

A SPECIALLY ARRANGED ISLAND HOPPING VOYAGE IN SUPPORT OF  
THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND

# HEBRIDEAN HEAVEN

SAIL FROM OBAN ABOARD THE MS SERENISSIMA AND EXPLORE  
SOME OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACES ON EARTH  
WITH GUEST SPEAKER JOHN LOVE

15<sup>TH</sup> TO 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2021



**NATIONAL  
TRUST *for*  
SCOTLAND**

**NOBLE CALEDONIA**



The Jacobite steam train on the Glenfinnan viaduct

We can all be guilty of forsaking the beauty that is close to hand for far-flung enticing foreign shores. But the call of the wild and the enchanting Hebrides cannot be ignored. To have such bewitching islands and seascapes on our doorstep is indeed fortunate, and we should all make the most of these magical places. Join us aboard the 95-passenger MS *Serenissima*, an ideal vessel for our exploration which is not a ‘traditional’ cruise but a thought provoking journey at a time of year when the islands and west coast will be at their best. The wildlife, gardens and wild flowers will be at their richest, thriving amongst some amazing habitats.

Our exploration of the Inner and Outer Hebrides will have its special moments. Often, it is the simplest stop and stare moments that leave a lasting memory - rainbows patching a velvet sky over mountains and moors or a shaft of sunlight illuminating a turquoise sea and blinding white sandy beach. There will be many such experiences to treasure as we sail the seas around the Hebrides, allowing contemplative moments on deck whilst absorbing the beauty of it all. There will be many highlights along the way but perhaps none more so than our visit to the St Kilda archipelago, an extraordinary place that deserves its dual designation as a World Heritage Site for both natural and cultural significance. Travelling with us will be a team of naturalists and experts who will add much to our enjoyment and knowledge in such diverse places as Glencoe, the gardens of Inverewe, Arduaine and Crarae, Fingal’s Cave on Staffa and the holy island of Iona.

Over the past 29 years Noble Caledonia has operated hundreds of diverse cruises in the Hebrides and we are proud to be working with the National Trust for Scotland who also have a long history of arranging cruises for members. Take a look at the itinerary for this voyage, and if you have a hankering to see and learn more about the natural world, history and culture of the Hebrides, why not join us on what promises to be an enchanting journey made with like-minded travellers.



## The Itinerary

**Day 1 Oban, Scotland.** Embark the MS *Serenissima* this afternoon. A transfer will be available from Glasgow Central Station and Glasgow International Airport at a fixed time. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner on board as we sail along Loch Linnhe and anchor overnight at Fort William.

**Day 2 Fort William.** Awake this morning in Fort William, the largest town in the Scottish Highlands and a great base to explore the surrounding beautiful scenery of the Nevis Range. On a morning tour, we will drive to two of the best-known monuments in Scotland – the statue to commemorate Bonnie Prince Charlie and the failed Jacobite rising of 1745 and the Glenfinnan Viaduct, enjoying stunning views of

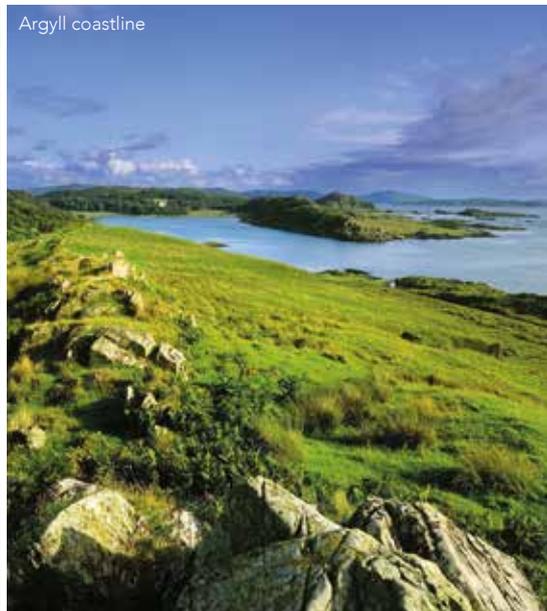
Ben Nevis on the way. Upon arrival at Glenfinnan, we will explore the National Trust for Scotland’s visitor centre and then watch the famous Jacobite steam train chug across this famous landmark. Return to Fort William for lunch after which we will travel south along the shores of Loch Linnhe to visit Glencoe, one of Scotland’s most spectacular places and now looked after by the National Trust for Scotland. The glen provides some of Scotland’s most dramatic scenery and it is, of course, the site of the infamous 1692 massacre. Continue on our scenic drive via the Pass of Brander, taking in the impressive landscapes of the Scottish Highlands, mountains, sea lochs, castles and islands before travelling back up the west coast to

Fort William and returning to the MS *Serenissima*.

