



Adventure
Canada

SMALL-SHIP EXPEDITION

Scotland, The Faroe Islands, & Iceland: North Atlantic Saga

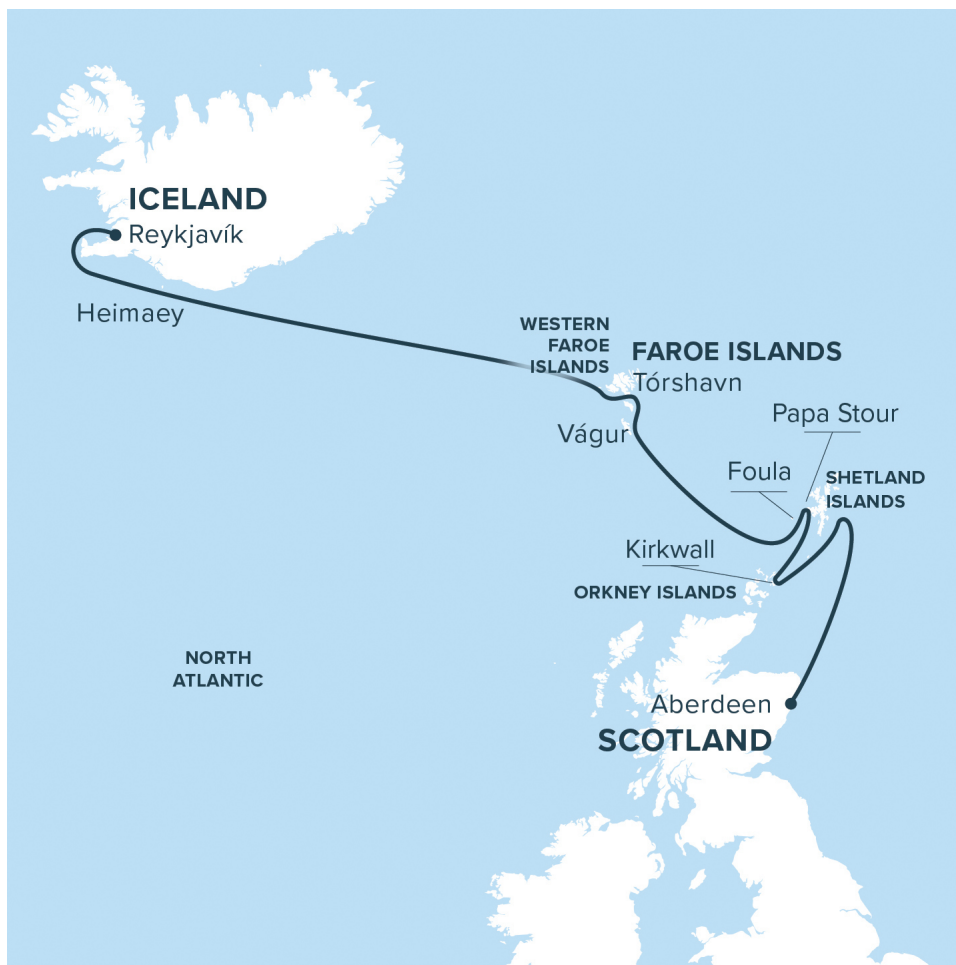
May 16–26, 2028

From **\$8,995** to **\$17,195** USD

Aboard the *Ocean Victory*

Starts: Aberdeen, Scotland

Ends: Reykjavík, Iceland





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Expedition Summary

Sea Roads of the North Atlantic

Across the North Atlantic, the sea has long been a road. It carried settlers and seafarers, fishers and merchants, stories and songs between islands. Following these routes by ship reveals a northern world whose cultures grew through centuries of movement and exchange, while developing identities unmistakably their own.

From the ninth century onward, Norse voyagers brought Orkney, Shetland, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland into a shared maritime sphere. Their legacy endures in place names, language, law, music, craftsmanship, and stories, yet it has taken a different form on every shore. Ancient Orcadian monuments, Shetland fiddle traditions, Faroese ballads, and Icelandic sagas belong to cultures shaped by local landscapes as much as by the waters connecting them.

