

PRODUCED BY
Condé Nast Traveller
PROMOTIONS

SHORT HAUL CRUISES

SPRING 2014



cruise



cruise CAPSULE



1. CAMEL COAT, £695, AMANDA WAKELEY.COM; 2. ATLANTIS EYE PENDANT, £180, MONICAVINADER.COM; 3. EMMA COOK RED SHOES, £182, NET-A-PORTER.COM; 4. POSTCARD SCARF, £65, PLUMO.COM; 5. STRIPED TOP, £85, CHINTIANDPARKER.COM; 6. ATLANTIS GEM EARRINGS, £145; 7. FRIENDSHIP BRACELET, £115, MONICAVINDER.COM

In a world where long-haul travel has become the norm, it's easy to equate holidays with far-flung destinations. However, by seeking out those exotic lands we often miss the rich beauty, culture and heritage of our back garden, not to mention our very own doorstep. And let's face it, a brief hop to Barcelona, short drive to Southampton, or even a tube ride to London Bridge beats a long-haul flight for convenience. So if you do one thing this year, consider a cruise closer to home – not just to avoid the airports, save trees, and discover your doorstep, but to get the most out of your precious time.

SHORT HAUL

The search for the exotic or adventurous does not have to mean seeking out far-flung destinations.

Words Gabriella Le Breton

Best cruises departing from England BLIGHTY TO THE BALTIC

This summer, ultra-luxury cruise line Silversea is offering the rare opportunity to spend the first and last nights of two fortnight-long voyages as a tourist in your own country, berthed by Tower Bridge. Sailing aboard the illustrious Silver

impressive selection of bars, restaurants, entertainment, sports and spa facilities, dedicated children's clubs and tranquil adult areas. She'll make several 12-night Mediterranean voyages from Southampton through



Cloud, more private yacht than cruise ship, sleeping just 296 cosseted guests, you'll call at the pearls of Scandinavia and the Baltic, including Copenhagen, Stockholm, Tallinn and St Petersburg before returning to London via Amsterdam silversea.com; 0844 770 9030

August and September, making her the ideal floating summer base for families pocruises.com; 0843 374 0111

FROM TOWER BRIDGE TO BÉLEM TOWER

There are few better ways to appreciate 'Vintage Europe' than from the comfort of a Seabourn ship. Familiarise yourself with the all-suite Seabourn Legend before slipping out of London on a 11-night autumn voyage. You'll be whisked from St Malo, St Helier and La Rochelle to the historical sights of Lisbon seabourn.com; 0845 070 0500



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: AZURA IS ONE OF P&O'S LARGEST SHIPS; THE VERANDAH CAFE ONBOARD THE SEABOURN LEGEND; BERTH BY TOWER BRIDGE BEFORE HEADING OUT ON THE HIGH SEAS WITH SILVERSEA

HOME FROM HOME IN THE MED

Maritime stalwart P&O Cruises offers more voyages from UK shores than any other line and maintains a reassuring sense of home aboard all of its ships. One of P&O's largest ships, Azura, boasts a particularly

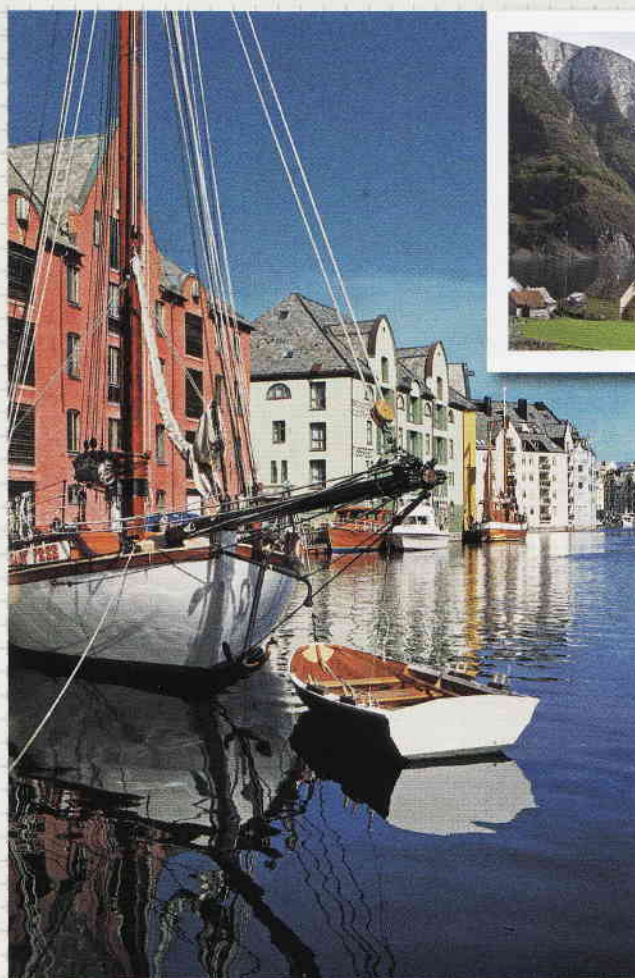
Each summer, more and more travellers are taking to the high seas on a cruise to fall for the lure of beautiful fjords, hot sandy beaches, rugged wilderness and the historic cities of Scandinavia and the Baltic. So go iceberg-spotting under the midnight sun in Greenland, spy on besotted Spitsbergen puffins, soak up Tallinn's café culture and marvel at glorious St Petersburg.

