



National Trust *for* Historic Preservation

**National Trust Tours**



**Empires of the Adriatic:**  
**Dubrovnik to Naples Aboard *Sea Cloud II***

September 19 – 29, 2027

# Montenegro, Albania & Southern Italy

## Dubrovnik to Naples Aboard *Sea Cloud II*

September 19 – 29, 2027

What defines the Adriatic? For millennia, it served as the crossroads where Greek colonists met Illyrian kingdoms, where Rome built its highway to the East, and where the Venetian Republic fortified its maritime empire. Sail aboard the three-masted *Sea Cloud II* from Dubrovnik to Naples, tracing this ancient corridor of commerce and conquest.

In Montenegro, walk through Kotor's Venetian stronghold and explore Albania's Roman amphitheaters and Byzantine monasteries. From Puglia's hilltop towns to Paestum's Greek temples and painted tombs, curator-led visits and exclusive museum access illuminate how successive civilizations—Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Venetian, Ottoman—left their architectural signatures on these shores. Regional tastings and private tours complete this journey through a sea that connected empires.



Old Town, Vlorë, Albania (top) and Map of the region (above)

### CRUISE HIGHLIGHTS

- Board a private boat to Our Lady of the Rocks, the Adriatic's only man-made island, where sailors deposited stones for centuries after finding a Madonna icon in 1452, and view the chapel's collection of over 2,000 silver votive plaques.
- Explore the Roman Amphitheatre of Durrës with a private archaeologist, discovering the Balkans' largest arena and its transformation into a Christian chapel with sixth-century mosaics, the only surviving wall mosaics of their kind in Albania.
- Walk across a wooden bridge to St. Mary's Monastery on Zvërec Island, a 13th-century Byzantine sanctuary in the Narta Lagoon that preserves the grave of Marigo Posio, who embroidered Albania's first national flag.
- Enjoy a home-style Apulian lunch in Ostuni, *La Città Bianca* (The White City), where a local host will prepare traditional dishes in the medieval hilltop town known for its whitewashed buildings.
- Experience an after-hours visit to the Regional Museum of Messina for close encounters with Caravaggio's *The Adoration of the Shepherds* and *The Resurrection of Lazarus*, painted during the artist's Sicilian exile.
- Share a winery lunch on Mount Etna's volcanic slopes, tasting wines from indigenous grapes and fresh buffalo mozzarella at Europe's most active volcano, where eruptions have been documented for 2,700 years.
- Explore Paestum's three Doric temples from 550-450 B.C.—among the best-preserved Greek temples in the world—and view the Tomb of the Diver with a curator, exploring the only surviving example of large-scale Greek wall painting from the Classical period.



*Our Lady of the Rocks, Kotor, Montenegro*

### **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19: DEPARTURE**

Depart on an overnight flight to Dubrovnik, Croatia.

### **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20: DUBROVNIK, CROATIA / EMBARK SEA CLOUD II**

Arrive in **Dubrovnik**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the former seat of the powerful maritime Republic of Ragusa. After a group welcome lunch, board **Sea Cloud II** in the afternoon and set sail from the historic harbor with a champagne toast. Gather for a welcome reception and dinner this evening on board. L,R,D

### **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21: KOTOR, MONTENEGRO / PERAST OR RISAN**

Arrive in the Bay of Kotor, a UNESCO-recognized submerged river canyon often mistaken for a fjord. You have a choice of two excursions:

**Option 1:** A short drive takes you to **Perast**, where you board a boat for **Our Lady of the Rocks**, the only man-made island in the Adriatic. The islet was built over centuries by sailors depositing stones on a reef where an icon of the Madonna was found in 1452.

After lunch, a guided tour takes you through **Kotor's Old Town**, a fortified medieval city shaped by the Venetian Republic, with defensive walls stretching nearly three miles up the adjoining mountain. You will have free time to explore this historic center at your own pace.

**Option 2:** Drive to **Risan**, the oldest settlement around the Bay of Kotor and former capital of the Illyrian kingdom, to explore its exquisite second-century A.D. **Roman Mosaics**.

Walk through the preserved villa where five intricate floor mosaics capture Roman domestic life, culminating in the world's only known mosaic depiction of Hypnos, the Greek god of sleep. This polychrome masterpiece was placed in the master bedroom to serve as a divine protector during rest.

This evening, gather for the captain's welcome dinner aboard *Sea Cloud II*. B,L,D

### **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22: DURRËS, ALBANIA**

Begin your day at the **Roman Amphitheatre of Durrës**, the largest in the Balkans, built in the early second century A.D., when this city was the western terminus of the Via Egnatia, Rome's great highway to the East.

With a private archaeologist, explore the arena that once held 20,000 spectators and discover its remarkable transformation: A sixth-century Christian chapel with rare wall mosaics was built within the structure, physically representing Christianity's triumph over Roman pagan spectacle.

Walk to the nearby **Byzantine Forum** and **Roman Baths** for insight into the civic and social life of ancient Dyrrhachium, then continue to the **Archaeological Museum**, Albania's largest, housing over 3,200 artifacts spanning the city's Greek, Roman, and Byzantine periods.

