

SPECIAL
OFFER - SAVE
£400
PER PERSON

THE MAKING OF SPAIN

A voyage from Barcelona to Madrid
aboard the MS Island Sky
27th September to 9th October 2017



Spain, with its geographical location at the crossroads of the Atlantic and Mediterranean, Europe and Africa has a fascinating history with a culture made up of diverse influences. Once the centre of a global empire, this exploration will uncover the country's intriguing history visiting some of the numerous World Heritage Cities including Tarragona, Cordoba, Merida and Toledo where, accompanied by our excellent local guides and guest speakers you can experience the cultural wealth of this captivating nation. In addition to the included guided excursions, there will of course be ample time to experience the unique atmosphere of the towns and cities and explore at your own pace.



The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Barcelona, Spain.

Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival transfer to the MS Island Sky and sail this evening.

Day 2 Empuries & Girona.

From our berth in Palamos we will drive the short distance to the archaeological site of Empuries. Founded by Greek merchants in the 6th century B.C. as Emporion, meaning marketplace, it was a commercial hub and, being located on several trading routes across the Mediterranean, it became a major port. In 218 B.C. the town was taken by the Romans who built an even greater city above the Greek town. Today we can explore the network of columns, streets, villas with mosaic floors and the Roman amphitheatre. We return to the ship for lunch and the afternoon is free to explore the pleasant old quarter of Palamos and the local beaches. Alternatively, join an excursion to Medieval Girona, known as the immortal city. The city was settled in turn by the Romans and the Moors and had a vibrant Jewish community located in the El Call district. We will see the elegant 11th century cathedral, which has the widest nave of any Medieval cathedral, the Romanesque Benedictine Monastery of St Pere de Galligants and the Arab Baths inspired by Roman public baths.

Day 3 Tarragona.

During the second Punic War in 218 A.D. the city of Tarraco was established as a garrison which developed into the main military base for the Roman army in Spain. Today we can still

see remnants of the Roman period as we explore the city by foot. See the impressive walls that once surrounded the city, the 2nd century amphitheatre and the Roman Circus where chariot races were held. Meanwhile on the outskirts of the city we will see the Pont de les Ferreres, a Roman bridge that formed part of the aqueduct that brought water to the city from the Francoli River. After lunch on board we have time to explore Tarragona at leisure or, alternatively, drive to the Moestir de Poblet, a UNESCO World Heritage Site on the road to Lleida. We will enjoy a guided tour of this fortified Medieval monastery and also have time in the museum featuring artefacts from the region's past.

Day 4 Palma de Mallorca.

Mallorca, the largest of the Balearic Islands, has a rich history dating back to the Phoenicians when it was under control of Carthage, the principal North African city at that time, before flourishing under Roman rule. From our berth in Palma we have a choice of excursions this morning. One option is to take the beautifully maintained vintage train that connects Palma with the pretty town of Soller on the island's west coast and enjoy splendid mountain views of the Serra de Tramuntana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Over the course of just seven kilometres the railway rises 199 metres and runs through thirteen tunnels and crosses several bridges. We will enjoy some time to explore Soller before returning to our ship in Palma. Alternatively, enjoy a scenic drive to the Roman city of Pollentia in Alcudia. Located on Mallorca's north coast the city of Pollentia is a key site for understanding the Romanisation of the Balearics. The city was the former capital of the Balearic Islands in the days of the Roman Empire and excavations continue to this day. We will explore the streets, houses, forum and the theatre originally built with a capacity for 2000 people. We return to the ship via the estate of Son Real, one of the most important

Guest Speakers

For our fascinating and in-depth look at this region of Spain, we are delighted to be joined by our two eminent guest speakers, Professor Robert Hillenbrand and Professor Carole Hillenbrand.



Professor Robert Hillenbrand has long-standing research interests in the Islamic art of North Africa and Spain. An Emeritus

Professor of Fine Art at Edinburgh University, his 160 publications include prize-winning books on Islamic architecture and painting. He has held visiting professorships at seven universities and was Slade Professor of Art at Cambridge in 2008. He is now Professor of Islamic Art at St Andrews University.



Professor Carole Hillenbrand is Professor Emerita of Islamic History at Edinburgh University and is now Professor

of Islamic History at St Andrews University. In 2005 she was awarded the King Faisal International Prize in Islamic Studies - the first non-Muslim ever to receive this award. She has published seven books and many articles on the Crusades and Muslim history. She was awarded an OBE in 2009.

