

SPECIAL
OFFER – SAVE
£200
PER PERSON

SPRING FLOWERS & THE GOLDEN AGE OF DUTCH ART

A cruise exploring the art treasures &
horticultural highlights of the Netherlands
aboard the MS Douce France

18th to 28th April 2024

NOBLE CALEDONIA

Spring is the perfect time of year to immerse yourself in the cultural and horticultural splendours of the Netherlands. During our voyage aboard the wonderfully comfortable MS Douce France we will explore the countryside in some depth, visiting the magnificent flower displays of the Keukenhof, the historic Castle and Gardens of Middachten, the picturesque towns of the Zuider Zee, the Hortus Botanicus, the oldest botanical garden in the Netherlands and of course the art treasures of Amsterdam and The Hague.

April is the ideal month for such a journey, the bulbs will be at their best and the landscape touched by the arrival of spring. The itinerary we have designed is, we believe, a perfect mix of horticulture, history, art and Dutch lifestyle and makes for a colourful and endlessly interesting cruise.



Amsterdam



Marken



GUEST SPEAKER – Brian Healey



Brian has enjoyed a lifetime of artistic exploration and learning, pursuing parallel careers as a modern linguist, professional artist and director of his own design company. After a highly successful career teaching at prestigious public schools in both the UK and Austria, for the last fifteen years he has become widely known throughout the cruise and travel industry for his inspirational lectures and art workshops to which he brings a unique practical insight. A fully accredited Arts Society lecturer, he has undertaken an extensive programme of speaking engagements including in Australia, courtesy of ADFAS. Examples of his atmospheric watercolours can be seen in private collections all over the world.

THE ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival into Amsterdam transfer to the MS Douce France and embark. Moor overnight.

Day 2 Keukenhof Gardens. After breakfast we will drive from Amsterdam to the Keukenhof Gardens for a morning in this extraordinary horticultural heaven. With 32 hectares of flowers, more than seven million bulbs in bloom and 800 varieties of tulips, this is a truly unique and unforgettable experience. We will return to the MS Douce France for a late lunch followed by an afternoon at leisure in Amsterdam. Moor overnight in Amsterdam.

Day 3 Naarden & Amsterdam. After breakfast we will depart for the ancient fortified town of Naarden, one of the best-preserved in Europe with a fascinating history. A military work of art, it has the shape of a 12-pointed star and a double ring of moats. On arrival enjoy a walking tour, followed by some free time. After lunch on board, the afternoon is at leisure to either explore independently or join the included tour to the Rijksmuseum. Housing some of the greatest examples of Western European painting and decorative arts, it boasts works by Vermeer, Goya, and Rubens. Here, Rembrandt's famous 'The Night Watch' hangs in the Hall of Honour.

Day 4 Haarlem. After breakfast, depart for a morning walking tour of Haarlem, including the Windmill de Adriaan. Our tour concludes with a visit to the Frans Hals Museum, home to a spectacular display of 16th and 17th

century portraits, still lifes and landscapes. Return to the MS Douce France for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore the city's pretty streets and café culture. Sail in the early evening towards Hoorn.

Day 5 Hoorn, Edam & Marken. This morning we will take a walking tour of the beautiful 16th century town of Hoorn and after lunch on board we will visit two unique communities of the Zuider Zee. Our first call will be at Edam, a tranquil little town with drawbridges across canals and charming historic houses with lovely facades. Continue on to the fascinating village of Marken which was separated from the mainland after a storm surge in the 13th century. Here the houses and the traditional costumes are reminiscent of the past when the island was flooded quite regularly and, the reason why the houses were built on stilts and mounds. Sail in the early evening towards Arnhem.

Day 6 Arnhem. Arrive this morning into Arnhem. After breakfast on board join an excursion to visit the memorable Airborne Museum 'Hartenstein'; this renovated building houses the world's largest collection of militaria from Operation Market Garden. Alternatively, you may like to visit the private art collection at the Kroller Muller Museum with its late 19th and 20th century paintings. Return to the MS Douce France for lunch and enjoy a leisurely afternoon in Arnhem or you may like to join the included visit to the unique Middachten Castle and Gardens. Middachten has never been sold but has always passed from one generation to another. As a result, the interior of the castle still has many of the original household effects, including a large collection of portraits. The gardens, as they are now, came into being around 1900 when the garden architect, Hugo Poortman, brought back elements of the former Baroque style into the landscaped gardens, keeping trees in his "neo" Baroque garden. Sail in the evening towards Dordrecht.

