

The Small Cruise Ship Collection

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MEDITERRANEAN WONDERS: SICILY, GREECE, SARDINIA CRUISE AND BEYOND

Traverse a wide swath of the Mediterranean Sea to encounter ancient ruins, medieval towns, and culinary delicacies from Spain and Sardinia to Corsica and Greece. Walk among pre-historic standing stones on the isle of Menorca, savor Sicilian wine at an 18th-century castle, snorkel in the azure waters of Kefalonia, and discover Delphi, a UNESCO World Heritage site and the center of the ancient Greek world. Aboard the nimble National Geographic Orion, we'll navigate places other ships cannot like the famed Corinth Canal while delving into the enduring empires that helped shape modern history.



ITINERARY

DAY 1 Barcelona, Spain

Arrive in Barcelona and explore the iconic architectural masterpieces of this city, the energetic street rhythms coming from Las Ramblas, and the beautiful views atop Montjuic. Embark National Geographic Orion in the late afternoon and set a course east for the island of Menorca.

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Arrival time: Arrive before 2:00 p.m. local time.

Arrival City: Barcelona, Spain

Meals Included: Dinner

DAY 2 Ciutadella de Menorca

The Vandals, the Moors, and the British Empire have ruled over this stunning little island where prehistoric civilizations left intriguing rock mounds and megalithic monuments dating back some 4,000 years. This afternoon, explore this history while traveling overland to the southeast of Menorca. Walk through the Bronze Age village of Torralba d'en Salord and see the characteristic T-shaped stone monuments left by the Talayotic peoples. This evening, set a course east toward the shores of Corsica.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3 At Sea / Bonifacio, Corsica, France

Enjoy National Geographic Orion's amenities during this day at sea. Listen to talks by our onboard experts, get photo tips from a Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic certified photo

instructor, or spend some time on the bridge with our officers, who are happy to answer questions. A massage from our wellness specialist is an inviting option or relax with a book in the observation lounge. We arrive in Bonifacio this evening.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 Bonifacio

Wake up to the sunrise over the layered cliffs of Bonifacio. Enter the narrow harbor to dock and enjoy the day in one of the Mediterranean's most beautiful towns. Begin with a walking orientation to the citadel, established by the powerful margraves of Tuscany in the ninth century. The rest of the morning is devoted to enjoying this lovely destination.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 Dorgali, Sardinia, Italy

Step ashore on Sardinia's east coast, known for its stunning and remote landscapes, including grottos and mountain peaks. Populated since pre-historic times, the landscape is dotted with Roman village ruins and monasteries from the Middle Ages. Spend the morning in Dorgali visiting local artisan shops that showcase traditional ceramics, leather crafts, and knife making. Or venture into the mountains to visit the archeological



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discoveries, including tombs and village remains.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 At Sea / Aeolian Islands

Enjoy the day at sea as we sail toward the Aeolian Islands--not only famous for the winds of the god Aeolus, but also for some of the most well-known classical volcanoes. With a bit of luck, we will witness the pyrotechnics of the active volcanic island of Stromboli. We'll pass through the narrow Strait of Messina overnight, the purported location of Homer's monsters Scylla and Charybdis: the rock and the hard place through which Odysseus had to sail.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Taormina, Sicily

This morning, drive up to the beautiful town of Taormina, perched 250 meters above the sea. With Mount Etna dominating to the south, this medieval town boasts the pedestrian-friendly Corso Umberto, lined with exquisite buildings, and one of the world's most interesting cultural sites: the Greco-Roman Theater. This remarkable theater was built right into the cliffside, overlooking the vast sea below, in the third century B.C. Enjoy a special lunch at a privately owned

castle, the Castello degli Schiavi. This impressive 18th-century home was the setting for many scenes in The Godfather films, and we meet members of the family that owns it and explore the extensive buildings and grounds.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAYS 8-9 Siracusa / At Sea

