Treasures of Northern Europe, Medieval to Modern
England to Denmark Aboard Ocean Albatros
April 27 – May 7, 2024
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A confederation of merchant guilds and market towns from the 12th to the 15th centuries, the Hanseatic League fueled unprecedented wealth along Europe’s northern coasts and laid the groundwork for the Renaissance. Set sail on this North Sea voyage from the south of England to Denmark, and explore the extravagant legacy of those riches in the great public buildings, private houses, and above all, the museums that these fortunes built and furnished. Transfer from London to Portsmouth, where you will embark the recently christened Ocean Albatros and sail to French Normandy. Call in Belgium for an excursion to charming medieval Bruges, or visit Ghent, where you will admire the sublime Van Eyck altarpiece. In Holland, choose between special museum openings exclusively for us at Amsterdam’s Van Gogh Museum or The Hague’s Mauritshuis. Arrive in Germany for a day in Hamburg, with its massive UNESCO-listed district of brick warehouses, or delve into Hanseatic history at the European Hansemuseum in elegant Lübeck. Then navigate the picturesque, 61-mile-long Kiel Canal connecting the North Sea to the Baltic. Call in sparkling Rostock, the “Gateway to Scandinavia,” and spend a day in Copenhagen where the ship is overnight in port.

CRUISE HIGHLIGHTS

— Sail past Les Falaises d’Étretat and the Manneporte on the Normandy coast at sunset, and marvel at these rock formations that painter Claude Monet captured in several of his works
— Join an art expert for an up-close look at the Van Eycks’ revered, recently restored Adoration of the Mystic Lamb (Ghent Altarpiece), now returned to its original home, Saint Bavo’s Cathedral in Ghent
— While in Belgium, enjoy an onboard chamber music concert by one of Europe’s renowned quartets
— At special museum openings exclusively for us, take in historic art achievements away from the usual crowds at Amsterdam’s Van Gogh Museum or The Hague’s Mauritshuis, home to a cherished collection including Vermeer and Rembrandt masterpieces
— Near the end of tulip season, enjoy an optional visit to Holland’s magnificent Keukenhof Gardens, where a million flowering bulbs create a brilliant expanse of color
— Gain an insider’s look at printmaking during a hands-on workshop at the GRID Grafisch Museum Groningen, an intriguing Dutch museum devoted to the history of graphic design
— Delight in a private rooftop lunch and attend a musical performance (pending confirmation) at Hamburg’s glittering Elbphilharmonie concert hall, Herzog & de Meuron-designed architectural masterpiece with a distinctive wave-like glass exterior
— Transit the 61-mile Kiel Canal, which connects the North Sea to the Baltic, and learn about the engineering involved to build Europe’s answer to the Panama Canal
SATURDAY, APRIL 27: DEPARTURE
Depart for London on an overnight flight.

SUNDAY, APRIL 28: LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM / PORTSMOUTH / EMBARK OCEAN ALBATROS
Arrive this morning at Heathrow Airport and transfer to Ocean Albatros docked in Portsmouth. Enjoy lunch on board, followed by an afternoon at leisure to explore the ship or learn about the Royal Navy’s historic past with a visit to the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Gather for a welcome and safety briefing, and savor dinner on board as you sail across the English Channel to Normandy in France. L,D

MONDAY, APRIL 29: OUISTREHAM, FRANCE / CAEN
From the port of Ouistreham, visit historic Caen, whose Norman treasures have survived the centuries. Continue to Bayeaux and the Memorial Museum of the Battle of Normandy. Then visit the 11th-century cathedral and the Bayeux Tapestry, an embroidered depiction of the Norman conquests and one of the most renowned surviving works of medieval art. Stop at Malcolm Forbes’s 17th-century Château de Balleroy to visit the Musée des Ballons, which houses Forbes’s collection of hot-air balloons, and sip cocktails while enjoying views of its surrounding gardens. As an alternative, you may visit Mont-Saint-Michel, a tidal island and UNESCO World Heritage Site topped with a gravity-defying medieval monastery. Return to Ocean Albatros, and sail east to the Belgian coast. Stand on deck as we pass the chalky cliffs and the extraordinary rock formations of Les Falaises d’Étretat and the Manneporte rising from the sea. Painter Claude Monet captured these striking rock pillars in numerous works during the years he lived in the seaside village of Étretat. Mingle with fellow travelers at the captain’s welcome reception and dinner this evening. B,L,D