In May, this island world is awakening into the long days of northern spring. Green returns to open hills and steep coastal slopes, puffins and other seabirds gather at their breeding cliffs, and shifting light moves across sea stacks, fjords, and volcanic peaks. The landscape gathers drama along the route, unfolding from Orkney's broad horizons through Shetland's ocean-carved shores and the soaring basalt walls of the Faroes to the young volcanic terrain of Iceland.

Travelling by expedition ship restores the sea to the centre of the story. Islands appear first as generations of voyagers knew them, rising from the horizon through weather and changing light. Harbours become gateways, remote coastlines come within reach, and the relationships between communities, wildlife, geology, and ocean become visible. This is a journey through one of the world's great island regions, following the waters that gave it shape and continue to hold it together.

Expedition Summary

Website & brochure copy · 80 words

Sea Roads of the North Atlantic

Follow the sea roads that have connected Scotland, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland for generations. Travelling by expedition ship reveals a shared northern world shaped by Norse voyagers, maritime exchange, and island cultures unmistakably their own. In May, lengthening days illuminate green hills, soaring basalt cliffs, seabird colonies, fjords, and volcanic shores. Approach remote islands as earlier seafarers did, discovering how ocean, wildlife, landscape, and



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community remain profoundly connected across the North Atlantic through a remarkable island world still unfolding.

Itinerary

Day 1: Aberdeen, Scotland

Day 2: Kirkwall, Orkney

Day 3: Shetland Islands

Day 4: Foula and Papa Stour

Day 5: Vágur, Suðuroy Island, Faroe Islands

Day 6: Tórshavn

Day 7 & 8: Western Faroe Islands

Day 9: At Sea

Day 10: Heimaey, Vestmannaeyjar, Iceland

Day 11: Reykjavík, Iceland

Highlights

Follow the sea roads of the North Atlantic

Travel between Scotland, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland along waters used by islanders and voyagers for centuries. Approaching by ship reveals the geography that shaped this northern world, from working harbours and sheltered fjords to remote islands and coastlines best understood from the sea.

Discover distinctive island cultures

Experience cultures shaped by maritime livelihoods, northern landscapes, and generations of exchange. Orcadian craftsmanship, Shetland's Norse inheritance, Faroese art and communal chain dancing, and Icelandic ingenuity each reveal a different expression of island identity. Music, language, architecture, food, and tradition remain vibrant parts of life across these North Atlantic shores.



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Walk through five millennia of northern history

Encounter Orkney's extraordinary Neolithic monuments, among the richest and best-preserved in Western Europe. Follow the Norse legacy through cathedrals, place names, stories, and enduring cultural traditions, and discover the generations of seafarers, islanders, and explorers who have added their own chapters to this deeply layered region.

Experience the North Atlantic's great seabird kingdom

Travel during the breeding season, when puffins, fulmars, gannets, storm petrels, guillemots, and other seabirds gather in spectacular numbers along towering cliffs and remote islands. Watch these remarkable travellers from ship, shore, and Zodiac as they follow ancient feeding routes across the North Atlantic.

Where ocean and volcanoes meet

Experience one of the few places on Earth where the power of the Atlantic and the forces that shape the planet are equally visible. From Scotland's wave-carved caves to the immense basalt cliffs of the Faroe Islands to Iceland's young lava fields and volcanic islands, discover landscapes where geology is not simply ancient history, it is an ongoing story.

Highlights at a Glance

- Follow the sea roads of the North Atlantic between Scotland, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland, approaching working harbours, remote islands, and spectacular coastlines by ship.
- Experience distinct island cultures through Orcadian craftsmanship, Shetland's Norse inheritance, Faroese art and communal traditions, and Icelandic ingenuity.
- Walk through 5,000 years of history among Neolithic monuments, Norse legacies, historic cathedrals, and layered island communities.
- Experience spectacular seabird colonies as puffins, fulmars, guillemots, kittiwakes, and other seabirds return for the breeding season.
- Encounter elemental North Atlantic landscapes, from Shetland's sea caves and the Faroes' basalt cliffs to the young lava fields of Heimaey.

