



National Trust for Historic Preservation

National Trust Tours

HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS & FJORDS

From the Scottish Highlands and Orkney Islands to Norwegian Fjords & Lofoten Islands Aboard the 72-cabin *Exploris One*

**May 30 – June 9, 2026
(11 days)**

Join an exploration of the landscapes, remote islands, ancient settlements, and villages of Norway and northern Scotland, cruising during the peak of spring with bright green scenery, blooming flowers, and waterfalls in the fjords from melting snow. This itinerary, from Inverness to the Orkney Islands and along the Norwegian Coast above the Arctic Circle, combines natural wonders with historical and cultural highlights. Special features include time in Scotland's Orkney Islands and Norway's Lofoten Islands, both showcasing wild landscapes, ancient settlements, and opportunities for bird and whale watching. The itinerary also offers several days inside Norway's iconic fjords, including the Sognefjord and UNESCO-listed Nærøfjord. Step ashore at picturesque fjord-side towns and fishing villages, including Ålesund, Brønnøysund, and tiny villages on the Lofoten Islands, all of which have inspired artists and photographers for over a century. Cruise for eight nights aboard the newly renovated *Exploris One*, offering 72 suites with breathtaking ocean views. Onboard, enjoy a sauna, steam bath, outdoor Jacuzzis, and regional cuisine, along with complimentary beverages, Wi-Fi, and exceptional service.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Optional excursions at most ports of call to cater to differing abilities and interests** including archaeological stops, garden visits, historical sites, and natural wonders with adventurous activities.
- **Elizabeth Pierce** of the Archaeological Institute of America and **Anthony Bull** of Colorado College will provide a series of engaging presentations and discussions for travelers.
- Explore **Inverness, the capital of the Scottish Highlands**, including its beautiful Old Town and indoor Victorian market; **Clava Cairns**, a top archaeological site in Scotland; or **Cawdor Castle** boasting three very different gardens.
- Discover how the Vikings held a strategic foothold in the Orkney Islands for centuries and marvel at the **UNESCO Heart of Neolithic Orkney**, four fascinating Stone Age sites.
- Linger in the dramatic landscapes of Norway's most beautiful fjords including **Sognefjord, Norway's longest and deepest fjord**, with its dramatic and narrow arm, **UNESCO-listed Naeroyfjord**.
- Step ashore at peaceful, picturesque towns, fishing villages, and farms off the beaten track—splendid **Art Nouveau Ålesund**, set on myriad islands stretching out into the ocean; and tiny **villages of A, Reine and Nusfjord in the Lofotens**—all of which have inspired artists and photographers for over a century.
- Cruise along the base of the **cliffs of Runde**, one of the largest nesting cliffs in Norway and **look for whales in the Lofotens**, a prime location in June for orcas, porpoises, and the mighty sperm whale.

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EXPLORIS ONE

Previously known as the *Silver Explorer* and owned by Silversea Cruises, *Exploris One* began her new life with the French company Exploris Expeditions in 2023. Having known this vessel for many years, we know her to be ideal for small ship cruising. The vessel's shallow draft will allow us to navigate in areas that larger ships would not be able to access and whilst cruising, the vessel benefits from spacious deck areas from where you can watch for passing wildlife and admire the beautiful scenery.

Exploris One, renovated in 2023, combines adventure and an exceptional level of comfort. The 60 staterooms and 12 suites are all outside and finished to high standards. Le Grand Restaurant and the Outdoor Grill offer refined French and International cuisine. The Grand Salon and Panoramic Lounge provide opportunities for breathtaking views. Additional onboard amenities include: a dedicated conference room for lectures, hair salon, fitness center, massage room, sauna, and two hot tubs.



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ITINERARY OUTLINE

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MAY 30 & 31

DEPART U.S. / INVERNESS, SCOTLAND

Depart home on overnight flights to Inverness. Upon arrival on May 31st, relax before dinner. DORNOCH STATION (D)

MONDAY, JUNE 1

INVERNESS / EMBARK *EXPLORIS ONE*

Explore Inverness Old Town and its indoor Victorian market, with lunch on your own during free time in town before boarding Exploris One this afternoon. *EXPLORIS ONE* (B,D)

TUESDAY, JUNE 2

KIRKWALL, ORKNEY ISLANDS

Disembark in Kirkwall for a morning exploration of the Ring of Brodgar and Skara Brae, part of the UNESCO Heart of Neolithic Orkney, the most important Neolithic sites in western Europe. Return to the ship for lunch and embark on one of two afternoon options: 1) Take a guided tour of Kirkwall, including the medieval St. Magnus Cathedral, with free time in the vibrant and pretty downtown; or 2) Visit The Quoy of Houton, listed as one of the top 10 UK coastal gardens, with the owner, a renowned horticulturalist, before returning on the coach by ship. (B,L,D)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3