TUESDAY, APRIL 30: OSTEND, BELGIUM / BRUGES / GHENT
Dock today in Ostend, and you may choose to travel by train or motor coach into Bruges, a perfectly preserved medieval town, for a walking tour. Immerse yourself in one of the best art collections in Belgium, including the Groeninge Museum, the Hans Memling collection at St. John’s Hospital, and a sculpture by Michelangelo displayed in the Church of Our Lady. Continue to Ghent, and visit the magnificent Saint Bavo’s Cathedral and the revered Adoration of the Mystic Lamb (Ghent Altarpiece), completed by the Van Eyck brothers in 1432. Joined by an expert, admire this masterpiece in the cathedral’s Sacrament Chapel, where it is displayed inside a bespoke glass case specially designed to house the polyptych, which consists of 12 panels, in optimal climatic conditions. Aboard Ocean Albatros, enjoy a chamber music concert performed by one of Europe’s renowned quartets. B,L,D

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1: SCHEVENINGEN, HOLLAND / AMSTERDAM OR KEUKENHOF & THE HAGUE
Dock in Scheveningen near The Hague, and choose from two excursions. You may explore Amsterdam, one of the great capitals of Europe and home to a wealth of museums and picturesque canals. Wander the famed Rijksmuseum with its unrivaled collection of works by Dutch masters. Savor lunch aboard a private canal cruise, followed by a special opening of the wonderful Van Gogh Museum (pending confirmation).

Botanical enthusiasts may opt to see the Keukenhof Gardens, where more than a million flowering bulbs provide a spectacle of color. After lunch, visit The Hague and its historic museum, the Mauritshuis, and see the Peace Palace, home to the International Court of Justice. Reunite as a group in The Hague to visit Panorama Mesdag. This museum houses Hendrik Mesdag’s vast 1881 panoramic canvas, which depicts the seaside resort of Scheveningen as it appeared in the 1880s. Return to the ship to sail past the Frisian archipelago as we navigate our way along the Wadden Sea to Delfzijl. B,L,D

THURSDAY, MAY 2: DELFZIJL / GRONINGEN
Step ashore in Delfzijl and transfer to charming Groningen, often described as one big open-air museum. Discover the gems of its Grote Markt (Great Market Square), including the Town Hall dating from 1810; the 15th-century Martinitoren, the town’s tallest church steeple and bell tower; and the Gothic Martinikerk, a 13th-century church with beautiful frescoes and a baroque organ. Most dazzling is the eye-popping trapezoidal building called The Forum, the city’s most striking piece of contemporary architecture.
designed by Italian architect Alessandro Mendini. Continue to the Groninger Museum, a futuristic structure showcasing modern and contemporary painting and sculpture. After lunch, learn about traditional printmaking at the GRID Grafisch Museum Groningen. Attend a specially arranged workshop that touches on the history of graphic art and explores various print and bookbindery techniques along with design and typesetting.

Garden lovers may choose to visit Hortus Haren, one of Holland’s oldest botanical gardens, featuring themed spaces such as the magnificent Chinese garden, a rock garden, and a Celtic garden. Delight in a visit to the Museum De Buitenplaats, a botanical complex that features creative examples of organic architecture. Admire its distinctive brick walls, overgrown piled stones, flowery garden roofs, and multicolored borders that run along with trimmed box and yew trees. As you return to the port, take a look at the old warehouses along the canal as well as other historic buildings and municipal monuments.

