

SPECIAL
OFFER - SAVE
£500
PER PERSON

TREASURES OF SICILY & PUGLIA

A voyage between Valletta and Bari aboard the MS Island Sky
with Guest Speaker Dr Steve Kershaw

26th September to 5th October & 5th to 14th October* 2024



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Here is the perfect voyage for those who love Italy, travelling in the company of just 100 or so like-minded travellers and sailing aboard a delightful small ship with a varied programme of interesting visits ashore. Setting sail from Valletta's Grand Harbour, we will spend time in Sicily to appreciate the island's rich legacy of so many invading civilisations followed by time in Puglia, our itinerary taking us off the beaten track to many places that are beyond the reach of the mega-cruise ships.

Sicily is an endlessly fascinating island that lends itself beautifully to discovery by small ship and our visits ashore here will include the Roman mosaics of the Imperial Roman Villa of Casale, the magnificently sited Doric temples of Agrigento, timelessly beautiful Syracuse, and the stunning Greek theatre at Taormina. Crossing to the heel of Italy, our final days will be spent discovering Puglia's many gems including visits with local guides to prehistoric dwellings and traditional trulli abodes as well as splendid Baroque architecture and 15th century palazzos.

Our days will be varied as we explore UNESCO World Heritage Sites, walk through historic villages and towns and discover the uniqueness of each region as well as enjoying opportunities to sample the local food and wine. Owing to the fact that our small ship can moor centrally, we have the added advantage of being able to access the towns by foot in many ports of call and we have also included time at leisure for individual exploration enabling you to soak up the atmosphere at your own pace.



Guest Speaker – Dr Steve Kershaw

Dr Steve Kershaw is a tutor in Classics for Oxford University Department for Continuing Education, an accredited lecturer for The Arts Society (ex- NADFAS), and lectures for the Victoria and Albert Museum's Early Medieval: 300 - 1250 and The Classical World and Classical Revivals courses. His publications include The Penguin Dictionary of Classical Mythology, A Brief History of the Roman Empire and Barbarians: Rebellion and Resistance to Rome. Steve is the author and tutor for Oxford University's online courses in Greek Mythology, The Fall of Rome, and Minoans and Mycenaeans. In 2016 he appeared as an Expert Contributor to The History Channel's Barbarians Rising series, and he has travelled widely in the world of the Greeks and Romans, both physically and intellectually.



Matera



Lecce



'Ear of Dionysius'



Trulli Houses, Alberobello

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. Return to the ship for lunch and maybe join a lecture this afternoon as we sail.

Day 4 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 5 Catania & Taormina. From the port of Catania we have a choice of tours this morning. Maybe drive up the coast to 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. Alternatively join a walking tour of Catania. The architecture here is particularly impressive but a little forbidding

being mainly constructed from black lava stone from Mount Etna. We will see the magnificent Piazza del Duomo, a World Heritage Site, St Agatha's Cathedral and the imposing 13th century Castello Ursino. Return to the ship for lunch and a relaxing afternoon at sea.

Day 6 Taranto & Matera, Italy. Our first call in Puglia will be Taranto from where we cross into neighbouring Basilicata as we visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sassi di Matera (stones of Matera). Situated in the old town of Matera, the Sassi are prehistoric dwellings dug into the rock itself and are suspected to be some of the first human settlements in Italy. The site covers over 1000 hectares and comprises over 1000 buildings including houses, churches, shops, workshops and monasteries and we will learn more about the history of the town on a walking tour of the labyrinthine streets. The afternoon is free to explore Taranto at your own pace and you may want to see the 15th century Aragonese Castle or the 11th century cathedral.

Day 7 Otranto & Lecce. After breakfast we will drive to Lecce, often referred to as 'The Florence of the South' with its amazing collection of Baroque architecture. A guided walk will include a visit to the beautifully decorated Santa Croce Basilica and Piazza Duomo, considered one of the finest and most impressive squares in southern Italy. We return to the ship for lunch and the afternoon is free to explore Otranto independently, maybe walk the winding streets or along the seaside promenade. The highlight is the wonderful cathedral with its Medieval mosaic floor created by the monk, Pantaleone, between 1163 and 1165. You can also see the Chapel of the Dead which shows the bones and skulls of 813 martyrs killed by the invading Turks in 1480.

