



**WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL**  
*of Philadelphia & Cooperating Councils*

# **EXPEDITION TO ICELAND, EAST GREENLAND, AND SVALBARD**

**Aboard the New 152-Guest Expedition Cruise Ship Vega**

**June 21 - July 7, 2023**



Dear Council Traveler,

This expedition to Iceland, Greenland, Jan Mayen Island, and Svalbard provides an opportunity to discover some of the lesser-visited regions of the Arctic, and to travel in the company of research scientists and naturalists who have devoted their careers to understanding and preserving the increasingly fragile ecosystems found here.

After two days in Iceland discovering the lava fields of Reykjavik and the seabird sanctuary of Vigur Island, we cross the Denmark Strait to spend five days sailing among the ice floes and Inuit communities of eastern Greenland, from Ittoqqortoormiit in the south to Kejser Franz Josef Fjord in the north. This entire region of massive fjords forms the largest National Park in the world, home to countless colonies of seabirds, reindeer grazing on the shore, walrus, and an occasional polar bear. Turning toward the northeast, we pause halfway between Iceland and Svalbard at seldom-visited Jan Mayen Island, before arriving at Svalbard. Here we spend two days of almost continuous daylight exploring this icy realm, searching among the region's famously rich flora and fauna for polar bears, walrus, seals, whales, and the millions of seabirds that abound.

Dr. P. Dee Boersma and Dr. Sue Moore—both distinguished researchers based at the Center for Ecosystem Sentinels in the Biology Department of the University of Washington—will accompany us throughout the voyage. Between them, Professors Boersma and Moore have more than 90 years of experience studying the effects of climate change on the ecology of polar regions, and they will share what they have learned in a series of lectures and discussions. Our onboard expedition team of naturalists will also bring their experience and expertise to bear in presentations on the flora and fauna, geology, history and culture of the places we visit.

Our vessel for this cruise will be the Swann Hellenic *Vega*, a state-of-the-art, new-generation expedition cruise ship built in Finland and launched in 2022. Accommodating only 152 guests in superb staterooms and balcony suites, *Vega* features elegant common areas and the most modern mechanical and environmentally conscious technology. *Vega's* seasoned expedition staff driving its fleet of Zodiac landing craft will bring you into intimate contact with the incredible places we will explore.

Please look over the enclosed brochure and begin making plans to join us next summer on this extraordinary *Expedition to Iceland, East Greenland, and Svalbard*.

Best wishes,

*Shoshana Altrichter*

Shoshana Altrichter  
Vice President of Travel  
World Affairs Council of Philadelphia

AKRON ♦ ALABAMA ♦ ALASKA ♦ ARIZONA ♦ ATLANTA ♦ AUSTIN ♦ BALTIMORE ♦ BOSTON ♦ BUFFALO  
CHARLESTON ♦ CHARLOTTE ♦ CHICAGO ♦ GREATER CINCINNATI ♦ CLEVELAND ♦  
COLORADO SPRINGS ♦ COLUMBUS ♦ CONNECTICUT ♦ DALLAS-FORT WORTH ♦ DAYTON ♦ DENVER ♦  
GREATER HAMPTON ROADS ♦ HARRISBURG ♦ HILTON HEAD ♦ HOUSTON ♦ INLAND SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
JACKSONVILLE ♦ KANSAS CITY ♦ KENTUCKY/SOUTH INDIANA ♦ LAS VEGAS ♦ LOS ANGELES ♦ MAINE  
MID-HUDSON VALLEY ♦ MILWAUKEE ♦ MONTANA ♦ MONTEREY BAY ♦ NAPLES ♦ NEW ORLEANS  
NEW HAMPSHIRE ♦ NORTHERN CALIFORNIA ♦ ORANGE COUNTY ♦ OREGON ♦ PALM BEACH ♦ PEORIA  
PITTSBURGH ♦ GREATER READING ♦ RHODE ISLAND ♦ RICHMOND ♦ SAN ANTONIO ♦ SAN DIEGO ♦ SANTA FE  
SAVANNAH ♦ SEATTLE ♦ SONOMA COUNTY ♦ SOUTH TEXAS ♦ ST. LOUIS ♦ STAMFORD ♦ TACOMA ♦ TENNESSEE  
TRAVERSE CITY ♦ UTAH ♦ VERMONT ♦ WESTERN COLORADO ♦ WESTERN MICHIGAN ♦ WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

Cover: *Isafjordur, Iceland*

## GUEST LECTURERS

### DR. P. DEE BOERSMA



**Dr. Boersma** is the Director of the Center for Ecosystem Sentinels in the Department of Biology at the University of Washington and holds the Wadsworth Endowed Chair in Conservation Science. She has worked on Galapagos penguins for 50 years, Magellanic penguins in Argentina for nearly 40 years, and Fork-tailed storm-petrels in Alaska for a decade.

