

THE ENCHANTED ISLES

Discover the beautiful Isles of Scilly
with Mike Nelhams & Chantal Cookson
staying at the Hell Bay Hotel on Bryher
4th to 9th May & 20th to 25th September 2023

NOBLE CALEDONIA



Calm waters of St Agnes

An Introduction by Andrew Cochrane, Noble Caledonia Founder & Director.



“ When I first visited the Isles of Scilly some 30 years ago, I thought the archipelago the most bewitching of places in the UK. It may be only 30 miles off the Cornish coast, but suddenly you arrive at a timeless maritime oasis where the grey Atlantic dissolves miraculously into turquoise, and white sandy beaches give way to verdant islands and palm trees. The nurturing warm waters of the Gulf Stream have helped to create a microclimate endowing the islands with great botanical and ornithological diversity. Most

of the year is warm enough to support plant growth for flora normally native to a Mediterranean or sub-tropical climate. The Abbey Gardens on the island of Tresco offer an explosion of sub-tropical colour at the eastern end of the island, whilst to the north and west, a thirty-minute walk away is another world. Here, the coast is rugged and wild with wind-shaped heathers and rugged coastal vegetation.

My first visit all those years ago led me in part to begin a series of UK and Ireland coastal cruises which concentrated on our islands' natural world. Noble Caledonia was the first company to offer such trips aboard small ships and any itinerary beginning in England always included a day in the Isles of Scilly. But, for me and many, a day is not sufficient. There is so much to see on the islands of St Marys, Bryher, St Agnes and St Martin whether your interest lies in botany, ornithology, horticulture, maritime history or archaeology and our six-day visit will cover all aspects. The joy of these islands are the gentle walks along car-free lanes and paths, absorbing the flora and birdsong without the background hum of traffic and modern-day life. The islands are small, the walks undemanding and, instead of hopping on and off coaches, our transport will be provided by private boats.

If you have travelled with us on one our ships to the Isles of Scilly I hope you will consider returning for a longer stay. If these treasure islands have eluded you up until now I can only recommend you correct this omission and join us for what promises to be an endlessly fascinating experience. ” ”



Wild iris, Bryher



The village and beach of Old Town, St Mary's



Atlantic grey seals

YOUR HOSTS

Guest Speaker & Garden Curator Tresco Abbey Gardens - Mike Nelhams



We are most fortunate in having Mike Nelhams as our Guest Speaker. We have known Mike for over 20 years as he has welcomed our vessels to Tresco and more recently accompanied our tours in Cornwall. He is one of the island's great characters and will add much to your visit. Mike first went to Tresco on a Studley Trust Scholarship as a student in 1976. He first trained for three years at the Royal Horticultural Society Garden, Wisley. After managing a woodland garden in Sussex for five years he returned to Tresco Abbey Garden in 1984 as Head Gardener and then in 1994 took the post of Garden Curator which was established for him. He is an RHS judge on the Tender Plants Committee, judging regularly at Chelsea, Hampton Court and London RHS shows and also is a frequent lecturer throughout the English-speaking world. He has published a book, "Tresco Abbey Garden" and has made many appearances on national TV and radio, as well as having written many articles for the horticultural press. Mike has a particular interest in plants from the Mediterranean and associated coastal regions of the world. A Fellow of the Institute of Horticulture and an Associate of Honour of the Royal Horticultural Society, Mike regularly leads garden tours.

Tour Leader - Chantal Cookson



Chantal has lost count of how many times she has stepped ashore in the Isles of Scilly. Chantal was born in Suffolk very near the sea and now lives in Northumberland where her husband farms. Chantal has been associated with Noble Caledonia since the company was founded in 1991 and has led tours, be it cruising or on land, all over the world. Chantal's initial experience of cruising in British waters was in 1991 when Noble Caledonia undertook its first cruise around the British Isles, which was a groundbreaking voyage and led to a very successful and popular concept. Though her main

job over the last 25 years has been working for Sotheby's, she is now a Travel and Fine Art Consultant intertwining in her busy life still working periodically as part of the Noble Caledonia field staff team. From the Arctic to the Antarctica, South America to Australia, the UK, Africa, India, the Seychelles, and many other destinations she has been able to pursue her love of the oceans, travel and photography. Chantal is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.



