

SCOTLAND BY SEA

JUNE 15-25, 2025



WILD FIBERS

A GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

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A Wild Fibers adventure offering rare opportunities for anyone with a passion for the Scottish Isles.



Traveling Scotland by sea provides an opportunity to understand this land from its most rugged and most beautiful vantage points. It is also the perfect setting to experience abundant wildlife and all things wooly.

DAY 1: Oban

Oban is a lovely seaside village with cobbled streets and stone houses. We board the MS Island Sky mid-afternoon and celebrate with an opening reception and captain's welcome, setting sail that evening in preparation for our first day of adventure.

DAY 2: Colonsay and Iona (Inner Hebrides)

Spend the morning exploring the island of Colonsay, with her craggy, heather-clad hills and sparse woodland yet impressive array of plants and birdlife. Near Colonsay House, built in 1722 by Malcolm MacNeil and bought by Lord Strathcona in 1904, we will visit the attractively dilapidated woodland gardens which protect the tiny, enigmatic 8th century St Oran's Cross. Sail over lunch to Iona which has been occupied for thousands of years and has been a place of pilgrimage and Christian worship for several centuries. We will meet with Michael and Kate Gordon who started Iona Wool, an extraordinary venture in making yarn from the island's eight different sheep breeds providing additional income for the farmers along with a product that is uniquely island made. Iona is also where St Columba fled from Ireland in 563 and established a monastery. Here his followers were responsible for the conversion of much of pagan Scotland and Northern England. No less than 62

Scottish Kings are buried in the Abbey. Visit the Abbey or perhaps walk along the white sandy beaches or go in search of the corncrake amongst the irises.

DAY 3: Staffa and Lunga (Inner Hebrides)

We awake this morning at Staffa, the south side where the perpendicular rock face features an imposing series of black basalt columns, known as the Colonnade, which has been cut by the sea into cathedralesque caverns, most notably Fingal's Cave or "the Cave of Melody," the inspiration for Mendelssohn's "Hebridean Overture." Weather permitting, we will use our Zodiacs to explore closer. We end the day in the Treshnish Isles, an archipelago of uninhabited volcanic islets. The island of Lunga has been described as 'a green jewel in a peacock sea' and is a summer nesting-place for hundreds of seabirds including a robust puffin colony.

DAY 4: Loch Scavaig (Isle of Skye)

Isle of Skye's southern coast is remote, mainly uninhabited and home to the Cuillin Mountains. Loch Courisk is nestled in the landscape folds of the Cuillin Ridge, a freshwater loch and is separated from the sea by the Scavaig River. Our short walk along this river gives access to the Loch, or the adventurous can take the opportunity to explore further.

DAY 5: St Kilda & Stac Lee (Outer Hebrides)

Remote and battered by the Atlantic seas, St Kilda is a near mystical island with dual UNESCO World Heritage site status for its natural and cultural significance. St Kilda is deemed Europe's most important seabird colony—with abundant puffins, fulmars and the largest colony of gannets in Britain. For sheep enthusiasts, the history of the Soay is one of the most remarkable in all of European sheep, providing not only a durable wool but a breed with pure genetics owing to the inability to introduce another breed in this remote location. St. Kilda was inhabited until 1930, when the advent of tourism ultimately altered the islanders' view of their small island life. The 19th century village layout still remains, allowing us to envisage life on this island where the bird life provided sustenance for the villagers.



DAY 6: Handa and Inverewe

At first light we arrive at Handa. Here we will use our Zodiacs to explore the magnificent sea cliffs of Torridonian sandstone which rise from the Atlantic. The island comes alive each summer when nearly 100,000 seabirds gather to breed including internationally important numbers of guillemot, razorbill, puffins and great skua. Sail over lunch to our anchorage in Loch Ewe to visit one of Scotland's premier gardens, Inverewe. This botanical garden in the northwest Highlands presents an amazing collection of exotic trees and shrubs that are sheltered by well-positioned windbreaks of native pine.



