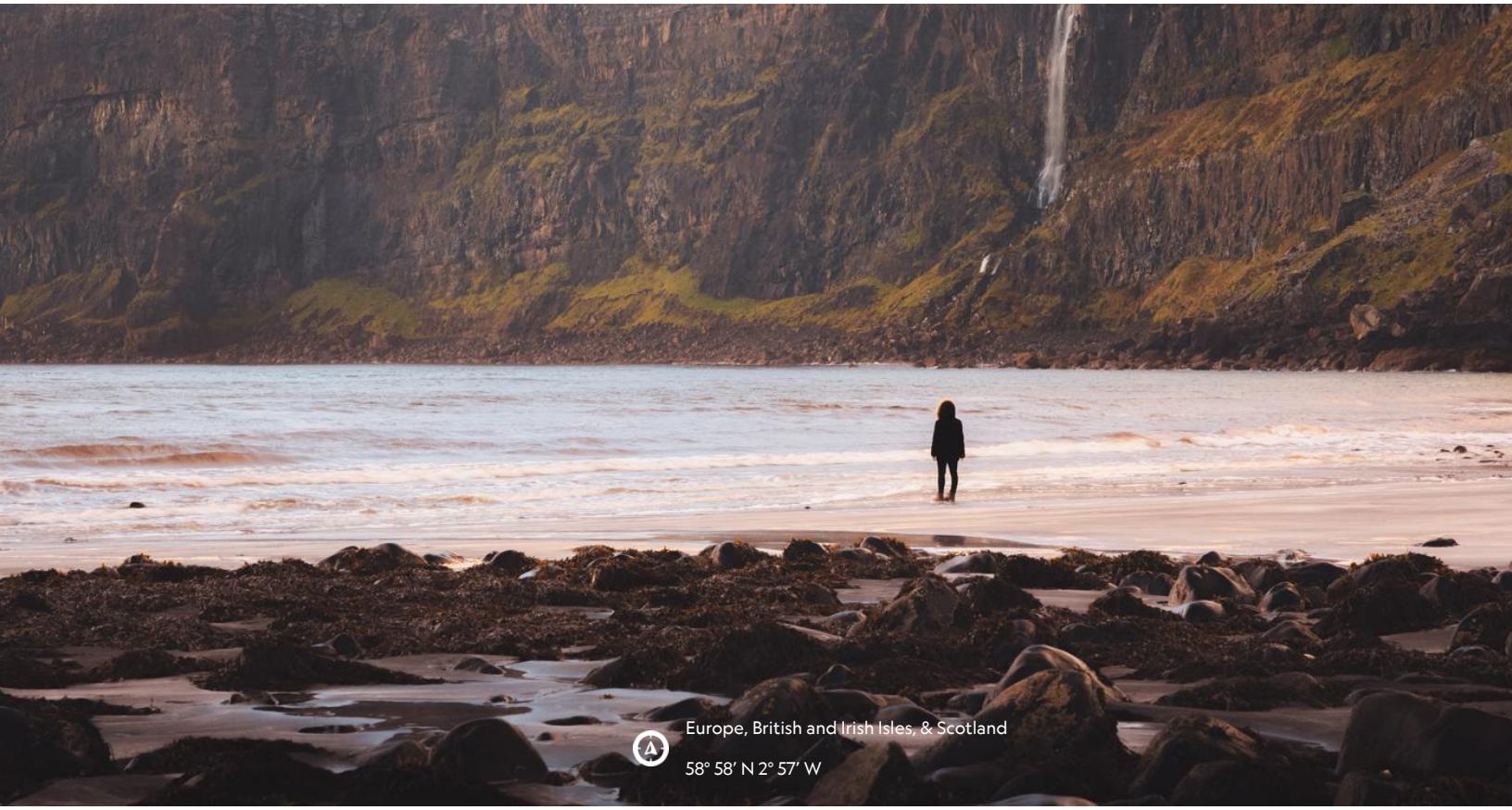


Scotland's Wild Isles: Shetlands, Orkneys and Inner Hebrides

From the Isle of Skye and its picturesque villages to the dramatic landscapes of remote Shetland and Orkney, delve into vivid histories and stunning scenery aboard this active 8-day voyage. Discover archaeological sites steeped in ancient mythology. Explore medieval castles, Viking ruins, and early Christian sites. Beyond Scotland, encounter significant seabird colonies on Northern Ireland's Rathlin Island. Experience the thrill of true exploration as you spend days charting courses, by Zodiac and on foot, based on the expertise of your expedition leaders, naturalists, and local guides.

From
$ 8,900 / per person
Does not include flights

DATES Apr, May and Jun	**DURATION** 8 Days
SHIPS *National Geographic Explorer*	
STARTS AT Dublin, Ireland →	**ENDS AT** Edinburgh, Scotland

Highlights

- Spend time on Rathlin Island, home to Northern Ireland's largest puffin colony and the unique "upside down lighthouse"
- Embark on an expedition day on the western coast of the Isle of Skye to explore its rugged shoreline and dramatic landscapes
- Uncover the Viking heritage and stunning scenery of remote Shetland and Orkney: delve into their unique cultures with local historians, explore ancient brochs and hike across island trails
- Stroll through the renowned and picturesque Inverewe Gardens in Loch Ewe while keeping an eye out for the "Scottish Big Five": red squirrel, red deer, otter, seal and golden eagle

Shetland
Orkney
Loch Ewe
Isle of Skye
Edinburgh
Rathlin Island
UNITED KINGDOM
Dublin
IRELAND
mapbox
© Mapbox, © OpenStreetMap

Day by day

■ DAY 1

Dublin, Ireland / Embark Ship

Arrive in Dublin and transfer from the airport to the city center. More living museum than city, traces of Dublin's past are on display at every turn with medieval castles, cathedrals and one of the oldest universities in Europe: Trinity College. Experience the city at your own pace before embarking the ship this afternoon.

Meals included: dinner

◇ DAY 2

Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland

