

SPECIAL  
OFFER - SAVE  
£300  
PER PERSON

# SPRING GARDENS, CULTURE & HISTORY OF JAPAN

A VOYAGE FROM OSAKA TO KANAZAWA  
INCLUDING SOUTH KOREA ABOARD THE MS ISLAND SKY  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH BOTANICA WORLD DISCOVERIES

14<sup>TH</sup> TO 28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2026

A woman in a white kimono with a large pink and purple floral pattern stands in the foreground, holding a large white parasol with red ribs. She is looking towards a traditional Japanese pagoda with multiple tiers and a spire, set against a backdrop of lush green trees and a clear blue sky. The pagoda is partially obscured by the trees and the woman's parasol.

NOBLE CALEDONIA

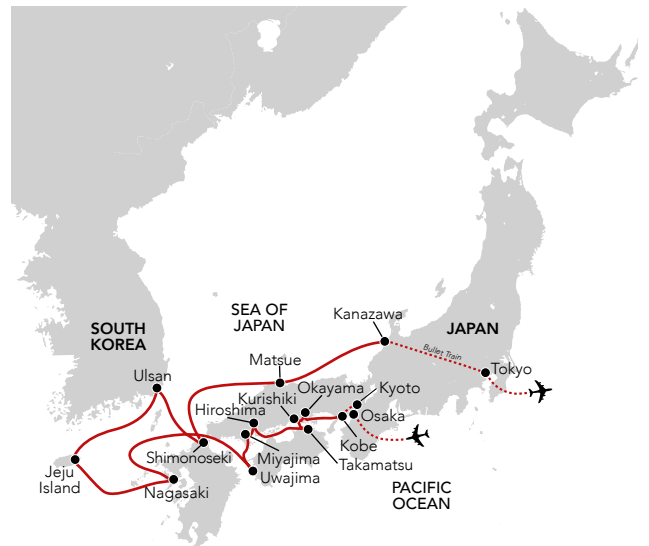
Yuushien Garden



Discover the beauty, mythology and botany of Japan and South Korea in spring during this fascinating voyage aboard the all-suite MS *Island Sky*. This voyage has been designed by our Australian associates at Botanica World Discoveries who have exclusively chartered the vessel for this sailing and have made some suites available for Noble Caledonia passengers. Sailing from Kobe, this comprehensive exploration offers a marvellous balance of beautiful gardens, ancient castles, and opulent temples and shrines combined with beautiful natural landscapes. Like all well planned itineraries some of the best known highlights have been included but equally you will also experience some of the more secluded places to explore the gardens and sites in their tranquil splendour.

Amongst the many highlights will be visits to two of Japan's top gardens, Kenroku-en and Koraku-en, the beautiful ponds and pavilions of Ritsurin Park and walking beneath an extensive canopy of dazzling purple wisteria at Ashikaga Flower Park. The visit to Yuushien Garden is timed for when 30,000 tree peonies in white, pink, purple and red float on the pond—an unforgettable spectacle. Also visit the 17th century Matsue Castle and the historical city of Kanazawa with its traditional crafts, discover the shrines and pagodas of Miyajima and see the Peace Memorial at Hiroshima. In addition to a partial circumnavigation of Japan, our course takes us past the southeastern tip of South Korea where we will explore the South Korean city of Ulsan, and Jeju Island where you can embrace its natural beauty while learning about South Korean traditions, art and industry.

All this will be achieved with great ease while sailing aboard the MS *Island Sky* and you will be joined on board by garden experts who, along with the expert local guides, will provide insight into the botany, fascinating culture and history along the way. With the MS *Island Sky* we are able to visit out of the way islands and remote stretches of coast which would not be practical on a regular land tour or a larger cruise ship, and it is in such places that we find beautiful and serene gardens, natural wonders, and a rich cultural heritage.





## The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Osaka, Japan.** Fly by scheduled indirect flight.

**Day 2 Osaka to Kyoto.** Arrive in Osaka and transfer to our hotel in Kyoto for an overnight stay. The afternoon and evening are at leisure.

**Day 3 Kyoto to Kobe.** A morning tour of Kyoto will include the Tenryu-ji Temple, the head temple of the Rinzai Zen tradition and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Founded in 1339 by the shogun Ashikaga Takauji, it is celebrated for its landscaped garden designed by the Zen monk Muso Soseki. Continue to the Ryoan-ji Temple, renowned worldwide for its enigmatic dry rock garden. Fifteen stones are set among raked white gravel, carefully arranged to encourage quiet contemplation. After lunch, visit the Sanjusangen-do Temple, home to one of Japan's most striking Buddhist halls and later drive to Kobe and embark the MS Island Sky. After dinner on board we set sail this evening.

**Day 4 Okayama & Kurishiki.** Having cruised westward along the shores of Japan's main island, we arrive in the city of Okayama. After breakfast, visit Koraku-en Garden, one of Japan's most significant gardens, whose name means 'Garden of Pleasure After'. After lunch, continue to Kurashiki, where we explore the old merchant quarter and its fine 17th-century wooden warehouses. These elegant buildings, with whitewashed façades and traditional black-tiled roofs, line a tranquil canal framed by weeping willows.