SOGNEFJORD FJORD, NORWAY

Enjoy a full day at sea looking for wildlife from one of the ship's spacious decks, indulging in the ship's amenities and listening to lectures from our team of experts. As evening approaches, arrive at the entrance of Sognefjord, Norway's longest and deepest fjord. (B,L,D)

THURSDAY, JUNE 4

VIK & NAEROYFJORD

Join a private fjord cruise of the UNESCO World Heritage Nærøfjord, narrowest and best known of the many arms of the Sognefjord. This fjord stands out as Norway's premier natural wonder, boasting steep mountainsides, hanging valleys, majestic peaks, snowfields, cascading waterfalls, and quaint hamlets. Visit one such hamlet, Gudvangen, an historic Viking village, nestled deep within Naerfjord, where there is free time to explore independently. Also discover the riches of Vik, a picturesque village along the banks of the Sognefjord, including the impressive Hopperstad Stave Church, one of Norway's 28 remaining stave churches and the oldest in the country. And don't miss the opportunity to sample the local 'gamalost cheese;' see Moahugane Burial Mounds, dating back to 200 AD, or walk the grounds of Djupvik, a unique mythological garden. (B,L,D)

FRIDAY, JUNE 5

NORDFJORDEID

Enjoy a morning at sea with time for lectures before arriving in Nordfjordeid. Be welcomed by a stunning coastline, majestic mountains and valleys, expansive farmland, and a chance to see the mighty Briksdal Glacier, the largest in Europe. Here choose from various excursion options including kayaking with a guided hike to learn about the local ecosystem, driving to see the Briksdal Glacier and walk the Loen Skylift, or visiting with a local family in their private home to learn about the Norwegian way of life and culture followed by a trip to the Norwegian Fjord Horse Center.(B,L,D)

SATURDAY, JUNE 6

RUNDE & ÅLESUND

Get up early this morning to look for birds on the cliffs at Runde, a nesting site of over 240 species including puffins, followed by a visit to beautiful Ålesund. Known for its Art Nouveau buildings and islands stretching out into the ocean, Ålesund offers three optional excursions including: 1) the medieval village of Sunmøre, an open-air museum; 2) Viking's Island; or 3) an in-depth city walk including Mt. Aksla, followed by free time. In the afternoon, enjoy cruising with time for lectures, relaxing on board, and keeping an eye out for whales. (B,L,D)

SUNDAY, JUNE 7

TORGHATTEN & BRONNOYSUND

Continue cruising north this morning with time for lectures. After lunch, arrive at the coastal town of Bronnysund to delve into its history and culture, surrounded by natural landscapes. Choose from optional excursions: 1) Hike Torghatten, known for its mythical mountain with a distinctive hole; 2) Enjoy a panoramic drive and visit Hildur's Farm for a taste of Norwegian farm life; or 3) Explore Norwegian aquaculture at the Norwegian Aquaculture Center. Reboard in the late afternoon and depart for the Lofoten Islands, crossing the Arctic Circle along the way. (B,L,D)

MONDAY, JUNE 8

REINE (LOFOTEN ISLANDS)

Enjoy a full day exploring the picturesque Lofoten Islands, where you'll visit charming fishing villages like Å, Reine, or Nusfjord, each offering unique insights into local life. Discover the rich Viking heritage at the Lofotr Viking Museum, home to the world's largest Viking longhouse, and visit a local farm indulging in a lunch ashore where you'll learn about the islands' efforts in sustainable farming. Conclude the day with the Captain's farewell reception and dinner. (B,L,R,D)

TUESDAY, JUNE 9

DISEMBARK / HOME

Transfer to Bodø airport, or those with late flights may take an optional morning tour in Bodø, or you may begin the optional post-voyage extension. (B)

OPTIONAL PRE-VOYAGE EXTENSION

EDINBURGH & THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

May 27-31, 2026

Fly from home to Edinburgh, Scotland. Over the coming days, explore the highlights of Edinburgh and the Scottish Highlands, including Edinburgh Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage site, a visit to Urquhart Castle, and a private tasting and tour at a top malt whisky distillery. Take time to relax at Dornoch Station and, if desired, enjoy a round at the historic Royal Dornoch Golf Club—advance tee time reservations are strongly recommended.

OPTIONAL POST-VOYAGE EXTENSION

ART & GARDENS OF OSLO

June 9-12, 2026

After exploring Bodø, fly to Oslo for a three-night stay at the elegant and historic Grand Hotel, opened in 1874, and for over 140 years the host to international guests, world leaders, celebrities and the Nobel Peace Prize laureates. Highlights include the Vigeland Sculpture Park, the world's largest sculpture park created by a single artist, Gustav Vigeland, featuring more than 200 of his works in bronze, granite, and wrought iron; and the Fram Museum of Polar Exploration, which artfully narrates the story of Norwegian polar exploration.

