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PORTSMOUTH TO COPENHAGEN - EXPLORE THE BRITISH ISLES, WESTERN IRELAND, AND NORWAY

Explore the splendid British Isles, Western Ireland, and Norway at a magical time of year. Embark from Portsmouth and discover coastal gems such as Sark Island and the Isles of Scilly, before heading to breathtaking Irish ports, including the Aaran Islands, Cliffs of Mother and Tory Island. Wind your way to the north of Scotland to admire remote treasures with plentiful birdlife. Witness beautiful Norwegian fjords before arrival in Copenhagen.



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Portsmouth also known as Pompey, is home to three hugely important historic ships, HMS Victory, Nelson's famous flagship at the battle of Trafalgar, HMS Warrior the first ironclad warship and the Mary Rose, Henry VIII's warship that sank in the Solent just off of Southsea Castle. These are all housed at the Historic Dockyard, home of the Royal Navy and also home to the world's first dry dock. The Historic Dockyard is one of the top ten visitor attractions in the UK. But Portsmouth is not just about history, the city is a cosmopolitan University city, with much to offer visitors and residents alike. Portsmouth has a Premier league football team, a superb seafront area, excellent shopping and a wide range of restaurants, pubs and bars. Portsmouth UK is home to the tallest publicly accessible structure in the UK, the Spinnaker Tower built right on the edge of Portsmouth Harbour at Gunwharf Quays. Portsmouth Harbour has been used in a number of films and television programmes such as Tomorrow Never Dies (James Bond), Oscar and Lucinda, Making Waves, Silent Witness, Mr Bean and Eastenders. The local area was used extensively in the filming of Tommy, The Who's rock opera.

Day 02 Sark Island, Channel Island

The crowning glory of the Channel Islands, Sark Island is an unbeatable place to escape modern life's busyness and slip into serenity. Nestled between Guernsey and Jersey, the island is just 24 miles from France's Normandy coast. The rhythm of life is dictated by foot, bicycle, or the gentle rumble of a traditional horse-drawn carriage. The crisp, beautiful sea is visible practically everywhere on the island. Explore sweeping trails

ITINERARY

DAY 0 Pre Cruise

Private Executive Transfers, International flights - Economy class or Business Class upgrade at reduced rates, Airport transfers

Day 01 Portsmouth

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across the emerald cliffs, finding hidden beaches, coves, and sea caves. Cars are forbidden on the island, which plunges into deep, undisturbed darkness at night, allowing the glorious strands of the Milky Way to shine brightly overhead. Sark Island has been designated as Europe's first International Dark Sky Community. Soak up the silence and stillness of this serene land in a blissful time warp of tranquillity. It hasn't always been smooth sailing; and Sark's history reads like a fascinating tome. Regarded as one of the smallest semi-autonomous territories in the world, until recently, it was described as Europe's last feudal stronghold. Settled and occupied by many over the years, this two-square-mile island has seen it all. Nowadays, it is a semi-autonomous dependency of Guernsey. This colourful history has endowed Sark with a glorious independence and an idiosyncratic, quaint charm. With just 600 residents and a few content cows for company - Sark Island is a truly unique and rejuvenating place.

[Day 03 Treeco, Isles of Scilly & St Mary's \(Isles of Scilly\)](#)

For many visitors Treeco is the most attractive of the Isles of Scilly. This is especially due to its Abbey Garden, which is home to thousands of exotic plant species from around 80 different countries. Plant collector Augustus Smith began the gardens in the 1830s on the site of an old Benedictine Abbey by channelling the weather up and over a network of walled enclosures built around the Priory ruins. He had three terraces carved from the rocky south slope and maximised Treeco's mild Gulf Stream climate. Even in mid-winter there still are hundreds of plants flowering here. Another surprising attraction at the

Abbey Garden is the collection of figureheads from ships that wrecked among the Isles of Scilly.

Scattered 30 miles offshore from England's most south-westerly point - Land's End - the Isles of Scilly are home to rich wildlife, and green land sloping to powdery white beaches. The Isles of Scilly's biggest island harbours around 1,600 people - roughly three-quarters of the total population - and is one of five occupied islands. Isolated and serene, life here hums along at its own pace in this archipelago's bubble, which enjoys the UK's mildest climate, and some of its most spectacular beaches. Hugh Town is the centre of St Mary's, and you'll be warmly welcomed by the incredibly tight-knit local community. A peaceful place, watch out when the waters are suddenly parted by the competition of gig racing - the island's sporting pride and joy - which sees teams competing in colourful rowboats. Elsewhere, catch sight of Atlantic seals and seabirds like puffins and fulmars, along nine miles of coastline. You can also spot the ghostly shipwrecks strewn around the island's waters, and the 140 islands and skerries that have made treacherous sailing historically. There's a dense collection of historical sites that belies the islands' small size - from a former prime minster's grave to star-shaped fortresses. Treeco Abbey Garden is one of the UK's most vibrant gardens, with diverse plants bathing in the warmer climate and over 300 species on display. Taste the rewards of the mild weather with a glass of wine from England's most south-westerly vineyard.