Dr. Boersma pioneered the use of seabirds as environmental sentinels. She has determined the reproductive success of penguins, their foraging locations, population dynamics, and the effects of climate variation, pollution, and how their behavior and physiology influences their survival. Dee holds a B.Sc. with honors in Biology from Central Michigan University, a Ph.D. in Zoology from Ohio State University, and an honorary doctorate in Science from Central Michigan University. She was President of the Society of Conservation Biology, received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Ohio State University, holds the 15th Heinz Award for the Environment and is an elected fellow of the American Ornithologists Union and the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Washington State Academy of Science.

### DR. SUE MOORE



**Dr. Sue Moore** is a research scientist and Affiliate Professor at the Center for Ecosystem Sentinels in the Biology Department of the University of Washington. She has 40 years of research experience focused on the ecology, bioacoustics, and natural history of whales and dolphins, with most of her work directed toward cetaceans in the Pacific Arctic region. Sue worked

for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for 20 years, where she served as the Director of the NOAA National Marine Mammal Laboratory and as a Senior Scientist for the NOAA Fisheries Science & Technology Marine Division. From 2008-2012, Sue served as Chair of the Environmental Concerns Working Group of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) Scientific Committee. In March 2020, Dr. Moore was honored to receive the IASC Medal in recognition of her Outstanding Achievement in Understanding Marine Mammals as Ecosystem Sentinels and How Climate Change is Influencing the Phenology of Arctic Species. IASC Medals are given for exceptional and sustained contributions to the understanding of the Arctic. She currently serves as a Science Advisor to the U. S. Marine Mammal Commission, the NOAA Marine Mammal Unusual Mortality Event (UME) Working Group, and the Washington State Academy of Sciences.

# THE NEW 152-GUEST EXPEDITION CRUISE SHIP VEGA



*Oceanview Stateroom*



*Balcony Suite*



*Observation Lounge*



*Sauna*



*Club lounge*



*Outdoor Café / Bar with swimming pool*

Built in Finland and launched in July 2022, Swan Hellenic's *Vega* is a new-generation expedition cruise ship. Although at 10,250 tons the ship is large enough to accommodate more than 250 passengers, *Vega* will accommodate a maximum of 152 guests in 76 spacious staterooms and balcony suites. The low guest density results in one of the most generous indoor and outdoor space-to-guest ratios among cruise ships.

*Vega* has been designed to meet the stringent requirements of the new Polar Code for ships navigating in Polar regions. Its high PC5 Category A ice-strengthened hull, and other technical and mechanical features, allow the ship to cruise the world's remote regions in safety and utmost

comfort. Technologically advanced hybrid engines and a system of powerful batteries make it possible for the ship to cruise in ecologically sensitive areas, leaving minimal footprint, while a computer-controlled Dynamic Positioning System allows the ship to maintain position without anchoring. Operated by a complement of 120 experienced European officers and international crew members, *Vega* will carry a fleet of Zodiacs, versatile landing boats, kayaks, and a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) that will reveal marine life in the deep. Powerful stabilizers provide a smooth ride.

All staterooms and suites face outside and are equipped with private facilities, climate control,

TV, basic Wi-Fi and USB connections as well as other amenities. Of the ship's 76 staterooms, 60 have balconies. Public areas include a spacious observation lounge that is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for lectures and presentations; a club lounge; a restaurant that accommodates all guests at one seating; an outdoor café/bar that surrounds the heated swimming pool; a wellness area with gym, spa, and sauna that includes an adjoining outdoor jacuzzi; library; beauty salon; a "mud room" with lockers for storing expedition gear; and an infirmary that is attended by a full-time doctor. The ship also features expansive open-deck areas. Two elevators connect all decks. Attentive service is provided on a 24-hour basis.



