

LIMITED AVAILABILITY REMAINING

SPECIAL
OFFER – SAVE
£500
PER PERSON

SICILY BY SEA

A circumnavigation of Sicily aboard the MS Island Sky
with Guest Speaker Olga Stone

14th to 22nd October 2024

NOBLE CALEDONIA



Join us aboard the all-suite MS Island Sky for this circumnavigation of Sicily and all its wonders in the company of just 118 fellow guests. This unique island has an incredible wealth of treasures and a geography which lends itself beautifully to exploration by sea with most points of interest located close to the coast. Owing to its benevolent climate and superb strategic position, Sicily has been coveted, fought over and colonised numerous times with the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Normans, Byzantines and Bourbons having all made their mark. With our circumnavigation of the island we have the luxury of time allowing us to explore Sicily's rich heritage at a relaxing pace.

From magnificent Doric temples to great Byzantine cathedrals and bizarrely styled villas, there is so much to explore during our exploration of the island which we have timed for October when the crowds of summer will have departed and the temperatures will be pleasant for our guided tours. We will visit the Roman mosaics of Villa Romana di Casale, the Valle dei Templi, the superbly well-preserved Greek temples of Segesta and the Norman Royal Palace and Palatine Chapel in Palermo, Byzantine Monreale Cathedral and the stunning Greek theatre at Taormina.

We have planned some late departures from port which afford the opportunity to enjoy dining ashore or an after dinner stroll in some towns which are particularly atmospheric in the evening. In addition, local guides and our onboard Guest Speaker will contribute greatly to your enjoyment and understanding of Sicily.



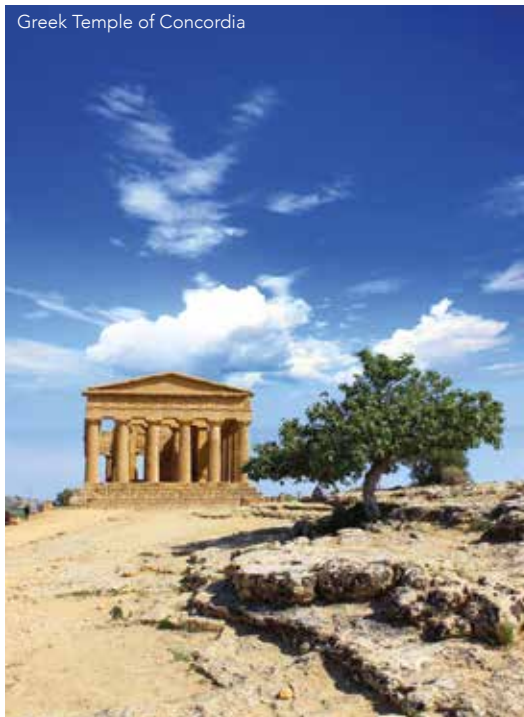
Guest Speaker – Olga Stone



Olga combines her skills as a concert pianist, historian, art historian and classicist to make her talks entertaining, lively, informative, and unusual. Olga is an accredited lecturer for the Arts Society and has a PhD in Classics and a BA in Arts History. She was Head of Classics at King William's College on the Isle of Man and teaches various history classes, Latin and Russian at the University College Isle of Man.

Olga also worked as a sessional Arts History lecturer for the University of Liverpool for 12 years, and for eight years was a history tutor for the University of Chester, lecturing on various art styles from Renaissance to 20th century, Medieval History and the Crusades. Olga was born in the Crimea and attended Conservatoire in Odessa, graduating with top marks in piano performance. She also has FTCL in Piano Performance, ATCL in Organ Performance and AMusTCL in music theory.





The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Valletta, Malta. Fly by scheduled flight. Arrive this afternoon and transfer to the MS Island Sky moored in the Grand Harbour of Valletta. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we sail this evening.

Day 2 Licata for Piazza Armerina, Sicily. From the port of Licata we travel inland to what is regarded as the finest Roman site in Sicily, the Imperial Roman Villa of Casale, which is located close to Piazza Armerina amidst wooded rolling countryside. This huge villa was built in the 3rd century and has some stunning floor mosaics. Our return drive takes us through the province of Caltanissetta, recognised today as one of the best winemaking regions in Italy thanks above all to its production of high quality, prestigious red wines including Nero D'Avola. We will break our journey at one of these vineyards and enjoy a chance to sample some wine over a Sicilian lunch before returning to the ship.

