

SMALL-SHIP EXPEDITION CRUISE

Scotland and Faroes: Isles and Wonders

May 5–17, 2027

From **\$11,995** to **\$21,995** USD

Aboard the *Ocean Victory*

Starts: Aberdeen, Scotland

Ends: Troon/Glasgow, Scotland



Itinerary

Day 1: Aberdeen, Scotland

Day 2: Kirkwall, Orkney

Day 3: Fair Isle

Day 4: Foula and Papa Stour

Day 5–7: Faroe Islands

Day 8: Stornoway, Lewis

Day 9: St. Kilda

Day 10: Isle of Skye

Day 11: Iona and Staffa

Day 12: Islay

Day 13: Troon/Glasgow, Scotland

Trip Summary

Sail north from Aberdeen to explore the far reaches of Scotland and the North Atlantic, where each horizon stirs curiosity and wonder. This immersive voyage reveals a rich interplay of landscapes and cultures—from the Neolithic stones of Orkney to the Gaelic heart of the Hebrides and the rugged cliffs of the Faroes. Travelling aboard a small expedition ship, you'll journey through waters that have carried Norsemen, monks, and modern explorers alike, experiencing both the solitude of distant isles and the warmth of coastal communities. In Orkney, step back into prehistory among ceremonial standing stones. In the Shetlands, meet islanders on Foula who continue age-old crofting traditions. At St. Kilda, stand before soaring cliffs alive with seabirds—the largest colony in the United Kingdom. Continue to the Isle of Lewis, where Gaelic culture and the Calanais Stones connect myth and memory. Wander Fair Isle's flower-strewn paths, visit Iona's sacred abbey, and hear the sea's music reverberate through Fingal's Cave. Across the North Atlantic, the Faroe Islands offer their own blend of drama and grace: waterfalls, fjords, and tunnels linking island to island in a living symbol of unity.

Throughout, the voyage balances discovery and reflection—connecting human heritage with the wild beauty of the sea. Each landfall reveals another thread in the story of Scotland and the Faroe Islands, bound together by wind, water, and wonder.

Highlights

Scotland's shores and maritime heritage

From the glimmering granite of Aberdeen to the wild western coasts, Scotland's maritime story is written in every tide. Harbours brim with history, and small boats still trace the same sea routes once followed by Norsemen and traders. These waters, ever in motion, bind together communities, stories, and centuries of seafaring spirit.

The heart of Neolithic Orkney

Step into deep time at Orkney's UNESCO World Heritage Site, where the 4,000-year-old Ring of Brodgar stands in quiet communion with the wind. Ancient villages and ceremonial grounds still whisper of belief and belonging, and each stone carries the mystery of a people who looked to both sea and sky.

Foula: the crofting tradition

At the edge of the Shetlands, Foula holds steadfast against the North Atlantic. Here, crofting remains a way of life—woven from patience, endurance, and the rhythm of the sea. Meet the islanders who keep this living heritage, where simplicity and community shape every season.

St. Kilda: the kingdom of birds

The cliffs of St. Kilda rise like citadels above the Atlantic, home to the largest seabird colony in the United Kingdom. Gannets, fulmars, and puffins fill the sky in whirling motion, their cries echoing across stone and turf. This remote archipelago, once inhabited by a resilient island community, remains a sanctuary of both nature and memory.

Isle of Lewis: a Gaelic stronghold

On the Isle of Lewis, Gaelic culture thrives amid moor and sea. Visit ancient standing stones, hear the music of the language, and feel the pulse of a proud island heritage. Lewis is a place of living tradition, where the past endures in song, story, and craft.

Fair Isle: Island tranquility and birdlife

Halfway between Orkney and Shetland, Fair Isle welcomes you with serenity and colour. A haven for seabirds and knitters alike, the island hums with creativity and calm. Puffins nest in burrows above bright wildflowers, and the island's few residents share a way of life shaped by sea and sky.

Iona Abbey: Scotland's sacred past

Set upon a small isle of soft grass and white shell sand, Iona Abbey remains one of Scotland's most spiritual places. The legacy of St. Columba endures in the carved crosses and the hush of stone cloisters, where faith and history intertwine.

The Faroe Islands: between wind and water

Between Scotland and Iceland, the Faroes rise in layers of green and grey stone, their cliffs veiled in drifting cloud. Waterfalls plunge down steep cliffs, and tunnels have been bored through the mountains to link the islands, binding a nation shaped by ocean and weather. Perhaps you'll visit a small community of turf-roofed houses tucked into the hillside, where narrow lanes curve between gardens of wildflowers and drying racks of fish. The scent of salt and peat hangs in the air, and locals share stories over coffee. Or perhaps you will set out on a scenic hike amid sweeping views of fjords and sea. In Tórshavn you'll find a culture both ancient and alive, where Norse heritage meets modern creativity.

Fingal's Cave: the music of stone

Sail by Zodiac to the cathedral of basalt on the Isle of Staffa. Fingal's Cave, famed for its basalt columns and natural acoustics, transforms the sea's rhythm into song. The waves echo like an organ, a timeless harmony of wind, water, and stone.