DAY 7: Shiant Islands and Isle of Lewis

Today we arrive on the Isle of Lewis, home of the world renowned Harris Tweed, where our group will meet in the home of a young Harris Tweed weaver who left his job as a banker so he could return to life on the island. In the afternoon, we head to the beautiful west coast. Described as Scotland's Stonehenge, the Callanish Standing Stones



date from around 3000 BC. There are a total of 32 stones in a circular and avenue design. The stones stand like a petrified forest on the flat top of a peninsula which reaches out into East Loch Roag. Our final stop is the Garrannan Blackhouse Village, a reconstructed settlement of traditional black houses which were made using dry stone masonry and have thatched roofs, distinctively weighted down with rocks. We will board the Zodiacs for a cruise around the spectacular basalt cliffs of the Shiant Islands, a group of little islands located a few miles off the shores of Lewis.



DAY 8: Papa Westray and North Ronaldsay (Orkney Islands)

Our day in the Orkney Islands will explore two of the islands to the north of the mainland. The morning is spent at Papa Westray, where there will be the opportunity for a number of island walks. You can also visit the 3500-year-old Knap of Howar, a Neolithic farm building that claims to be the oldest standing house in Europe and the 12th century St Boniface Kirk. In the afternoon, we sail to the northernmost of the Orkney Islands, the remote and isolated North Ronaldsay. Renowned for its beautiful coastal scenery and abundant birdlife, it is one of the crown jewels in the history of Northern European short-tailed sheep. In 1832, a stone wall was erected along the island's perimeter to keep the sheep off the pasture land, preserving it for cattle who were deemed more valuable. The North Ronaldsay sheep were forced to survive on seaweed and to this day are one of the few mammals who can. Soon after the island's lighthouse was decommissioned in the late 1990s, a Mini-Mill was installed in one of the outbuildings. We will tour the mill and meet with a farmer to learn more about these historic sheep.

DAY 9 Lerwick, (Shetland Islands)

In recent history, Shetland's cobblestone streets were filled with the rush of vibrant fishing and ship building industries, and a unique wool history. Approximately 80% of Shetland wool is purchased by Jamieson and Smith who possess a wealth of information they are always delighted to share. To the south of Lerwick is Jarlshoff where we delve into more than 4,000 years of human occupation. Neolithic people first settled this site in Shet-





land around 2700 BC, and it remained in use until the 1600s AD. Discoveries made here include oval-shaped Bronze Age houses, an Iron Age brooch and wheel-houses, Norse longhouses, a medieval farmstead, and a laird's house dating back to the 1500s. We will also visit The Shetland Museum offering in-depth exhibit on the islands' wool and farming history. More knitting history can be found at The Shetland Textile Museum.

DAY 10 Noss Head & Fair Isle, Shetland Islands

This morning we anchor off the remote island of Fair Isle. Located midway between the Shetland and Orkney Islands, the tiny population of sixty or so islanders always extend a warm welcome. Famous for its

birds, knitwear, and historic shipwrecks, our group will enjoy a special meet and greet with the one of the local knitters. Afterwards, there is time for a walk across the island, searching out the puffin slopes, a visit to the community hall for a cup of tea or indulge in something special from the gift shop. If the weather permits, we will sail around to Noss Head in the afternoon where the cliffs will be full of nesting gannets, guillemots and fulmar.

DAY 11 Aberdeen.

Disembark this morning after breakfast. Transfers will be provided to Aberdeen Airport and Railway Station at a fixed time.

Island Sky

Our tour is in conjunction with Noble Caledonia who is fortunate to have two of the finest small ships in the world, the MS Island Sky and MS Hebridean Sky. These ex-Renaissance Cruises sister vessels accommodate just 102 guests and are not only two of the most comfortable and well equipped small ships, but also two of the friendliest and most efficiently run. With crews of just over 70, many of whom have been with Noble Caledonia for most of their working career, they are dedicated to offering the best possible experience. It is this gentle, kind and efficient atmosphere on board that makes these vessels so popular.