Spain - from prehistory to 1492

by Professor Robert Hillenbrand

The Mediterranean peoples knew of Spain's strategic location guarding the Straits of Gibraltar, and its mineral and agricultural wealth, for millennia. The Basques arrived first, in the north. Next came the Iberians and Celts. Phoenician traders from the Levant (9th century B.C.) founded colonies in Andalusia, with ports at Cadiz and Tartessus, followed by the Carthaginians (who appropriately named their Spanish capital Cartagena) and Greeks. But the Romans defeated the Carthaginian Hannibal and Romanised Spain, bringing political unity, the rule of law and economic prosperity. Their footprint is everywhere, from theatres and amphitheatres to colonnaded streets and public baths, bridges and circuses, fortified city walls and private villas with floor mosaics. Christianity reached Spain very early, possibly through St Paul; St James the Greater is the country's apostolic patron. From 409 Spain suffered successive invasions by Germanic peoples, notably the Visigoths who, from their capital, Toledo, ruled a multiracial society prefiguring its medieval successor.

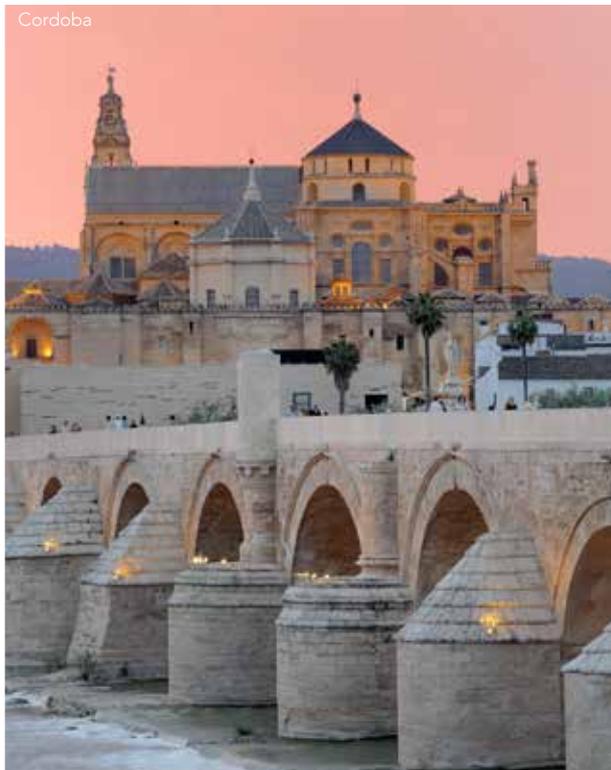
From 711 onwards the Arabs quickly conquered most of Spain. Andalusia was their major power base; its capital was Cordoba, whose population of c.300,000 and civic amenities - like street lighting, sewage disposal and running water - eclipsed all other European cities. The Spanish Umayyad caliphate dominated Western Islam politically and economically, but after 1010 Muslim Spain disintegrated into numerous mutually hostile emirates, while the Christian kingdoms of León, Navarre, Aragón and Castile, though disunited, began the Reconquista. Two North African Berber federations preaching a puritan reformed Islam invaded Andalusia, the Almoravids (1086) and Almohads (1146), but could not turn the tide, and a major Muslim defeat in 1212 proved decisive. Granada fell in 1492 to the newly united kingdoms of Aragón and Castile; the Jews were expelled shortly afterwards. The Moors became second-class citizens, but their cultural impact long made itself felt in Spanish arts and crafts. And for almost 800 years they had presided over a remarkably tolerant multi-racial and multi-confessional culture of high intellectual attainment in which Christians, Jews and Muslims had all flourished, as Cordoba's mosque, Seville's Giralda and Granada's Alhambra prove.

A more comprehensive overview by Professor Robert Hillenbrand can be viewed at www.noble-caledonia.co.uk





Tarragona



Cordoba



Old Cathedral, Cadiz



Ronda Valley

sites for archaeological heritage in the Balearic Islands, including the well-known prehistoric cemeteries or necropolis located at S'Illot des Porros and the Punta des Fenicis. Son Real is also closely linked to rural Majorca and we find a "possessió" made up of different buildings from different eras. Enjoy lunch on board and spend the afternoon at sea.