[Day 04 Kinsale](#)

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Vivid Kinsale offers a bright and breezy introduction to Ireland's south coast, with colour-splashed buildings, and fascinating maritime history to unravel. The town swells in size during the summer months, when visitors from across Ireland head here to cast rods into the water, swing golf clubs, and sail the gentle waves of the postcard-perfect harbour. The twin fortresses, which watch out over the harbour's entrance, hint at the town's significant military past, and few clashes have been more important to Irish history than the Battle of Kinsale - which saw an Irish and Spanish assault on the English, back in 1601. The Irish were ultimately defeated, scuppering their bid for independence. If you look out over the waves, you can also see the location where a German U Boat sunk the RMS Lusitania - briefly the largest passenger ship ever built - during World War I. The attack led to the deaths of more than 1,100.

Day 05 Dingle

A hearty welcome, a bright and bold harbour, and the promise of windswept walks amid Ireland's emerald scenery await in beautiful Dingle. Sheltered within Dingle Bay, this cheerful town's buildings are splashed with colourful hues. Walk streets dotted with inviting pubs and eateries, from which fulsome laughter, Gaelic vowels, and clapping singalongs sound. No visit is complete without calling at the South Pole Inn. Legendary explorer, Tom Crean - a daring hero of Shackleton's Endeavour shipwreck - ran the pub in his later years. It's a million miles from the pack ice and uncharted seas he explored, but the

Dingle Peninsula is no less beautiful. Sandy beaches unfurl, and the ravishing Sleat Head Drive offers an exceptional winding tour. Undulating trails take you on breathtaking hikes through wild emerald landscapes - expect precipitous cliffs, peaceful shores, and verdant mountains. Leaving Dingle harbour, the uninhabited Blasket Islands are within reach at this western extremity of the European continent. The islands are a refuge for Irish red deer and bright-billed puffins, while basking sharks, minke whales and seals swim the waters. The wildlife doesn't get friendlier than Dingle's most famous resident - Fungie the bottlenose dolphin. Fungie greets boats with a playful leap and has become a local celebrity for welcoming ships back home. A statue now honours this most devoted dolphin of Dingle.

Day 06 Inisheer, Aran Islands & Kilronan, Aaran Islands & Cliffs of Moher

The smallest of the Aran Islands, Inisheer, is a quaint and idyllic low-lying island steeped in rich Irish culture. It's a gorgeous place of rustic stone walls, green fields stretching out beneath racing skies, and expansive Atlantic views. The authentic Aran Island way of life is well preserved here, and you can eavesdrop on cheerful conversations in the Gaelic language, admire local weaving, or tap your foot to lively music performances in local drinking holes while sharing a friendly pint of the black stuff. Hike or cycle through this preserved vision of old, sepia-toned Ireland. There are plenty of stories and tall tales to discover - scour the small island for its black and white lighthouse, Bronze Age history, crumbling castle ruins, and buried churches. Or simply soak in the peace and tranquillity during quiet island rambles. You're sure to come across the rusty red hull of the

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Plassey ship. Over six decades have now passed since the ill-fated cargo vessel ran aground here. Fortunately, thanks to the bravery of the locals, all sailors were saved. The aged shipwreck now lies dramatically perched ashore above the waters.

If you have ever wanted to imbibe in the Celtic legends of your past, then Kiltonan is the answer to your prayers. Situated on the isle of Inishmore in the Aran Islands in County Galway, Cill Ronain - the official Gaelic spelling - is all about history, spirituality and the kind of rejuvenation that can only be found on Irish soil. The first thing you should know about the Aran Isles is that they are exceptionally beautiful. National Geographic called them "one of the world's top island destinations" and they are universally recognised as being the "islands of saints and scholars". Windswept moors and craggy cliffs akin to a Victorian novel flank rolling seas that are Dantesque in their raw power. This is where nature comes home to roost (not to mention the 60,000 seabirds that call the islands their home). Inishmore (Inis Mor) is the biggest island of the archipelago, and as such has the most interesting Celtic history. Over 50 Celtic, Christian and pre-Christian sites are on Inishmore alone (with others on the other two islands that make up the rest of the archipelago). The most important of these sites is perhaps the prehistoric fort of Dun Aonghasa, "the most magnificent barbaric monument extant in Europe". Perched precariously on a 100-metre-high cliff, the fort dates back 3,000 years and is one of Ireland's most ancient and sacred sites. Little is known of the history of Dun Aonghasa, not who Dun Aonghasa may have been, but a placing so close to the sea edge suggests ritualistic significance.

