

# The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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## LOST EMPIRES - A VOYAGE FROM VENICE TO ATHENS

For thousands of years southeastern Europe has been a crossroads of empires. Greeks, Persians, Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans all left their mark on the culture, philosophy, art and architecture of this region. In more recent times, some of the countries that occupy this strategic part of Europe have been at the centre of conflict as world powers continue to contend for influence and control. During our journey from Venice to Athens, we will sail along the stunning Adriatic Coast to the Ionian Sea and cruise through turquoise waters, admire rugged landscapes and visit some of the region's greatest sites. We have designed the voyage for October when the crowds of summer have departed and the temperatures are perfect for exploration. This is not an itinerary that a large cruise ship could operate but one that is ideal for the 118-passenger MS Island Sky. During our exploration of the area we will experience the beauty and charm of Venice, Croatia's delightful Istrian coast, Montenegro's Kotor, a 14th century walled fortress town fronted by a sublime bay and surrounded by limestone cliffs, and the tranquil Ionian island of Kefalonia. We also discover some of the fascinating ancient sites in the region including Diocletian's Palace in Split, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Butrint, Albania, whose ruins span some 2,500 years, and the ancient Sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi, Greece. Finally, before arriving in Athens, ensure you are on deck as we transit the Corinth Canal, a wonderful end to our cruise and only possible on a small ship. The rich legacy of multiple civilisations, each building atop another, is evident everywhere during our itinerary and our guided tours ashore will be a pleasure as we explore in small groups with our excellent local guides and knowledgeable Guest Speaker. Whether your

interest lies in ancient history, modern politics or simply the joy of experiencing new places, this journey has



much to offer.

### ITINERARY

Day 1 London or Manchester to Venice, Italy.

Fly by scheduled flight. Arrive this afternoon and transfer to the MS Island Sky and embark. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we moor overnight.

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### Day 2 Venice.

This morning is free to explore Venice at your own pace from our central berth. Lunch will be served on board and in the early afternoon a guided walking tour will discover the hidden corners of Venice. An off the beaten track itinerary takes us to the San Giorgio dei Greci Church and its secret courtyard; Campo Santa Maria Formosa, one of the city's largest squares, and Marco Polo's House. We end at the Chiesa della Pietà, a former convent and orphanage and an authentic masterpiece of the 18th century by Giorgio Massari. The young orphans that stayed here were encouraged to study music and their most famous teacher was Antonio Vivaldi. It was here that he composed the Four Seasons and we have arranged for an exclusive private concert of Vivaldi themed music performed by a Venetian orchestra. It will be a thrilling experience to hear the music performed where it was created. Return to the ship as we sail tonight.

### Day 3 Pula & Rovinj, Croatia.

Arrive this morning at the tip of the Istrian Peninsula and the former Roman settlement of Polensium, now known as Pula. Here we will discover one of the best preserved Roman amphitheatres left in the world. The Arena, built in the 1st century AD was designed to host gladiatorial contests with seating for up to 20,000 spectators. This afternoon you can remain in Pula to explore independently or join a drive to Rovinj where the houses inside the old town are small and lean into each other creating a unique atmosphere. Our guided walking tour will include the Franciscan Monastery, City Palace and the

17th century clock tower before we visit the town's main landmark, St Euphemia Church, which is built on the top of a small hill. This Baroque building built in Venetian style was dedicated to the saint and martyr whose sarcophagus, according to a legend, was miraculously washed ashore somewhere around 800 AD.

### Day 4 Split.

After a morning at sea we arrive into Split. Our guided walk includes the Diocletian's Palace, built by the emperor in 295-305 AD as his retirement villa. Much of this large building is well preserved and the palace contains Split's old town within its walls, making it the only Roman palace that has been continuously inhabited since Roman times. It is a wonderful spot to wander the maze of streets. Alternatively, join us as we drive the short distance to the ancient site of Salona, the Roman capital of Dalmatia and a city that was once home to over 40,000 people. Archaeologists have excavated remains of temples, amphitheatres, early Christian churches, burial grounds, and baths which we can explore with our local guides.

### Day 5 Kotor, Montenegro.

Over breakfast we enter the Gulf of Kotor and sail up the fjord-like entrance to the Medieval town and UNESCO World Heritage Site of Kotor. This really is an extraordinary place full of marvellous architecture and pretty town squares. Our walk will include the 12th century Cathedral of St Tryphon, the ancient town gates, the Maritime Museum and Romanesque churches including St Luke's. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy the

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afternoon exploring at your own pace. Those feeling active may wish to take the strenuous climb to the Castle of San Giovanni which offers wonderful views over the bay and town below.

### Day 6 Sarande, Albania.

Spend the morning at sea as we cruise to Albania and the port of Sarande, our base to discover the ancient city of Butrint, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. On a guided tour explore the ruins that feature the remains of many eras and cultures. From the Hellenistic period there are temples, the promenade and the 4th century BC theatre. From the Roman era are the public baths, gymnasium and fountains. From the Byzantine era we see chapels and the large Basilica of St Peter and St Paul, whilst the Venetians are represented by a watchtower and a small castle with commanding views over the Straits of Corfu.

### Day 7 Preveza, Greece.

Today we arrive into Greece at the port of Preveza from where we head for the little known ancient city of Nikopolis, one of the largest and most important sites in the whole of Greece. Built by the Roman Emperor Octavianus Augustus following his victory at Aktium in 31 BC over Antony and Cleopatra, inside its extensive walls are the Odeum, the Theatre, the Nymphaeum and the monument to Augustus. Later, the city flourished in the early Christian period as the seat of the archbishop of old Epiros, but earthquakes and invading Goths and Vandals led to its demise. Return to the ship for lunch and a free afternoon to explore this pretty, yacht lined harbour town.