Start your expedition on Rathlin Island, home of Northern Ireland's largest puffin colony, perched precariously on seaside cliffs. It is also home to thousands of seabirds, including guillemots, razorbills, kittiwakes and fulmars. Take the shuttle up to the cliffs and home to the Rathlin West Light, the "upside down lighthouse", built between 1912 and 1917. From here you can peer over the cliffs and observe the seabirds that call these dramatic drops home. After getting your fill of the cliffs and panoramic sea views, hike along the country lane back to the harbor and witness daily island life around you.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 3-4

Isle of Skye, Scotland / Loch Ewe

Sail through the Sea of the Hebrides to the Isle of Skye, known for its rugged landscapes, picturesque fishing villages and medieval castles. Enjoy an expedition day along its coast, exploring inlets and villages that this region is known for—and possibly a wee dram of the local libations.

The next day, move further up the coast to Loch Ewe, inhabited over the centuries by crofting villages and used as a gathering point for maritime trade and military convoys. Today, one of the best known highlights of the Loch is Inverewe Gardens, initially curated by a private land owner and currently looked after by the National Trust of Scotland. Enjoy a relaxed morning amongst the gardeners tending the early season beds, while keeping an eye out for the Scottish Big Five of red squirrel, red deer, otter, seal and golden eagle that call this area of the world home.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

◇ DAYS 5-7

Shetland and Orkney

Rounding the most northern region of the United Kingdom, spend the next three days winding your way south through Shetland and Orkney. Shetland is composed of 16 individual islands and offers the chance to delve into its Viking and Norwegian roots, as well as its farming culture on the edge of the ocean.

Orkney offers its own highlights, including the capital of Kirkwall and the famed harbor of Scapa Flow. Your expedition team will make the most of these days by calling at remote piers and beaches by Zodiac. Explore ancient brochs overlooking the North Sea and hike across island trails.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner

■ DAY 8

Edinburgh / Disembark Ship

Disembark in Edinburgh and transfer to the airport for flights home.