Day 5 Cartagena. Return to mainland Spain this morning and the Murcian port of Cartagena. We will enter the deep natural harbour through two fortified rocky headlands for a day of exploration in this historic city that dates back to the Phoenicians. Hannibal used it as his capital city on the Iberian peninsula and named it after Carthage in North Africa whilst the Romans used it as a strategic port and administrative centre. The city walls remained intact until the 20th century, creating a dense historic centre which we will explore before taking the lift or walking up to Concepcion Castle where we will learn of the city's past and enjoy amazing views of the city and harbour below. We will also see the Roman amphitheatre which was able to hold up to 7000 people. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore further. Perhaps visit the archaeological site of Molinete, where work continues to uncover the Roman city, or the naval museum or simply enjoy a stroll along the tree lined harbour promenade before we sail this evening.

Day 6 Motril for Alhambra. From Motril, we will drive inland to the UNESCO World Heritage listed Alhambra and Generalife gardens. The Alhambra's construction began in the 11th century on the red hill known as Alsabika which overlooks Granada. The palace fortress was mainly built by the Nasrid sultans, rulers of the last Spanish Moorish kingdom who made Granada their capital. We will visit the most important halls and courtyards of the Alhambra and the nearby sumptuous Generalife Palace with beautiful gardens.

Day 7 Gibraltar for Ronda. Departing from Gibraltar, we will cross the border into Spain for the short transfer to the Estacion de San Roque, where we board the scenic railway to the spectacular city of Ronda. Perched on the top of a rocky outcrop and divided by El Tajo gorge, Ronda is home to the Puente Nuevo, an 18th century viaduct-like bridge which connects the old and new parts of the city. We will start our visit at the city museum located at the Palace of the Marquis of Villasierra where you can learn about the history of the city, the region's natural parks and the local industries of cork and cheese production and saddle-making. Next visit the church of Santa Maria la Mayor. Built on the foundations of an earlier mosque, this landmark church was started in 1485 and not finished until the end of the 17th century. Admire the Gothic and Baroque decoration and magnificent altar before visiting Ronda's bullring. Stop for lunch at

a local restaurant before returning to Gibraltar arriving in the late afternoon.

Day 8 Cadiz & Puerto de Santa Maria. Arrive this morning in Cadiz. Situated on a peninsula jutting out into a bay and almost entirely surrounded by water, it is amongst the oldest surviving cities in Spain which was founded by the Phoenicians in 1100 B.C. and was later occupied by the Carthaginians, Romans, Visigoths and Moors. During our guided tour we will discover the most beautiful monuments and landmarks of the city including the Mudejar-style tobacco factory, Santo Domingo Church, the Santa Catalina Fortress and finally the cathedral of Cadiz and Diocesan Museum in the old city. After lunch on board we will visit the nearby seaside town of Puerto de Santa Maria. Founded by the Phoenicians as the base for the salt industry, which is still active today, it was in the 19th century that the wine industry flourished here as the town became part of the sherry triangle with Jerez and Sanlucar de Barrameda. This afternoon we will learn about the history and production of the local wines at one of the town's bodegas before enjoying a tasting. We will end with a private flamenco show accompanied by some of the local food specialties.

Day 9 Seville. Overnight we will have sailed up the Guadalquivir River to Seville. We will leave the vessel this morning for our full day tour of Cordoba, a beautiful city that

demonstrates a past in which Jews, Christians and Muslims peacefully coexisted and left a beautiful legacy of architecture to be appreciated for centuries to come. It was the Romans who founded Cordoba, thanks to its strategic importance as the highest navigable point on the river, but Cordoba's heyday was when it became the capital of the Moorish kingdom of Al Andalus. They began the construction of the Great Mosque, or Mezquita which is still one of the largest in the world. When the city was reconquered by the Christians they were so impressed by the beauty of the mosque that, rather than demolish it they simply built a cathedral inside it. We will also visit the Jewish Quarter and will spend time at the Mudejar Synagogue before having lunch at a local restaurant. Before returning to the MS Island Sky we will visit the Royal Stables, created in 1570 by King Philip II and where they breed Andalusian horses.