Day 8 Brindisi & Ostuni. From our berth in Brindisi we head to the "White City" of Ostuni, so called due to the almost blinding sunlight reflecting on the walls of its whitewashed dwellings. Ostuni has a privileged position as it was built on three hills and from the top of the town you can enjoy a stunning view of the Adriatic coast from which Ostuni is separated by an ocean of centuries-old olive trees. The town has maintained its Medieval atmosphere which we will experience as we walk through the meandering, narrow and picturesque streets of the old town which lead to the impressive 15th century cathedral, a beautiful example of Apulian Romanesque style. Spend the afternoon at leisure in Brindisi, maybe take a stroll along the waterfront promenade and see the Roman Arch which marks the end of the Roman Road "Via Appia" used by pilgrims, soldiers and traders as they travelled to Greece and the Holy Land. Alternatively visit the 12th century Tempio di San Giovanni al Sepolcro or wander the palm-tree lined Corso Garibaldi.

Day 9 Monopoli & Alberobello. Today we drive into the Puglian countryside which is scattered with 'trulli', limestone dwellings built with dome or conical roofs. We will enjoy a pleasant walk in Alberobello, a fairy-tale trulli village and a UNESCO World Heritage Site and see St Anthony Church also built in trullo style. Afterwards we visit 'Cantina Albea' and its wine museum, home to pictures and old instruments used in the past for the production of wine and



where we will enjoy a tasting along with a talk on the wine production. Return to the ship for lunch and a free afternoon in Monopoli where you can wander through the historic centre, visit the cathedral or see the Castello di Carlo V.

Day 10 Bari to London. Disembark after breakfast and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

*Please note that the 5th October departure operates in the reverse direction from Bari to Valletta. Full details can be viewed online.



Imperial Roman Villa of Casale mosaic

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
Magellan	Standard	£5795	£5295
Columbus	Superior	£5995	£5495
Marco Polo	Premium	£6195	£5695
Marco Polo	Corner	£6495	£5995
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£6995	£6495
Explorer	Owner's Balcony Suites	£7295	£6795
Explorer	Island Suite	£7995	£7495
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£6795	£6295
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£6995	£6495

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Nine 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.

Malta Extension

24th to 26th September & 14th to 16th October* 2024

Valletta



If you would like to spend some time in Malta, 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)

*Please note that the 14th October extension operates as a post-cruise extension. Full details can be viewed online.

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.



Monopoli

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.

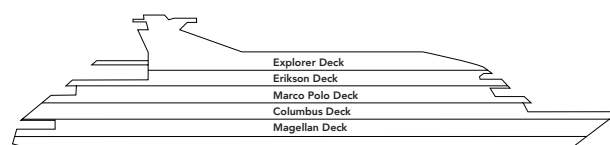
Your Comfort

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.

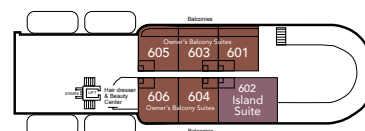
Your Life On Board

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.

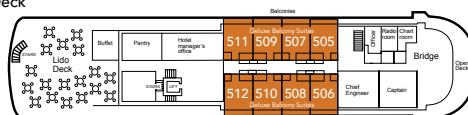
MS ISLAND SKY DECK PLAN



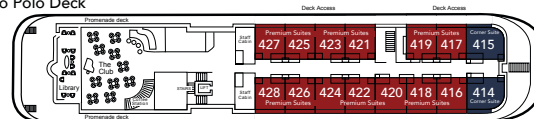
Explorer Deck



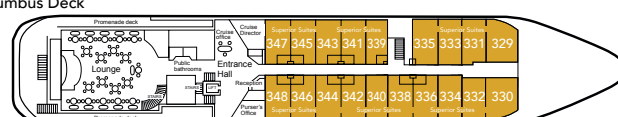
Erikson Deck



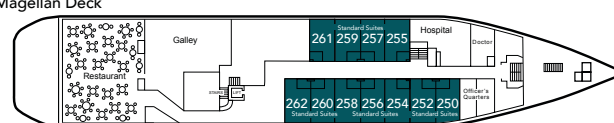
Marco Polo Deck



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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All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Greek Temple of Concordia..