"The cliffs of Moher rising out of the mist"... These words by the great American poet Wallace Stevens perfectly immortalise the Cliffs of Moher. Romantic, wild, mysterious, and breathtakingly beautiful, this landscape is to Ireland what poetry is to prose. There's no better way to soak in the views of Ireland's premier natural wonder than from the surface of the waves far down below their lofty heights. The immense scale and beauty of this 15 km stretch of 300-million-year-old cliffs gradually unveils itself from the privileged vantage point on deck. A mesmerising highlight of the Wild Atlantic Way, the cliffs at the southwestern edge of County Clare are Ireland's most visited natural landmark, welcoming 1.5 million visitors annually. Spectacular and stark, they loom over 200 metres at their tallest point, where the iconic O'Brien's Tower salutes passing ships. From the perspective at sea level, the staggering scale of the layered, precipitous cliffs is starkly revealed, along with the relentless power and churn of nature, as Atlantic waves smash and break against the sheer rock wall. Designated as a UNESCO Global Geopark and enjoying Special Protection status, the cliffs offer rich spoils for birdwatchers. Thousands of guillemots, razorbills, fulmars, and kittiwakes thrive on the cliffs alongside the largest mainland colony of puffins. At certain times of the year, it's also possible to spot basking sharks gliding through the waters around you.

[Day 07 Tory Island](#)

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Just three miles long, this remote island greets all visitors with unusual aplomb. A testament to the island's distinctive culture, none other than the island's king - who still holds an official designation - will welcome you ashore. Gaelic culture thrives on Tory Island, protected and celebrated through traditions of dance, music, and stories, which are often regaled over a drink or two. The lyrical folk tales dance expertly between fact and fiction; for example, you can explore the legend of Balor of the Evil Eye at the ancient Dun Bhaloir fort - said to have been the stronghold of a giant folklore warrior. It's easy to imagine colossal forces shaping this land as you gaze at the spectacular sea cliffs, where faces and figures seem to emerge from intricate crags and fissures. These time-sculpted cliffs provide a perfect sanctuary for rare bird colonies. Watch adorable puffins hop across the cliffs and flap furiously as they launch into the air. Artistic souls find solace in the wild and secluded scenery of Ireland's northernmost inhabited island, a muse to many fine painters. The sense of independence and resilience is palpable and perhaps a legacy of Tory Island's turbulent history - take the 6th-century monastery that stood as the island's centre until it was destroyed in 1595 by English raiders. A historic black and white lighthouse also watches out over the potentially treacherous outcrops, giving an intriguing nod to a history of smugglers and pirates.

Day 08 St. Kilda & Boreray Island cruising

Gloriously remote, St. Kilda is an archipelago 50 miles off the Isle of Harris. Although the four islands are uninhabited by

humans, thousands of sea birds call these craggy cliffs home, clinging to the sheer faces as if by magic. Not only is St. Kilda home to the UK's largest colony of Atlantic Puffin (almost 1 million), but also the world largest colony Gannets nests on Boreray island and its sea stacks. The islands also home decedents of the world's original Soay sheep as well as having a breed of eponymously named mice. The extremely rare St. Kilda wren unsurprisingly hails from St. Kilda, so birders should visit with notebook, binoculars and camera to hand. While endemic animal species is rife on the island, St. Kilda has not been peopled since 1930 after the last inhabitants voted that human life was unsustainable. However, permanent habitation had been possible in the Medieval Ages, and a vast National Trust for Scotland project to restore the dwellings is currently being undertaken. The islands even enjoyed a status as being an ideal holiday destination in the 19th century. Today, the only humans living on the islands are passionate history, science and conservation scholars. One of the caretakers even acts as shopkeeper and postmaster for any visitors who might like to send a postcard home from St. Kilda. It should be noted that St. Kilda is the UK's only (and just one of 39 in the world) dual World Heritage status from UNESCO in recognition of its Natural Heritage and cultural significance.