Day 7 Dordrecht & Kinderdijk. Enjoy a relaxing morning cruise as we head towards Dordrecht. After lunch on board there will be an excursion to see the nearby marvellous Windmills of Kinderdijk, of which there are 19 in total, dating from 1740. The remainder of the day is free to explore Dordrecht with its old-world atmosphere and quaint shops, cottages and canals. Sail on towards Veere this evening.

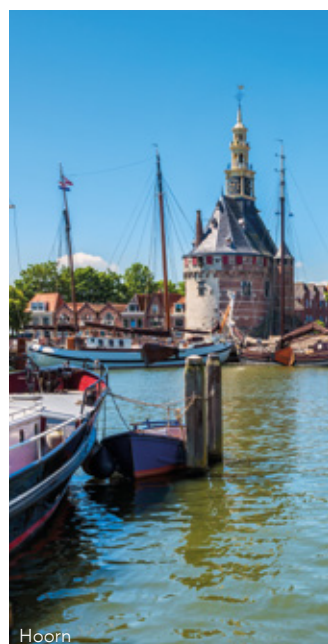
Day 8 Veere & Middelburg. Today we explore Southern Zeeland, starting in the 13th century town of Veere. Formerly a seaport but now within a lake due to the Delta works carried out in the 1960s, it is a charming place with well-preserved houses and a marina. Enjoy free time here to explore at your own pace. Return to the ship and sail on to the lovingly restored Medieval town of Middelburg whose 12th century abbey is one of the oldest in the Netherlands. Join an afternoon guided walking tour on arrival. Sail this evening to Rotterdam.



Day 9 Delft & The Hague. From Rotterdam we depart for a full day tour. Our first stop will be Delft, birthplace of Vermeer. Here we enjoy a walking tour of the pretty town, followed by lunch and a visit to the Delft Blue Pottery. Afterwards, we continue to The Hague for a visit to the beautiful Mauritshuis Museum with its marvellous collection of Dutch Golden Age paintings.

Day 10 Leiden. After breakfast we depart for the vibrant city of Leiden, a treasure trove of narrow streets and canals, lined with beautiful 17th century buildings, including ancient alms houses. On our walking tour we will see the old harbour, Beestenmarkt square and the charming Weddesteege, where the world-famous painter Rembrandt was born. We continue with a visit to the Hortus Botanicus, the oldest botanical garden in the Netherlands. Return to the ship for a late lunch and sail towards Amsterdam. This evening join your fellow travellers for the farewell drinks and dinner.

Day 11 Amsterdam to London. Disembark after breakfast and return to London by scheduled flight.



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
C	Main Deck Double/Twin Cabin with Large Window	£3395	£3195
B	Upper Deck Double/Twin Cabin with French Balcony	£3795	£3595
A	Upper Deck Suite with French Balcony	£4395	£4195
C	Main Deck Double/Twin Cabin with Large Window for sole use	£3795	£3595

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • 10 nights aboard the MS Douce France on a full board basis • House wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch & dinner • Shore excursions • Noble Caledonia onboard team including Guest Speaker • Gratuities • Transfers • Port & airport taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance.

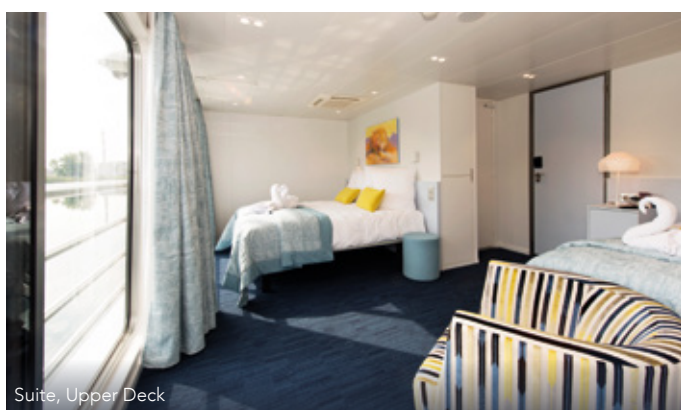
TRAVEL BY TRAIN

For those passengers who would prefer to travel by train to Amsterdam, we are offering the option to travel aboard the Eurostar service from London St Pancras International station for a supplement of £150 per person for the return journey. Train travel is subject to availability at the time of booking.