Day 10 Seville & Merida. Disembark this morning and enjoy a morning excursion to one of Seville's greatest monuments, the Alcazar with its exotic terraced garden. Built by Pedro the Cruel in the 14th century with the help of Moorish craftsmen, it is still used as a residence by the King of Spain. Also see the Christian cathedral, reputed to be the largest Gothic style church in the world. We will visit a local restaurant for lunch before driving to Merida this afternoon. On arrival we will check into our hotel and have some free time to explore before meeting for dinner this evening.



Day 11 Merida & Toledo. Located at the end of the Via de la Plata, the Roman road that began in Astorga, Merida was the capital of the Roman province of Lusitania. Its theatre, amphitheatre and temple, dedicated to the goddess Diana, make this one of the best conserved archaeological sites in Spain, and has earned it the title of a World Heritage site. After our visit we will enjoy lunch before driving to Toledo, the former capital of Spain. Check into our central hotel this afternoon and relax before meeting for dinner tonight.

Day 12 Toledo. Toledo, declared National Monument by the Spanish State, seems to be one large museum and is one of the most

important centres of European Medieval history. Hardly another town is so well conserved in its historical style. During a morning walking tour we will see the cathedral, with its exquisite choir stalls and museums with paintings by El Greco, Caravaggio and Bellini among others and the Church of Santo Tome, with El Greco's famous and beautiful "Burial of the Count of Orgaz" and the "Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca". Return to the hotel this afternoon for some free time before we enjoy a farewell dinner.

Day 13 Madrid to London. After breakfast we will transfer to Madrid for our scheduled flight to London.

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 |
| Magellan | Standard Forward | £5295 | £4895 |
| Magellan | Standard | £5395 | £4995 |
| Columbus | Superior | £5695 | £5295 |
| Marco Polo | Premium | £5795 | £5395 |
| Marco Polo | Corner | £5895 | £5495 |
| Erikson | Deluxe Balcony | £6395 | £5995 |
| Explorer | Owner's Balcony | £6895 | £6495 |
| Magellan | Standard for sole use | £7495 | £7095 |
| Columbus | Superior for sole use | £7695 | £7295 |

Price Includes: Economy class scheduled air travel, nine nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis, wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, shore excursions, Cruise Director, Tour Manager, Guest Speakers, overnight hotel accommodation in Merida and two nights accommodation in Toledo on a bed and breakfast basis, lunch and dinner on days 10, 11 and 12, transfers, port taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance.

Madrid Post-Tour Extension – 9th to 12th October 2017



If you would like to spend some time exploring Madrid and the surrounding area before returning to London we are offering a three night extension.

The Itinerary

Day 1 Toledo to Madrid. This morning we will transfer to Madrid and the centrally located Emparador Hotel. After checking in we will make the short journey to the San Miguel Market for the opportunity to stroll around the stalls and enjoy tastings of local foods and wines. Return to the hotel this afternoon and enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure.

Day 2 Escorial. After breakfast in the hotel we will visit the Royal Monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial which is an imposing building dating from the 16th century. King Philip II ordered its construction and it was mostly designed and built by the Spanish architect Juan de Hererra. The major artist from that time worked on the Monastery, which is also a memorial for the Kings and Queens of Spain and is considered the Eighth Wonder of the World. Return to Madrid and enjoy the afternoon at leisure to explore before we meet this evening for dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 3 Segovia & Avila. The city of Segovia is famous for the tall, two tiered aqueduct that cuts

across the city centre, a mortarless feat of Roman engineering. This impressive construction, with its two tiers of arches, forms part of the setting of the magnificent historic city of Segovia. The walled upper town is a maze of streets and features a Gothic cathedral and several Romanesque churches. After our tour of the town we will enjoy lunch before continuing to Avila, a city of contrasts, the hustle and bustle of the Mercado (market) contrasts with the quiet repose of the temples and its cloisters. Return to the hotel this evening and enjoy a final night in Madrid

Day 4 Madrid to London. After breakfast in the hotel transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£875** Single: **£1095**

Price includes: Three nights hotel accommodation on a breakfast only basis, guided excursions, dinner on day 2, transfers, gratuities.

Not Included: Travel insurance, meals other than those stated.



MS Island Sky

The much loved MS Island Sky is one of the finest small ships in the world. With a maximum passenger capacity of only 114, 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.