### Day 8 Argostoli, Kefalonia.

The largest of the Ionian Islands, Kefalonia is immortalised in the novel Captain Corelli's Mandolin and has great charm. From our berth in Argostoli we have a choice of excursions today. A half day tour will drive to the famous lighthouse of Agioi Theodori, the remarkable Venetian castle of Saint George and the 16th century Monastery of Agios Gerasimos. St Gerasimos is the patron saint of Kefalonia, and his relic is kept in the monastery, in a silver urn. Near to the monastery we find the Robala vineyards. Wines have been grown here since the 12th century and we will learn about the processes and enjoy a tasting before we return to the ship. The afternoon is free to explore the town of Argostoli. Alternatively, a full day tour will drive to the north of the island passing the famous Myrtos beach as we drive to the village of Assos. With just 100 residents it is one of the most charming spots on the island. Built on a small peninsula the town is dominated by the ruins of a 16th century Venetian castle. After time to wander the streets viewing the traditional architecture, pretty harbour and pebbled beaches we continue to the small port of Fiskardo which curves serenely beside coral-blue waters, gazing out towards Ithaki. Thanks to its colourful crop of Venetian villas, spared from earthquake damage because they rest on a sturdy bed of flat rock, Fiskardo is home to upscale restaurants built around the small harbour where yachts jostle for space to dock. After lunch in the port and some free time to explore we return to the MS Island Sky.

### Day 9 Delphi & Corinth Canal.

The port of Itea is our gateway to the sacred site of Delphi, one

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of Greece's most important sites of antiquity. The hillside ruins here are exceptional and we will explore the Sanctuary of Apollo, the site of the sacred Delphic Oracle and walk along Delphi's Sacred Way, visiting the Treasury of the Athenians and the 5,000 seat theatre dating from the 4th century BC. Alternatively, visit the picturesque harbour town of Galaxidi which is built on the site of the ancient town of Oianthi. Only accessible by boat until 1963 and once a major boatbuilding centre the town played a major role in Greece's maritime history. Walking the cobblestoned streets we will see the Neoclassical Captains mansions, Agios Nikolaos Church, with its splendid and unique wooden temple, and the Nautical Museum. Sail over lunch and in the late afternoon we transit the Corinth Canal. Completed in 1893 and only 6.4 kilometres long and 21.5 metres wide, it is only small ships like ours which can now make this journey. We will arrive into Piraeus late this evening and berth overnight.

Day 10 Athens to London or Manchester.

Disembark after breakfast and transfer to the airport for the return scheduled flight.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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## YOUR SHIP: ISLAND SKY

**YOUR SHIP:** Island Sky

**VESSEL TYPE:**

**LENGTH:**

**PASSENGER CAPACITY:**

**BUILT/REFURBISHED:**

With a maximum passenger capacity of only 116, 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. There is a high ratio of crew to passengers- the friendly crew of 75 crew and 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. We promise 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, guest speakers, informative port briefings from our cruise director and of course good food which may be enjoyed leisurely in the attractive dining room. After a day ashore you will return to the comfort and peace of a well run and exceedingly

comfortable ship. Your Suite Onboard 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 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 player which can also play CDs and a telephone in each suite. Bottled water, towelling dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted toiletries and individually controlled air-conditioning and heating. The suites on each deck have their own colour theme. Soft hues and blended tones enhance the traditional maritime style making the passenger accommodation an inviting and relaxing place to be. 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 bar also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. The onboard library is the perfect place to relax with a book and is stocked with reference books pertaining to the places the vessel is visiting along with a selection of games and two computers with internet access. Daily newspapers and magazines are also placed in the library depending on local availability. There is

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also WI-FI access throughout the vessel. Outside there is a rear sun deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade, a bar and comfortable deck furniture for sun bathing or relaxing with a book. On the top deck there is a Jacuzzi and further observation and sun deck. There is also a small hairdressers on board with appointments made on request. 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. Such purchases enhance the well stocked larders and bring a local touch to the



varied menus.

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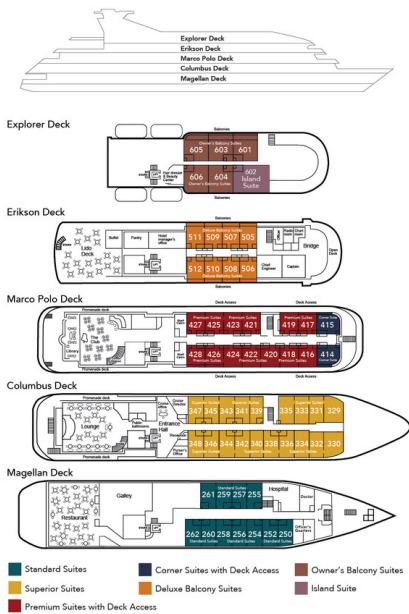
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## INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Columbus Deck Superior Single



Columbus Deck Superior Suite



Erikson Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite



Explorer Deck Island Suite



Explorer Deck Owner's Balcony Suite



Magellan Deck Standard Single



Magellan Deck Standard Suite

Marco Polo Deck Corner Suite

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## PRICING

12-Oct-2025 to 21-Oct-2025

Marco Polo Deck Corner Suite	£6595 GBP pp
Marco Polo Deck Premium Suite	£6395 GBP pp
Columbus Deck Superior Suite	£6195 GBP pp
Magellan Deck Standard Suite	£5995 GBP pp
Magellan Deck Standard Single	£6995 GBP pp
Columbus Deck Superior Single	£7195 GBP pp
Explorer Deck Island Suite	£7795 GBP pp
Explorer Deck Owner's Balcony Suite	£7295 GBP pp
Erikson Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite	£6995 GBP pp