Meals included: breakfast

Eastbound

Dublin, Ireland → Edinburgh, Scotland

2027 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *National Geographic Explorer*

09 Jun				

2028 DEPARTURE DATES

Aboard *National Geographic Explorer*

28 Apr				
12 May				

Alternative Routes

Visit Expeditions.com for more information.

2027 Departure Dates

02 Jun

2028 Departure Dates

05 May

National Geographic Explorer

GUESTS	CABINS
148	81

Built to handle deep swells and towering waves, the *National Geographic Explorer* lends herself to globe-spanning travel and a dedication to curiosity and wonder.

Originally constructed for service along Norway's coast as part of the famed Hurtigruten, or Coastal Express, she ferried passengers among the fjords of this iconic coast in conditions that could deteriorate into heavy seas in a matter of minutes. She had to be able to handle deep swells and towering waves—and have a high degree of maneuverability. Those traits, and an ideal size, made her a natural choice for addition to the Lindblad fleet.

The plans to completely rebuild her drew on 50 years of pioneering expedition history and expertise. *National Geographic Explorer* was equipped with an ice-strengthened hull and advanced navigation equipment for polar expeditions; a roster of tools for exploration; and a well-appointed interior with vast expanses of glass for an unprecedented connection to the environment. Her interior and exterior design embodied the Lindblad expedition ethos—the privilege of wildness and the luxury of comfort.

For many guests she remains their paradigm of an expedition ship. She is devoted to exploration—from her Welcoming Bridge, and the Chart Room below it where you can tuck in to warm up with a hot chocolate, to her high-perched Observation deck with its aqueous light and compelling 24/7 views. Even the art on the walls— from the Hurley prints of Shackleton's expedition to the stunning National Geographic photos— tells an uber- narrative of globe-spanning travel and a dedication to curiosity and wonder.

National Geographic Explorer is a state-of-the-art expedition ship. She is a fully stabilized, ice-class vessel, with an ice-reinforced hull, enabling her to navigate polar passages while providing exceptional comfort.

Cabin Categories

Category 1

MAIN DECK **#301-308**

Cabins feature one or two portholes. Most cabins feature two single beds that can be converted to a queen. Cabins #301-306 feature one queen-sized bed. All cabins feature a writing desk, floor length mirror, reading lamps, well-appointed bathrooms with a roomy glass-wall shower, and a TV.

Category 2

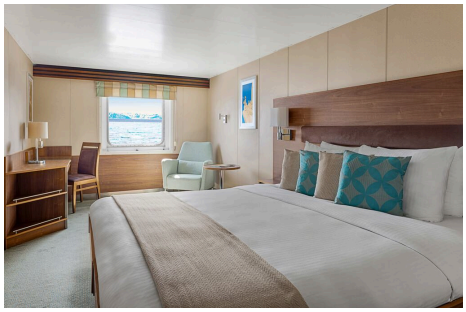
MAIN DECK **#317-320, 335-336**

Cabins feature two single beds (some can convert to a queen-sized bed), and one large window. They offer a writing desk, floor length mirror, reading lamps, sitting chair, well-appointed bathrooms with a roomy glass-wall shower, and a TV.

Category 3

MAIN DECK **#313-316, 321-328, 337-340, 342, 344, 348, 350**

Cabins feature two single beds (some can convert to a queen-sized bed), one large window, and two sitting chairs and a small table and ample storage. They have a writing desk, floor length mirror, reading lamps, well-appointed bathrooms with a roomy glass-wall shower, and a TV. Cabins 341 & 343 have a sofa bed for a triple.