Return to *Sea Cloud II* and enjoy dinner this evening as we sail along the Albanian coast. B,L,D

### **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23: VLORË**

Step ashore in **Vlorë**, where Albania declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1912. Today, choose between two excursions:

**Option 1:** Enjoy a guided tour of the historic city of **Vlorë**, beginning at the **Muradie Mosque**, a 1542 Ottoman masterpiece attributed to Mimar Sinan, the empire's greatest architect. Continue to the **Museum of Independence**, housed in the original headquarters where Ismail Qemali declared Albania's independence from the Ottoman Empire on November 28, 1912, ending nearly 500 years of rule.



*Roman Baths, Durrës, Albania*

Conclude with a stroll through **Vlorë's Old Town**, where restoration efforts have revitalized the blend of Ottoman and early 20th-century Albanian architecture. Drive to the **St. Mary's Monastery**, a 13th-century Byzantine structure on Zvërnec Island, reached by a wooden bridge across tranquil lagoon waters.

**Option 2:** Take a day trip to **Apollonia**, the extensive ruins of a major Greek and Roman city founded in the sixth century B.C. Once home to 60,000 inhabitants and a prestigious school of philosophy where the young Octavian (later Emperor Augustus) studied, the city was abandoned after a third or fourth-century earthquake altered the course of the Vjosë River, causing its harbor to silt up and transforming the surrounding area into malarial swamps.

Explore the well-preserved monuments, including the Bouleuterion with its reconstructed Corinthian façade; the intimate Odeon theater; and the 13th-century Byzantine monastery that now houses the site museum. B,L,D

## FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24: BRINDISI, ITALY / SAN VITO DEI NORMANNI & OSTUNI

Step ashore in **Brindisi**, a port in the Alto Salento sub-region of Puglia, the heel of the Italian peninsula. Today, you may choose between two optional morning excursions:

**Option 1:** Join a guided tour of the town of **San Vito dei Normanni**. Its name is a deliberate 19th-century rebranding, designed to elevate the town's origins from a Slavic refugee settlement to a more prestigious Norman warrior stronghold. Explore its historic palaces and churches, including the **Basilica di Santa Maria della Vittoria**, a local monument to the pivotal 1571 Battle of Lepanto.



Ostuni, Italy

Continue to the white-washed hilltop town of **Ostuni**, known as *La Città Bianca* (The White City). This practice began as a public health measure, as the lime wash used on the buildings acted as a disinfectant that helped protect the city from the 17th-century plague. Lunch is a home-style Apulian meal, where a local host prepares traditional dishes.

**Option 2:** A guided tour of **Brindisi** concentrates on the city's history as a vital Roman port and the terminus of the **Via Appia**, the great military road known as the *regina viarum* (queen of roads). This position solidified the city's role as the crucial gateway to the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire.

View the **Roman Columns** that still stand overlooking the harbor, marking the ancient road's end. Lunch will be served in a historic setting overlooking the Adriatic or at a local *trattoria* known for traditional Apulian specialties. B,L,D

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25: DAY AT SEA

Attend enlightening lectures about what's to come on your sea voyage while taking advantage of the world-class amenities aboard *Sea Cloud II*. B,L,D

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26: MESSINA (SICILY) / MOUNT ETNA

Your port of call is **Messina**, a city whose identity is defined by its position on the narrow, current-swept strait that separates Sicily from mainland Italy and gave rise to the myths of Scylla and Charybdis. You have two options for the day:

**Option 1:** A morning in Messina illustrates the city's cycle of destruction and rebirth. You will visit the **Messina Cathedral**, a building that has been faithfully reconstructed multiple times following catastrophic earthquakes and fires, and see its bell tower, home to the world's most complex mechanical and astronomical clock.



Basilica di Santa Maria della Vittoria, San Vito dei Normanni, Italy

After lunch on board, you will have an exclusive after-hours visit to the **Regional Museum of Messina**. The collection was largely formed from artworks salvaged from the city's ruins, and here you will have a close encounter with two masterpieces by Caravaggio, *The Adoration of the Shepherds* and *The Resurrection of Lazarus*, painted during his exile in Sicily.

**Option 2:** A private 4x4 vehicle takes you up the slopes of **Mount Etna**, Europe's most active volcano and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The volcano's eruptions have been documented for at least 2,700 years, providing one of the world's longest records of volcanism and making it a prime natural laboratory for the study of earth sciences. Your excursion includes lunch at a winery on its fertile slopes. B,L,D

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27: LIPARI

Arrive at **Lipari**, the largest of the volcanic Aeolian Islands. In the Neolithic period, the island's vast deposits of obsidian, a volcanic glass prized for making sharp tools, made it one of the most prosperous settlements in the Mediterranean. You have two options for the morning.

**Option 1:** Enjoy an exclusive entrance to the **Archaeological Museum of Lipari**, where you will be led on a visit by the director. The museum's collection includes cargo from ancient Greek and Roman shipwrecks and the world's largest collection of miniature Greek theatrical masks, which provides invaluable insight into this lost art form.

