

Wild Earth Travel

Small Ships, Big Adventures

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info@wildearth-travel.com

LA DOLCE VITA - AN IN-DEPTH EXPLORATION OF ITALY'S WONDERS FROM LIVORNO TO VENICE

Here is a wonderful journey which will appeal to those who have a love of Italy, enjoy a varied programme of interesting visits ashore, travelling in the company of just 100 or so like-minded travellers and sailing aboard a delightful small ship. It is difficult to imagine a better time of year or a more ideally suited vessel for our voyage; just about everything is as perfect as it can be, from the comfortable temperatures to the relatively crowd free sites.

Sailing south from the Tuscan port of Livorno aboard the all-suite MS Hebridean Sky, we will call into Naples, cruise around the Amalfi Coast to Salerno, continue to Sicily and then onwards to Puglia. We then sail along Italy's Adriatic Coast to Ancona followed by time spent in the region of Emilia-Romagna before arriving in Venice, a fitting conclusion for our Italian odyssey. We will discover all aspects of this wonderfully diverse country from its art, architecture, music and ancient sites to some charming towns and stunning coastal scenery.

Our days will be varied as we explore UNESCO World Heritage Sites, walk through historic villages and towns, and discover the uniqueness of each region as well as enjoying opportunities to sample the local food and wine. Owing to the fact that our small ship can moor centrally, we have the added advantage of being able to access the towns by foot in many ports of call and we have also included time at leisure for individual exploration enabling you to soak up the atmosphere at your own pace.



at your own pace.

ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Livorno, Italy.

Fly by scheduled flight to Pisa. On arrival transfer to the MS Hebridean Sky which will be moored in Livorno. Sail this evening.

Day 2 Portoferraio, Elba.

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Today we call into the enchanting island of Elba, best known as Napoleon's island of exile from 1814 to 1815. Departing from the island's busy capital Portoferraio, we set out for a delightful drive exploring the southern region of this charming island with superb views over the coastline. We will visit the Villa San Martino which was the summer residence of Napoleon Bonaparte and has been transformed into a museum before enjoying some time at leisure in Porto Azzurro with its picturesque harbour. Return to the ship for lunch and spend a relaxing afternoon at sea.

Day 3 Naples & Herculaneum.

Arriving in Naples we see the Norman castle that protects the port and the backdrop of Mount Vesuvius in the distance. There will be a choice of tours today and you may choose to visit Herculaneum, a wealthy Roman town which was completely submerged by volcanic mud following the 79 AD eruption of Vesuvius. Since its rediscovery in 1709, excavations have revealed beautiful public baths, villas and gardens of noble families, decorated with murals and floor mosaics, and the remains of a theatre. Alternatively explore Naples including the Piazza del Plebiscito with its range of buildings including the Galleria Umberto I, the Maschio Angioino and the Palazzo Reale. Inside the palace you will visit the Historical Apartment, which is accessed through the majestic Staircase of Honour, which Montesquieu described as the most beautiful in Europe. Also see the Teatro San Carlo which was built in 1737 and is the oldest opera house in Europe. The afternoon is free to explore at your own pace and you may wish to walk the bustling Via dei Tribunali in the historic centre or make your way to one of the city's pizzerias to enjoy one of Naples's most famous exports.

Day 4 Salerno, Paestum & Amalfi.

Overnight we will have sailed around the Amalfi coast to the ancient city of Salerno, our gateway to the Cilento region, a mix of small villages, coastal paths, archaeological sites, national parks and renowned as the home of the Mediterranean diet. Maybe choose to visit the site of Paestum, which was founded by Greeks in 600 BC. This well preserved and fascinating site was rediscovered in 1752 and during our time here we will see the impressive Temple Poseidon, the Basilica, Amphitheatre and Aethenian before spending some time in the museum, adjacent to the site. Alternatively learn about one of the Cilento region's main exports during a visit to a farm to hear about the production of the local Mozzarella di Bufala. A final option for today is to board

a local boat and sail to Amalfi which is flanked by an old Saracen tower and a 12th century Capuchin monastery and also boasts a splendid cathedral dating from the 11th century. Whilst in Amalfi we will visit St Andrew's Cathedral and the Basilica of the Crucifix dating back to 596 AD followed by some free time to stroll along the impressive marina and discover the picturesque shops and cafes.

