

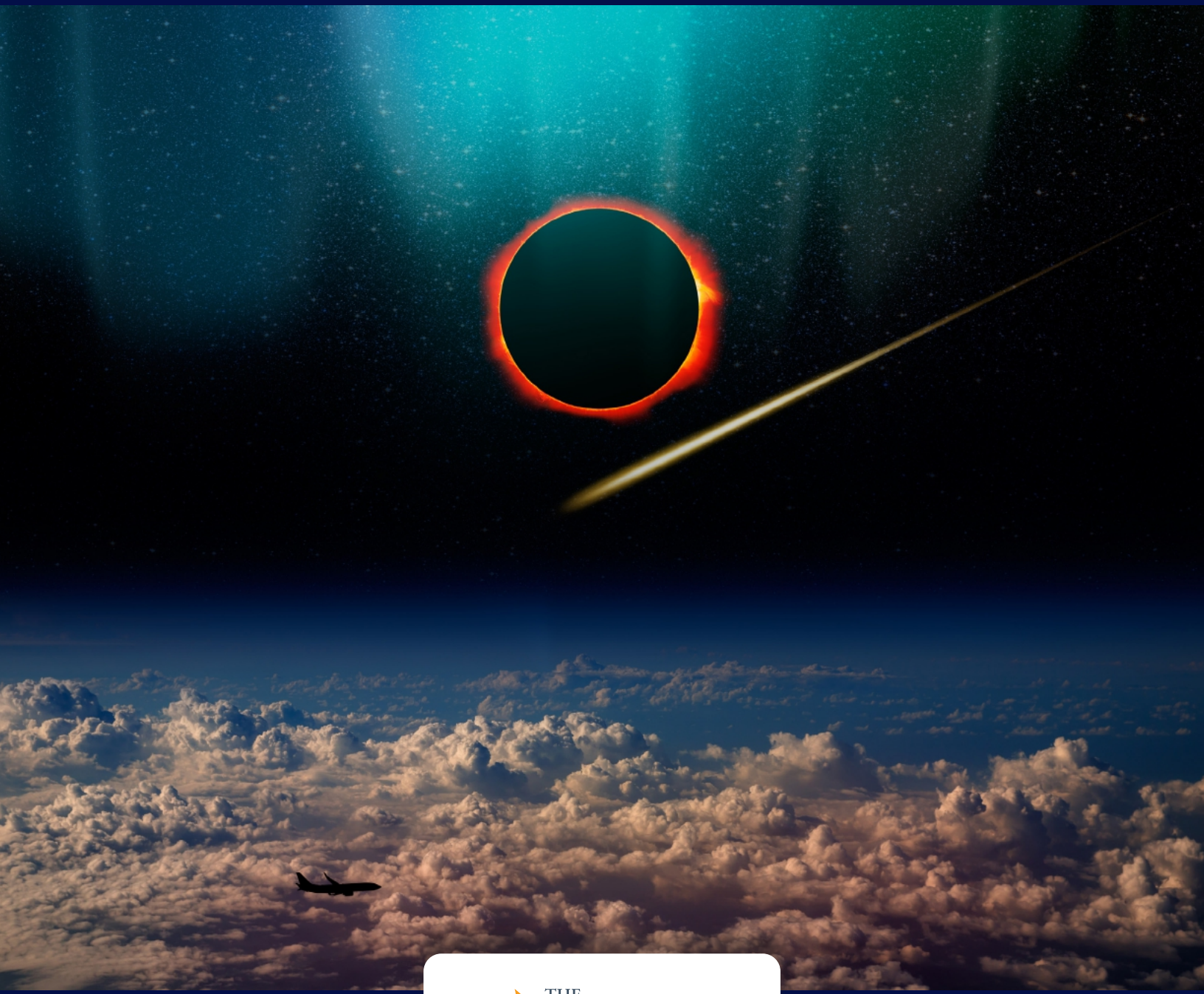


National Trust for Historic Preservation

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# 2026 Solar Eclipse Cruise: Totality in the Mediterranean

*with Sarah Rugheimer | August 7-14, 2026*



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**August 7-14, 2026**

From \$8,995



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## **2026 Solar Eclipse Cruise: Totality in the Mediterranean**

*with Sarah Rugheimer*

**Embark on a once-in-a-lifetime Mediterranean cruise to witness the 2026 total solar eclipse with author, astrophysicist, and TED speaker, Dr. Sarah Rugheimer and The Great Courses Journeys.**

Begin and end your journey in the glamorous city of Nice — a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its glimmering beaches and tree-lined promenade — and enjoy ports of call in Barcelona and the sunny islands of Menorca and Mallorca, where optional shore excursions include walking tours and a stargazing experience at a planetarium. When the sky darkens and the stars emerge on August 12, you'll have one of the best vantage points in the world for experiencing the total solar eclipse — at sea, directly in the path of totality, with an unobstructed view of the moon as it passes between the Earth and the sun. Your western Mediterranean cruise aboard the elegant *La Belle des Océans* provides an ideal balance of elements: an expert scientist who will offer fascinating lectures and insights into the astronomical phenomenon that occurs during an eclipse; the natural beauty and delicious cuisine of the Mediterranean; and the opportunity to experience one of nature's most spectacular shows from the deck of a small expedition ship.

