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SPRING
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CLASSICAL
WORLD

A voyage from Valletta to Athens
aboard the MS Hebridean Sky
with Guest Speaker David Stuttard

20th to 31st March 2028

The seas between Malta and Greece offer access to a wealth of ancient sites, unspoiled islands and traditional towns. Join us aboard the all-suite MS Hebridean Sky as we set sail from Valletta's Grand Harbour to the ancient sites of Sicily and on to the storied landscapes of mainland Greece as we discover some of the Mediterranean's most evocative classical sites.



Our voyage begins with four days of exploration in Sicily during which we will be able to appreciate the island's rich legacy of so many invading civilisations. Explore the remarkable Valley of the Temples at Agrigento which reveals some of the finest surviving Greek remains outside of Greece. Inland, the exquisite mosaics of the Villa Romana del Casale offer a vivid glimpse into Roman life, while Catania's striking Baroque architecture, hewn from volcanic stone, stands in the shadow of Mount Etna. In Syracuse, once one of the greatest cities of the ancient world, we will explore atmospheric archaeological sites and enjoy the experience of a private concert in an elegant palazzo.

Continuing to Greece and the Peloponnese we will walk among the ruins where the Olympic Games were born before exploring the Byzantine splendours of Mystras or the rugged beauty of the Mani Peninsula from Gythio. In Crete, the legendary Palace of Knossos brings to life the myths of King Minos and the Minotaur, and our penultimate port of Nafplio, one of the most beautiful towns on mainland Greece, provides a charming base from which to explore the great sites of Mycenae, Epidauros and Nemea, each rich in history and myth.

Our custom-made itinerary focuses on many places that the mega cruise ships cannot access and, in addition to our included guided excursions and the magnificent sites we will explore, there will be ample time at leisure for some independent exploration in addition to opportunities to savour regional cuisine and local wines.



Epidauros Theatre



The 'Ear of Dionysius', Syracuse



Piazza Armerina



Mosaic floor, Villa Romana del Casale



St Agatha's Cathedral, Piazza Del Duomo, Catania



Olympia with blooming cercis tree



Temple of Concordia, Valley of the Temples, Agrigento

Guest Speaker – David Stuttard



With a degree in Classics from St Andrews University followed by three years of postgraduate research, David taught for eleven years in Edinburgh, St Andrews and York. To date he has written 19 books on classical history and literature including *A History of Ancient Greece in 50 Lives* (Thames and Hudson) and *Nemesis: Alcibiades and the Fall of Athens* (Harvard University Press), and his translations

of Greek drama are published in Bloomsbury Press' Looking at series, for which he is series editor. David also has a long background in drama, having toured his own productions of Greek plays throughout the UK as well as to Graeco-Roman theatres including Ephesus and Butrint. His *Women and Troy* (with Dame Siân Phillips and Rachel Donovan) and *It's All Greek* (with Dame Siân Phillips, Robert Powell and Alex Jennings) are currently being staged in London and the South of England. David lives near Lewes in Sussex and is a fellow of Goodenough College.

The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Valletta, Malta. Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky and enjoy welcome drinks and dinner. Sail this evening.

Day 2 Agrigento for Valley of the Temples, Sicily. 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 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. This evening we will sail for Licata where we will moor overnight.

Day 3 Licata for Piazza Armerina. 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 the opportunity to sample some wine over a Sicilian lunch before returning to the ship.

Day 4 Catania. This morning we arrive in Catania. The architecture here is particularly impressive but a little forbidding being mainly constructed from black lava stone from Mount Etna. During our morning walking tour we will see the magnificent Piazza del Duomo which is a World Heritage Site, St Agatha's Cathedral and the imposing 13th century Castello Ursino. Alternatively join a tour to the slopes of Mount Etna, Europe's largest active volcano. Our drive will take us through scenic countryside, small towns and vineyards before arriving at the Silvestri Craters that were created in the eruption of 1892.

Day 5 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. After lunch on board, 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 6 At Sea. Spend a relaxing day at sea as we make our way to Greece.