Day 5 Messina for Taormina or Tindari, Sicily.

From the nearby port of Messina, you can choose to visit Taormina, a walled town lying in the shadow of Mount Etna, Europe's highest volcano. The town has been a popular tourist destination since the 19th century and our guided tour will include walking the characteristic alleys before visiting the 15th century Palazzo Corvaja and the impressive Greek Theatre from where there are marvellous views over the town and coast. Alternatively, join an excursion to Tindari a town which was founded by Syracusan merchants during the war against Carthage in 396 BC. The ruins of the ancient city are relatively well preserved and the structure that astounds above all others is the 4th century Greek Theatre which is a marvel of acoustic engineering. However, the foremost attraction is the Sanctuary of the Madonna Nera containing the sculpture of the Virgin and Child, in citron wood, and which is said to have reached Tindari in an attempt by the faithful to keep it safe from the 8th century Byzantine Iconoclast movement.

Day 6 Syracuse & Noto.

Syracuse was founded by the Greeks in 734 BC and by the 5th century was a political and military power throughout the Mediterranean, rivalling Athens as the largest and most beautiful city in the Greek world. This morning choose to visit the Neapolis Archaeological Park to discover the well preserved Greek theatre with seats carved from limestone. 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 vast grotto with an amplifying resonance. Alternatively, drive to Noto, a picturesque city built in 1703 located on the terraced slopes of Mount Iblei. A guided walk along the central streets will reveal the 18th century Palazzo Ducezio and some of the Baroque churches: San Francesco Immacolata, the cathedral, San Carlo, Santa Chiara and the imposing Palazzo Nicolaci di Villadorata, built in 1737. After lunch on board we have an afternoon at leisure to explore Ortigia, the historical centre of Syracuse where we find the Temple of Apollo, considered to be Sicily's most ancient Doric temple and the Baroque Cathedral, erected over the remains of the Temple of Minerva. We will meet this evening for a private concert in one of

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the town's palazzos accompanied by local food and wine before we sail tonight.

Day 7 At Sea.

After a busy few days, enjoy a leisurely day on board allowing for time to relax on deck and attend a lecture.

Day 8 Otranto & Lecce.

From our berth in Otranto we will drive to Lecce, often referred to as 'The Florence of the South' with its amazing collection of Baroque architecture. A guided walk will include a visit to the beautifully decorated Santa Croce Basilica and Piazza Duomo, considered one of the finest and most impressive squares in southern Italy. We return to the ship for lunch and a leisurely afternoon to explore Otranto independently, maybe walk the winding streets or along the seaside promenade. The highlight is the wonderful cathedral with its Medieval mosaic floor created by the monk, Pantaleone, between 1163 and 1165.

Day 9 Monopoli & Alberobello.

This morning there is a choice of options. You may choose to join the tour into the Puglian countryside which is scattered with 'trulli', limestone dwellings built with dome or conical roofs. We will enjoy a pleasant walk in Alberobello, a fairy-tale trulli village and a UNESCO World Heritage Site and see St Anthony Church also built in trullo style. Alternatively, enjoy a morning at leisure in Monopoli where you can wander through the historic centre, visit the cathedral or see the Castello di Carlo V. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at sea.

Day 10 Ancona for Urbino & Loreto.

Arrive this morning at the busy port of Ancona, from where we will have a choice of excursions. A full day tour will head inland to the UNESCO city of Urbino which features a historic centre that appears little changed since the 15th century, when it became a centre of culture attracting artists and scholars from all over Italy. See the Duomo, the house where the artist Raphael was

born in 1483, which is now a museum, as well as the impressive Palazzo Ducale, built under Federico da Montefeltro, where we find the National Gallery of Marche containing a stunning collection of Renaissance art. Alternatively, join a morning tour to the renowned Marian pilgrimage site of Loreto to visit the small town, its lovely piazza and the church of the 'Holy House', built for enshrining the house in which the Blessed Virgin Mary is believed by some Catholics to have lived, which was transported all the way to Marche from Palestine. This afternoon is at leisure to relax on board or explore Ancona at your own pace.

Day 11 Ravenna & Bologna.