Erupting out of the Atlantic waters like a mythical beast, Boreray Island captivates all those who lay eyes upon it. As we approach, listen out for sharp intakes of breath - the abrasive and immense form of this staggering island never fails to astound. Few locations command such awe as uninhabited Boreray, left to the seabirds since the last residents of the St Kilda Islands departed in 1930. Watch as vast numbers of

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Northern Gannets glide overhead before attempting skilful landings at tucked-away nest sites or plunge into the sea, seeking food for their new chicks. Northern Fulmars also make their homes on the volcanic cliffs, while Atlantic Puffins dart in and out of burrows on the slopes. The rugged, rocky island is also well known for the hardy sheep who cling to its shores. You might be able to pick out the rare Boreray Sheep, unique to the island, grazing on the hilly slopes as we cruise alongside the island and the attendant rock stacks that stand tall against the Atlantic onslaught. Boreray forms a part of the dramatic St Kilda World Heritage Site and is a rare example of a site recognised for both its outstanding natural and cultural values.

Day 09 Shiant Islands, Scotland & Dunvegan, Isle of Skye, Scotland

Cliffs of tall hexagonal columns create a sensational landscape at the Shiant Islands, especially when viewed from the sea. The cliffs of six-sided rock columns look like the cross-section of an enormous honeycomb. The rock formations were formed when molten volcanic magma cooled very slowly underground. Millions of years of erosion has exposed the six-sided columns to the sea, and to us. The tallest of these formations is 120 metres (390 feet) high. During spring and summer, flights of seabirds near the Shiant Islands catch the eye. Many long-winged seabirds wheel and soar gracefully. Others are more shaped for underwater swimming and fly in direct lines, beating stubby wings to resemble flying potatoes. Some birds nest in burrows while others, like Black-legged Kittiwakes, nest on cliffs. Rather than build nests, guillemots lay eggs on bare rock ledges. The pointed shape of the eggs ensures they roll in a

tight circle, not off the ledge to the sea below. The Shiant Islands are part of the Outer Hebrides and located between the Isles of Lewis and Skye. Historically, they have supported families of sheep grazers who could tolerate a lonely island outpost. The Shiant Islands were known as the last place in Britain where the Black Rat occurred in substantial numbers. Originally introduced to Britain from Asia in Roman times these rodents caused problems, eating eggs and chicks of seabirds. A successful eradication program eliminated the rats in 2016, giving the seabird colonies well-earned peace.

Skye epitomizes Scotland's wild celtic appeal. A turbulent geological history has given this beautiful, rugged island some of Britain's most varied and dramatic scenery. Steeped in mystery, romance and adventure, the Isle of Skye is perhaps the most well-known of Scotland's many islands. Charles Edward Stuart, better known as Bonnie Prince Charlie, escaped here from the mainland disguised as a maidservant of a woman by the name of Flora MacDonald. The north of the island is dominated by a rugged volcanic plateau, the south by the Cuillins mountain range, whose peaks were sculpted by the glaciers of the Ice Age. Skye is divided by numerous sea lochs allowing continuous proximity to the sea. The limestone grasslands of the south are the home of sheep and cattle. Scattered about are ruins of crofts, small holdings used for grazing; they were abandoned as their owners fell into poverty due to lack of income. Dunvegan is situated in a sheltered sea loch, or fjord, on the northwestern coast of the island on the Watemish peninsula. The small settlement is dominated by Dunvegan Castle. The oldest inhabited castle in Scotland, it has been the seat of the chiefs of the Clan MacLeod for the past 700 years. It offers insights into Scotland's clan spirit with

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paintings and relics from the MacLeod Clan. The gardens were originally laid out in the 18th century and are of considerable interest with the woodland glades, shimmering pools and a multitude of rhododendrons. Loch Dunvegan is home to a seal colony; the two main varieties are the brown seal and the great gray Atlantic seal. Small local boats depart from the jetty at frequent intervals throughout the day enabling close observation of these playful sea mammals.