Highlights at a Glance

- Appreciate Scotland's picturesque shorelines and enduring maritime heritage
- Wander among monuments at the Heart of Neolithic Orkney, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Discover the crofting traditions and close-knit community of Foula in the Shetlands
- View the largest seabird colony in the United Kingdom at the cliffs of St. Kilda
- Explore the Isle of Lewis, a vibrant Gaelic cultural stronghold
- Indulge in the tranquil island culture and exceptional birdlife of Fair Isle
- Journey through Scotland's sacred past at Iona Abbey
- Experience the dramatic scenery and living culture of the Faroe Islands
- Take a Zodiac cruise to the Isle of Staffa and Fingal's Cave—famed for its towering basaltic columns and natural acoustics

Itinerary

Day 1: Aberdeen, Scotland

Begin Your Adventure

Granite spires and polished stone shimmer under northern light in Aberdeen, where the mica-rich buildings catch even the faintest sun. Once a fishing village and now the gateway to the North Sea, the city's maritime heritage lives on in its bustling harbour and winding streets. Today, offshore platforms on the horizon speak to Aberdeen's pivotal role in the North Sea oil

era—modern industry layered atop centuries of seafaring tradition. Stroll through parks and gardens before boarding your vessel, ready to set sail into Scotland’s storied waters.

Day 2: Kirkwall, Orkney

Echoes of the Past

Step ashore in Kirkwall, Orkney’s capital and keeper of deep time. Visit the Heart of Neolithic Orkney, a UNESCO World Heritage Site where the Ring of Brodgar has stood for four millennia. Admire the red sandstone walls of St. Magnus Cathedral and explore the Hall of Clestrain, birthplace of Arctic explorer John Rae. In the town’s cafés and galleries, Orkney’s living culture hums with warmth and creativity.

Day 3: Fair Isle

Haven of Birds and Light

Halfway between Orkney and Shetland, Fair Isle welcomes you with green meadows and sea-swept cliffs. Once a Viking harbour and now a sanctuary for artists and naturalists, the island hosts vast colonies of seabirds. Watch puffins, great skuas, and fulmars circle above a tapestry of wildflowers. A visit to the small community reveals the island’s enduring story of self-sufficiency and craft.

Day 4: Foula and Papa Stour

The Edge of the Shetlands

Discover two of Scotland’s most remote islands. At Foula, meet residents who maintain traditional crofts beneath some of Britain’s highest sea cliffs. Also board a Zodiac to explore Papa Stour’s labyrinth of sea caves, blowholes, and rock arches—shaped over centuries by wind and wave. Each turn reveals another play of light, sound, and colour in motion.

Days 5–7: Faroe Islands

Isles of Green and Stone

Arrive in the Faroe Islands, a place where steep mountains rise from the sea and winding tunnels connect one dramatic landscape to the next. In Tórshavn, one of the world’s smallest and most charming capitals, colourful turf-roofed buildings line narrow lanes alive with music, craft, and conversation. Explore the harbourfront, where fishing boats sway beside modern cafés, and feel how the island’s traditions and contemporary culture coexist in a rhythm as natural as the tides.

Beyond the city, venture into a land of tumbling waterfalls, deep valleys, and mist-draped cliffs alive with seabirds. Visit small villages where homes cling to green hillsides and grass roofs blend seamlessly into the landscape—sometimes with goats grazing above. Every turn in the road or tunnel reveals a new vista: a fjord glimmering in soft light, a stack of basalt rising from the sea, or a community that feels both timeless and warmly alive. Here, the balance of solitude and connection defines daily life, and the meeting of land, water, and wind shapes everything in sight.

Day 8: Stornoway, Lewis**The Call of Ancient Stones**

Sail to the Isle of Lewis, the largest of the Outer Hebrides and a proud stronghold of Gaelic culture. In Stornoway, explore a town alive with craftsmanship and island character before journeying across moorland to the Calanais Standing Stones. Older than Stonehenge, these monoliths rise from the earth in a cross-shaped pattern of mystery, their weathered forms catching light and shadow as the wind moves across the moor. Here, you can touch the stones, lean against them, and feel their age beneath your hands—a tangible connection to the people who shaped this sacred place thousands of years ago.

Day 9: St. Kilda**The Outermost Edge**

Journey to St. Kilda, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the most remote of the Outer Hebrides. Once home to a self-sufficient island community, the archipelago now stands uninhabited—a sanctuary for seabirds and stories. Walk among stone houses left behind in 1930, when the last residents departed, and watch as gannets, puffins, and fulmars fill the air above some of the tallest sea cliffs in Britain. The sense of isolation here is profound and unforgettable.

Day 10: Isle of Skye**Mountains, Myths, and Birds**

Arrive at Skye, where mountains meet the sea in sculpted ridges and quiet glens. Hike or photograph the Cuillin Hills, explore the island's shoreline alive with the sound of oystercatchers, or simply take in the vastness of sky and stone. Skye's beauty invites reflection—a meeting point between wild grandeur and human story.

Day 11: Iona and Staffa**Spirit and Sound**

At Iona, walk the sacred ground where St. Columba founded his monastery, resting place of kings. The abbey's carved crosses stand as testaments to faith and time. Nearby lies Staffa and its famed Fingal's Cave, a cathedral of basalt whose echo inspired Mendelssohn's Hebrides Overture. The sea's rhythm fills the air—a natural symphony of wind and wave.

Day 12: Islay**The Lordship of the Isles**

Explore Islay, Queen of the Hebrides, known for its rolling pastures and storied heritage. Visit Loch Finlaggan, the ancient seat of Clan Donald and the Lords of the Isles. Among the ruins, sense the lingering presence of Scotland's medieval power and poetry in the still air and weathered stone.

Day 13: Troon/Glasgow, Scotland**Journey's End**

Disembark at Troon, a harbour town of soft light and sea breeze. Wander its long sandy beaches framed by views of Arran across the firth and feel the quiet rhythm of a place shaped by tides and sailing traditions. Troon's harbour remains a link between Scotland's maritime past and present, welcoming fishing boats, leisure craft, and travellers alike. From here, travel to Glasgow, a city of energy and art where Victorian architecture meets creative renewal. It's a fitting finale—a return from the wild coasts to a place alive with music, conversation, and warmth.