FLAVOUR OF THE NORTH

Celebrity Cruises, perhaps more than any other cruise line, has a truly distinctive style. Sailing aboard the innovative *Celebrity Eclipse*, with her contemporary interiors, diverse restaurants and hip bars, you can enjoy a fortnight-long overview of Scandinavia and the North. Sailing from Southampton, enjoy two days at sea to acquaint yourself with the AquaSpa and top deck lawn before calling at Reykjavik and Akureyri in Iceland. Admire the ruggedly beautiful Faroe Islands before navigating some of Norway's most dramatic fjords and the atmospheric city of Stavanger, returning to Southampton after a rejuvenating day at sea. celebritycruises.co.uk; 0845 456 0523

FJORD FLING

For a fjord exploration with a difference, book yourself onto *Prinsendam*, the smallest ship in the Holland America Line fleet. The *Prinsendam*'s relatively diminutive size (835 passengers) creates a sense of intimacy and affords access to lesser-visited ports of call. Holland America Line's imaginative two-week North Cape Explorer itinerary



SCANDINAVIA AND THE BALTIC

Forego the beach this year for a once-in-a-lifetime trip aboard a luxurious vessel to a land of dramatic landscapes and midnight sun

starts in Amsterdam and travels the length of Norway's west coast to its northernmost town, Honningsvåg, before returning to the Dutch capital. Expect to be mesmerised by the towering Geirangerfjord, Sognefjord and Lysefjord and fall under the spell of the beautiful Lofoten Islands, the gem-coloured houses of Bergen and art-nouveau splendour of Ålesund. hollandamerica.com; 0843 374 2300

NORWAY NO BRAINER

Established in 1893, Hurtigruten has unparalleled sailing experience in Norway and the Arctic Circle. With multiple Norwegian itineraries ranging from six to 11 days, Hurtigruten is the natural choice for fjord cruising. However, it's the new two-week National Park Expeditions voyage that's caught our eye. Starting in Svalbard, an archipelago between Norway and the North Pole, and sailing aboard Hurtigruten's swanky expedition ship, *MS Fram*, you'll travel through the dramatic fjords and bays of Spitsbergen to Greenland and Iceland. You'll also call at the world's largest and least visited National Park, open just four to six weeks of the year and home to polar bears, musk oxen and Arctic wolves. hurtigruten.co.uk; 0203 411 8216

ONE-WAY TICKET TO THE BALTIC

If you love your creature comforts, fun and food, let Oceania Cruises entertain you - *Oceania Marina* combines large ship facilities with a mid-size ship feel and superb cuisine. Sailing from Stockholm, the Baltic Explorer itinerary will usher you to Tallinn, St Petersburg, Helsinki, Riga, Klaipeda, Berlin, Copenhagen and Bruges before reaching Southampton. While you're not seeing the sights, you can recreate some of the Nordic dishes you've sampled ashore in the Bon Appétit