Day 7 Katakolon for Olympia, Greece. The port of Katakolon will be our base today for our excursion to Olympia. Pastoral and lush, Olympia's plentiful ruins are shaded by Aleppo pines and olive trees. The fame of Olympia rests upon the Olympic Games. During the celebrations that accompanied the Games, competitors, while not forgetting that they were Athenians, Spartans or from other city states, remembered that they were Greeks and regarded an Olympic victory as the highest honour. We will see the gymnasium, the stadium and the palestra or wrestling school. We will also explore the Altis, or sacred precinct of Zeus, which houses structures including the Temple of Zeus, one of the largest temples on the Greek mainland and the Archaeological Museum which houses some fine sculptures and artefacts from the site. This afternoon is free to explore Katakolon at your own pace before we sail this evening.

Day 8 Gythio. Arrive this morning at the picturesque port of Gythio from where we have a choice of tours. Perhaps head inland to Mystras, a remarkably intact Byzantine hillside town that once housed a population of 20,000. Here we visit the Cathedral of Agios Dimitrios, where the two-headed eagle which is the symbol of the Palaeologos Dynasty is carved into a plaque on the floor. Strolling through the narrow lanes of the dead city, we will also visit the Church of Agia Sophia, the Palace of the Despots and the Monastery



Nafplio



Palace of Knossos

of Pantanassa, with its brilliant frescoes. Alternatively, join a scenic drive to the Mani Peninsula visiting the villages and enjoying the wonderful views along the coast. Visit Aeropoli, named after Ares, the God of War, for its role in the War of Independence. Here we find tower houses, constructed with field stones, that are distinct from the traditional blue and white buildings that characterise many Greek villages. Following lunch on board, enjoy a leisurely afternoon to explore Gythio at your own pace, maybe take a walk on the promenade, visit the lighthouse or people watch from a waterfront taverna.

Day 9 Heraklion. From our berth in Heraklion on the island of Crete, it is a short distance to the Palace of Knossos, the legendary home of the Minotaur. Wander around the site impressively excavated by Sir Arthur Evans, seeing some of the 1300 rooms adorned with lively frescoes where King Minos held court. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure in the town, maybe visit the archaeological museum which holds the world's largest collection of Minoan artefacts.

Days 10 & 11 Nafplio. We have a day and a half in the picturesque port of Nafplio. During our time here we will offer visits to the famous citadel of Mycenae which is located high above the confluence of two boulder-strewn ravines and accessed by way of the Lion Gate. Once inside the gate, we will explore the Royal Palace, the shaft graves and the remains of the city walls. An archaeological briefing within the Treasury of Atreus (also known as the Tomb of Agamemnon) will add to our understanding and appreciation of the sights. We also visit one of Greece's most renowned ancient sites, Epidaurus, which situated on the slopes of a beautiful and wooded valley was known throughout the Hellenic world for its unique medical facilities and healing treatments. Dedicated to Asclepius, the god of healing, the city was filled with curative spas and baths and only priests had access to certain secret sites. Most of the ruins of Epidaurus have been reduced to their foundations, except for the astonishing theatre. Still used for special performances, the theatre is in an admirable state of preservation. Also see Nemea, the site of a religious sanctuary which hosted the pan-Hellenic athletic games every two years from 573 BC until 271 BC. The mythical origin of the Games is sometimes ascribed to Hercules who, after his first labour in which he had to kill the Nemean lion living in the caves of Mount Tritos above the site, established the athletic games in honour of his father, Zeus. Nemea was not a town or settlement but a venue where festivities were held during the games and our tour will include the Temple of Zeus, the bathhouse and the stadium before spending time in the small but excellent onsite museum. Nemea is also famous for its red wines and we will enjoy a wine tasting at a local vineyard before returning to the ship. As we moor overnight there will be time at leisure in Nafplio in the evening to wander the atmospheric, twisting labyrinthine streets and admire the Venetian and Turkish architecture of this charming town.

Day 12 Athens to London. Disembark this morning in Piraeus and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

Malta Pre-cruise Extension 18th to 20th March 2028



Valletta

If you would like to spend some time in Valletta before embarking the MS Hebridean Sky, we are offering a two night extension including a tour of Valletta and Mdina.