Scoresby Sound fjords

## ITINERARY

**Wednesday, June 21, 2023**  
**DEPART THE US**

**Thursday, June 22**  
**REYKJAVIK, ICELAND**

Arrive in Reykjavik and transfer to our deluxe hotel. Gather with fellow travelers this evening for a welcome dinner. (D)

**Friday, June 23**  
**REYKJAVIK / EMBARKATION**

After breakfast at the hotel, begin our exploration of Reykjavik with a panoramic tour of the city's major attractions, Parliament, the national museum, Höfði house (site of the 1986 Reagan-Gorbachev Summit), and the city's main landmark, Hallgrímskirkja. Leaving the city, we drive through lava formations of all shapes and sizes, to reach the geothermal fields of Krysuvik, where powerful jets of steam escaping from deep below the Earth's crust share the landscape with multicolored pools of boiling mud. After a light lunch, we continue to Njardvik to visit superb Viking Museum, which houses a fully seaworthy replica of a typical Viking ship. Return to Reykjavik in late afternoon and embark Vega. (B,L,D)

**Saturday, June 24**  
**ISAFJORDUR**

This enchanting town of picturesque, brightly colored houses, sits at the foot of a volcanic

plateau, where even the center of the town seems to be part of the natural environment. It is a great jumping-off point for exploration for an expedition to the island of Vigur, site of a significant seabird colony of arctic terns, puffins, black guillemots, and eider ducks. One of the two inhabited islands in the fjord, Vigur is least populated, with a single farm, Iceland's only windmill, the country's smallest post office, and oldest boat. (B,L,D)

**Sunday, June 25**  
**AT SEA**

During days at sea, attend informative lectures and briefings from the expert expedition staff, relax and enjoy cruising the open sea, and treat yourself to some of the many amenities aboard Vega. (B,L,D)

**Monday, June 26**  
**ITTOQQORTOORMIIT, GREENLAND**

One of the most remote towns in the world, Ittoqqortoormiit is inaccessible by ship for nine months of the year. The town's 450 present-day residents are largely self-sufficient, hunting and fishing to keep the community alive. Ittoqqortoormiit is also our gateway to the Scoresbysund fjord system—the world's largest fjord network with an area of over 15,000 square miles. (B,L,D)

**Tuesday, June 27 and Wednesday, June 28**  
**SCORESBY SOUND**

These two days are spent exploring this vast system of fjords, where large basalt mountains create a striking backdrop to the brilliant white

ice floating in mirror-like waters. The mountains offer protection from the Arctic winds, providing excellent shelter for Greenland's iconic wildlife. We will be on the lookout for muskoxen, Arctic foxes, and mountain hares along the frozen shores. With the help of our expedition team, we'll spot the little auks, Atlantic puffins, fulmars, snowy owls, and great black-backed gulls that abound here. Seals and whales are also common sightings. (B,L,D)

**Thursday, June 29**  
**KING OSCAR FJORD**

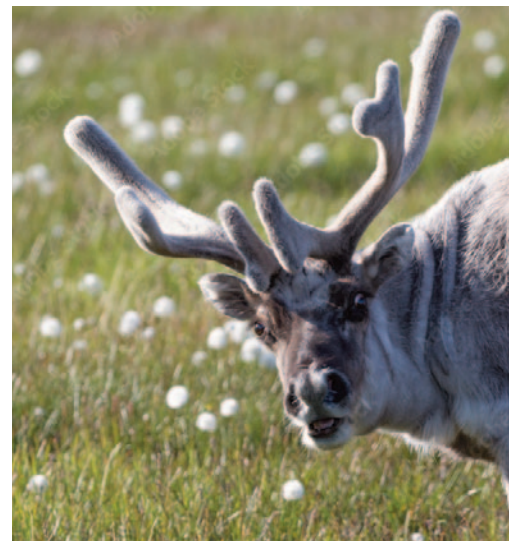
King Oscar Fjord, which forms the northern border of the Scoresby Sound, is a seemingly endless maze of valleys, where mountains, deep water, and sparkling ice create an overwhelmingly dramatic landscape that photography simply cannot capture. It is an other worldly place, seductively beautiful and hostile at the same time. One highlight of our time here will be a chance to see Berzelius Bjerg, a mountain of sharply striated bands of color that provide evidence that millions of years ago these mountains were part of a seabed. (B,L,D)

**Friday, June 30**  
**KEJSER FRANZ JOSEF FJORD**

Dramatic Kejsers Franz Joseph Fjord stretches 120 miles inland from its mouth in Foster Bay, between Cape Mackenzie and Cape Franklin in the Northeast Greenland National Park. Its cliffs provide an unusually colorful red-hued backdrop, as we sail past Attestupa, the world's highest coastal cliff, and encounter the Devil's