CRUISE CAPSULE



1. EDBROOK GOLD SUNGLASSES, £270, HARDYAMIES.COM; 2. COMBE REGULAR CREW KNIT, £85, HENRILLOYD.COM; 3. PONTOS S EXTREME WATCH, £3,970, MAURICELACROIX.COM; 4. TRETORN SKYMRA GORETEX SNEAKER, £130, TRETORN.SE; 5. TOM DIXON BAG, £350, N06-LONDON.COM; 6. WAX BIKER JACKET, £169, JAMESAUBREY.CO.UK; 7. FLEURI BELT, £90, UK.EDEN-PARK.COM; 8. BARBERIA MENS COLOGNE, ALVAREZ & GOMEZ, £30, CARTERANDBOND.COM

cruise

IMAGES, CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: CELEBRITY CRUISES VISITS NUMEROUS QUANT HARBOURS ON THE NORWEGIAN COAST; VISIT THE FIORDS OF NORWAY; THE HURTIGRUTEN TAKES YOU TO THE ARCTIC CIRCLE AT SPITSBERGEN; NOBLE CALEDONIA VISITS BALTIC STATES SUCH AS ESTONIA; LEARN TO COOK ABOARD OCEANIA CRUISES



Sailing aboard Hurtigruten's swanky expedition ship MS Fram, you'll travel through the dramatic fjords and bays of Spitsbergen to Greenland and Iceland

and plenty of pottering along Tallinn's cobbled lanes.

azamaraclubcruises.co.uk;
0844 493 4016

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

The MS *Serenissima* is floating proof that small is beautiful: sleeping just 107 guests, she's able to moor in the heart of Europe's historic cities and reach small, remote ports. With the feel of an elegant Swedish country house, *Serenissima* creates the perfect ambience for a cultured tour of the Baltic, with experienced guest speakers providing invaluable local history and insights. The eleven-night Baltic Odyssey starts in Stockholm and brings you back to Southampton via Amsterdam, incorporating guided tours of the Baltic's 'must see' destinations - Helsinki, St Petersburg, Tallinn and Copenhagen. noble-caledonia.co.uk; 020 7752 0000

Culinary Centre, luxuriate in the Canyon Ranch Spa, dab your Baltic memories on canvas at the Artist's Loft, and sip cocktails as you squeeze through the picturesque Kiel Canal. oceaniacruises.com; 0845 505 1920



BALTIC IN BRIEF

If you've only got a week to explore the Baltic, Azamara Club Cruises will ensure you get the most out of every moment. Known for its unique shore excursions and longer stays in port, Azamara treats you to three days in St Petersburg, allowing ample time to visit the Hermitage, Peterhof, Red

Square and Nevsky Prospect and even throwing in a red carpet and champagne evening at the Mikhailovsky Theatre, one of Russia's most venerated opera and ballet houses. And there's more: a canal tour of Stockholm, scenic sailing through the Stockholm Archipelago to Helsinki,





European rivers

MAKE 2014 A TAUCK CHRISTMAS

Take a Christmas voyage with Tauck and not only will you rediscover your inner child, delighting in: snowy walks, glittering trees, tongue-burningly hot chestnuts and candlelit shops, but you can also abandon your sensible outer adult. Celebrated for its exceptional attention to detail and thoughtful extras, Tauck will relieve you of virtually all responsible duties, from cooking and washing up to arranging family outings and warming the mulled wine for your return from snowy Christmas markets. Simply float down the Danube from cheery Nuremberg to chic Vienna in festive style, discovering Christmas as it should be, tauck.co.uk; 0800 961 834

LA DOUCE FRANCE

If you're a Francophile with a penchant for boutique hotels, you need to know about SS *Catherine*. Launching in April, the *Catherine* will be the latest addition to the Uniworld fleet and promises to set a new benchmark in luxury river cruising. The hotly-anticipated ship will boast exceptionally spacious suites, a lavish



EUROPEAN RIVERS & MEDITERRANEAN

Meander your way through one of the most extensive systems of waterways in the world



restaurant and alfresco dining terrace, chic lounges and a mosaic-tiled pool and spa. Soak up the beauty of Provence and Burgundy from your six-star floating pied-à-terre, meandering along the Rhône and Saône and following in the footsteps of Van Gogh, Cézanne and Gauguin as you visit Arles, Avignon, Lyon and Beaune. titantravel.co.uk; 0800 988 5867