Category 4

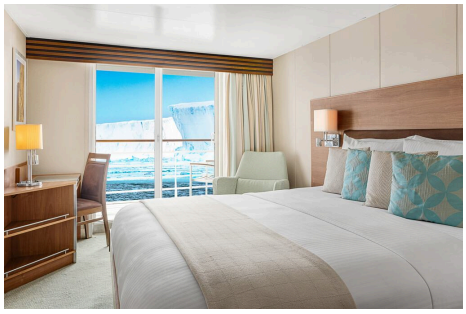
UPPER DECK **#201-202, 204-207, 210, 212, 217, 226, 228**

Cabins feature two single beds and at least one large window. All cabins can convert between two single beds to a queen, except Cabins 217, 226 and 228, which feature one queen- size bed only. All cabins feature climate controls, sitting chairs and a TV. Bathrooms are also generously sized with a roomy, glass-walled shower stall.

VERANDA DECK **#103-104, 107-108**

Cabins feature two single beds that can convert into a queen. They have a writing desk, floor length mirror, reading lamps, sitting chair, private bathrooms with a glass-wall shower, and a TV.

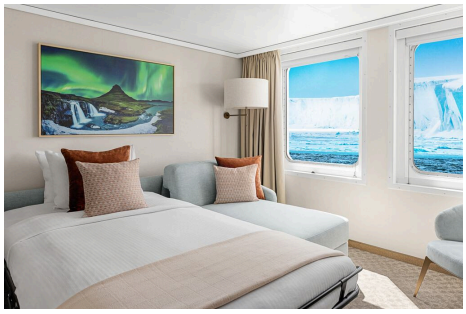
Category 5



UPPER DECK **#209, 211, 214, 216, 218, 220-222, 224**

Cabins feature a balcony with sliding glass doors, one queen-sized bed, writing desk, floor length mirror, reading lamps, private bathrooms with a glass-wall shower, and a TV. (Cabin 221 has two single beds that can convert to a queen.)

Category 6



UPPER DECK **#213**

This spacious cabin has a private balcony, two single beds that can be converted into a queen, a writing desk, double closet, bookcase, pull-out sofa, armchairs, two large windows and a TV. The sleeping area has a glass partition separating the living room. Bathrooms are generously sized with a roomy glass-walled shower stall and twin sinks.

VERANDA DECK **#101-102**

These spacious cabins can be converted into triples. They have two single beds that can be converted into a queen, a writing desk, double closet, bookcase, sofa-bed, chairs, two large windows and a TV. The sleeping area can be closed off with the glass partition. Bathrooms are generously sized with a roomy glass-walled shower stall and twin sinks.

Category 7

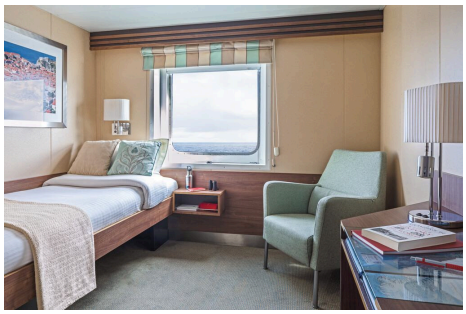
UPPER DECK **#215, 219, 230**

These large cabins with private balconies have two single beds that can convert to an Olympic-sized queen. They have seating areas with a sofa-bed and can be converted to triples. Cabins also include a desk with chairs, coffee table with sitting chair, and a small table. Bathrooms are generously sized with a roomy glass-walled shower stall and twin sinks.

Category A Solo

MAIN DECK **#309-311, 329-334**

These cabins feature one single bed and a large window, a writing desk, reading lamp, bathroom with a roomy glass-wall shower stall, and a TV.