MS Island Sky is equipped with the latest safety, navigation and communications equipment along with roll stabilizers to minimize the ship's motion. During your voyage we hope to offer the opportunity to visit the Captain and Officers on the Bridge to check the vessel's progress by charts and learn more about your journey. You will also find on your suite television a navigation channel showing the routing of the vessel as well as the view from the Bridge. On board you will also find a clinic and doctor and a lift that serves all decks. Smoking on board is restricted to a specific area on deck.

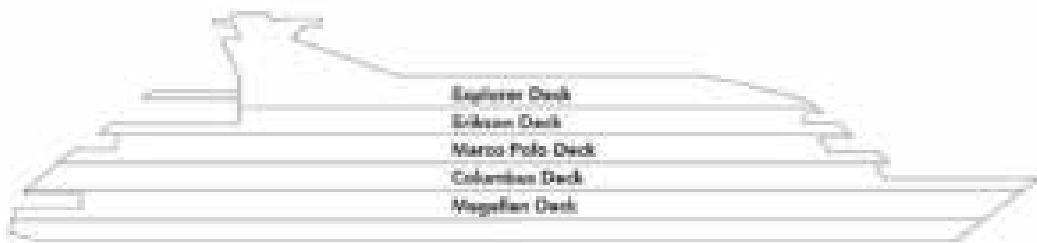




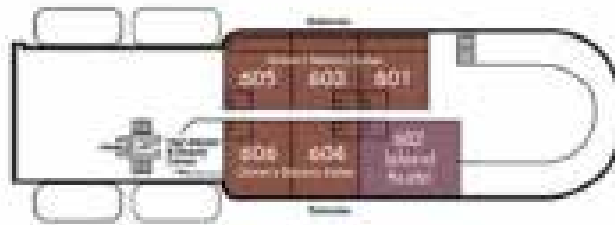
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Prices are based on per person sharing a cabin. For single travelers, cabin price is listed as “for sole occupancy”
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 For more information, kindly contact Linda Cortright, wildfibers@mac.com or 207-756-3512. (email is preferred)

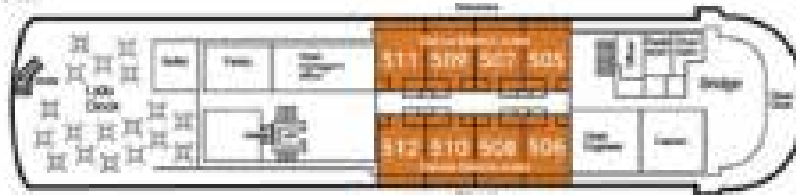
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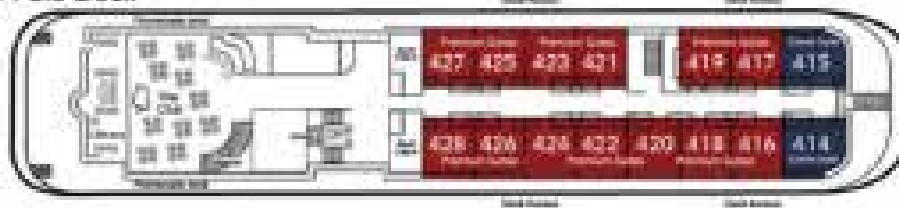
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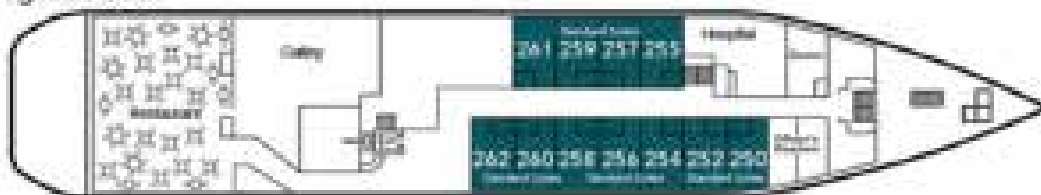
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