Day 10 Inverie, Scotland

On the northern shore of Loch Nevis, you'll find a charming highland village of widescreen views, beautiful scenery, and a curious claim to fame. The undulating backdrop of the Scottish Highlands sweeps you up, and a sense of remote wonder looms large here in Inverie. Isolated from the rest of the country, little Inverie's tiny road network - which serves its approximately 100 local residents - peters out beyond the outskirts of the community-led village, so almost all visitors arrive by boat or by foot. Inverie is the largest village not connected to the main road network, and the faraway setting means it's fair to say that nobody reaches these shores by accident. Indeed, as the only village on the beautiful Knoydart peninsula, visitors literally hike for miles to reward themselves with a prized pint at Inverie's star attraction. The village revolves around its pub, the UK mainland's most remote and a World Record holder. Inverie may be distant, but that only strengthens the sense of community spirit that permeates everything here. The pub binds the tightly-knit locals together with a steady stream of overflowing glasses and free-flowing stories. Enjoy a drink and a bite to eat

outdoors on one of the grassy shore's picnic benches. Here, you can toast the tranquil beauty of Inverie's sweeping sea loch and earthy highland colours while plotting your return to this far-flung haven.

Day 11 Iona & Lunga

If tiny islands that resonate with peace and tranquillity are your idea of travel heaven, then welcome to Iona. Almost 200 miles east of Edinburgh, set in Scotland's Inner Hebrides, this magical island has a spiritual reputation that precedes it. And luckily, more than lives up to. The island is miniscule. Just three miles long and only one and a half miles wide, this is not a place that hums with urban attractions. 120 people call Iona home (this number rises significantly if the gull, tern and Kittiwake population is added), although residential numbers do go up (to a whopping 175) in summer. The beautiful coastline is lapped by the gulf stream and gives the island a warm climate with sandy beaches that look more Mediterranean than Scottish! Add to that a green field landscape that is just beautiful, and you'll find that Iona is a place that stays with you long after you leave. Iona's main attraction is of course its abbey. Built in 563 by Saint Columba and his monks, the abbey is the reason why Iona is called the cradle of Christianity. Not only is the abbey (today an ecumenical church) one of the best - if not the best - example of ecclesiastical architecture dating from the Middle Ages, but it also serves as an important site of spiritual pilgrimage. St. Martin's Cross, a 9th century Celtic cross that stands outside the abbey, is considered as the finest example of Celtic crosses in the British Isles. Reilig Odhrain, or the

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cemetery, allegedly contains the remains of many Scottish kings.

The stunning Isle of Lunga is the largest island in the Treshnish archipelago. With volcanic origin the isle was populated until the 19th Century, and remains of black houses can be seen around this magnificent coastal jewel. Abundant plant life and exotic birdlife are now the main inhabitants of the area. Fortunate visitors view the magnificent array of birds, especially the great puffins that breed on the islands plateau. One can sit within just a few feet away without disturbing the avian ambassador's peace. The 81 hectare island is home to many rare and endangered plants such as, primroses and orchids. Views over the landscape and across the ocean can be seen from the 300 foot high cliffs.

Day 12 Belfast

Reborn as a cool, modern city, Belfast has successfully left its troubles behind, emerging as a hotbed of culture and architecture, where the comfort of a cosy pub is never far away. Take a voyage of discovery in its maritime quarter, home to a celebrated museum dedicated to the most famous ship ever built, which was constructed right here in the city's shipyards. A walk across the Lagan Weir Footbridge brings you to Belfast's fascinating Titanic District - an area of the city devoted to its rich ship-building heritage. The state-of-the-art Titanic Museum brings the story of the doomed vessel to life, and is the largest museum dedicated to the infamously 'unsinkable' ship. Wind up

a nautical-themed ramble along the Maritime Mile with a visit to SS Nomadic, the smaller cousin of the Titanic, and a ship which serves as a fascinating time capsule back to the pomp and grandeur of the Titanic, while also telling its own stories of service in both World Wars. There's just enough time to give the 10-metre long Salmon of Knowledge sculpture a quick peck for luck, before continuing to explore. A stark barbed wire and graffitied sheet metal barrier marks an abrupt scar through the city's residential areas. The Peace Line was constructed during the height of the Troubles, when Belfast was plagued by sectarian divisions between Protestants and Catholics. Nowadays, you can jump in a black taxi tour to see the colourful murals and living history of the walls, which stand as a stark reminder of the fragility of peace. After exploring the city's historic divisions, a reminder of Belfast's uniting creativity can be found at the Metropolitan Arts Centre - a seven-storey tall building, which invites light to gloriously cascade inside. The Cathedral Quarter is a cobbled blend of flower-adorned pubs, restaurants and theatres, and venues where music spills out onto the streets at night, and many a pint is cheerily shared.