Category B Solo

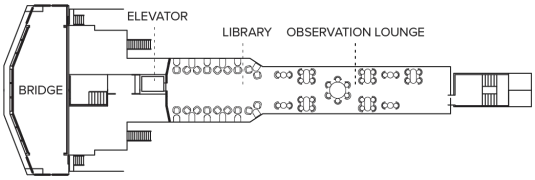
UPPER DECK **#203, 208**

VERANDA DECK **#105-106**

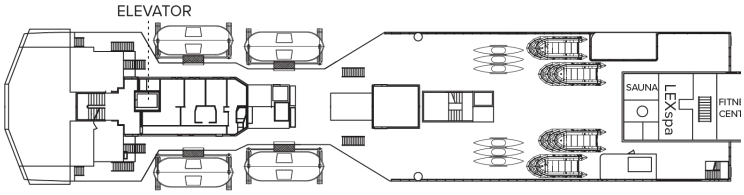
These cabins feature one single bed and a large window, a writing desk, reading lamp, bathroom with a roomy glass-wall shower stall, and a TV.

Deck Plans

Bridge Deck

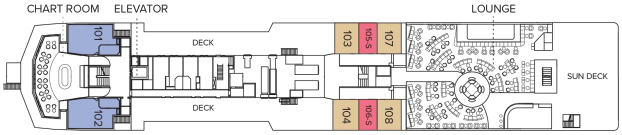


Wellness Deck



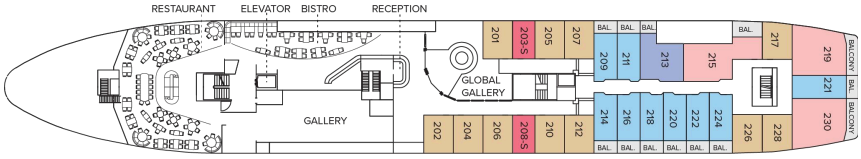
Veranda Deck

- Category 4
- Category 6
- Category B Solo



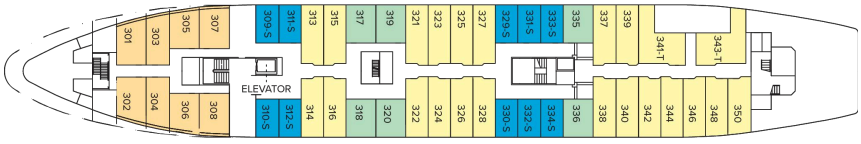
Upper Deck

- Category 4
- Category 5
- Category 6
- Category 7
- Category B Solo

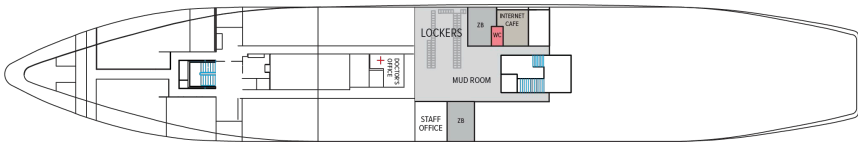


Main Deck

- Category 1
- Category 2
- Category 3
- Category 2 Solo



B Deck



Ship Amenities

Public Areas

Reception; three dining areas; global gallery; library, OM System photo locker; 24-hour Bistro area beverage bar; lounge with bar and state-of-the-art presentation facilities; observation lounge; mudroom with lockers for expedition gear; plus open access to the Bridge, the Captain, officers and on-duty wildlife spotters.

Meals

Meals are served in the dining room, Bistro bar or the Observation lounge, at a single seating with unassigned tables for an informal atmosphere and easy mingling. Menus feature sustainable choices, local where possible.

Cabins

81 outside cabins. All cabins face outside with windows or portholes, private bathroom and climate controls. Cabins are equipped with Wi-Fi, multiple electrical outlets, USB outlets, full length mirror and phones. TV featuring entertainment on demand, live feed for onboard presentations, bow camera and ship's position. Luxury bed linens and pillows. Botanically inspired shampoo, conditioner, shower gel and lotion are all available in cabin bathrooms, as well as an Expedition Essential Kit. Hair dryers, complimentary insulated water bottles and a National Geographic Atlas are available in each cabin.