Standard Suite



Dining on deck



Lounge

On board there is a high ratio of crew to passengers. Our friendly crew of 75 are mainly Filipino and Eastern European and our Scandinavian captains are experienced mariners, having been in service aboard large 2000 plus passenger vessels and who now prefer a less frantic life aboard a small ship. If, like them and us, you prefer a more peaceful life at sea, you will find the MS Island Sky the perfect ship. When choosing the vessel for your next voyage of discovery, you can select a ship with endless entertainment and impersonal service or come with us where peace, high quality service and attention to detail are the order of the day.

There will be no organised entertainment, fancy dress, deck games or any of the usual big ship experiences. The atmosphere on board is more akin to a private yacht or country hotel. A little music in the lounge or bar after dinner, informative port briefings

and presentations from our expedition team and of course good food which may be enjoyed leisurely in the attractive dining room, all contribute to making any voyage aboard the MS Island Sky a memorable experience. After a day ashore you will return to the comfort and peace of a well run and exceedingly comfortable ship.

Your Space

The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large lounge where daily briefings and talks will be provided throughout the voyage and an elegant bar where a pianist plays periodically throughout the day. The onboard library is the perfect place to relax with a book. Daily newspapers and magazines are placed in the library depending on local availability. Outside there is a rear sun deck, a bar and comfortable deck furniture for sun bathing or relaxing with a book. On the top deck there is a further observation and sun deck.



Deluxe Balcony Suite



Restaurant



Library

Your Dining

Another benefit of a small ship is the quality of the cuisine. With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the galley is able to provide delicious meals. Where possible and when it meets his high standards, the chef will obtain local produce in markets or buy the catch of the day from a passing fishing boat. In the main elegant dining room, breakfast is served buffet-style, with certain items cooked to order and lunch and dinner is à la carte. When weather permits, breakfast and a buffet-style lunch are also served on deck. To enhance your dining experience even further a selection of wines are included with lunch and dinner. Afternoon tea is served in the lounge and tea and coffee are available 24 hours.

over five decks and all suites have outside views. Each affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring marble-topped 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 with inbuilt DVD/CD player and a telephone in each suite. Bottled water, Molton Brown toiletries, towelling dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, air-conditioning and heating.

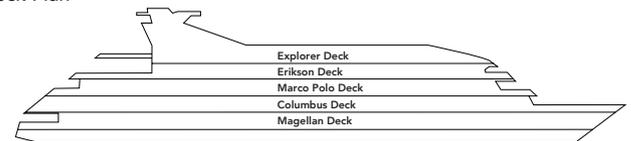


Friendly Staff

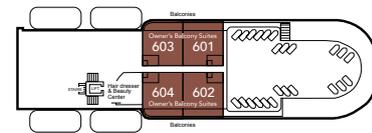
Your Suite

On board there are 57 exceptionally spacious and well designed suites. All feature a sitting room 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

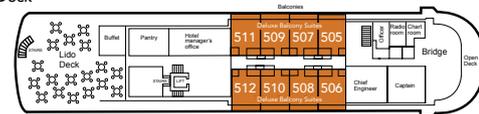
Deck Plan



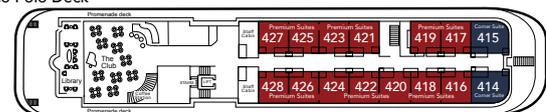
Explorer Deck



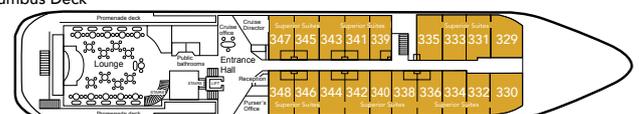
Erikson Deck



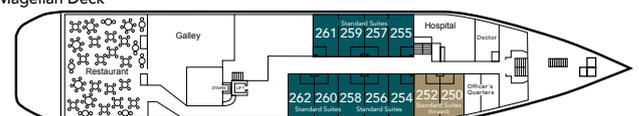
Marco Polo Deck



Columbus Deck



Magellan Deck



- Standard Suites (Forward)
- Premium Suites
- Deluxe Balcony Suites
- Standard Suites
- Corner Suites
- Owner's Balcony Suites
- Superior Suites

NOBLE CALEDONIA

2 Chester Close, Belgravia, London, SW1X 7BE
 +44 (0)20 7752 0000 | info@noble-caledonia.co.uk | www.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: Arches in Moorish style and Alhambra.