VIKINGS ON THE DOURO

Viking River Cruises lays claim to more



ships than any other river cruise line, operating across the most extensive network of rivers, and is popping out a further 12 ships this year. The new breed of Viking Longships, complete with organic herb gardens, suites

cruise



and bar on the prestigious front decks. Guests staying in the plush enclave further benefit from priority embarkation, butler service, a dedicated restaurant and inclusive fares. So, as you meander around the Med the children can make new friends in their pools and clubs while you enjoy peace and quiet

maccruises.co.uk; 0844 561 7412

care for your every need, delivering Croatian sparkling wine to your hammock and sourcing tickets for exclusive festivals, means summers will never be the same again

saildalmatia.com; 0800 124 4176

POPPING YOUR CRUISE CHERRY

Even the most experienced cruisers had to face their inaugural voyage once, and will acknowledge it can be daunting. However, thanks to Norwegian Cruise Line, cruise virgins can dip their toes in the water with a three or four-night dabble in the Mediterranean. Sailing aboard the new *Norwegian Epic*, you could grab a long spring weekend to Barcelona, Aix-en-Provence and Palma or enjoy an autumnal break to Rome, Florence, Cannes, Palma and Barcelona. Boredom is not an option aboard *Epic*, with performances from big-name Las Vegas shows including

Blue Man Group, over 20 dining venues, rock climbing, abseiling, 10-pin bowling and the biggest spa at sea; 0845 201 8900



You'll be transported in chic Scandinavian style along the impossibly picturesque Douro to quaint villages, world-famous Port estates, through the rugged Alto Douro to Salamanca and back

BE/POKE DALMATIA

Quite simply, the best way to explore the 3,625 miles of Croatia's rugged coastline, and the 1,185 islands, islets and reefs peppered along it, is by privately-chartered boat. Dora Vulic, founder of London-based Sail Dalmatia, will tailor a dream holiday for you, picking your ideal boat from her select portfolio and crafting the perfect itinerary. You can bob around Korcula on a gulet, sink into Hvar on a yacht or discover Dubrovnik from a motorboat. Be warned: having a dedicated skipper, chef and crew to



CLOCKWISE FROM THIS IMAGE: VIEW ALONG THE DOURO RIVER IN PORTUGAL; THE RIVER COUNTESS CRUISING THE RIVER RHONE IN FRANCE; MSC CRUISES ARE A POPULAR CHOICE FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN; BERTH ABOARD NCL; SAIL DALMATIA EXPLORES CROATIA'S COASTLINE; BACKSTREETS OF ARLES IN PROVENCE WITH TITAN TRAVEL; LE PONT D'AVIGNON; COLMAR, IN ALSACE, WITH TALICK

featuring private wraparound verandas and all-inclusive pricing, is set to conquer Portugal this spring, as a pair of new ships launch on the Douro. Boarding your Longship in Porto, you'll be transported in chic Scandinavian style along the impossibly picturesque Douro to quaint villages, world-famous Port estates, through the rugged Alto Douro to Salamanca and back

vikingrivercruises.co.uk; 0800 319 6660

Mediterranean

LA DOLCE VITA AT SEA

It's hard to beat a summer cruise in the Med for sun-baked, action-packed family fun. If your little angels already prefer the company of cohorts to their 'rentals', the MSC Yacht Club is for you. Present on five of the Italian cruise line's ships, the Yacht Club comprises some 70 spacious cabins, an exclusive lounge, pool deck

cruise capsule



1. ORANGE DRESS, £69.95, WELLCIOUS.COM; 2. RIVA DIAMOND COCKTAIL EARRINGS WITH LEMON QUARTZ STONE, £450, MONICAVINADER.COM; 3. KOS SANDALS, £95, PLUMO.COM; 4. FLORA PURSE, £45, PLUMO.COM; 5. PINEAPPLE SCARF, £39, PLUMO.COM; 6. MONDAVI SUNGLASSES, \$95, WOODZEE.COM; 7. JUNGLE CANVAS COURTS, £95, PLUMO.COM

cruise

There is something extremely pleasurable about being able to slow down the normally hectic pace of life. The intoxicating beauty of the Languedoc-Roussillon region in the South of France, viewed from a luxuriously renovated Dutch barge, floating along the Canal du Midi, is quite simply a joy. The meandering tranquility of this historic waterway, lined with luscious plane trees, offers a journey of slowness and calm, a window in to a bygone era.