The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Valletta, Malta. Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival transfer to our hotel and check in for a 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. Our morning tour will include the highlights of Valletta 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. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure. (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 Hebridean Sky moored in Valletta. (B, L)

Prices per person based on double occupancy

Twin: £895

Single: £1295

Price Includes: Two nights hotel accommodation, meals as indicated (B - Breakfast, L - Lunch, D - Dinner), house wine, beer and soft drinks with lunches and dinners included, tours as described, Noble Caledonia Tour Manager, gratuities, transfers.

Not Included: Travel insurance.

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
Amundsen	Standard	£8295	£7795
Byrd	Superior	£8495	£7995
Mawson	Premium	£8795	£8295
Mawson	Corner	£9295	£8795
Scott	Deluxe Balcony	£10295	£9795
Shackleton	Owner's Balcony	£10995	£10495
Shackleton	Hebridean	£11495	£10995
Amundsen	Standard for sole use	£9995	£9495
Byrd	Superior for sole use	£10395	£9895

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • 11 nights aboard the MS Hebridean Sky on a full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Noble Caledonia onboard team including Guest Speaker • Gratuities • Transfers • Shore excursions • Airport taxes • Port taxes.
Not Included: Travel insurance.

MS HEBRIDEAN SKY



Alfresco Dining



Owner's Balcony Suite



The Restaurant

The much loved MS Hebridean Sky is one of our two flagships and sister vessel to the MS Island 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 Hebridean 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, television and a telephone in each suite. Refillable water bottles, towelling dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted Noble Isle 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 the Club. 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. 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 collection 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*). 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.

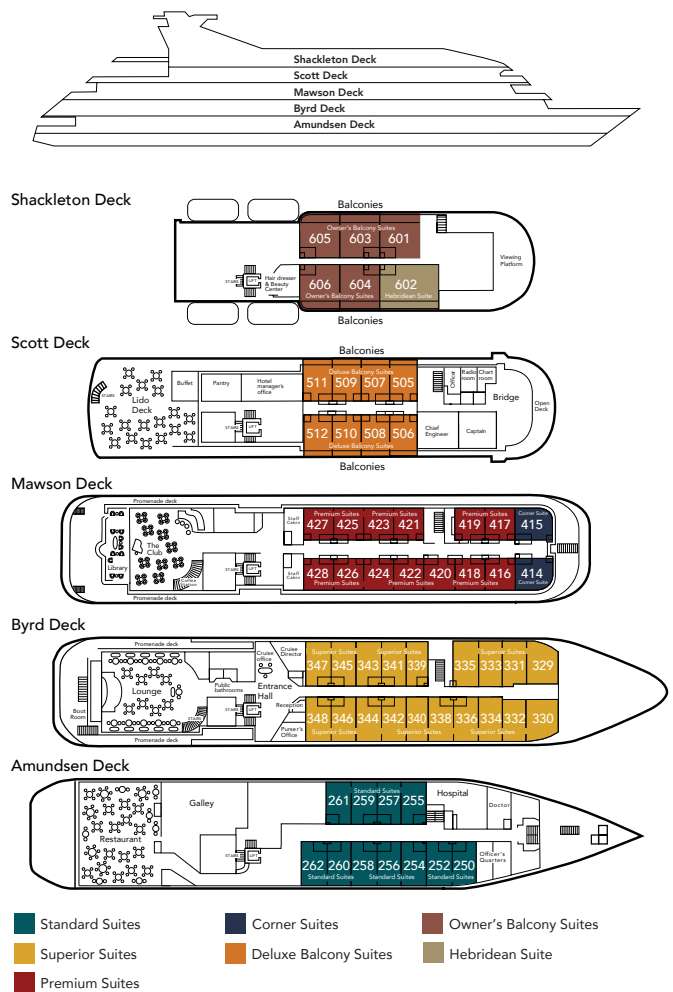
Your Comfort

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 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



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.



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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: Temple of Castor and Pollux, Valley of Temples, Agrigento, Sicily.