closed to regular services after severe damage by an earthquake in 1991. For the second part of the trip we will board a boat and travel along the scenic Tortuguero canals, where waterfowl, white-faced and spider monkeys can be spotted.

Day 8 Isla de Providencia, Colombia. Often referred to as 'Old Providence' in English, Providencia is a beautiful Colombian island that is little known and untouched by the hand of tourism. Along with its smaller sister island of Santa Catalina, it is enclosed by an extensive barrier reef system of some 35 kilometres in length, making it one of the most significant reefs in the world. Captured twice by Henry Morgan and his buccaneers who aimed to make it a British possession, it nevertheless ended up Spanish and is now a remote Colombian island. Arriving at lunchtime we have an opportunity to spend the afternoon on an island tour and travel in local boats to Crab Cay for snorkelling.

Day 9 At Sea. Relax on board, find a spot on deck to read or maybe join one of the lectures as we continue our journey north.

Day 10 Guanaja Island, Honduras. Arrive this morning in Honduras and the small island of Guanaja. The easternmost of the three Bay Islands, Guanaja is covered in a forest of Caribbean pine and when Christopher Columbus landed on the island in 1502, he named it the Isla de Pinos (Island of Pines). Unlike some of the surrounding islands only small ships like ours can anchor here and we will spend the day exploring the island and its surroundings. Visit the small town, use local boats to explore the mangrove channels, snorkel on one of the nearby cayes, visit the small turtle sanctuary or join nature walks with the local guides.

Day 11 Puerto Cortes. Our second day in Honduras will be at the mainland port of Puerto Cortes from where there will be a choice of excursions. A full day tour will travel to the archaeological site of Copán, famous for its magnificent Maya ruins which were declared a UNESCO World Heritage Archaeological Site in 1980. One of the most important of all Maya civilisations lived, prospered, and then mysteriously crumbled around the site. The city produced remarkable sculptures and hieroglyphics, including a towering stairway, which we will explore before enjoying lunch in a local restaurant and returning to the ship. This will be a long but rewarding tour. Alternatively drive to the nearby Fortaleza de San Fernando do Omoa, a colossal fortress, at 4,400 square metres, built by the Spanish between 1759 and 1777 to combat the piracy prevalent in the region. Explore the fortress, the visitor centre and museum before returning to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at leisure.

Day 12 Livingston, Guatemala. Surrounded by water and jungle, Livingston is a settlement of Garifuna people accessible only by sea which is just one of the things that makes it unique among Guatemalan cities. We will transfer onto local boats and venture up the Rio Dulce hoping to see pelicans, cormorants and herons as we cruise up the river before arriving at the Ak'tenamit project, a local social development organisation supporting sustainable tourism. Here we



Isla Providencia

will walk the trails viewing birds and plants before returning to spend time in Livingston itself.

Day 13 Belize City, Belize. We have an interesting day ahead as we travel inland to the ancient Mayan city of Lamanai (translates to 'submerged crocodile'). From the nearby town of Orange Walk Bridge, we board local boats for a wildlife cruise through mangroves, wetlands and forests. Look out for egrets, herons, kingfishers, snail kites and black-collared hawks as we make our way up river past Morelet's crocodiles. A short walk through the jungle brings us to the Lamanai Archaeological Reserve with its massive pyramids which are in fact pyramids built upon pyramids. Local guides will tell the story of this site which is the only Mayan city known to have been inhabited through every age of Mayan civilisation.

Day 14 Costa Maya, Mexico. From the port of Costa Maya we will head inland to the Mayan archaeological sites of Dzibanche and Kinichna which formed a city that covered 40 square kilometres. The ruins, discovered in 1927 by Thomas Gann, include impressive temples, plazas and ceremonial centres whilst government buildings suggest this



Havana

was a social and economic centre for the region. The site was settled during the 'classic period' between the 3rd and 9th centuries and was also the capital of the Kan dynasty in the 5th and 6th centuries AD. Recent excavations at Dzibanche have revealed tombs with rich jade offerings for members of the ruling family and inscriptions that indicate it could have been home to the most powerful Maya dynasty.

Day 15 Cozumel. The island of Cozumel is our base for a choice of tours today. We will travel by boat to mainland Mexico for our full day tour to the Mayan site of Chichen Itza, one of the new 'Seven Wonders of the World'. Our visit will include the great main plaza with the adjoining imposing El Castillo, also known as the Pyramid of Kukulcon. Other buildings include the Temple of the Carved Panels, the Temple of the Warriors and the nearby Group of the Thousand Columns, the Ball Court and the Caracol Observatory. Alternatively stay on the island of Cozumel and visit the pre Columbian Mayan site of San Gervasio. This was a hub of worship for the goddess Ix Chel, the deity of childbirth, fertility, medicine and weaving and women would make a pilgrimage to the site at least once in their lives. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at leisure in the local town.

Day 16 At Sea. After a busy few days enjoy a relaxing day at sea, maybe join a lecture or find a spot on deck to settle down with a book.

Days 17 & 18 Havana, Cuba. We have two full days to explore Havana and will offer a choice

of excursions during our time here. Perhaps choose to discover Habana Vieja (Old Havana) with its twisting, cobbled streets that lead to beautifully restored Baroque churches, castles and palaces and visit the 16th century Plaza de Armas, the oldest plaza in the city and its original administrative centre. Alternatively learn more about Hemingway's Cuba and visit the legendary writer's finca in San Francisco de Paula and the Ernest Hemingway Museum. Later, call into Cojimar Village, the inspiration for 'The Old Man and the Sea'. For those who wish to explore modern Havana, an excursion will drive along the Malecon, Havana's seafront to Vedado. See the Plaza de la Revolution and the headquarters of President Fidel Castro and his Council of Ministers. We also hope to embrace one of the traditional industries of Cuba with a visit to a cigar factory learning about the traditional techniques still in practice today. For those wishing to venture further we will offer a full day tour to the Vinales Valley in the Pinar del Rio Province. It is here that some of the best tobacco is grown, harvested and processed. We will learn about the production techniques, see the traditional Cuban country lifestyle and enjoy lunch before our scenic drive back to the ship. We also hope to have musicians join us on board for a concert as we moor overnight.