**Day 5 Takamatsu.** Today our ship traverses the Seto Inland Sea, bringing us to the island of Shikoku, the smallest of Japan's four main islands. Here we tour the attractive city of Takamatsu, visiting Kinashi Bonsai Village before exploring Ritsurin Park, a 350-year-old garden famous for its spring colours and Chrysanthemum Moon Pavilion. Return to the ship for dinner this evening.

**Day 6 Hiroshima & Miyajima.** Arrive in Hiroshima and visit the poignant Peace Memorial Park, dotted with memorials including the cenotaph containing the names of all the known victims of the atomic bomb dropped on the city in 1945. After lunch, continue to Miyajima. Considered one of Japan's most scenic wonders, Miyajima provides postcard-perfect vistas of its scarlet torii gate, which stands before the Itsukushima Shrine. We go ashore by Zodiac to explore the shrine, founded in the sixth century AD and dedicated to three goddesses. The shrine is a designated World Heritage Site.

**Day 7 Uwajima.** Situated along the saw-toothed coast of Uwajima Bay is the city of Uwajima. This morning you will have the option of choosing between two activities. You may like to visit Tensha-en Garden, which was built during the Samurai era. From here, continue to the Date Museum, which is home to a collection of samurai weapons and other artefacts that belonged to the Date Clan, who once governed this area. Alternatively, you may like to visit Uwajima Castle, whose strategic position atop a hill in the middle of the town provided for defense against the threat of an approaching enemy. From the castle, you can enjoy panoramic views of this small town. Sail this afternoon.

**Day 8 Nagasaki.** Arrive in Nagasaki, the second Japanese city destroyed by an atomic bomb during World War II. Tour the Nagasaki Peace Park, Atomic Bomb Museum and Glover Garden, also known as Madame Butterfly House. Continue to Dejima Island, built during the Edo Period to accommodate Portuguese Christian missionaries and prevent the propagation of their religion. It was also once the residential quarters of the Dutch, the only foreigners allowed to trade in Japan for 200 years during the period of isolation known as Sakoku. Japan's fear of outside influence kept the country secluded from the rest of the world during this time. It remained that way until, at the behest of US Navy Commodore Matthew Perry, Japan signed the 1854 Treaty of Kanagawa, which permitted American ships to dock in two of its ports.

**Day 9 Jeju Island, South Korea.** This morning, arrive on South Korea's Jeju Island, an area full of natural wonders. While here, you can choose to take a full-day tour taking in Camellia Hill Botanical Gardens, renowned for its stunning collection of over 500 camellia varieties and scenic walking paths. Visit the Spirited Garden, which is replete with hundreds of bonsai plants. The garden was created by a single farmer, upon what was previously a wasteland of rocks. Afterwards, visit Osulloc Tea Museum, where you'll learn about the art and tradition of Korean tea. Alternatively, set off on a full-day visit to the Haeyeo Museum. Here you will learn about the legendary female free divers of Jeju. Then head to Sunrise Peak, a volcanic crater and one of Jeju's most iconic landmarks. Finally, follow winding boardwalks across the Saryeoni Forest Path, a tranquil and enchanting woodland that offers a refreshing escape into nature. The forest is known for its dense canopy of Japanese cedars and cypress trees.



Kenroku-en gardens



Torii Gate, Miyajima



Uwajimi Castle

**Day 10 Ulsan.** Reaching the South Korean mainland, our ship docks in the city of Ulsan. While here, you have the option of heading out on a full day tour, which takes in the Gyeongju National Museum, Bulguksa Temple and the sprawling Taehwagang National Garden, which features the Hoes-Oudolf Ulsan Garden, the first Piet Oudolf garden in Asia. Alternatively, visit the Jagalchi Fish Market and the impressive Gwangan Grand Bridge.

**Day 11 Shimonoseki, Japan.** Our ship arrives back at the island of Honshu, in whose westernmost city, Shimonoseki, we dock this morning. From here, we travel by coach across the Kanmon Bridge to the neighbouring island, Kyushu. At the Kawachi Wisteria Garden, we witness a private paradise, boasting a spectacular display of cascading wisteria vines. The two alluring, 100-metre-long tunnels are each adorned with overflowing and vibrantly coloured blooms. The canopy of wisteria is comprised of several varieties, allowing it to enjoy a gradient fade, from deep purple to bright pink, and even a delicate white, making for a breathtaking spectacle overhead. Afterwards, we return to the ship to enjoy an afternoon at sea.