Day 13 Dublin

Atmospheric cobbled streets, with buskers scraping fiddles and characterful pubs inviting passersby inside, is Dublin in a snapshot. A city of irrepressible energy and lust for life, Ireland's capital is as welcoming a place as you'll find. Horse-drawn carriages plod along cobbled centuries-old streets, blending with an easy-going, cosmopolitan outlook. Known for its fun-filled gathering of pubs, any excuse works to enjoy a

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celebratory toast and chat among good company. Home to perhaps the world's most famous beer - slurp perfect pourings of thick, dark Guinness - cranked out for the city's thirsty punters. Learn more of the humble pint's journey at the Guinness Storehouse. Dublin has come along way since the Vikings established a trading port here, back in the 9th Century. In the time since, the city became the British Empire's defacto second city, and the Georgian imprint still adds oodles of historic character. Learn of 1916's Easter Uprising, when the Irish rebelled and established their independence here, as you visit the infamous, haunting Kilmainham Gaol. The uprising's leaders were tried and executed in these dark confines. Dublin's St. Patrick's Cathedral has immense history below its steep spire, which dates back to 1191. There's rich literary heritage to leaf through too, and the city's streets were rendered vividly in James Joyce's classic Ulysses. The Museum of Literature celebrates the full scope of Dublin's lyrical talents. Trinity College also has a prestigious roll-call of alumni - visit to see the Book of Kells, a beautifully illustrated bible of the medieval era.

Day 14 Lunga

The stunning Isle of Lunga is the largest island in the Treshnish archipelago. With volcanic origin the isle was populated until the 19th Century, and remains of black houses can be seen around this magnificent coastal jewel. Abundant plant life and exotic birdlife are now the main inhabitants of the area. Fortunate visitors view the magnificent array of birds, especially the great puffins that breed on the islands plateau. One can sit within just a few feet away without disturbing the avian ambassador's

peace. The 81 hectare island is home to many rare and endangered plants such as, primroses and orchids. Views over the landscape and across the ocean can be seen from the 300 foot high cliffs.

Day 15 Shiant Islands, Scotland & Loch Ewe

Cliffs of tall hexagonal columns create a sensational landscape at the Shiant Islands, especially when viewed from the sea. The cliffs of six-sided rock columns look like the cross-section of an enormous honeycomb. The rock formations were formed when molten volcanic magma cooled very slowly underground. Millions of years of erosion has exposed the six-sided columns to the sea, and to us. The tallest of these formations is 120 metres (390 feet) high. During spring and summer, flights of seabirds near the Shiant Islands catch the eye. Many long-winged seabirds wheel and soar gracefully. Others are more shaped for underwater swimming and fly in direct lines, beating stubby wings to resemble flying potatoes. Some birds nest in burrows while others, like Black-legged Kittiwakes, nest on cliffs. Rather than build nests, guillemots lay eggs on bare rock ledges. The pointed shape of the eggs ensures they roll in a tight circle, not off the ledge to the sea below. The Shiant Islands are part of the Outer Hebrides and located between the Isles of Lewis and Skye. Historically, they have supported families of sheep grazers who could tolerate a lonely island outpost. The Shiants were known as the last place in Britain where the Black Rat occurred in substantial numbers. Originally introduced to Britain from Asia in Roman times these rodents caused problems, eating eggs and chicks of seabirds. A

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successful eradication program eliminated the rats in 2016, giving the seabird colonies well-earned peace.

Loch Ewe is the only north facing Loch in Scotland, with an interesting history and a fine scenic landscape this area has a true natural beauty. During WW2 the loch was a convoy collecting point with a strong naval presence; it was therefore protected by light and heavy aircraft guns, a boom net and mine defence system helped to shield this precious settlement. Loch Ewe is a natural deep water sea loch that links to the Atlantic Ocean with a relatively small mouth giving the loch a vast amount of protection from the weather. Nearby Inver ewe gardens thrive on the warm currents of the North Atlantic Drift to create an oasis of colour and fertility where exotic plants from many countries flourish on latitude more northerly than Moscow, giving an almost continual display of colour throughout the year.