Itinerary



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Day 1: Aberdeen, Scotland

Scotland's Granite Gateway

Facing the North Sea, Aberdeen is a city of silver-grey granite and nearly nine centuries of maritime ambition. Established in 1136, its harbour is Britain's oldest existing business. Fishing, shipbuilding, global trade, and offshore energy have each shaped this working waterfront.

Beyond the harbour, medieval Old Aberdeen, the colourful fishing quarter of Footdee, striking civic architecture, contemporary galleries, and a lively food scene give the Granite City a character all its own.

Board the expedition vessel in the heart of this historic port. As Aberdeen's granite skyline recedes, the sea roads to Orkney, Shetland, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland open ahead.

Day 2: Kirkwall, Orkney

Five Thousand Years in Stone

Across Orkney's open landscape, standing stones, ceremonial monuments, and remarkably preserved settlements form one of Western Europe's richest surviving Neolithic landscapes. Built five thousand years ago, these sites reveal a sophisticated society of farmers, builders, and seafarers. Low green hills, broad skies, lochs, and the surrounding sea remain inseparable from their extraordinary presence.

Kirkwall adds another layer to the story. Founded in 1137, St. Magnus Cathedral rises above the town in local red and yellow sandstone, a magnificent legacy of Orkney's Norse heritage and Scotland's most complete medieval cathedral. The winding streets around it reflect a continuing tradition of exceptional Orcadian craftsmanship, particularly jewellery, textiles, and design inspired by the islands. Kirkwall also honours Arctic explorer John Rae, whose grave lies in the cathedral grounds.

Day 3: Shetland Islands

Between Scotland and Scandinavia

Set between the North Sea and North Atlantic, Shetland has long been a crossroads of northern cultures. Norse rule lasted for centuries, leaving its mark on place names, language, traditions, and a strong island identity that remains distinctive within Scotland today.



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Explore archaeological sites that reveal thousands of years of human presence, wander through communities shaped by fishing, crofting, and the sea, and watch for the abundant birdlife that gathers along Shetland's rugged coast. Music and storytelling remain strong threads in island culture, connecting contemporary Shetland with generations that came before.

As you explore, discover a place whose character has been shaped by connections in every direction: north toward Scandinavia, south toward Scotland, and outward across the North Atlantic.

Day 4: Foula and Papa Stour

Life on Shetland's Small Islands

Foula, whose Old Norse name means “bird island,” is home to only a few dozen people, living amid some of Britain's highest sheer sea cliffs. Discover an island where crofting continues, peat is still cut for fuel, and traditions of music and storytelling remain part of community life. In season, thousands of seabirds gather along the cliffs, adding another dimension to an island already rich in character.

On Papa Stour, another small island community occupies a landscape of ancient volcanic rock carved into stacks, arches, blowholes, and some of Britain's finest sea caves. Together, Foula and Papa Stour offer a rare glimpse of life on Shetland's smaller islands, where longstanding traditions continue amid extraordinary wildlife and geology.

Day 5: Vágur, Suðuroy, Faroe Islands

The Colour and Rhythm of Suðuroy

Set along a deep fjord and surrounded by steep mountains, Vágur grew into one of Suðuroy's important fishing towns. Its boats and salt-fish trade connected this southern island with markets across Europe, while traditional boathouses, warehouses, and the working harbour still reflect its maritime character.

The cultural life of Suðuroy comes into closer view at the Ruth Smith Art Museum, where the celebrated Faroese painter captured the islands' shifting light, landscapes, and people. Join in the Faroese chain dance, moving together as traditional ballads carry stories across generations.



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This much-loved communal tradition reveals the importance of music, memory, and shared participation in Faroese culture.

Above the village, the cliffs of Eggjarnar overlook the open Atlantic, bringing Vágur's maritime heritage, creative expression, and dramatic setting into one remarkable place.