From our berth in Ravenna there will be a choice of tours today. Ravenna has a rich history being the capital of the Western Roman Empire and capital of the Ostrogoth Kingdom of Italy whilst the port of Classe was one of the largest in the Roman world. From the 4th to 6th century, the city became a hub for skilled craftsmen who covered the city's churches in stunningly beautiful mosaics which were described by Dante as a 'symphony of colour'. A morning tour of the city will include the Basilica di Sant'Apollinare, named after Ravenna's patron and featuring mosaics of biblical figures such as Abraham and Emperor Constantine IV. Meanwhile, at the Basilica di San Vitale we will see mosaics representing Old Testament scenes and the Byzantine Emperor Justinian. Alternatively join a full day tour to Bologna, considered as one of the most beautiful cities in Italy, dominated by spectacular architecture from the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods.

Day 12 Rovinj, Croatia & Venice, Italy.

We will spend the morning in Croatia and the atmospheric town of 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. Depart over lunch and be on deck in the late afternoon as we sail into Venice where you may want to take the opportunity to enjoy a pre or post-dinner stroll. Moor overnight.

Day 13 Venice to London.

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Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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YOUR SHIP: HEBRIDEAN SKY

YOUR SHIP:	Hebridean Sky
VESSEL TYPE:	Expedition
LENGTH:	90.6 metres
PASSENGER CAPACITY:	118
BUILT/REFURBISHED:	1992 / 2016

The MS Hebridean Sky is one of our three elegant sister ships--alongside the MS Island Sky and MS Caledonian Sky--renowned for their small size, comfort, and service. Built in the same Italian shipyard, this refined vessel underwent a multi-million-pound refurbishment in 2016, enhancing its private yacht-like atmosphere.

Suites

The ship offers 59 spacious, outside-facing suites over five decks, with 14 featuring private balconies. Each suite includes a sitting area, en-suite bathroom with rainfall shower, flat-screen TV, minibar, safe, dressing table, Molton Brown toiletries, robes, slippers, and individually controlled climate settings. Beds can be configured as twins or doubles, except in suites 601 and 602. The luxurious Hebridean Suite includes a large balcony, sitting room, and complimentary minibar and laundry.

Public Areas

Public spaces include a panoramic lounge for talks and briefings, The Club bar with live piano music, a library with books and games, and ample outdoor deck space including a wildlife observation area. A lift serves all decks, and there is a small hair salon and an onboard doctor. Complimentary satellite

Wi-Fi is available, though signal strength may vary.

Dining

Meals are served in a single sitting in the elegant dining room or al fresco on the Lido Deck. Cuisine is fresh and varied, often featuring local produce. Enjoy daily afternoon tea, pre-dinner canapes, and wines with lunch and dinner. Breakfast is buffet-style with cooked-to-order options. Barbecues and live cooking stations are also offered. Special diets can be accommodated with notice.

Experience

Designed for those who prefer a quiet, enriching cruise, the Hebridean Sky offers a relaxed, yacht-like ambiance without large ship distractions. There's no organised entertainment or dress codes--just thoughtful service, enriching lectures, and scenic cruising among like-minded travellers.

Comfort & Safety

The vessel is fitted with stabilisers, modern navigation systems, and safety equipment. Guests can visit the Bridge, view route information on suite TVs, and enjoy peace of mind with a fully equipped clinic on board.

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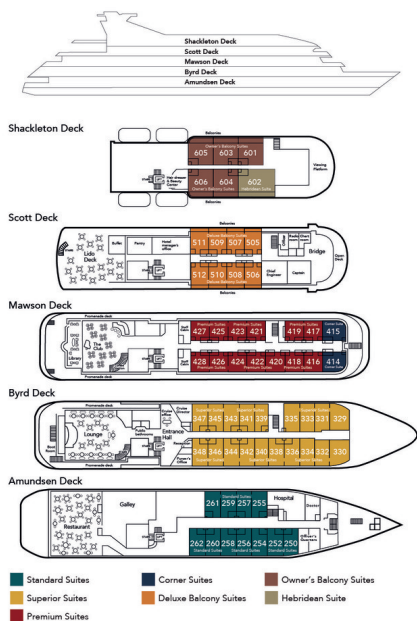
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INSIDE YOUR SHIP



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PRICING

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