Day 3 Agrigento for Valle dei Templi. Although handsome in its own right and awash with Medieval atmosphere, Agrigento is not our main reason for calling at this southern coast port. Close by is the Valle dei Templi, a series of Doric temples and the most captivating of Sicilian Greek remains, a grouping unique outside Greece. Surrounded in the greenery of olive and almond trees, admire the Temple of Hera, the Temple of Concordia, the Dioscuri Temple, the Temple of Olympic Jove and the Temple of Hercules. After lunch on board the afternoon is free to explore Agrigento and shuttles will run from the port to the town and the excellent archaeological museum which you can explore at leisure.

Day 4 Trapani. Trapani was the landing point for Peter of Aragon in 1282 to start the Spanish occupation of Sicily. This morning there is the option to travel inland to explore Segesta, one of the grandest Doric monuments to survive. See the unfinished temple dating from 424 BC as well as the theatre from where you can enjoy excellent views of the countryside and distant coastline. Alternatively visit Erice, famed in antiquity for its temple dedicated to the goddess of love, the Phoenician Astarte, Greek Aphrodite or Roman Venus. A tour will take us to this stunning site high above the sea and to the beautifully preserved Medieval town characterised by its winding cobblestone streets and beautiful courtyards. Both tours will then enjoy a Sicilian lunch at a nearby olive oil farm. We return to the ship later in the afternoon and there will be the opportunity to wander around Trapani at leisure as we plan to sail later in the evening.

Day 5 Palermo. Arrive this morning in the Sicilian capital of Palermo. After breakfast we will explore the city, famous for its jumbled and picturesque streets punctuated with ornate Baroque churches, domed Arab mosques and the glittering Byzantine mosaics that reveal a unique and diverse heritage. We visit the impressive 12th century cathedral which houses the royal tombs of Henri VI and King Ruggiero. Return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon

either enjoy some time to explore independently or join an excursion to Monreale Cathedral, said to be the most beautiful Norman Church in Italy, designed and completed by William the Good in 1174. With its thick walls and powerful towers, the exterior looks like an austere fortress yet it is the interior of this great cathedral which is its crowning glory. Here the large nave, with its side aisles and grey granite columns set off the exquisite Byzantine mosaics on the walls above the arches.

Day 6 Messina for Taormina. From the nearby port of Messina we will visit Taormina, a walled town lying in the shadow of Mount Etna, Europe's highest volcano. The town has been a popular tourist destination since the 19th century and our guided tour will include walking the characteristic alleys before visiting the 15th century Palazzo Corvaja and the impressive Greek Theatre from where there are marvellous views over the town and coast. Those who wish to spend longer here will be able to take lunch independently in one of the local restaurants and enjoy an afternoon exploring at leisure before our coach returns to Messina. Alternatively, return to the ship for lunch and enjoy free time in Messina before we sail this evening.

Day 7 Syracuse. Syracuse was founded by the Greeks in 734 BC and by the 5th century was a political and military power throughout the Mediterranean which rivalled Athens as the largest and most beautiful city in the Greek world. On leaving the vessel we visit the Neapolis Archaeological Park where we will find a well preserved Greek theatre with seats carved from limestone. Paradise Quarry, now an attractive garden and orange grove, was the primary source of that limestone and is the site of the curious 'Ear of Dionysius', a vast grotto with an amplifying resonance. We will continue to explore the island of Ortigia where we will find the Temple of Apollo, considered to be Sicily's most ancient Doric temple and the Baroque Cathedral, erected over the remains of the Temple of Minerva. The afternoon is free to explore independently before we meet this evening for a private concert in one of the town's palazzos accompanied by local food and wine.