**Option 2:** An opportunity to experience the island's geology firsthand with a relaxing morning on one of Lipari's black volcanic sand beaches.

After lunch, spend an afternoon at sea before dinner on board this evening. B,L,D

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28: AGROPOLI / PAESTUM

From the port of **Agropoli**, a short drive takes you to **Paestum**, one of the most important archaeological sites in Italy. Originally the Greek colony of Poseidonia, it contains three of the best-preserved ancient Greek temples in the world, built in the Doric order between 550 and 450 B.C.



Lipari, Italy



Tomb of the Diver, Paestum, Italy

After an exclusive welcome from the site director, you will see the three monumental temples dedicated to Hera and Athena, which are considered superior in their state of preservation to many in Greece itself.

A curated visit to the adjacent museum follows, where you will see the **Tomb of the Diver**. Discovered in 1968, it is the only surviving example of large-scale Greek wall painting from the Archaic or Classical periods, its famous lid panel depicting a youth diving into water in a metaphor for the soul's passage to the afterlife. Before returning to the ship, you will have a chance to taste authentic buffalo mozzarella.

Enjoy lunch on board as we sail to Naples. Gather for the festive farewell dinner this evening. B,L,D

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29: NAPLES / DISEMBARK / RETURN

After breakfast, you will disembark in Naples for your transfer to the airport and your flight home. B

**Activity Level:**  
Intermediate

**Pace Level:**  
Moderato

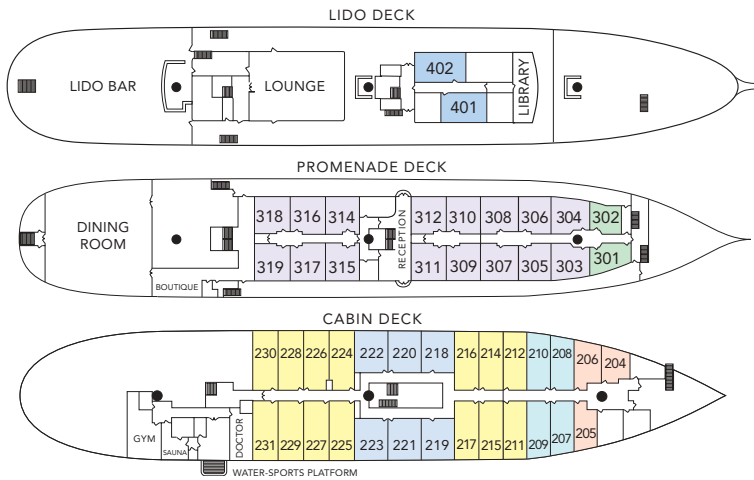


Visit [Arrangements Abroad's website](https://www.arrangementsabroad.com) for more information about Activity and Pace Levels at [www.arrangementsabroad.com/faqs](https://www.arrangementsabroad.com/faqs).

**DISCLAIMER:** This itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of Arrangements Abroad. For complete details, please carefully read the terms and conditions at [www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms](https://www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms).

## CRUISE RATES

Cabins	Decks	Double	Single
Cabins 204 to 206 Upper/lower twin berths, shower	Cabin	\$9,999	\$12,999
Superior Cabins 207 to 210 Twin beds, shower	Cabin	\$12,999	\$19,499
Deluxe Cabins 211 to 217 & 224 to 231 Twin beds, shower	Cabin	\$15,499	\$22,999
Deluxe Cabins 218 to 223 Twin beds, shower	Cabin	\$17,499	Inquire
Deluxe Cabins 301 & 302 Twin beds, shower	Promenade	\$18,499	Inquire
Junior Suites 303 to 319 Twin beds, bathtub with shower	Promenade	\$19,999	Inquire
Owner's Suites 401 & 402 Queen-size bed, bathtub, and separate shower	Lido	\$23,999	Inquire



## SEA CLOUD II

*Sea Cloud II* is a three-masted sailing yacht steeped in the elegance of yesteryear and complemented with the most modern amenities. Sister ship of the legendary *Sea Cloud*, *Sea Cloud II* has 47 outside cabins and travels under 23 billowing sails trimmed by hand. From the mahogany-paneled library and gracious lounge to the gym and watersports platform, no detail has been overlooked. Praised by the world's most discerning travelers, *Sea Cloud II* receives consistently high rankings from *Condé Nast Traveler*. Travelers enjoy open seating at all meals and complimentary use of all water sports equipment. A doctor is on call 24 hours a day. Please note that there is no elevator on *Sea Cloud II*.



On Deck, Sea Cloud II



Sea Cloud II

## RATES INCLUDE

- Nine nights cabin accommodations aboard *Sea Cloud II* as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner); Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; thoughtfully selected wine and beer with onboard lunches and dinners; complimentary open bar aboard *Sea Cloud II* throughout the cruise (including all standard spirits).
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Airport/pier/airport transfers for participants on arrival and departure days
- Taxes, service, and portage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers; customary shipboard gratuities

**NOT INCLUDED IN RATES** International airfare; passport/visa fees; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than what is noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; airport transfers other than for participants on arrival and departure days; excess baggage; trip insurance; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.

Call 888.484.8785 for more information