Tresco Abbey sub-tropical gardens



Hugh Town, St Mary's



Eurasian Oystercatcher, St Agnes



Bryher

The Itinerary

Day 1 St Mary's to Bryher, Isles of Scilly. Make your own way to the Isles of Scilly. The numerous options include the ferry service from Penzance or flight and helicopter trips from Land's End, Penzance, Newquay and Exeter (refer to www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk for detailed information). Meet at St Mary's Quay for transfer by boat to the island of Bryher and the Hell Bay Hotel. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure before meeting for drinks and a welcome dinner.

Day 2 Tresco. After a leisurely breakfast join the private boat for the brief crossing to the island of Tresco. Walk along the traffic-free lane to the Tresco Abbey Gardens where Mike Nelhams and his head gardener will accompany us around this most stunning of gardens which includes an extraordinary collection of salvaged figureheads at Valhalla. After the guided tour and some free time to explore the gardens individually, we will have lunch at the Flying Boat Bar & Bistro. We then explore the island and head north across the wild heathland in the view of Cromwell's Castle and the ruins of King Charles's Castle. King Charles II hid out in the Isles of Scilly whilst fleeing from the Parliamentary forces. Return to Bryher in the mid-afternoon by private boat and enjoy some leisurely time at Hell Bay before dinner.

Day 3 St Agnes. This morning we will embark on a privately chartered seabird and seal watching trip and in the late morning land on St Agnes. Surrounded by rocks and reefs St Agnes is the most south westerly community in the UK. After lunch at High Tide Seafood Restaurant we are free to explore this rugged but attractive island with its traditional stone cottages, pocket-size farms and tiny bulb fields. Take a walk along the coastal path with its impressive views of the treacherous Western Rocks and famous Bishop Rock Lighthouse. At low tide you can also walk across to the neighbouring island of Gugh, famous for its Bronze Ages Standing Stones and numerous dolmens and burial chambers. Return to Bryher for dinner.

Day 4 St Martin. We take a private boat this morning to St Martin. This narrow island with perfectly white sandy beaches is a walker's delight. We start the day with a visit to the Churchtown Flower Farm, a family run venture that sends flowers to home addresses all over the UK. From October to March they grow scented narcissi outdoors in small sheltered fields and in the summer months they produce all manner of scented old English flowers. After lunch at the Karma St Martin's Hotel take a walk

along the coastal path through scented gorse heathlands or beachcomb looking out to the bluest waters of the islands. Return to Bryher in the mid-afternoon.

Day 5 St Mary's. This morning our private boat will take us across to the hub of the islands, St Mary's and Hugh Town. We will see some of the island and head for the Holyvale Vineyard. Planted in 2009 their first vintage arrived in 2014, we will hear how with the cooperation of the Duchy of Cornwall they managed to create a vineyard in the most unlikely of locations. After a tour and tasting, return to Hugh Town for lunch at Star Castle Hotel and some free time. Return to Bryher for a relaxing afternoon and perhaps an afternoon walk on Bryher to the peaceful bays and secluded beaches at the southern end of the island. Enjoy farewell drinks and dinner this evening.



Standing stone, Gugh

Day 6 Bryher to St Mary's. Depart after breakfast for St Mary's Quay and airport for your individual homeward transport arrangements.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Category	May	September
High Tide Suites & Garden View Suites	£2495	£2695
Studio Suites, Spring Tide Suites & Seaview High Tide Suites	£2795	£2995
Juno & Empress Suites	£2995	£3195
Emperor Suite	£3195	£3395
High Tide Suites - sole use	£2795	£3095
Studio Suites - sole use	£3095	£3395

PRICE INCLUDES: Five nights hotel accommodation at Hell Bay Hotel on a breakfast and dinner basis • Four lunches • Entrance fees • Tour Leader • Guest Speaker.

Not Included: Travel insurance.