*Hallgrímskirkja, Reykjavik*



*Reindeer, Svalbard*



*Walrus, Svalbard*



*Atlantic puffins*

Castle (Teufelsschloss), which looms large over the fjord. At the fjord's head, Nordenskiöld Glacier discharges into the sea, while nearby Petermann Peak at 9,655 feet, is Greenland's tallest. (B,L,D)

**Saturday, July 1**  
**AT SEA**

During days at sea, attend informative lectures and briefings from the expert expedition staff, relax and enjoy cruising the open sea, and treat yourself to some of the many amenities aboard Vega. (B,L,D)

**Sunday, July 2**  
**JAN MAYEN ISLAND, NORWAY**

A snow-covered volcano dominates the ice cap and glaciers at the northeast end of Jan Mayen Island, where we call today. The only residents on this Norwegian island halfway between Iceland and Svalbard are either members of the Norwegian Armed Forces or workers at the meteorological station. During a nature walk to

the station along the black sandy beach, we will see the surprising variety of plant species hearty enough to survive here, and we will look out for the nesting northern fulmars, Brünnich's, black guillemots, and little auks that make the island an important birding area. (B,L,D)

**Monday, July 3**  
**AT SEA**

During days at sea, attend informative lectures and briefings from the expert expedition staff, relax and enjoy cruising the open sea, and treat yourself to some of the many amenities aboard Vega. (B,L,D)

**Tuesday, July 4 and Wednesday, July 5**  
**SVALBARD**

Approaching the Svalbard Archipelago aboard ship feels a lot like sailing toward the edge of the world. Deep inside the Arctic Circle, in the realm of the polar bear, we will spend two days exploring some of the most varied landscapes in the Arctic. Aboard Zodiacs, we will venture

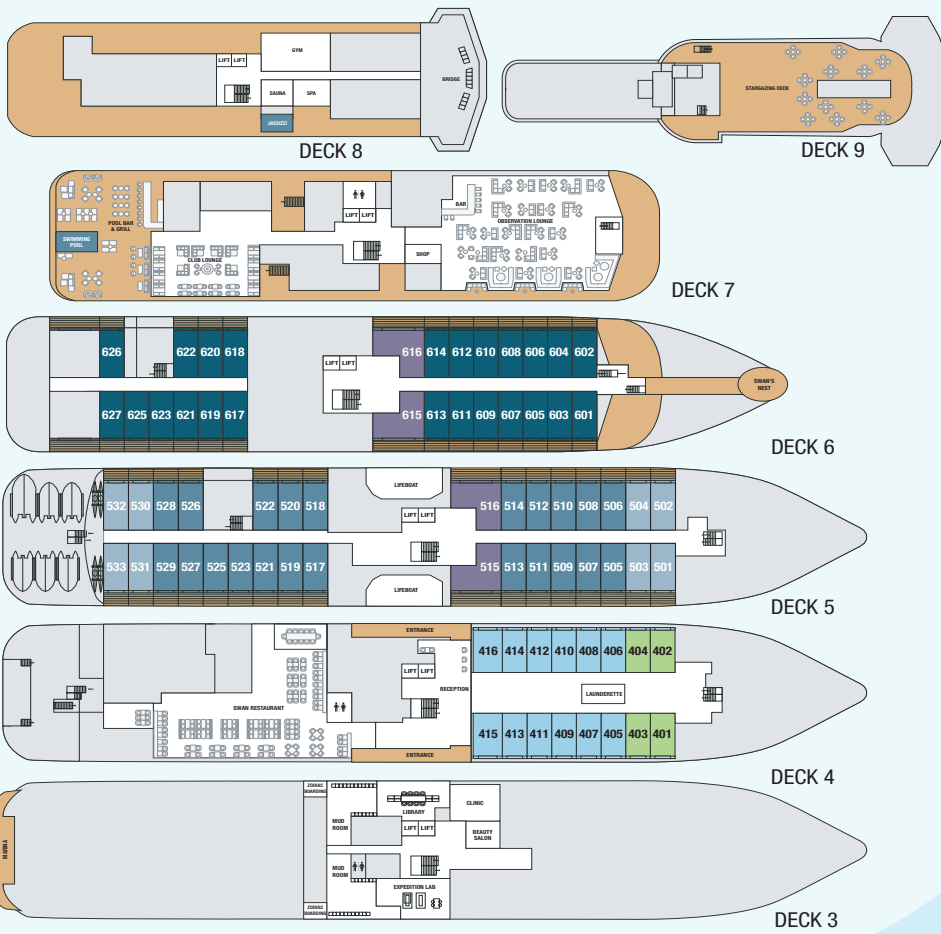
close to the gargantuan glaciers that are rapidly retreating from the oceans they feed. As we reach the northern edge of the islands, sea ice provides the perfect hunting ground for polar bears. And as we round the northwest corner of Spitsbergen and get closer to Longyearbyen, the landscape is punctuated with large areas devoid of snow and ice, exposing a vast tundra. In addition to the iconic polar bear, we hope to see walrus, Svalbard reindeer, ringed seals, and arctic foxes, as well as many species of marine mammals and seabirds. (B,L,D)