Day 8 Noto & Ragusa. From our berth in Pozzallo we will explore the Baroque villages of Noto and Ragusa. Built in 1703 Noto is a picturesque city located on the terraced slopes of Mount Iblei among olive groves and almond trees. A guided walk along the central streets will reveal the 18th century Palazzo Ducezio and some Baroque churches: San Francesco Immacolata, the cathedral, San Carlo, Santa Chiara and the imposing Palazzo Nicolaci di Villadorata, built in 1737. We return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon continue to charming Ragusa which has been included in the UNESCO World Heritage list for its artistic architectural heritage with its Baroque palaces, churches, squares and winding narrow streets, all of which create an evocative and ancient atmosphere. We will discover the wonderful Ragusa Ibla: the "Pearl of the Baroque", the gardens, the magnificent

Pre-cruise Malta Extension

12th to 14th October 2024



Valletta

If you would like to spend some time in Malta before embarking the MS Island Sky we are offering the opportunity to enjoy a two night stay in Valletta.

The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Valletta, Malta. Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival transfer to the Phoenicia Hotel and check in for our two night stay. After some time at leisure we will meet for dinner this evening. (D)

Day 2 Valletta. Enjoy a morning walking tour of Valletta, the 16th century "Fortress City" built by the Knights of St John with its stunning views across the harbour from the Barakka Gardens. We will explore Merchants Street, containing the surviving auberges built by the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, together with the palace where Napoleon Bonaparte is believed to have stayed in 1798. Our final stop will be at St John's Cathedral. (B)

Day 3 Mdina. This morning we will tour the city of Mdina. Known as the "Silent City" at the heart of the island, Mdina was the fortified capital of the island before the arrival of the Knights. Enjoy a local lunch before transferring to the MS Island Sky moored in Valletta. (B, L).

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: £795 Single: £995

Price Includes: Two nights accommodation at the Phoenicia Hotel, meals as indicated (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner), tours as described, Noble Caledonia Tour Manager, gratuities, transfers.

Not Included: Travel insurance.

palaces, the splendid church of San Giuseppe and the Dome of San Giorgio, built in the 18th century on the site where an older church stood before the earthquake of 1693.

Day 9 Valletta to London. Disembark after breakfast and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.



Imperial Roman Villa of Casale mosaic

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

LIMITED AVAILABILITY – SAVE £500 PER PERSON

Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Magellan	Standard	£5295	£4795
Columbus	Superior	£5495	£4995
Marco Polo	Premium	£5695	£5195
Marco Polo	Corner	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Explorer	Owner's Balcony Suites	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Explorer	Island Suite	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£6595	£6095
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£6995	£6495

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Eight nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia onboard team including Guest Speaker • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Airport taxes • 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 flag ships 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 Erikson 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.

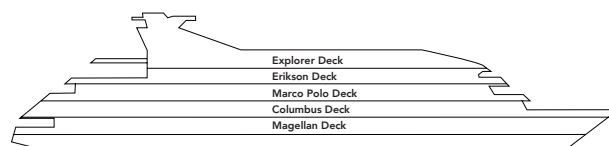
Your Comfort

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.

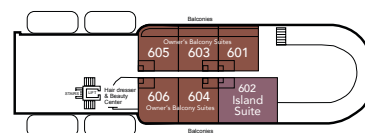
Your Life On Board

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.

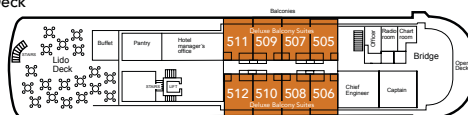
MS ISLAND SKY DECK PLAN



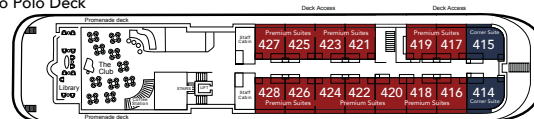
Explorer Deck



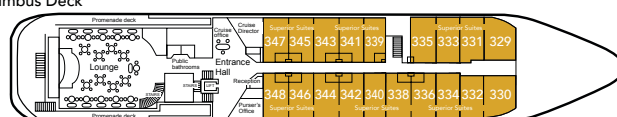
Erikson Deck



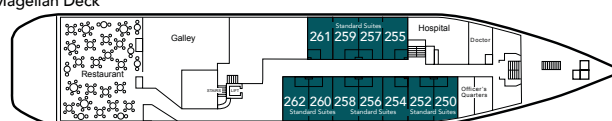
Marco Polo Deck



Columbus Deck



Magellan Deck



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



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