# Your Journey Expert



**Professor Sarah Rugheimer** is an astrophysicist and the Allan I Carswell Chair at York University in Toronto. Her work is focused on how to detect life on an exoplanet by looking for atmospheric biosignatures and her research interests are modelling the atmosphere and climate of extrasolar planets, with a particular focus on atmospheric biosignatures in Earth-like planets, as well as modelling early Earth conditions.

Sarah earned her bachelor's degree in physics at the University of Calgary, and her MA and PhD at Harvard in Astrophysics. She then took the Simons Origins of Life Research Fellowship at St. Andrews, followed by a Glasstone Research Fellowship at Oxford. In addition to research, Sarah is interested in public outreach. Her TED talk "[The Search for Microscopic Aliens](#)" has 1.7 million views on [TED.com](#). She previously has been awarded the Barrie Jones Award and the BSA Rosalind Franklin Lectureship in 2019, and the Caroline Herschel Lectureship Prize in 2018. Her astrobiology course for the public is available on Amazon Audible Originals partnered with the Great Courses, called "[Searching for Extraterrestrial Life](#)". Partnering with the Great Courses again, she is releasing a course on the wonders we are discovering with JWST in 2025.

## Highlights

- **Total Solar Eclipse.** On August 12, 2026, witness a solar eclipse from the deck of a stylish small ship ideally positioned in the Mediterranean's path of totality.
- **Barcelona.** Enjoy a full day in the vibrant city of Barcelona, from strolling the famous Las Ramblas to taking a deeper look at the fanciful architecture of Antoni Gaudi. In the evening, gather for a unique stargazing experience at one of the world's oldest astronomical observatories.
- **Menorca.** Visit the charming city of Mahón, known for its Gothic cathedral, local art galleries, and picturesque harbor.
- **Mallorca.** Explore the "pearl of the Mediterranean" on a guided small-group shore excursion through its bustling capital city to a stunning church filled with beams of natural light. Join a private star party at the Observatorio Astronómico de Mallorca, the first astronomical center in the Balearic Islands.
- **At Sea.** Spend two relaxing days sailing through the sparkling Mediterranean, with time at leisure to lounge on the sun deck, take a dip in the swimming pool, and attend insightful onboard lectures by Professor Rugheimer and experts joining from two additional participating institutions. At nighttime, enjoy the clear Mediterranean skies without any surrounding light pollution.



Photo by: David Hancock

# 2026 Solar Eclipse Cruise: Totality in the Mediterranean

August 7-14, 2026



## Itinerary

Photo by: Croisieurope



### Friday, August 7: Bienvenue

Arrive on individual flights into Nice's Côte d'Azur Airport. Spend the day at your leisure, transferring independently to the MV *La Belle des Océans* for embarkation at 5:00 PM. (Luggage may be stored on the ship earlier in the day.)

After taking time to settle into your cabins, gather with Professor Rugheimer and your fellow travelers this evening for a celebratory welcome dinner as you cruise along the French Riviera at night.

**Included meal:** Dinner

**Accommodations:** MV *La Belle des Océans*

### Saturday, August 8: At Sea

Enjoy a day at sea aboard the MV *La Belle des Océans*. Relax on the sun deck, visit the fitness center, take a dip in the swimming pool, and converse with your fellow travelers over a beverage in the lounges and bars. In the afternoon, Professor Rugheimer will offer a lecture on the science of solar eclipses — why they happen, what makes a total eclipse rare, and how to get the most out of your eclipse experience. She will go over a detailed explanation of the many optical effects to look out for during the partial and total phases of the eclipse, as well as eclipse eye safety. Afterwards, enjoy the beautiful scenery as the ship sails towards Barcelona.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Accommodations:** MV *La Belle des Océans*