Our gentle cruise began in Carcassonne, Europe's largest medieval fortress and took us to Béziers, famous for its seven canal locks, via wonderful vineyards and small Cathar strongholds which are so much a part of the history of this region. A particular favourite was Minerve, situated above a limestone gorge and offering the chance to explore the dry river bed and cathedralesque cave before wandering through the old town streets with its artisan shops.

CANAL DU MIDI

Our barge, the Alouette, drew many an admiring glance and was clearly a popular and recognisable celebrity along the canal. It accommodates up to four passengers who are looked after by a very capable crew which included the captain, the chef, the housekeeper and the chauffeur. Four passengers and four crew, it doesn't get much better than that.

The charming team aboard the Alouette provide some serious spoiling. How marvellously decadent not having to lift a single finger. Of course if



cruise ITINERARY

Day 1:
Carcassonne

Day 2:
Visit Carcassonne
Cruise to Trèbes

Day 3:
Cruise to Homs. Visit Minerve

Day 4:
Cruise to Le Somail
Visit Narbonne

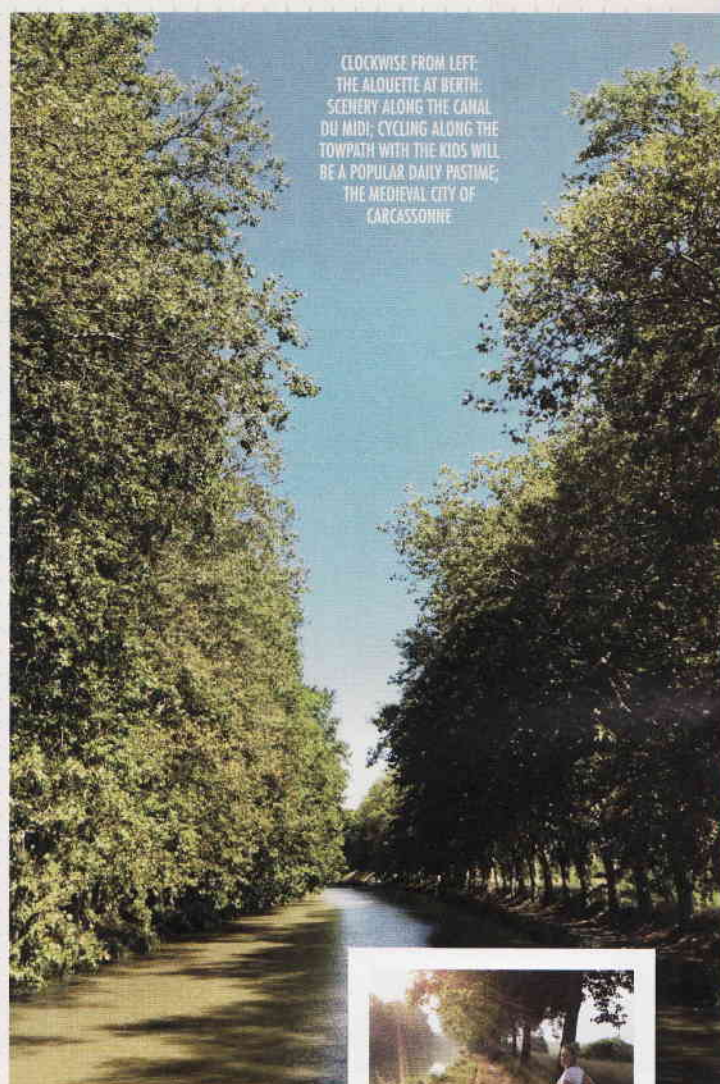
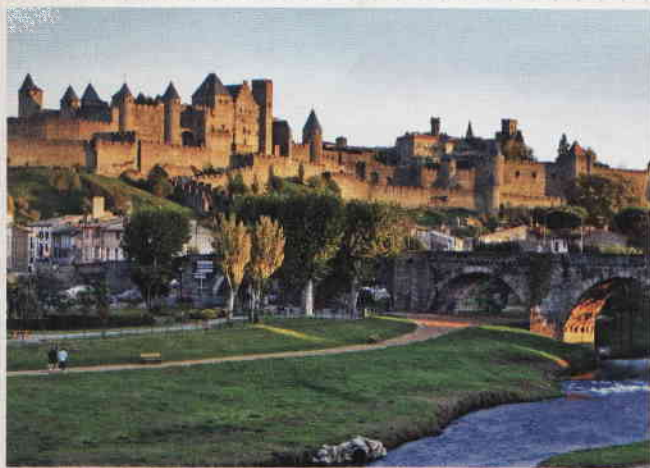
Day 5:
Visit l'Abbaye de Fontfroide
Cruise to Capetang