**Thursday, July 6**  
**LONGYEARBYEN / DISEMBARK / OSLO**

Arrive this morning in Longyearbyen, the world's most northerly town, and transfer to the airport for our flight to Oslo, where we stay overnight.

**Friday, July 7**  
**OSLO / HOMEWARD**

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to the Oslo international airport for flights homeward. (B)



# VEGA

# Deck Plan

## RATES

All accommodations aboard *Vega* are spacious staterooms and balcony suites. They are elegantly decorated, face outside, affording sea views, and include a queen-size bed that can be arranged as two twin beds, a spacious bathroom, mini-refrigerator, safe, ample closet space, climate control, telephone, TV, Wi-Fi, and USB connections, as well as other amenities.

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	RATES PER PERSON / DOUBLE OCCUPANCY
<b>E</b>	Oceanview staterooms with two large oval windows. 206 sq. ft. Deck 4. Staterooms 401 - 404.	\$ 11,590
<b>D</b>	Oceanview staterooms with two large oval windows. 206 sq. ft. Deck 4. Staterooms 405 - 416.	\$ 12,190
<b>C</b>	Suites with balcony & living room area. 300 sq. ft. Deck 5. Suites 501 - 504, 530 - 533.	\$ 13,290
<b>B</b>	Suites with balcony & living room area. 300 sq. ft. Deck 5. Suites 505 - 514, 517 - 529.	\$ 13,690
<b>A</b>	Suites with balcony & living room area. 300 sq. ft. Deck 6. Suites 601 - 614, 617 - 627.	\$ 14,290
<b>AA</b>	Suites with large balcony, separate bedroom & living room. 440 sq. ft. Decks 5 & 6. Suites 515, 516, 615 & 616.	\$ 16,190

## SAVINGS FOR SOLO TRAVELERS

A limited number of cabins are available for single occupancy in categories E to B at no additional charge. Additional single cabins are available at a supplement of 50% of the per person double occupancy rate, instead of the normal 70% supplement.

## PROGRAM INCLUSIONS

The rates are all-inclusive. There are no hidden costs and no additional charges such as shore excursions or embarkation and port charges. Other than the international airfare and expenses of a personal nature, all else is included. Specifically, the rates include:

- One night at a deluxe hotel in Reykjavik.
- Welcome dinner in Reykjavik, and lunch on the day of embarkation.
- Cruise aboard the Swan Hellenic Vega, as described in the itinerary.
- Airport/hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage.
- Program of lectures and discussions with Professors Dee Boersman and Sue Moore of the Center for Ecosystem Sentinels at the University of Washington.
- Additional presentations from the onboard expedition team of naturalists.
- Complete program of shore landings and activities ashore, led by professional local guides and onboard experts.
- All meals aboard the ship, with a selection of wines, beer and soft drinks during lunch and dinner.
- Welcome and farewell cocktail receptions aboard the ship hosted by the captain.
- Open bar with select alcoholic beverages.
- Coffee, including espresso and cappuccino, tea and soft drinks throughout the day and night.
- 24-hour room service.
- Gratuities to the ship's crew, guides, porters and drivers.
- Basic Wi-Fi aboard the ship.
- The services of an experienced Thalassa Journeys Trip Director.
- All local taxes and service charges, including port and embarkation taxes.
- Complete pre departure material.

**NOT INCLUDED:** International airfare; travel insurance; expenses of a personal nature; any items not mentioned in the itinerary or the above inclusions.