Expedition Equipment

Zodiac landing craft, a fleet of double kayaks, a crow's nest camera, a hydrophone, underwater video cameras, video microscope and an ROV. Plus, for South Pacific voyages: snorkeling gear for all guests, scuba gear for a number of pre-qualified guests, stand-up paddleboards, glass-bottom Zodiac and splash-cam.

Special Features

A full-time doctor, undersea specialist, National Geographic photographer and National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions certified photo instructor, internet café and laundry. Enjoy a session in the topside library with a good book.

Wellness

A glass-enclosed fitness center, outdoor stretching area, a LEXspa treatment room and sauna, staffed by wellness specialists.

Self-Disinfecting Ships

ACT Clean CoatTM is a light-activated, self-disinfecting cleaning process that continuously breaks down viruses, bacteria, mold, and airborne allergens across all ship surfaces. Not only does this create a cleaner, healthier shipboard environment for guests and crew alike, but this non-toxic, chemical-free system also saves more than one million gallons of water each year in our cleaning procedures, and reduces our carbon footprint as well as the amount of plastic and waste in our supply chain.

Special Offers

SUITE EXCLUSIVES

Spacious living areas and incredible views immerse you in the beauty of your marine surroundings. Our new Suite Exclusives package helps make your voyage all the more memorable. **Learn more**

CELEBRATE LIFE'S MILESTONES

Celebrate a milestone with a group of eight or more and enjoy a special amenity package including: 5% savings on voyage fares, custom group photo, US$150 shipboard credit for the group, and other special gifts. Milestone celebration to be communicated at time of booking.

SAVE 5% TRAVELING AS A GROUP

Save 5% when traveling as a group of 8 or more people. Valid for new bookings only on select departures, subject to availability, not applicable on extensions, and may not be combined with other offers. Call for details.

COMBINING OFFERS

Certain offers may be combinable, up to two savings opportunities, except where noted otherwise. For example, travel with a group of 8 or more on back-to-back expeditions, and take advantage of both savings.

INCLUDED IN PRICE

All accommodations aboard ship or in hotels per itinerary; all meals as indicated in the itinerary, both aboard and onshore; beer, wine, cocktails, liquor and spirits aboard the ship (except certain premium brands which are available for purchase); hors d'oeuvres, 24-hour access to snacks, premium coffees and teas, non-alcoholic beverages, and filtered water; excursions and airport transfers to and from recommended flights, as indicated in the itinerary; crew gratuities; exploration tools curated to destination, such as Zodiacs and kayaks; guidance and company of our leading expedition staff; assistance by the National Geographic Photographer and Lindblad Expeditions-National Geographic certified photo instructor; access to the OM System Photo Gear Locker; presentations by expedition staff and expert guest speakers; complimentary reusable water bottle; onboard physician consultations; morning stretch classes and 24-hour access to exercise equipment; 24-hour access to lounges, observation decks, library, and other shared spaces; park and site entrance fees, special access permits, and port taxes. Unused services or items included in our programs are non-refundable.

NOT INCLUDED IN PRICE

Airfare (except flights when indicated as included); pre- and post-expedition extensions; additional hotel nights (except when indicated as included); private transfers; laundry, spa treatments, Wi-Fi, and phone services (except when indicated as included); travel protection plans; and passport, visa, and immigration fees.

Additional costs associated with medical services outside onboard physician consultation.

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN

We strongly recommend our guests to take advantage of our Travel Protection Plan. This plan offers comprehensive coverage to protect you from cancellation fees, costs incurred due to trip delays/interruption, damage or loss of baggage, medical assistance, and evacuation during your travels. Our Travel Protection Plan is available for U.S. residents only, and may be purchased any time prior to final payment due date, Travel Protection premiums are non- refundable once plan is purchased. Learn more about our Travel Protection "Plus" Plan: https://www.expeditions.com/terms-conditions/travel-protection-plan/

CANCELLATION POLICY

Review our cancellation policy: https://www.expeditions.com/cancellation-policy/