### Sunday, August 9: Barcelona

Arrive in Barcelona early this morning. After breakfast, explore this capital of Catalonia on a guided panoramic bus tour. Those who wish may return to the ship for lunch. The afternoon is for independent explorations in Barcelona or to relax onboard the ship. In the evening, attend an exclusive after-hours visit to the Observatorio Fabra, the world's fourth-oldest astronomical observatory still in operation and the perfect location for an evening of stargazing. Enjoy a private guided tour of the observatory, explore distant constellations with the assistance of local astronomy experts, and gather for dinner overlooking the city of Barcelona. Return to the ship and set sail for Menorca.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Accommodations:** MV *La Belle des Océans*





### **Monday, August 10: Menorca**

A morning of sailing brings you to the island of Menorca. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure in Mahón, Menorca's charming capital city. Stroll along the waterfront for views of one of the largest natural harbors in the world, explore the vibrant boutiques and galleries, and sample local specialties like a glass of gin or Mahón cheese, known for its distinctive orange rind. History buffs may choose to visit Santa Maria de Maó, a 14<sup>th</sup>-century Gothic cathedral and home to a magnificent organ, or take a short walk to Fort Marlborough, which offers insights into the island's British influence. Return to your ship this evening for dinner and overnight in the port of Menorca.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Accommodations:** *MV La Belle des Océans*



### **Tuesday, August 11: Menorca y Mallorca**

This morning, delve deeper into the natural beauty and fascinating history of Menorca on a guided walking tour. Return to the ship for lunch and cruise across to the island of Mallorca. After dinner on board, gather for a private star party at the Observatorio Astronómico de Mallorca, which has undergone extensive renovations and is scheduled to reopen in 2025. Hear from Observatory staff about current research and key discoveries, tour the building's scientific domes and observational facilities, and enjoy a clear view of the night sky as seen through the lens of a powerful telescope. Overnight in the port of Palma.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Accommodations:** *MV La Belle des Océans*



### **Wednesday, August 12: Total Solar Eclipse**

Start your day in the stunning city of Palma, Mallorca, on a guided small-group tour of La Seu Cathedral, the city's iconic Gothic church that was restored in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century by Antoni Gaudí, and a stroll through Palma's enchanting old quarter filled with historic mansions and bustling squares. Return to the ship for lunch and set sail for the path of totality. As the moon moves across the sun, the sky will darken into a surreal twilight over the shimmering Mediterranean. Feel the collective excitement build on deck as totality approaches and enjoy your unforgettable view of cosmic alignment.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Accommodations:** *MV La Belle des Océans*

Photo by: Alexandre Sattler



### Thursday, August 13: At Sea

Enjoy a day at sea aboard the *MV La Belle des Océans*. Relax on the sun deck, visit the fitness center, take a dip in the swimming pool, and converse with your fellow travelers over a beverage in the lounges and bars. In the afternoon, attend a lecture on the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) by Professor Rugheimer and learn about the extraordinary findings of NASA's most recent flagship mission. JWST can peer further back in our Universe's history than ever before — it's even the first telescope with the potential to detect life on another planet. As your ship sails towards Nice, raise a toast to your journey of sea and sun during a farewell dinner on board.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Accommodations:** *MV La Belle des Océans*

### Friday, August 14: Disembarkation

Disembark after breakfast and transfer independently to the Nice airport for flights home or onward.

**Included meal:** Breakfast

## Your Cruise Itinerary At-A-Glance

Day/Date	Title	Location/City
1- August 7	Welcome Aboard	Nice, France
2- August 8	At Sea	At sea
3- August 9	Barcelona	Barcelona, Spain
4- August 10	Menorca	Port Mahon, Menorca
5- August 11	Menorca y Mallorca	Menorca to Mallorca
6- August 12	2026 Total Solar Eclipse	Palma, Mallorca
7- August 13	At Sea	At sea
8- August 14	Disembarkation	Nice, France



# Accommodations

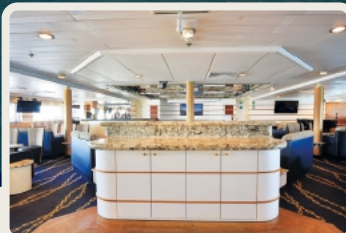
Photo: Marcel Belanger



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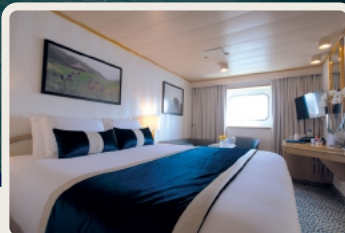