Day 6:
Cruise to Béziers.
Visit Oppidum d'Ensérune

Day 7:
Béziers

GENTILE ALOUETTE

A first-hand experience on board a luxuriously renovated Dutch barge on one of France's most scenic waterways



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:
THE ALOUETTE AT BERTH;
SCENERY ALONG THE CANAL
DU MIDI; CYCLING ALONG THE
TOWPATH WITH THE KIDS WILL
BE A POPULAR DAILY PASTIME;
THE MEDIEVAL CITY OF
CARCASSONNE



you want to help with the locks, steer the barge or go into market with the chef to choose fresh produce for lunch and dinner, then no problem. The chauffeur and local guide is more than willing to take you sightseeing into the old Roman port of Narbonne for the morning or wine tasting at a nearby vine yard, of which there are many. Local knowledge and fresh produce make every meal a special occasion. The daily cheese selection is part of a gastronomic adventure, cleverly matched with delicious wines from the area.

Travelling together as a family enabled

us to spend precious time discovering this stunning region of France. Cycling along the towpath became a favourite daily routine. As parents it was a real bonus to see the children abandoning their electronic gadgetry in favour of old-fashioned pursuits like fishing and exploring the canal banks and even chatting in basic French to the many lock keepers we encountered on our journey.

Alouette's season will run this year from 30 March - 19 October 2014 and prices start from £4,900 per person. Afloat in France by Orient-Express, visit afloatinfrance.com.