Day 6: Tórshavn

Where Eighteen Islands Come Together

Few capitals feel as closely tied to their harbour as Tórshavn. At Tinganes, red timber buildings with turf roofs occupy one of the world's oldest parliamentary meeting places, where assemblies have been held since the Viking Age. Nearby, the narrow lanes of the old town wind between black-tarred houses and sheltered gardens.

The city is also the creative centre of the islands. Faroese language, visual art, music, design, and an ambitious food culture flourish in its galleries, venues, workshops, cafés, and restaurants. Fishing boats and ferries keep the harbour in motion, while the surrounding hills and sea remain close at hand. Tórshavn brings the culture and character of eighteen islands together in one lively harbour.

Founded as a Viking trading settlement, it remains the cultural heart of the Faroe Islands, where old timber buildings with turf roofs stand alongside contemporary galleries, cafés, and restaurants. Wander quiet lanes and discover a confident island society where language, craftsmanship, music, and design continue to evolve while remaining firmly anchored in place.

Days 7–8: Western Faroe Islands

The Faroes at Their Most Elemental

Across the western Faroe Islands, the land rises from the North Atlantic with an almost improbable beauty. Dark walls of layered basalt are draped in vivid green, waterfalls descend from high plateaus, and narrow fjords disappear between mountains. Sea stacks, arches, and isolated islets stand offshore, while Atlantic puffins, northern fulmars, guillemots, and kittiwakes return in their thousands to the cliffs for the breeding season. Mist, sunlight, and passing weather continually transform the view, heightening the elemental beauty of these remarkable islands.



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Two days allow this extraordinary island world to unfold from different perspectives. Hikes cross sweeping headlands and reveal views deep into the archipelago, while Zodiac cruises bring the immense proportions of the coast fully into view from the water. Beneath cliffs alive with seabirds and beside formations carved by the Atlantic, the western Faroes offer some of the voyage's most stirring natural encounters with the forces that have shaped this island world.

Day 9: At Sea

The Sea Road to Iceland

The North Atlantic unfolds during the crossing to Iceland, its changing light, weather, and wildlife holding attention far beyond the decks. Fulmars and gannets follow the winds above the waves, while the possibility of whales keeps watch focused on the horizon.

Aboard, presentations and conversations explore the natural and human histories carried through these waters, from seabird migrations and ocean currents to the generations of voyagers who travelled between islands. Time at sea brings the expedition's central story into focus: across the North Atlantic, the ocean has long been a route of movement, exchange, and connection.

Day 10: Heimaey, Vestmannaeyjar, Iceland

Where Fire Meets the Sea

Heimaey rises from the North Atlantic in a dramatic meeting of volcanic earth and ocean. In 1973, Eldfell erupted without warning, forcing nearly the entire population to evacuate as lava and ash buried parts of the town. When molten rock threatened to close the harbour, islanders pumped seawater onto the advancing flows, helping preserve the sheltered waters at the heart of community life.

Today, brightly painted homes and a busy fishing harbour stand beneath the still-young volcanic cone. Lava fields reach toward the town, while Atlantic puffins return in vast numbers to breed along the surrounding cliffs. Heimaey reveals an island continually shaped by powerful natural forces and by the ingenuity of those who call it home.



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Day 11: Reykjavík, Iceland

Where the Sea Roads Meet

The expedition reaches Reykjavík, Iceland's lively capital and a fitting culmination to a journey across the North Atlantic. Set between mountains and sea, the city pairs colourful streets and corrugated houses with bold architecture, an inventive culinary scene, and a creative culture expressed through literature, music, and design. Geothermal energy warms its homes and outdoor pools, bringing Iceland's volcanic landscape into the rhythms of daily life.

After disembarkation, those staying on can discover a capital whose museums, galleries, restaurants, and waterfront offer many reasons to linger. Here, at the journey's final shore, the sea roads followed from Scotland through the Faroes arrive in a country profoundly shaped by the forces and connections of the North Atlantic.