Day 16 Kirkwall, Orkney Islands, Scotland

Scattered just off the northern tip of Scotland, Kirkwall is the capital of the Orkney Islands - a scenic archipelago of fascinating, dual heritage. The Viking influence is deep, while a prehistoric past and World War history adds to the endless stories that these dramatic islands have to tell. Sparse and beautiful, let the sweeping seascapes of frothing waves, and dance of the northern lights, enchant you as you explore. Windswept beaches are inhabited by whooping swans, while grassy cliffs hide puffins amid their wavy embrace. Sea caves and crumbling castles - and the dramatic meeting of the North

Sea and the Atlantic Ocean add to the romantic beauty of these lands, which may be physically close to the UK, but feel an entire world away. The sandstone St. Magnus Cathedral is the centrepiece of Orkney's main town - a place of winding lanes and atmospheric walks - and Britain's northernmost cathedral is a masterpiece that took 300 years to complete. Started in 1137, the beautiful cathedral is adorned with mesmerising stain-glass windows and has been evocatively named as the Light of the North. Look down over the ruined Bishop's and Earl's Palaces nearby from the tip of the cathedral's tower. Or, test out the islands' history-rich distilleries, which produce smokey single malts - said to be the best in the world. You can also venture out to Europe's best-preserved Stone Age Village, at the extraordinary World Heritage Site of Skara Brae, which offers an unparalleled vision into prehistoric life.

Day 17 Sumburgh, Shetland Islands, Scotland & Fair Isle, Scotland

Lying mid-way between Shetland and the Orkney islands, Fair Isle is a tiny jewel in the sea. Famous for birds, knitwear and historic shipwrecks, the island offers a warm and friendly welcome to visitors. With a population of only around 70 people this island is truly a beautiful setting and is one of Britain's most successful communities. View the cloudy light turquoise water as it drifts out to sea beneath the breath-taking Sheep Rock, rising over 100 metres, which is almost an isle of its own. Fair Isles oceanic climate brings stormy but fairly mild winters, in summer, you can expect rapid changes in the weather, sparkling sunshine can be followed by a thick blanket of mist and fog, and this makes the isle a truly inspiring area. Over the centuries

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the island has changed hands many times and was named the island of peace by Norse settlers. The isle has been a useful landmark for shipping but in storms and fog it is highly dangerous creating over 100 known shipwrecks such as the Spanish armada flag ship "El Gran Grifon".

Day 18 Bekkjarvik

Sail back through time to the quaint charm of Bekkjarvik, a former fishing village home to an inn worthy of royalty. Nestled among picturesque fjords and idyllic islands, historical warehouses, quays, and factories have been sensitively restored and repurposed, creating a town of nostalgic flair and a sense of living history. Located on the island of Selbjørn in the Austevoll archipelago, just 25 miles south of Bergen, Bekkjarvik boasts beautiful scenery and royal lodgings. The renowned guesthouse, commissioned by King Christian IV of Denmark, was initially intended to provide a suitable rest stop for travelers after a half day of sailing along the splintered coastline. The immaculate, white-timbered walls of Bekkjarvik Gjestgiveri have warmly welcomed sea-faring travelers since the 17th century, offering guests refined gastronomic experiences with high-quality ingredients sourced from across the region. Delve further into the fractured archipelago by cycling along bridges that loop and weave along stunning cycle tracks, or relax and watch as pleasure boats glide peacefully through the waters. For those who prefer hiking, a steep stone staircase leads to breathtaking panoramic views of the fjords and archipelago unfurling before you.

Day 19 Rosendal

Rosendal, with its mountains and waterfalls, is one of Norway's more romantic villages. Cut off from the rest of the world by high mountains and the Folgefonna National Park, and home to just 800 year round inhabitants, to say the village is in a little world of its own is no exaggeration! While Rosendal might lack for urban excitement, you certainly couldn't want to find a more beautiful setting. Soaring mountains peaks, narrow winding fjords, impressive waterfalls and the third largest glacier in Norway are all par for the norm here, as are breathtaking glacier views and some of the freshest air you'll ever experience. The village was famously a wedding present to Ludvig Holgersen Rosenkrantz's daughter in 1658. Rosenkrantz was the wealthiest man in the country at the time, owning over 500 farms all over western Norway. The great manor house built shortly after the wedding still stands, along with beautifully maintained gardens that were added 300 years later. The house is a wonderful reflection of the different periods styles of the various illustrious owners and restoration has been painstakingly carried out. The oldest rooms are still decorated as they were in the early 19th century while the library is the only 17th century room in Norway kept in its entirety, complete with the original rich French tapestry from the 1660's. No visit to this little village would be complete without a taste of local life. Pop into a tea shop for a traditional girdlecake, enjoyed amid splendid waterfront views.