Head ashore at Siracusa, one of the most powerful cities in the classical world. Explore the archaeological park, where a well-preserved Greek amphitheater with carved limestone seats is still used today. Paradise Quarry, now an attractive garden and orange grove, was the primary source of that limestone, and is the site of the curious Ear of Dionysius--a huge cave with incredible acoustics. Make the most of your time in port: explore the city's excellent market or explore the adjacent island of Ortigia, where a stunning cathedral was built on the columns of the 6th-century Temple of Athena. Alternatively, take an evening stroll through the city's piazzas. Spend the following day at sea, relaxing aboard the National Geographic Orion, as she makes her way toward Greece.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10 Corfu, Greece



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Known for its strong cultural heritage, Corfu is home to many of the country's firsts: the first university, theatre, and opera. Learn about the island's history, including its triumphant defense against the Ottoman empire, and spend time around Spianada, the old city's main square--and the largest one in Greece--built in the 16th and 17th centuries by the Venetians. Discover the island's most iconic landmarks and signs of foreign influences. Or, meander through the old town's charming city streets tasting local delicacies such as kumquats and olive oil. Alternatively, spend the day taking in the stunning landscapes of Greece's greenest island exploring the countryside and mountain trails.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

[DAY 11 Kefalonia or Zakynthos](#)

Today, your Expedition Leader and local guides will choose one of the many picturesque beaches on the island of either Kefalonia or Zakynthos, bordered by the idyllic Ionian Sea. Soak in the vivid blue waters--a true photographer's delight. Stroll along the shoreline or opt for a swim in Ionian's stunning waters.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

[DAY 12 Delphi / Corinth Canal](#)

Visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Delphi, the center of the ancient Greek world. The ruins here are home to the Temple of Apollo--Greece's most important shrine--where the Oracle of Delphi delivered divine prophecies. Learn about the city's storied past and explore the temple and other important sites. Later, navigate the historic Corinth Canal, slipping between the 300-foot limestone walls that tower above both sides of our vessel. Built in the late 19th century, the canal is too small for most modern-day ships, but the National Geographic Orion is perfectly sized for the transit to the Gulf of Corinth and Ionian Sea.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

[DAY 13 Athens / Disembark Ship](#)

Arrive in Athens this morning. After breakfast, disembark and transfer to the airport for your flight home.

Departure Time: Depart after 12:00 p.m. local time.

Departure City: Athens, Greece

Meals Included: Breakfast

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.

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YOUR SHIP: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION

YOUR SHIP:	National Geographic Orion
VESSEL TYPE:	Luxury Expedition
LENGTH:	103 metres
PASSENGER CAPACITY:	102 (in 53 cabins)
BUILT/REFURBISHED:	2003 / Refurbished 2014

Engineered for maximum comfort and safety, *_Orion_* is equipped with the latest technology including large retractable stabilizers, sonar, radar, and an ice-strengthened hull. A shallow draft plus bow and stern thrusters provide the convenience of being able to maneuver close to shore. 14 Zodiacs ensure quick disembarkation and offer the ideal transport for up-close exploration. *_National Geographic Orion_* meets strict specifications for environmental protection and the on board waste management systems meet the stringent Antarctic operational standards enabling us to travel to the most pristine environments. A host of advanced design features and technology ensures sustainable marine environmental practices. *_National Geographic Orion_* accommodates 102 guests in 53 cabins, including several with balconies. She is spacious and modern, with a variety of public rooms that offer panoramic views of the passing landscape. Friendly and informal, *_Orion_* fosters a welcoming atmosphere where like-minded guests share in exceptional experiences and enrichment. Her public rooms include a dramatic window-lined main lounge, as well as an observation lounge and library perched at the very top of the ship, with plentiful observation decks. The spacious lounge is

the heart of our expedition community, and is suited for spirited cocktail hours, informative presentations and our nightly tradition of Recap. In addition, a dedicated theater provides a unique setting for specialist presentations or films and slideshows. Both the main dining room and outside buffet easily accommodate all guests at once for open seating dining. On selected nights, weather permitting, our dining room menu is also available on the outside deck. While *_Orion_* interiors are elegant, life aboard is always casual, with no need for formal clothing. And you'll find shipboard services like laundry, in-room cabled internet, and public-area wifi make packing and traveling more

convenient.

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