FRIDAY, MAY 3: HAMBURG, GERMANY OR LÜBECK
Dating back more than eight centuries, Hamburg’s famous port was a vital link during the Hanseatic League. Today, Hamburg delights with its stunning architecture, dynamic museums, and burgeoning art and culture scene. Experience the city’s iconic, UNESCO-listed Speicherstadt district, the world’s largest warehouse district, an ensemble of 19th- to early 20th-century brick and timber buildings standing on oak log foundations along the canals. Set near the Speicherstadt and perched atop a 1960s brick warehouse is the Herzog & de Meuron-designed architectural masterpiece, the Elbphilharmonie concert hall. A feat of engineering, the Elbphilharmonie has become Hamburg’s most magical landmark, with its glistening wave-like top soaring hundreds of feet into the sky. Lunch will be in the Elbphilharmonie’s rooftop restaurant overlooking the Elbe. Enjoy free time to browse the many cafés and shops fronting the Alster River. With the ship in port in Hamburg until midnight, we may have an opportunity to attend a musical performance at the Elbphilharmonie concert hall (schedule pending).

Alternatively, spend the day in Lübeck, which earned the title of “Queen of the Hanseatic League.” Visit the European Hansemuseum, which includes interactive displays on Hanseatic trade and the expanding economy. Admire Lübeck’s excellent architectural detail, especially its iconic Holstentor city gate and the Old Town.

SATURDAY, MAY 4: BRUNSBÜTTEL / KIEL CANAL TRANSIT
Spend the day navigating the 61-mile-long Kiel Canal, which cuts across the Jutland Peninsula and connects the Baltic Sea to the North Sea. While sailing, attend lectures and learn about the engineering involved to build the canal.

SUNDAY, MAY 5: WARNEMÜNDE / ROSTOCK
Step off in the resort town of Warnemünde and venture to Rostock, an important trading center known as the “Gateway to Scandinavia” during the height of the Hanseatic League. Learn about this 800-year-old port city’s maritime history at the Schiffbau und Schifffahrtsmuseum (Shipbuilding and Maritime Museum). Return to Ocean Albatros as we sail to Copenhagen.

MONDAY, MAY 6: COPENHAGEN, DENMARK
Experience the Danish capital’s abundant street life. Shop along the Strøget, one of the world’s longest pedestrian streets, and stroll along the quay of Nyhavn. After lunch, continue to the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art and its impressive 20th-century collection, including several important works by Henry Moore. Gather for the captain’s farewell reception and dinner this evening.

TUESDAY, MAY 7: COPENHAGEN / DISEMBARK / RETURN
Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for flights home.

PLEASE NOTE: This proposed itinerary is the property of Arrangements Abroad and may not be duplicated or distributed without written permission. All prices are estimated based on preliminary quotes provided by hotel and service providers, prevailing fuel prices, airfares and currency exchange rates in effect as of the date of this proposal and are subject to change. Reservations are subject to the Terms & Conditions of Arrangements Abroad.
**RATES INCLUDE**

- Nine nights cabin accommodations aboard *Ocean Albatros* as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated on the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner). Bottled water, water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine during lunches and dinner
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Airport/pier/airport group transfers for all participants on suggested flights
- Taxes, service, and porterage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers

**NOT INCLUDED IN RATES** International airfare; passport/visa fees; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than noted in inclusions; shipboard gratuities, personal items and expenses; airport transfers other than those on suggested flights; excess baggage; trip insurance; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.

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**CRUISE RATES**

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**OCEAN ALBATROS**

Being unveiled in June 2023, *Ocean Albatros* holds 95 comfortable staterooms and suites, all with unobstructed sea views and most with their own balconies. *Ocean Albatros* offers two restaurants, a wellness area, a unique panorama sauna, an Albatros Nordic Bar, an open-deck dining facility, a modern lecture lounge, and other state-of-the-art amenities. The vessel will have more than a 50% lower carbon footprint than traditional expedition vessels and be one of the most environmentally friendly, implementing the Green Initiative Program, ensuring both absolute comfort and sustainability for our guests.