**Day 12 Sakaiminato & Matsue.** From our berth in Sakaiminato we visit the city of Matsue, known as the 'City of Water'. Matsue is surrounded by the lakes Nakaumi and Shinji, as well as the Sea of Japan. Visit some of its cultural attractions, including Matsue Castle. The striking black and white castle is one of only a few wooden Medieval castles remaining in Japan today. Admire its graceful exterior before heading inside, from where we can enjoy magnificent views of the city and Lake Shinji beyond. Afterwards, choose to delve into Japan's modern art and culture at the highly regarded Adachi Museum of Art. The museum's adjoining garden is a masterpiece of modern design which has won many awards and accolades. This work of 'natural art' has been designed not to be entered, however, but to be admired only from select vantage points. Alternatively, visit Yushi-en Garden, a real flower garden, full of colour and blossom, and famous for its ginseng and peonies.

**Day 13 Kanazawa.** This morning, we visit Kanazawa's renowned Omicho Market. The market sells everything from flowers to fish and local handicrafts. Afterwards, take in one of Japan's premier highlights at the famed Kenroku-en Garden, which is ranked as one of the country's top three gardens. This afternoon, immerse yourself in Kanazawa's culture with a visit to the Higashi Chaya-gai Geisha District. The town retains its traditional

housing and layout, which reaches back to the Samurai era. While in Kanazawa, keep a lookout for some of the handcrafted items the region is famous for, including the kimono and gold leaf. This evening, we enjoy a farewell dinner on board as we moor overnight.

**Day 14 Kanazawa to Tokyo.** Disembark the ship this morning and travel by bullet train from Kanazawa to Tokyo. On arrival an afternoon tour will include the Akasaka Palace and the Meiji Jingu Shrine, Tokyo's most important Shinto shrine, dedicated to Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken. We then check into our hotel and have the remainder of the day at leisure.

**Day 15 Tokyo to London.** Check out this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London. Arrive today.

## PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

### SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £300 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Deck	Suite Category	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
Magellan	Standard	£9295	£8995
Columbus	Superior	£9595	£9295
Marco Polo	Premium	£9895	£9595
Marco Polo	Corner	£10195	£9895
Erikson	Deluxe Balcony	£11795	£11495
Explorer	Owner's Balcony	£12795	£12495
Explorer	Island	£12995	£12695
Magellan	Standard for sole use	£10295	£9995
Columbus	Superior for sole use	£10595	£10295

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Economy class scheduled air travel • 11 nights aboard the MS Island Sky on a full board basis • Overnight hotel accommodation in Kyoto & Tokyo with breakfast • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch & dinner • Onboard team including Noble Caledonia Tour Manager • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Airport taxes • Port taxes.

**Not Included:** Travel insurance, dinner on days 2 & 14.

# MS ISLAND SKY



The Library



Deluxe Balcony Suite



The Restaurant

The much loved MS Island Sky is one of our two flagships 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, television 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 Noble Isle 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 the Club. Tea and coffee are also available 24 hours a day. Special diets can be catered for with sufficient notice.



Superior Suite



The Lounge



The Club

## 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 Magellan 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.

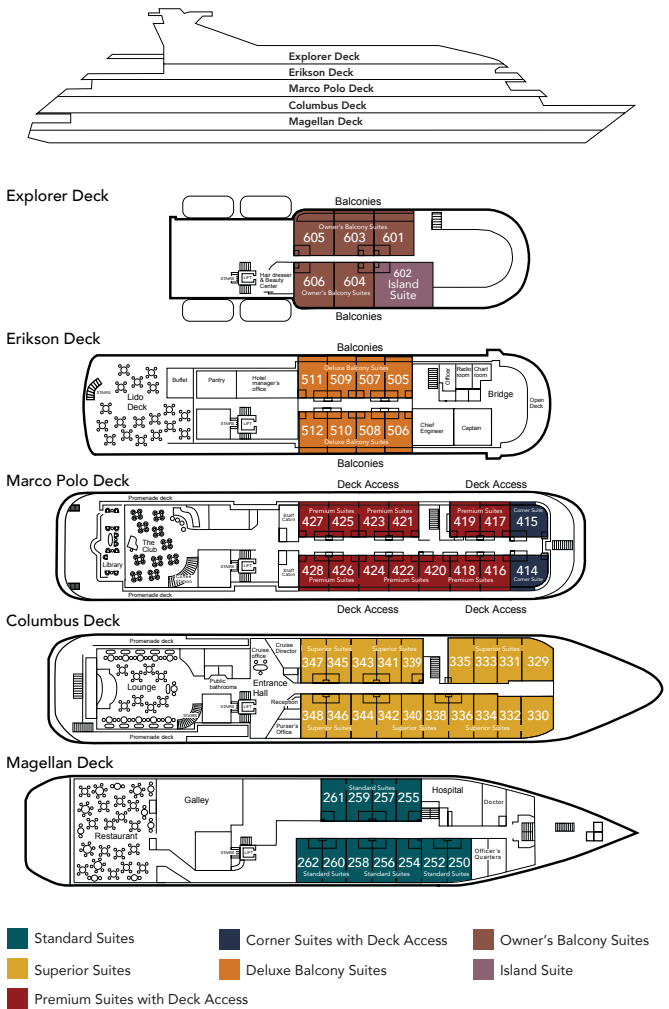
## Your Comfort

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



# NOBLE CALEDONIA

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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: Woman in traditional dress, Kyoto, Japan