**Day 3 Canna & Loch Scavaig.** Strategically placed between the mountains of Rum and the Outer Hebrides, the island of Canna and its adjoining neighbour Sanday have an amazingly rich archaeological landscape, with remains dating from all periods of settled occupation in Scotland. Canna is owned and looked after by the National Trust for Scotland and enjoys the best harbour in the Small Isles. The fertile soil and diversity of habitats mean that the island has an incredibly rich plant life, with 248 native flowering plants recorded. We will see Canna House, and wander across grassy plateaus to the 600-foot cliffs in

the north of the island. Sail during lunch to lovely Loch Scavaig on the island of Skye. Just beyond is the freshwater Loch Coruisk with breathtakingly beautiful views over the Cuillins. This is great walking country, but for those who prefer a less energetic afternoon our Zodiacs will explore the coastline looking out for seals.

**Day 4 Inverewe & Shiant Islands.** This morning we will visit Inverewe, surely one of the finest sited gardens in all Scotland. Cared for by the National Trust for Scotland since 1952 it was first designed by plant hunter Osgood Mackenzie in the late 19th century and is home to a multitude of exotic and tender plants. They thrive in this northerly location warmed by the effects of the



Gulf Stream and protected by over 40 hectares of woodland shelter. After a guided tour of the gardens, we will return to the ship and sail over lunch. This afternoon we will board the Zodiacs for a cruise around the spectacular basalt cliffs of the Shiant Islands, a group of little islands located a few miles off the shores of Lewis. This is an excellent place to spot puffins, razorbills, guillemots, seals and hopefully white-tailed eagles.

**Day 5 St Kilda.** Awake this morning in St Kilda, a remarkable uninhabited archipelago some 40 miles beyond the Outer Hebrides. Dominated by the highest cliffs and sea stacks in Britain, Hirta, (St Kilda's main island) was occupied on and off for at least 2000 years, with the last 36 islanders evacuated at their own request in 1930. Immediately after the evacuation, the islands were bought by the Marquess of Bute to protect the thousands of seabirds including puffins and fulmars, and in 1957 they were bequeathed to the National Trust for Scotland. St Kilda is one of the few UNESCO World Heritage Sites with dual status, reflecting both its natural and cultural significance. The National Trust for Scotland Ranger will join us on board before our expedition staff lead a number of guided walks on Hirta. Later, cruise past two of the largest gannetries in the world at Stac Lee and Berneray. These impressive stacs rise 170-metres from the sea and are home to up to 60,000 breeding pairs of northern gannets.

**Day 6 Mingulay & Barra.** Arrive over breakfast at Mingulay, which is the largest of the group of islands south of Barra. Its towering cliffs and stacks face the Atlantic while the east side slopes gradually down to

the sandy beach of Mingulay Bay. Despite there being a continuous population on the island for at least 2000 years, evacuation began in 1907 and the island was completely abandoned in 1912. Ruins of the village remain close to the shore which we will explore on a guided walk. The island, now cared for by the National Trust for Scotland, also has important breeding populations of razorbills, guillemots, puffins, fulmars and shags. Over lunch we sail to Barra which is near the southern tip of the Outer Hebrides and we will visit Castlebay which curves around the barren rocky hills of a beautiful wide bay. Here we find the 15th century Kisimul Castle, seat of the Clan Macneil and a key defensive stronghold situated on a rock in the bay.

**Day 7 Staffa, Iona & Lunga.** Over breakfast we hope to drop anchor off the south of Staffa, which has been looked after by the National Trust for Scotland since 1986. Here, the perpendicular rock face features an imposing series of basalt columns, known as the colonnade, which has been cut by the sea into cathedralesque caverns, most notably Fingal's Cave. Weather permitting, we will use our Zodiacs to explore closer before sailing to Iona, also in the care of the Trust. This flat Hebridean island has been occupied for thousands of years and has been a place of pilgrimage and Christian worship for several centuries. St Columba fled from Ireland in AD 563 and established a monastery here; his followers were responsible for the conversion of much of pagan Scotland and northern England. Many early Scottish kings are buried in the abbey. Visit the abbey or enjoy a

walk along the white sandy beaches. Northwest of Staffa lie the Treshnish Isles, an archipelago of uninhabited volcanic islets, of which the island of Lunga is the largest. Of volcanic origin, Lunga has been described as 'a green jewel in a peacock sea' and is a summer nesting-place for hundreds of seabirds.

**Day 8 Arduaine & Crarae Gardens.** Sail this morning along the Argyll coast to our anchorage at Ardfern. From here we will visit two very special National Trust for Scotland gardens. First stop is Arduaine Garden, a delightful woodland garden on a rocky promontory beside the sea which enjoys the benefits from the warming effect of the North Atlantic Drift and is a paradise for plant lovers. Here you will see the magnificent collection of rhododendron species as well as azaleas, magnolias and many other shrubs and trees creating scents

and splashes of colour throughout. Take a walk through the woodland to the coastal viewpoint and enjoy superb views of the Sound of Jura or just spend some time relaxing at the water garden. Return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon drive to Crarae Garden, a Himalayan-style glen set in the gentle hills of Argyll. The garden was created in 1912 by Lady Grace Campbell, the aunt of intrepid plant hunter Reginald Farrer, who sourced trees and shrubs from China, Nepal and Tibet. Today, the sparkling waters of the Crarae Burn form the centrepiece for a woody paradise of rocky gorges, wooden bridges and thickets of maple, birch and evergreens, blending with sprays of flowers.