Program Rates (per person, sharing):

Premium Stateroom, Deck 3, two portholes, shower, 156–168 sq. ft.....**\$8,990**

Ocean Stateroom, Deck 3, picture window, shower, 194 sq. ft..... **\$9,990**

Superior Stateroom, Deck 4, picture window, shower, 173–190 sq. ft..... **\$10,990**

Deluxe Stateroom, Deck 4, large picture window, shower, 194 sq. ft.....**\$11,990**

Balcony Stateroom, Deck 5, floor to ceiling glass door / French balcony, shower, 171–180 sq. ft..... **\$13,490**

Premium Stateroom, Deck 3, single occupancy **\$13,900**

Navigator Suite,

Deck 7, floor to ceiling glass door, 86 sq. ft. private balcony, tub & separate shower, 312 sq. ft.....
\$14,990

Ocean Stateroom, Deck 3, single occupancy **\$15,990**

Discovery Suite,

Deck 5, bedroom, living room with sitting area, floor to ceiling glass doors / two French balconies, tub & separate shower, 388 sq. ft..... **\$16,990**

Grand Suite,

Deck 7, bedroom, living room with sitting area, floor to ceiling glass door, 86 sq. ft. private balcony, tub & separate shower, walk-in closet, 527 sq. ft.....**\$18,490**

Owner's Suite,

Deck 7, bedroom, living room with sitting area, floor to ceiling glass door, large 160 sq. ft. private terrace, tub & separate shower, walk-in closet, 560 sq. ft.....**\$19,990**

RESERVATIONS & PAYMENTS

A deposit of \$1,000 per person is required to reserve space on this program. If you have questions, or to register using a credit card, please call (888) 484-8785 or email info@nationaltrusttours.com. Final payment deadline is January 30, 2026. For those who register on or after January 30, 2026, full payment is due upon registration. Final payment may be made by check, bank transfer, or credit card (credit card payments will incur a 2% fee).

GENERAL INFORMATION

PROGRAM RATES INCLUDE

All accommodations, meals, and excursions as specified in the itinerary, including nine breakfasts, seven lunches, nine dinners, one hotel night and eight nights aboard Exploris One • Comprehensive program of briefings, lectures and presentations • Group transfers for all participants on group arrival and departure dates • Baggage handling • Gratuities to porters, waitstaff, guides and drivers • Gratuities to shipboard personnel • Port charges • Entrance fees • Welcome and farewell wine receptions • House wine, beer, and soft drinks with all group lunches and dinners • Filtered water for water bottles on motorcoaches • Complete packet of predeparture information • Professional tour managers throughout the program

AIR ARRANGEMENTS

U.S. domestic and international airfare is not included in the program rates. Valerie Wilson Travel, Inc., can help with airline arrangements for this trip and can be reached at (877) 376-1754 . You are also welcome to book your air transportation through your local travel agent, an online travel site, or the airline of your choice. Further information about making flight arrangements will be sent to confirmed participants.

WHAT TO EXPECT

This is a moderately strenuous program, at times physically demanding and busy, with considerable walking at some sites. Hiking options are available in some ports, with distances of up to three miles. In some instances, elevators are unavailable, and stairs may not have handrails. You will need to climb into and out of Zodiacs for several excursions ashore—and there may be additional use of the Zodiacs to take advantage of opportunities that arise. Participants should be fit and in active good health. Limited medical facilities are available on board Exploris One. All participants will be required to follow safety protocols set forth by Criterion Travel, local staff, and host country laws.

PROGRAM RATES DO NOT INCLUDE

U.S. domestic and international airfare • Passport/visa expenses • Medical expenses and immunizations • Private airport transfers or airport transfers outside of group arrival and departure days • Travel and trip cancellation insurance • Excursions that deviate from the scheduled tour options • Airline baggage charges • Meals not specified in the itinerary; dishes and beverages not part of the included meals; liquor or soft drinks except as noted • Laundry or dry cleaning • Telephone, fax, internet, and email charges • Room service • Other items of a personal nature

GROUP SIZE

This program can accommodate 114 participants, including travelers from National Trust Tours, Harvard Alumni Travels, Cornell's Adult University, Colorado College and Archaeological Institute of America.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

National Trust Tours strongly recommends the purchase of trip cancellation insurance, which is available for coverage of expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to covered illness or accident. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel program, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement. USI Travel Insurance Services offers a plan designed specifically for National Trust Tours travelers, providing coverage for Trip Cancellation, Trip Interruption, Emergency Medical, and more. Plus, you can upgrade your plan with Cancel For Any Reason (CFAR) coverage for the utmost flexibility. CFAR allows you to cancel your trip for ANY reason at all and be reimbursed up to 75% of your pre-paid, nonrefundable trip costs (conditions apply, see plan for details). To purchase travel insurance today, call: (800) 937-1387. For additional information, please contact National Trust Tours at (888) 484-8785. Complete Terms and Conditions including a Statement of Responsibility will be made available at time of registration, or in advance upon request. A signed "Terms & Conditions, Release from Liability, Assumption of Risk and Binding Arbitration Clause" is required from each applicant prior to participation on the tour.