

*2012 British & Irish Isles*  
**DELUXE SPECIAL CRUISE & TOUR**  
**IRELAND, ENGLAND, SCOTLAND & NORWAY**  
 May 15, 2012  
 14 Days

*Sail the British & Irish Isles on the National Geographic Explorer*

*National Geographic Explorer* is a state-of-the-art expedition ship, and the newest addition to the fleet. It is a fully stabilized, ice-class vessel, enabling it to navigate polar passages while providing exceptional comfort. It carries kayaks and a fleet of Zodiac landing craft. An Undersea Specialist operates a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) and sophisticated video equipment, extending access to the underwater world.

**800-863-9067**





## **DAY 1 — U.S./London, England**



## **DAY 2 — London/Portsmouth/Embark Ship**

Arrive today in London and proceed to the historic coastal town of Portsmouth to embark National Geographic Explorer. (D)



## **DAY 3 — Dartmouth**

Be on deck this morning as we make a dramatic entry into the River Dart. Dartmouth has a great seafaring history. We stroll along the quaint waterfront, observing many fine old buildings that recall its nautical past. (B,L,D)



## **DAY 4 — Isles of Scilly**

On the island of Tresco we visit the fabulous Tresco Abbey Gardens. The Gulf Stream allows an astounding variety of subtropical plants to flourish at these northern latitudes, and numerous birds, including shearwaters and sandpipers, are often seen here. (B,L,D)



## **DAY 5 — The Skelligs and Dingle Peninsula, Ireland**

Today we explore the roots of Celtic Christianity. We cruise slowly by Skellig Michael to view the beehive huts of a Celtic Christian monastery, built five hundred feet high atop the island in the sixth century. A half-mile distant is rocky Little Skellig, whose white spires reveal is as a favorite roost for seabirds. Go ashore at the beautiful Dingle Peninsula. Walk through the charming village of Dingle, sample an Irish coffee and browse the shops for woolens. (B,L,D)



## **DAY 6 — Aran Islands and Cliffs of Moher**

These stark islands contain many pre- and early Christian sites. Most dramatic is Dun Aengus, a stone fort dating to 4000 BC. Perched on a 200-foot cliff overlooking the sea, the view is staggering. (B,L,D)



## **DAY 7 — County Donegal, Ireland**

Donegal, in Gaelic Dun na nGall or 'fort of the foreigners' (i.e. the Vikings), is an ancient and dramatically beautiful area. We board Zodiacs to explore lovely Donegal Bay and drive to Glencolumbkille, one of the most traditional areas in Ireland, where Gaelic is still the primary language. In the evening, we cruise past the 2,000-foot-high cliffs of Slieve League, the highest in Europe. (B,L,D)



## **DAY 8 — Iona and Staffa, Inner Hebrides, Scotland**

St. Columba called Iona "love of my heart" and chose it as the site for his monastery. Walk through the ancient nunnery to 12th-century Iona Abbey, where sixty kings lie buried, including Duncan and MacBeth. Afternoon finds us on Staffa, an island famed for its great basalt columns and deep sea caves. It was here in Fingal's Cave that Felix Mendelssohn was inspired to write his haunting Hebrides Overture. (B,L,D)



### **DAY 9 — Outer Hebrides: St. Kilda and Callanish**

Along the wild, western coast of Scotland are the Outer Hebrides, islands steeped in history and legend, where Gaelic is still widely spoken. The day is open for exploration. Weather permitting, we explore remote St. Kilda. A World Heritage Site, it was occupied from the New Stone Age through 1930. We then venture to the Isle of Lewis to see the massive neolithic Standing Stones of Callanish. (B,L,D)



### **DAY 10 — Inverewe Gardens**

Visit the famous Inverewe Gardens. Tempered by the Gulf Stream, the delightful gardens are an anomaly of sub-tropical color--grown at the same latitude as St. Petersburg! (B,L,D)



### **DAY 11 — Orkney Islands**

Few places in the world have the impact of the Stone Age sites of Orkney. The standing stones of the Ring of Brodgar and the 6,000-year-old stone-slab village excavated at Skara Brae are stunning manifestations of a culture older than the Pyramids of Egypt. Later, we see the massive Cathedral of St. Magnus, built by the Vikings, and stately Balfour Castle on Shapinsay Island, where we recharge with a hearty Scottish tea. (B,L,D)



### **DAY 12 — Fair Isle and Mousa**

Fair Isle claims to be the most isolated settlement in the British Isles. The seventy or so inhabitants are a rugged yet amiable people, proud of their island and, of course, their world-renowned woolen crafts. After a pleasant walk around the island, we join our island friends for tea. Later, Zodiac in to the uninhabited island of Mousa, where we find one of the best examples of an Iron Age broch (fortified farm). (B,L,D)



### **DAY 13 — Shetland Islands**

Drive through scenic countryside, stopping to photograph resident Shetland ponies on our way to the Jarlshof archaeological site. Here we enter the Bronze Age with the ruins of 3,000 years of continuous settlement (B,L,D)



### **DAY 14 — Bergen, Norway/Disembark/Home**



**MAY 15, 2012 RATES**

Prices are per person, double occupancy unless indicated as solo.  
Deposit amount: \$1000 per person

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>DOUBLE</b>	<b>SOLO</b>
<b>01</b>	\$10380	-
<b>02</b>	\$10990	-
<b>03</b>	\$11390	-
<b>04</b>	\$11870	-
<b>05</b>	\$14170	-
<b>06</b>	\$16360	-
<b>07</b>	\$18960	-
<b>2S</b>	-	\$13730
<b>3S</b>	-	\$14240

**For further information & reservations,  
Call: 800-863-9067**