**Day 9 Oban.** Disembark this morning after breakfast. Transfers will be provided to Glasgow International Airport and Glasgow Central Station at a fixed time.

## PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Cat	Cabin Description	Price
2	Standard Stateroom	£3595
3	Classic Stateroom	£3795
4	Superior Stateroom	£4295
5	Deluxe Stateroom	£4595
6	Junior Suite	£4995
7	Owner's Suite	£5395
8	Serenissima Suite	£5395
10	Standard Single	£5095

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Eight nights aboard the MS Serenissima on a full board basis • House wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch and dinner on board • Noble Caledonia onboard team including Guest Speaker • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.  
**Not Included:** Travel insurance.

*Noble Caledonia will be making a contribution to support the vital work of the National Trust for Scotland, much of which will be enjoyed during this voyage.*



# MS SERENISSIMA

The charming MS Serenissima began her career as the Harald Jarl, cruising the Norwegian coastline and fjords. Since 2003, when she was extensively renovated, she has been operating as a classic cruise ship. With her small size and fleet of Zodiac landing craft, she can navigate into small, remote ports inaccessible to the big cruise ships.

## Your Cabin/Suite

Accommodating no more than 95 passengers, the cabins are attractively designed for comfort and convenience. All cabins are fully air conditioned with an en-suite bathroom, safety deposit box and other thoughtful appointments. Due to the very nature of the ship, the cabins do vary in shape and size, adding to the vessel's overall charm.

## Your Dining

The free seating Venice Restaurant accommodates all guests in one sitting and, with its Deck 5 location, all of the tables benefit from great views. Breakfast is served buffet style with cooked dishes available and eggs to order by the ship's accomplished chef. Lunch is also served buffet-style with hot and cold dishes available. Dinner is served a la carte and is four courses, except at the Captain's Dinner, which is a six course affair. In good weather there are al fresco dining facilities available and tea and coffee are available around the clock in the Andrea Lounge.

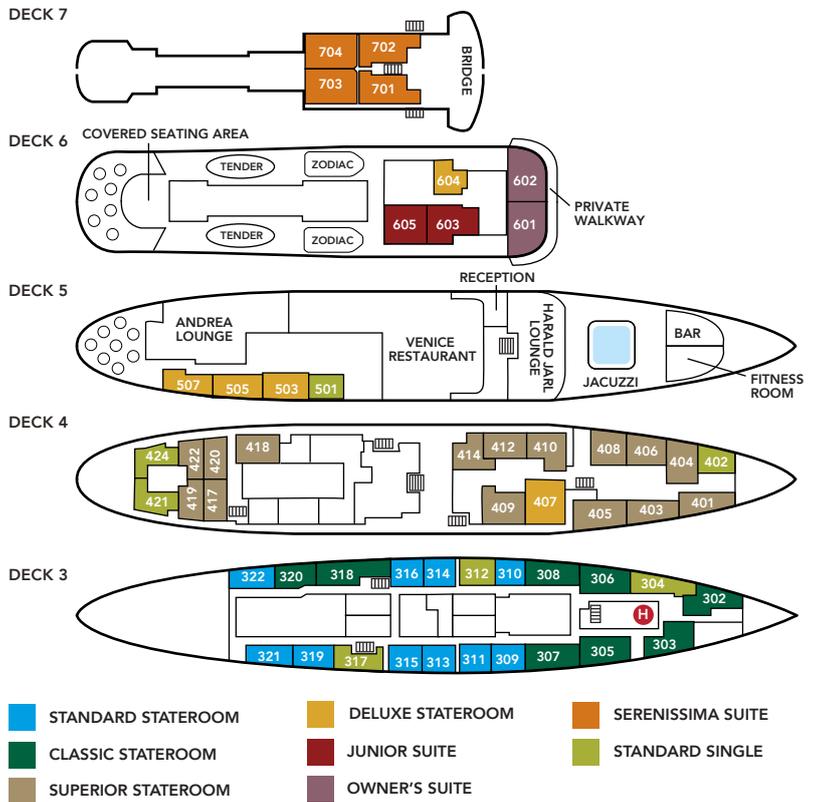
## Your Space

There are two lounges on board in addition to the outside areas which include a spacious observation deck, a lido area with Jacuzzi, outside bar and a covered seating area. Perhaps, one of the best known and loved features of this vessel is its unique Swedish 18th century influenced, country house style which works particularly well on a vessel of this vintage, providing intimacy and a classic nautical sensibility often lacking in larger vessels.



The Restaurant

## DECK PLAN



During this voyage you will be visiting out of the way destinations and will be accompanied by an expedition team. Landings and excursions will be made by Zodiac landing craft. This cruise will appeal to the more adventurous and those who enjoy the natural world.



# NOBLE CALEDONIA

2 Chester Close, Belgravia, London, SW1X 7BE  
 +44 (0)20 7752 0000 | info@noble-caledonia.co.uk | noble-caledonia.co.uk

