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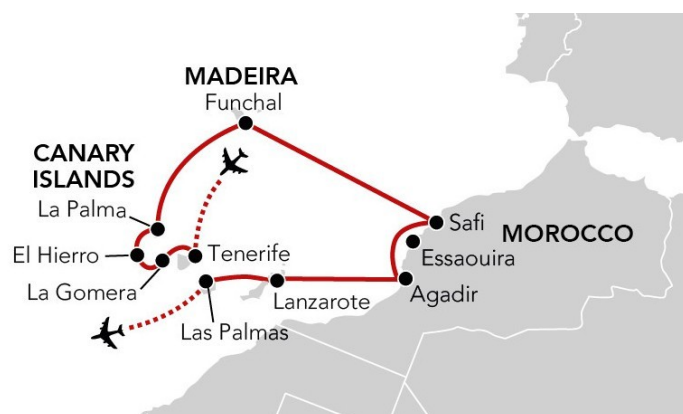
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MACARONESIA & BEYOND - CANARY ISLANDS, MADEIRA & MOROCCO

December in the UK is certainly a month to be thinking about travelling south. Join us aboard the MS Hebridean Sky and in the company of just 100 or so likeminded travel companions discover the diversity and beauty of the Canary Islands and Madeira combined with the cultural riches of Essaouira and Agadir in Morocco. We will be able to make the most of the region and in our small groups we can explore places that are otherwise inaccessible to the larger ships. Our itinerary has been designed to offer a choice of excursions on most days and we are confident that you will find this cruise the perfect antidote to the cold and grey skies at home. Our voyage will begin in the delightful Atlantic Archipelago of the Canary Islands where there is much to discover including some marvellously varied landscapes and an absorbing, multifaceted culture. We will visit the three lesserknown islands of La Gomera, El Hierro and La Palma where we can enjoy nature at its very best. These volcanic islands impress with their unique flora and fauna and boast rugged rocky landscapes, evergreen cloud forests, metre high ferns and bizarre-looking dragon trees. Continue on to the delightful island of Madeira where we have a day and a half to explore this "floating garden in the Atlantic" visiting the island's wonderful gardens and experiencing the breathtakingly beautiful scenery on offer. After a day at sea to relax and enjoy some interesting talks by our Guest Speaker, we reach the Moroccan port of Safi for our exploration of charming Essaouira and then further south we arrive into the beautiful bay of Agadir. After a morning tour to explore the city, we head into the fertile Souss valley for a visit to the ochre walled city of Taroudant where we can watch the Berbers trade and explore the souqs and

squares. Returning to the Canary Islands our final afternoon will be spent on the island of Lanzarote where there will be the opportunity to explore the beautiful gardens of the city or the otherworldly landscapes of the Timanfaya



National Park.

ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Tenerife, Canary Islands.

Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky for embarkation as we sail this evening.

Day 2 La Gomera.

Arrive this morning on beautiful and unspoilt La Gomera. On a full day tour we will explore the island including Garajonay

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National Park, home to the world's only surviving laurel forest and visit the villages of Hermigua, Agulo and Las Rosas followed by lunch in a local restaurant. Before returning to the ship experience a demonstration of Silbo Gomero, the island's unique whistling language, and visit the magnificent rock formations of Agando. Alternatively, you may wish to join a morning guided trek through the Garajonay National Park commencing in the village of El Cedro which offers some interesting examples of the architecture of the Canary Islands. Set sail during dinner as we make our way to El Hierro where we will moor overnight.

Day 3 El Hierro.

Probably the least known of the Canary Islands, and once considered to be the end of the world, El Hierro is unique and utterly captivating. This morning will be free to explore the town at your own pace. Later on an afternoon island tour it will be impossible not to be entranced by the island's slow pace and simple style; by its craggy coast, where waves hurl themselves against lava sculpted rock faces; by the pretty farmland and flower meadows of the interior; by the eerily beautiful juniper groves; and by the desolate volcanic badlands that stretch out like moonscapes in the south. We will also have the opportunity to sample some of El Hierro's excellent wine and visit the lizard house where the island's unique giant lizards are bred; near extinction, they are protected by international law. Alternatively, opt for the La Llania hiking excursion which will take us through primeval forests, along ancient cisterns and mythical witches dance floors to El Hierro's top viewing point affording spectacular views of the western parts of the island.

Day 4 La Palma, Canary Islands.

La Palma is known by locals as the 'Beautiful Island', and it is easy to see why. It is a simply stunning, peaceful and most importantly an un-spoilt destination that has deservedly been declared a UNESCO biosphere reserve. This morning drive inland to the beautiful village of El Paso and visit the Silk Museum. This is the only place in Europe where the 500-year-old tradition and processes have been preserved. From here we will continue onto the Caldera de Taburiente, a massive depression eight kilometres wide which scientists agree was a majestically tall volcanic mountain that collapsed in on itself. Explore on foot and whilst all may seem stoic and still, the forces of erosion are hard at work and some geologists estimate that it will finally disappear in just 5,000 years. Alternatively, for those who would prefer a more energetic excursion there will be a guided trek on offer through the El Pilar area; see remains of volcanic eruptions, the magnificent views of the Valley of Aridane and the crater wall that surrounds the Taburiente National Park. Return to the ship for lunch and set sail for Madeira.