cruise

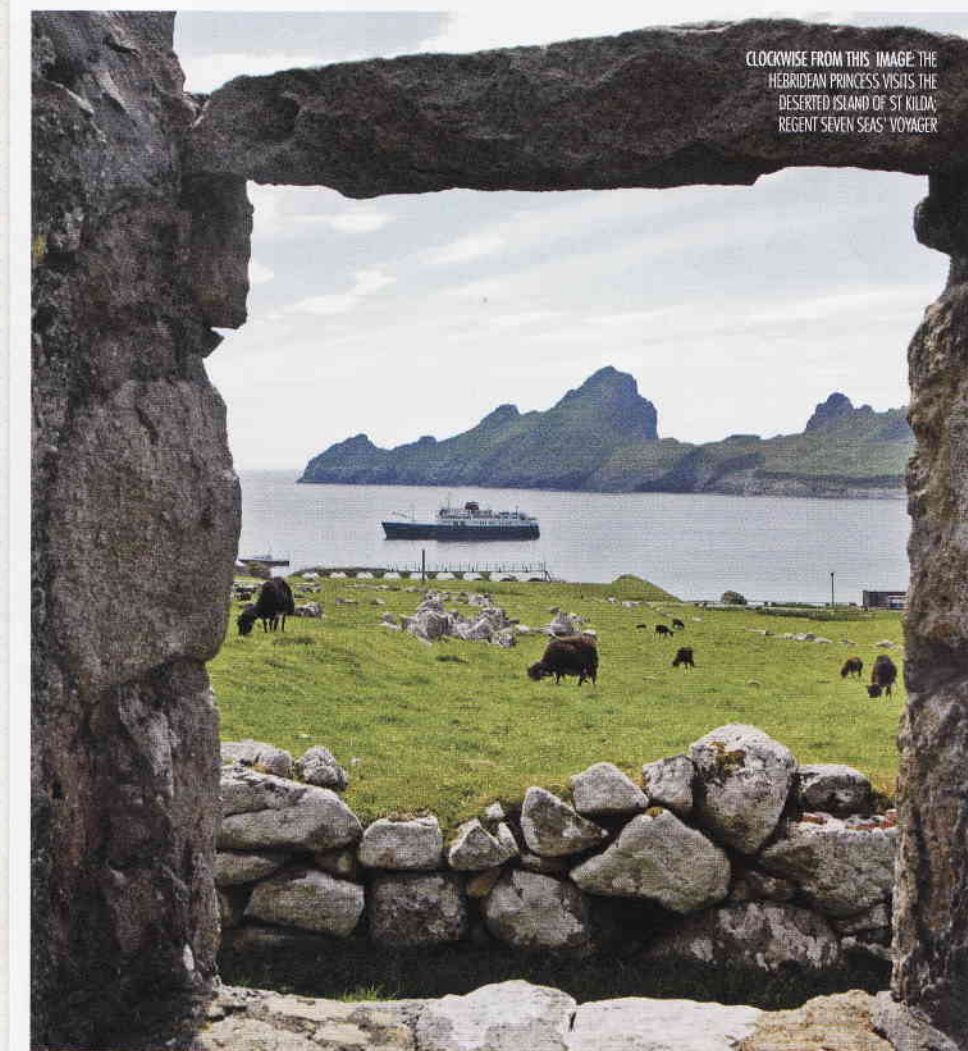
cruise capsule



1. YACHTING SWEATER, £215, [ADIDAS.COM/PORSCHE DESIGN SPORT](http://adidas.com/porsche_design_sport); 2. MENS ANCHOR SHACKLE BRACELET, \$19, [THREADETIQUETTE.COM](http://threadetiquette.com); 3. NIKE ROSHE RUN MID, £70, [JDSports.COM](http://jdsports.com); 4. PIPER REGULAR PANTS, £75, [HENRILLOYD.CO.UK](http://henrilloyd.co.uk); 5. EXTREME CUTAWAY ASPEN SHIRT, \$48, [TRASHNESS.COM](http://trashness.com); 6. JAMMING JOE WATCH, £75, [GAXS.SE](http://gaxs.se)

HOME SWEET HOME

If you're going to stick to home turf, why not splash out and do so in comfort? Few cruise lines can rival Regent Seven Seas for luxury and the all-suite, 700-passenger Seven Seas Voyager will explore the British and Emerald Isles over the course of 12 days this summer. Starting from Southampton, Voyager will call at Edinburgh, Invergordon in the Highlands, Kirkwall, capital of the Orkney Islands, and Portree on the Isle of Skye. There'll be a day in Belfast before two full days to explore Dublin, as well as



CLOCKWISE FROM THIS IMAGE: THE HEBRIDEAN PRINCESS VISITS THE DESERTED ISLAND OF ST KILDA; REGENT SEVEN SEAS' VOYAGER

BRITISH ISLES

There are some fascinating stories to be told on a trip around our own breathtaking coastline

visits to Waterford, Cork and the Isle of Portland before returning to Southampton. rssc.com; 02380 682 280

THE PRINCESS FIT FOR A QUEEN

Despite her humble car ferry origins, the 49-passenger *Hebridean Princess* is the ship of choice for HRH The Queen, who has twice chartered her for family holidays. The *Hebridean Princess* is simply the best way to explore the dramatic, wildly beautiful Scottish coastline, with diverse week-long voyages offered from March to November. However, only two itineraries offer the opportunity to sail overnight to the remotest outpost of the UK, the St Kilda archipelago. Inhabited for over two millennia until the last remaining locals chose to be evacuated in 1930,

St Kilda is one of few World Heritage Sites to hold joint status for its natural and cultural qualities, and makes for a moving highlight of a Scottish fling hebridean.co.uk; 01756 704700

NATIONAL TREASURES

The thinking man's cruise line, Swan Hellenic prides itself on providing acclaimed guest speakers and enriching shore excursions on all its voyages. Thus, this summer's Treasures of the British Isles itinerary features no fewer than three speakers - experts in the field of history, wildlife and theology - and visits to six National Trust properties. Sailing aboard the enduringly popular *Minerva* from Portsmouth, the fortnight-long voyage will call at the Port of Tyne, Edinburgh, Scrabster, Portree, Oban, Liverpool, Holyhead, the Isle of Scilly, Falmouth and Sark. swanhellenic.com; 0844 644 1770