MS DOUCE FRANCE

We are delighted to have chartered the MS Douce France that is owned and operated by our associates CroisiEurope. Refurbished in 2017, the ship has a modern feel and offers a tranquil atmosphere on which to relax and enjoy the picturesque views of the passing landscapes. Cabins are located over two decks and have a bright airy feel; those on the Main Deck have large picture windows and those on the Upper Deck benefit from sliding floor-to-ceiling windows and French balconies. Public areas include the restaurant and the lounge bar with panoramic floor-to-ceiling windows, and a spacious Sun Deck with comfortable loungers and chairs.



Suite, Upper Deck



Double Cabin, Upper Deck

YOUR CABIN

All cabins are stylishly decorated and feature individually controlled air-conditioning, private bathroom with shower, television, hairdryer, safe and wardrobe. Beds in all of the cabins and suite can be configured as twin or double with the exception of cabins 125 and 221 which feature a fixed double bed. All cabins measure 14.5 square metres and the suite on the Upper Deck measures 23.5 square metres. Cabins on the Main Deck have two windows including a large picture window which can be opened partially and cabins and the suite on the Upper Deck boast sliding floor-to-ceiling windows with a French balcony.

YOUR SPACE

The vessel offers plenty of space to unwind and watch the world go by. The Sun Deck is equipped with comfortable loungers and for those who prefer the shade, an awning, under which are tables and chairs. The lounge bar is situated on the Upper Deck. Stylishly decorated with clusters of armchairs and sofas set around tables, this area boasts panoramic floor-to-ceiling windows and is the perfect place to spend time at leisure and socialise with new friends. The entrance to the ship is also on the Upper Deck, and you can find the reception desk here, manned from morning through evening and offering assistance when required. On the same deck is a small shop selling a selection of souvenirs. Complimentary Wi-Fi is available throughout the vessel.

YOUR DINING

Breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea and dinner are served in the stylish restaurant located on the Upper Deck which seats all passengers in one sitting. The excellent cuisine features delicious local and international dishes. Breakfast and lunch are buffet style with hot and cold items, and dinners are a served set menu with a choice of three main courses including a vegetarian option. House wine, beer and soft drinks are included with lunch and dinner on board.

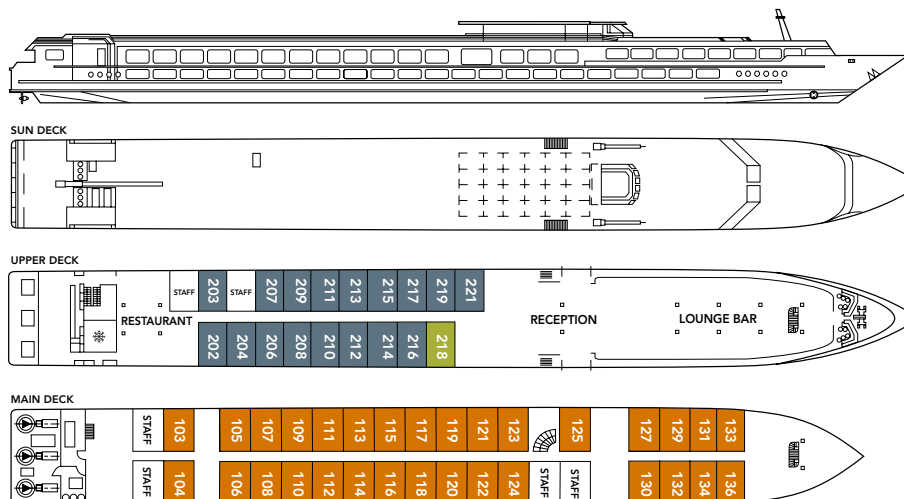


LIFE ON BOARD

The atmosphere on board is friendly and informal and after a day exploring ashore, you will return to the comfort and peace of a well-run and exceedingly comfortable vessel. Travelling with a maximum of 100 fellow passengers, you will find yourself amongst like-minded people in an English speaking environment and for those who seek peace and quiet, there will always be the opportunity to find a secluded spot on the Sun Deck or simply rest in your well-appointed cabin. The charming and friendly crew members provide a superb, personal service. In addition to our Cruise Director and Tour Manager, we will be joined by a Guest Speaker who will deliver informative and interesting lectures on board, adding to your enjoyment of the cruise.



DECK PLAN



Please note: All beds can be configured as twin or double with the exception of cabins 125 and 221 which feature a fixed double bed.

- CATEGORY A - SUITE
- CATEGORY B - DOUBLE/TWIN CABIN WITH FRENCH BALCONY
- CATEGORY C - DOUBLE/TWIN CABIN WITH LARGE WINDOW



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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: Tulip Field, The Netherlands.