Days 5 & 6 Madeira.

Spend the next day and a half on Madeira where there will be a choice of excursions, including a beautiful panoramic exploration of the western part of the island taking in Ribera Brava and Porto Moniz. There will also be the opportunity to visit the Madeira Botanical Gardens which cover an area of over 35,000 square metres and has more than 2000 exotic plants from all continents, some of which are endangered species. This fantastic garden has several ornamental trees and shrubs, an



orchid area, lawns, and lovely viewpoints. The more active may wish to join a Levada walk. Levada are irrigation channels that were created by the Portuguese settlers in the 19th century, who painstakingly carved them out of the rock by hand. Designed to carry freshwater from the north to the drier southern regions of the island, they helped to create many of the lush landscapes that can be seen today. The walk will follow the course of 'levadas' for over three miles, seeing the verdant plants, mountain views and green farmland that cover Madeira.

Day 7 At Sea.

Spend the day at sea as we sail towards Morocco. Our lecture programme continues in the lounge or maybe find a spot on deck to relax.

Day 8 Safi for Essaouira, Morocco.

This morning we will depart the port of Safi and head along the coast to Essaouira. Founded in the 18th century, Essaouira was built to be a rival city to Agadir. Formerly known as Mogador, meaning small fortress, it was designed as a fortified town surrounded by Vauban-style ramparts and played a major role as an international trading seaport, linking Morocco and sub-Saharan Africa with Europe and the rest of the world. On our full day tour we will see the amazing mixture of Portuguese and Berber architecture, the 16th century sea bastions built to protect the city, the 18th century Medina, and in the Mellah we will find the souks dedicated to gold, spices and fish. Enjoy a seafood lunch near the beach before returning to the MS Hebridean Sky.

Day 9 Agadir.

Arrive in southern Morocco in the vast bay of Agadir. A morning tour will include time at the Kasbah, built to defend the Atlantic shoreline and offering wonderful views over the coast, and the Talborjt Mosque. After some time in the souk we will drive through the fertile Souss valley to the gold, pink and orange tinted imperial city of Taroudant, a past capital of the Saadian dynasty. Explore the medina with its souks, see the red ramparts and end with a visit to the Assarag and Tamaklotte squares. After a local lunch we return to the ship.

Day 10 Lanzarote, Canary Islands.

Returning to the Canary Islands we arrive in the early afternoon in Arrecife, a pleasant town with a modern seafront and colourful gardens. A volcanic island designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Lanzarote's dramatic landscapes were shaped by an explosive past, but today the dazzling white salt flats of Janubio, the rugged terrain of Fire Mountain and an array of unspoilt fishing villages scattered around the coast combine to make it a hugely successful tourist destination. This afternoon you may wish to experience the world of Cesar Manrique, celebrated painter, landscape conservationist and one of Lanzarote's best-known citizens, who left an indelible imprint on the island. Cross the northeastern part of the island to Jardin del Cactus, an unusual botanical garden where many species of cacti have been carefully arranged in a natural setting by Manrique himself. Then visit Manrique's former home, designed by Manrique and which combines his interest in traditional local architecture with his concerns about environmental protection.



Alternatively, visit Fire Mountain which was born from a spectacular volcanic eruption over 280 years ago. Drive through the haunting scenery of dark, barren lava cinders topped by brooding ochre and violet volcano cones resembling a lunar landscape. Vineyards dot the landscape with the vines, protected by semi-circular stonewalls, making them look more like art than agriculture. A visit will be made to a 'bodega' so you can sample one of the local wines before returning to the ship.

Day 11 Las Palmas to London.

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

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

YOUR SHIP:

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VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

Medical facilities with available doctor Elevator serving all passenger decks Swimming/zodiac platform All Voyages Include: Up to Two Pre-Voyage Hotel Nights Complimentary Wine or Beer with Dinner Certified Emergency MD and Clinic World Class Cuisine Live Entertainment Complimentary Coffee/Tea station Voyage Photographer Dedicated Passenger Service Manager Complimentary Expedition Jacket Please note deck

plan may vary.

Hebridean Sky has always been known for its effortless elegance, impeccable service and atmosphere of charm and camaraderie. Now we add increased adventure options and an on-site Passenger Service Representative. Hebridean Sky is the perfect blend of luxury and adventurous exploration. Is it a luxury ship? An adventure ship? It's both! The vessel underwent a multi-million pound refurbishment in Sweden in Spring 2016. **ONBOARD DINING** Great expeditions require great food! We are pleased to offer daily changing breakfast, lunch and dinner menus with an emphasis on providing well balanced and nutritional cuisine. Our team of international chefs has boat loads of creativity and you are sure to experience a variety of interesting dishes throughout your voyage. The restaurant is located on Deck 2 and our service team looks forward to providing a memorable dining experience. **IMPECCABLE SMALL-SHIP AMENITIES** Returning from excursions, passengers enjoy complimentary refreshments, afternoon tea and all-day coffee in The Club, a gracious space for relaxation, surrounded by panoramic windows. Other Sea Explorer features include: Library with Internet access Lounge with audiovisual facilities Dining room Wraparound sun deck with Jacuzzi Exercise room



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