Day 20 Cruise Lysefjord

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East of Stavanger, Lysefjord is the southernmost of Norway's biggest fjords. The ship will enter the narrow 42 kilometer long fjord between Forsand and Oanes and will then pass under Lysefjordbrua, the only bridge connecting the northern and southern sides. Bergsholmen and the adjacent islet with Forsand lighthouse are the only obstacles in the fjord which in some parts is as deep as the mountain cliffs on its side. The light granitic rocks on both sides of the fjord are said to have given it its name "Light Fjord". The fjord's cliffs, waterfalls and hardy trees are reflected in the calm waters, yet while cruising through the fjord, hardly any houses will be seen, as the shore provides only very limited farm area and the cliffs are just too steep. Two of Norway's famous viewpoints will be passed: on Lysefjord's northern shore is the 604 meters vertical cliff of Preikestollen, while the southern shore shows Kjerak, a mountain with a height of 1,100 meters. Kjerak has the famous Kjerakbolten, a boulder stuck 894 meters above sea level in a mountain crevasse. Before reaching Kjerak and eventually the end at Lysebotn, an old hydroelectric plant is passed at Florli - its main attraction today is to climb one of the longest wooden staircases in the world with more than 4400 steps running parallel to the tubes which formerly brought down the water.

Day 21 Day at sea

Days at sea are the perfect opportunity to relax, unwind and catch up with what you've been meaning to do. So whether that is going to the gym, visiting the spa, whale watching, catching up on your reading or simply topping up your tan, these blue

sea days are the perfect balance to busy days spent exploring shore side.

Day 22 Copenhagen

Effortlessly cool and down to earth, Copenhagen is a contemporary, clean and classy highlight of Scandinavia. A city built to be liveable, Copenhagen has refused to compromise, resulting in a forward-thinking metropolis that's green and clean. Swim in the waters of Havnebadet Islands during summer, or shelter from winter's bite by snuggling in beside a roaring open fire during winter. You can even hop on a train to Sweden, traversing the famous span of a Nordic Noir star - the Öresund Bridge. It takes just a touch over half an hour to step off the train in Malmo. There's only one way to truly explore Copenhagen and that's on two wheels. Easy bike hire schemes will get you moving across this flat city, designed with bikes at the forefront of the mind. Choose a model with electronic assistance to take the strain out of any journey, giving you the freedom to whizz around and explore the modern angular architecture of the centre, and the pastoral colours of Nyhavn waterfront. Head out to the Little Mermaid statue, inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale - the strikingly-restrained statue is the perfect landmark for Copenhagen; unshowy, self-assured and utterly irresistible. The Danish concept of hygge is very much alive here, and you'll feel that warm cosy feeling as you visit cafes illuminated by the warm glow of hanging filament bulbs, and stuffed to the brim with thick, dusty books. Home to mega-brewer Carlsberg, Copenhagen is also a city for hop enthusiasts, and there is a thriving craft brewing scene to

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sample. Danish Smørrebrød sandwiches are a must try, or for something a little more substantial, settle in for a culinary voyage and try a taster menu - the city's restaurants are littered with Michelin stars.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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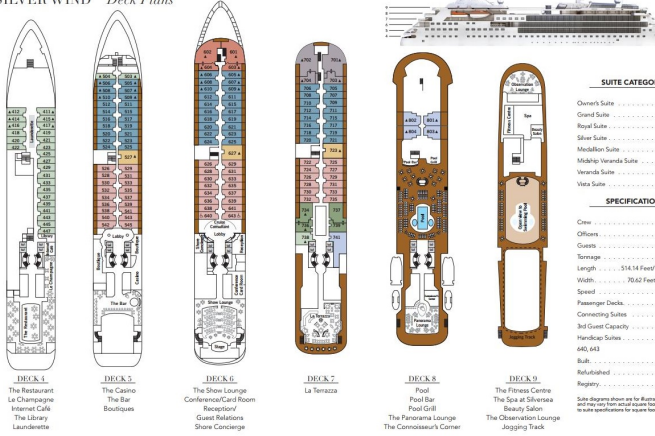
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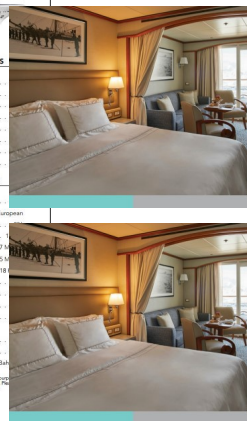
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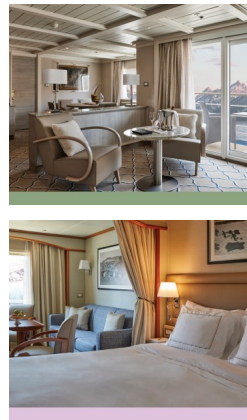


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