**FOR RESERVATIONS  
AND INFORMATION,  
PLEASE CONTACT  
WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL  
OF PHILADELPHIA AT  
800-942-5004  
EXT. 209 or EXT. 231**

## REGISTRATION

Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$1,500 per person) as a deposit to hold \_\_\_\_\_ place(s) on **Expedition to Iceland, East Greenland, and Svalbard**, June 21 - July 7, 2023 with World Affairs Council. I understand that final payment is due ninety (90) days prior to departure and is payable by check.

Please make check payable to Thalassa Journeys and mail with this registration form to:

**World Affairs Council**

**One Penn Center, 1617 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Suite 1055, Philadelphia, PA 19103**

**Email: [travel@wacphila.org](mailto:travel@wacphila.org)**

**Phone: 800-942-5004 or 215-561-4700 ext. 209 or ext. 231 • Fax: 215-561-5660.**

### PLEASE SELECT CABIN CATEGORY IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1st choice  \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd choice  \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd choice  \_\_\_\_\_

Double Occupancy       Single Occupancy (Inquire for rates)

FIRST                      MIDDLE                      LAST                      (AS ON YOUR PASSPORT)

FIRST                      MIDDLE                      LAST                      (AS ON YOUR PASSPORT)

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

*Each participant must sign below: I/We have read the "General Information" section and agree to its terms.*

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE (DAY) \_\_\_\_\_

(EVENING) \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**PAYMENT SCHEDULE:** A deposit of \$1,500 per person is required to reserve your space on the tour. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure. Payment can be made by personal check or charged to a credit card.

**CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS:** All cancellations are subject to a \$300 per person administrative fee. Cancellations received 61-90 days prior to departure will be assessed a penalty equal to 50% of the total program cost per person. Cancellations received within 60 days of departure are subject to 100% cancellation penalties. Requests for cancellations must be made in writing. No refunds will be made for any part of this program in which you choose not to participate.

**INSURANCE:** We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance, which is available for coverage of expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to illness or accident. Baggage insurance is also recommended. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel program, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement.

**ITINERARY:** The itinerary, accommodations and arrangements are subject to change at the discretion of Thalassa Journeys.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Please read carefully the following terms and conditions, which constitute the sole, legally enforceable agreements between the traveler and Thalassa Journeys. Thalassa Journeys acts solely as agents for the traveler with respect to all transportation, hotel and other tour arrangements. In that capacity, we exercise all reasonable care possible to ensure the traveler's safety and satisfaction, but, we neither assume nor bear any responsibility or liability for any injury, death, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity arising in connection with the services of any ship, airplane, train, automobile, motor coach, carriage or other conveyance, or the actions of any third-party, involved in carrying the traveler or in affecting these tours. We are not responsible for damages, additional expenses, or any other losses due to cancellation, delay or other changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, civil disturbances, acts or threats of terrorism, travel warnings or bans, termination or suspension of war risks or other carrier insurance, quarantine, acts of God or other causes beyond our control. All such losses must be borne by the traveler, and tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. In the event of cancellation, delay or rescheduling mandated by any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall have the option of accepting in lieu of the original tour such rescheduled tour or other substituted tour(s) as may be offered by us, or else, receiving a refund of as much of such advance tour expenditures as we are able to recover on the traveler's behalf from carriers, third-party tour vendors, etc., but, we shall not have any obligation or liability to the traveler beyond the foregoing. We reserve the right to make alterations to the tour's itinerary and to substitute hotels, transportation methods, or lecturers if this is required. We reserve the right to cancel, delay, or reschedule any tour prior to departure, and, so long as this is not due to any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall be entitled to a full refund of all monies paid to that point if he/she so desires. No refund shall be made for any unused portion of any tour. By forwarding their deposit(s), the traveler certifies that he/she and/or their dependents, minors or others covered thereby do not have any mental, physical or other condition of disability that could create a hazard for them or other travelers. We reserve the right to decline to accept or to decline to retain any person as a member of any tour should such person's health, condition or actions adversely affect or threaten the welfare or safety of other travelers or impede the tour. Baggage or valuables brought on the tour shall be transported, handled or stored at the traveler's risk entirely, and, we shall bear no liability or responsibility for any damage or other loss thereto. Resolution of any disputes arising hereunder shall be affected exclusively in the state or federal courts presiding in Florida, pursuant to applicable Florida law.

**RATES:** Tour costs are based upon current airfares, tariffs, and currency values. While we do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change.

**CST 2138603-50  
ST 42048**



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