**DECK 5 LOUNGE**



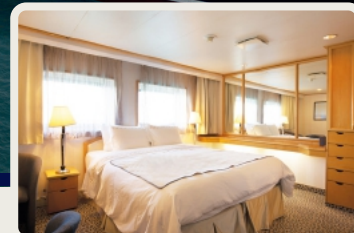
*Photo by: David Hancock*

**DECK 4 & 5 CABIN**



*Photo by: Alexandre Sattler*

**DECK 6 CABIN**



*Photo by: David Hancock*

## ***MV La Belle des Océans***

An elegant small ship designed for an intimate cruising experience, all 5 decks of this luxury vessel provide modern comfort and personalized service. Renovated in 2014, the 65 spacious cabins and suites offer exterior views, Wi-Fi, flat-screen televisions, a writing desk, and refrigerator. On board, travelers can enjoy a range of amenities including a sun deck, beauty salon, fitness center, swimming pool, and comfortable lounges. A casual grill restaurant near the pool provides a relaxed atmosphere in which to take in the magnificent views, while the main dining room serves contemporary Mediterranean-inspired cuisine with a focus on fresh, locally sourced ingredients. The Great Courses Journeys will be sharing the ship with two other like-minded organizations. A program of on-board lectures by the three experts on board will be open to all passengers.

Discover More 

# PRICES

(prices per person)

Deck 6 Ocean Suite \$13,595	
Deck 6 Riviera Suite \$11,895	
Deck 6 Panorama Suite \$11,295	2 Suites left
Deck 5 Horizon Cabin \$10,495	1 cabin left
Deck 4 Horizon Cabin \$9,745	2 cabins left
Deck 3 Horizon Cabin \$8,995	
Single Supplement \$6,650 <i>*limited availability</i>	
Deposit upon enrollment \$1,000	

You will be allocated a cabin within The Great Courses Journey's allotment, specific cabin requests cannot be guaranteed.

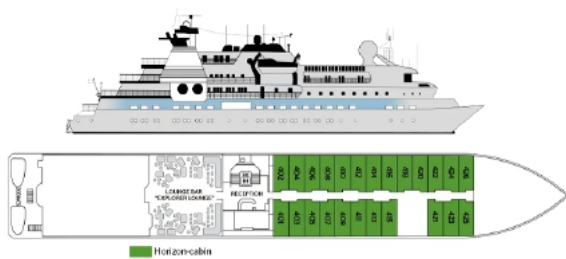
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# What's Included:

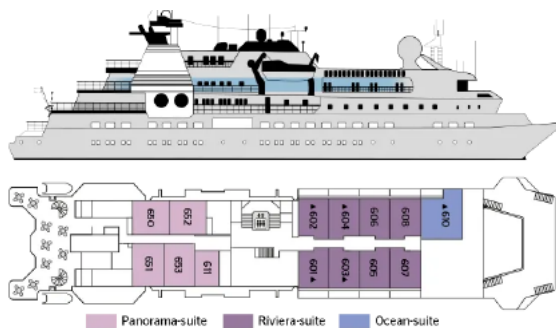
- All accommodations for the duration of the cruise
- All meals
- Unlimited drinks on board the ship, including coffee, house wine, beer, and standard alcoholic beverages
- All sightseeing and guided visits as noted in the itinerary
- Staffing: Expertise of a subject matter expert, travel director, and local guides throughout the tour
- All gratuities for on-tour guides and bus drivers. Gratuities for the crew on the cruise are not included
- All on-tour transportation, unless otherwise noted
- Listening devices to facilitate audible accessibility on tour
- The assistance of an ATA professional travel team to assist with pre-trip questions and, travel arrangements, including flights and other services
- Comprehensive pre-departure mailings and materials with information about the destination and what to expect on tour, including a suggested reading list
- Emergency evacuation insurance

# MV La Belle des Océans Deck Plans

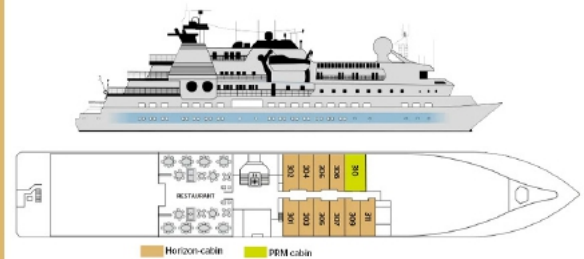
Deck 4



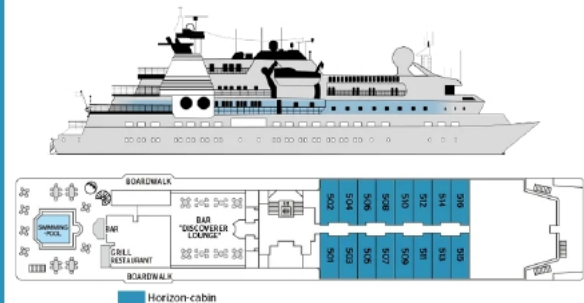
Deck 6



Deck 3



Deck 5



Deck 7