Days 19 & 20 Key West, USA. Awake this morning in Key West, the southernmost point of the continental United States and home to a rich legacy of historic sites. During our two days here visit the homes of two heavyweights of

20th century literature, Ernest Hemingway and Tennessee Williams, before enjoying some free time to soak up the sights and sounds of the city's lively Duval Street. A full day excursion by high speed catamaran will visit America's least-visited National Park, the island grouping of Dry Tortugas. Located 67 miles west of Key West, the islands are home to the impressive Fort Jefferson, built to secure the southern US coast and the one time home to over 2000 people.

Day 21 At Sea. Spend a final, relaxing day at sea as we cruise around the Florida coast.

Day 22 Port Canaveral to London. Disembark this

morning and drive to the nearby Kennedy Space Centre, offering a rare and behind the scenes look at one of mankind's most fascinating and remarkable achievements – the space programme. After our tour we will enjoy lunch before transferring to Orlando Airport for our scheduled flight to London.

Day 23 London. Arrive this morning.

SHIP TO SHORE

Please note that this voyage is a mix of expedition and destination cruising and we will be making use of the vessel's Zodiacs in at least five ports of call including the San Blas Islands, Bocos del Toro, Isla de Providencia, Guanaja Island and Livingstone.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £400 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY			
Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Amundsen	Standard	£11395	£10995
Byrd	Superior	£11595	£11195
Mawson	Premium	£11995	£11595
Mawson	Corner	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Scott	Deluxe Balcony	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Shackleton	Owner's Balcony	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Shackleton	Hebridean	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Amundsen	Standard for sole use	£13995	£13595
Byrd	Superior for sole use	£14195	£13795

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Overnight hotel accommodation in Cartagena on a bed and breakfast basis • Half day Cartagena tour with lunch • Dinner on day 2 • 19 nights aboard the MS Hebridean Sky on a full board basis • Wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Shore excursions • Noble Caledonia onboard team • Transfers • Port taxes • Gratuities.

Not Included: Travel insurance, visas.

MS HEBRIDEAN SKY



Alfresco Dining



Owner's Balcony Suite



The Restaurant

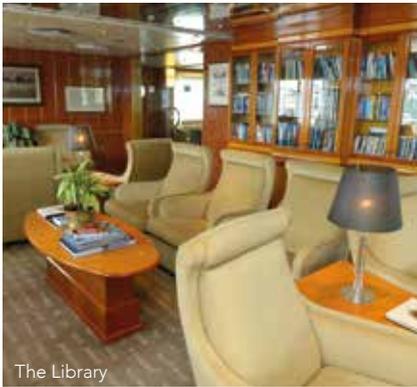
The MS Hebridean Sky is one of our three flag ships and sister vessel to the MS Island Sky and MS Caledonian Sky. All three vessels were built in the same ship yard in Italy at similar times and share the same excellent attributes that make them three of the finest small ships in the world. With a maximum passenger capacity of only 118, 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 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, flat screen television and a telephone in each suite. Bottled water, Egyptian cotton sheets, 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



Superior Suite



The Club

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 where the onboard pianist plays periodically throughout the day. 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 selection of games and two computers offering complimentary internet access can also be found in the Library. 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. Throughout the vessel, carefully chosen artwork and photos reflect the destinations we sail to.

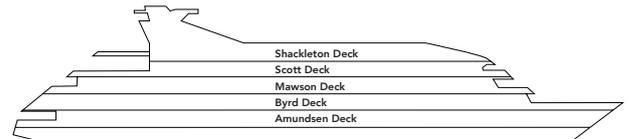
Your Comfort

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.

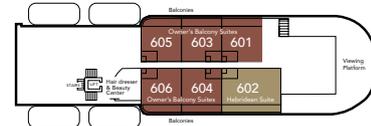
Your Life On Board

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 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 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.

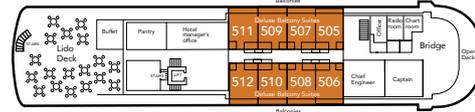
MS HEBRIDEAN SKY DECK PLAN



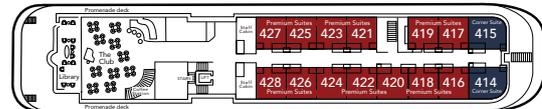
Shackleton Deck



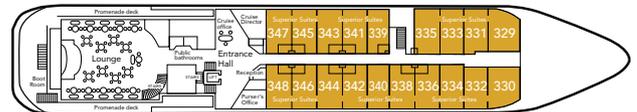
Scott Deck



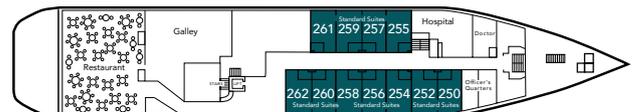
Mawson Deck



Byrd Deck



Amundsen Deck



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

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.



NOBLE CALEDONIA

2 Chester Close, Belgravia, London, SW1X 7BE
 +44 (0)20 7752 0000 | info@noble-caledonia.co.uk | noble-caledonia.co.uk



All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
 Cover image: Cartagena.