Hell Bay Hotel - Studio Suites

HELL BAY HOTEL, BRYHER

This is an extraordinary hotel, sitting on the edge of the outermost of the inhabited islands. Yet, for all its remote location it offers great style, wonderful food and a warm and friendly welcome. Hell Bay is tucked away in a secluded cove enjoying spectacular sea views and we have taken over the hotel for the duration of our trip. The suites and public areas house works by some of Cornwall's leading artists and there is a large terrace with stunning views, perfect for a drink or lunch and a Sunset Deck where you can watch the sun go down over Gweal Hill. You might think because of its location that the food could be indifferent. Nothing could be further from the truth. Head chef Richard Kearsley presides over a three AA Rosette kitchen. Much of the food is sourced locally including the fish, meat and vegetables, "the ingredients that come into the kitchen inspire the menu, never the other way round". Richard and his team pull off something remarkable. On a remote and tiny island they produce award winning food, not in spite of their location, but because of it. Other comforts include a bar, Crab Shack, spa treatment room, heated outdoor pool and tennis court. This is such a special place that our itinerary has been planned to allow for free time to enjoy all that Hell Bay has to offer.



Restaurant



Juno Suite



Award winning cuisine



The Crab Shack



The Emperor Suite with its private deck area

Your Suite

The 25 spacious suites are beautifully appointed in an island style with soft colours complementing the seascapes. There are several suite grades to choose from ranging from two room suites to studio suites.

Emperor Suite: Emperor is the hotel's signature suite. It comprises of a large, well-appointed open plan room with second bedroom that can accommodate up to four adults. The master bedroom has a king size bed with a large, open plan sitting area that opens up onto a large private decked area with sun loungers. The second bedroom has a king size bed (or twin beds). The suite has satellite TV and a DVD player, a fridge and a tea/coffee tray. The Emperor suite has magnificent surrounding sea views.

Juno Suite: The Juno suite is located upstairs in 'The Boathouse' building and has a large private balcony with panoramic sea views. The master bedroom has a king size bed (or twin beds) and an open plan sitting room area from which you can sit back and enjoy the stunning sea views. The suite has satellite TV, DVD player, fridge and a coffee/tea tray. There is an ensuite bathroom.

Empress Suite: The Empress is a fully detached, single storey building, built to resemble a traditional gig shed. It is a large, open planned suite with a king size bed (or twin beds) and a sitting room area. The suite has satellite TV, DVD player, a fridge and a coffee/tea tray. There is an ensuite bathroom. The Empress suite has its own decked area which leads out to the hotel gardens.

Studio Suites: The studio suites all have wonderful sea views. There are six ground floor studio suites each with a large private patio and sea views along with five on the first floor each with private balcony and stunning sea views. Each studio suite has a master bedroom with a king size bed (or twin beds), an ensuite bathroom (some with shower only) and a sitting area. The suites have satellite TV, DVD player, a fridge and a coffee/tea tray. The ground floor Galatea studio suite has a second bedroom with a king size bed (or twin beds).

Spring Tide Suites: There are four Spring Tide sea view suites. Two are located on the ground floor and two on the first floor. The ground floor suites have a private large patio and sea views. The first floor suites have wonderful surrounding sea views and large balconies. Each suite has a master bedroom with a king size bed (or twin beds) with sliding doors opening up onto a sitting room area with two armchairs. There is an ensuite bathroom, satellite TV, DVD player, fridge and a tea/coffee tray.

High Tide Suites: There are four High Tide Suites - two on the ground floor, and two on the first floor. The ground floor suites have a master bedroom with a king size double or twin bed, private patio and garden views. The first floor suites have a master bedroom with a king size double or twin bed, private balconies and surrounding sea views. There is a sliding door leading into the sitting room area where there are two large armchairs; there is an ensuite bathroom, satellite TV, DVD player, fridge and a tea/coffee tray.

Garden View Suites: There are two individual suites with private patios and garden views:

Guinevere: Located on the ground floor of the Boathouse, Guinevere has a master bedroom with a king size bed (or twin beds) which is separated from the sitting room by sliding doors. The sitting room has two large armchairs; there is an ensuite bathroom, satellite TV, DVD player, fridge and a tea/coffee tray. There is a private decked area with garden views.

Lily: This suite has an open plan master bedroom and a king size bed (or twin beds) with a sitting area. The second bedroom has a king size bed (or twin beds). There is an ensuite bathroom, satellite TV, DVD player, fridge and a tea/coffee tray. Lily has a private patio with pretty garden views.



High Tide Suite



Studio Suite



Empress Suite



Spring Tide Suite



Bryher

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Itinerary and accommodation subject to change. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.

Cover image: The Bar, separating the islands of Gugh and St Agnes.