

2025

HARVARD ALUMNI TRAVELS

DISCOVER • LEARN • CONNECT • EXPLORE



HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS & FJORDS

Scotland, Orkney Islands & Norway

Aboard *Exploris One*

May 29 – June 8, 2025



HARVARD
Alumni Travels



Flowers of Norway

Highlands, Islands & Fjords Scotland, Orkney Islands & Norway

Embark on an exploration of the magnificent landscapes, remote islands, ancient settlements, and idyllic villages of Norway and northern Scotland, cruising during the peak of spring, with long days of bright-green scenery speckled with blooming flowers and rushing waterfalls in the fjords from snow melting in the mountains. This eight-night itinerary, from Inverness to the Orkney Islands and along the Norwegian Coast above the Arctic Circle, seamlessly blends the wonders of the natural world with the historical and cultural highlights of the area. Begin and end your journey in the remote Orkney Islands and Norway's Lofoten Islands, both showcasing wild landscapes and ancient remains. The cruise includes ample time to explore Norway's iconic fjords, including Sognefjord, Norway's longest, as well as Naeroyfjord and Geirangerfjord, both UNESCO World Heritage sites. Delight in the comforts of the newly renovated 72-stateroom *Exploris One*, experiencing Zodiac cruises along the nesting cliffs of Runde and whale watching in the Lofotens. Step ashore at picturesque fjord-side towns like Ålesund and tiny villages like A, Reine, and Nusfjord, immersing yourself in the rich history, natural beauty, and unique experiences of these captivating destinations.

Catherine McKenna



Catherine McKenna is Harvard's Margaret Brooks Robinson Professor of Celtic Languages and Literatures, specializing in the literature and legends of the Celtic-speaking peoples of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Brittany, and Cornwall. From ancient times down to the present, the peoples of Scandinavia, Scotland, and Ireland have been linked by the waterways

that seem to divide them—the North Atlantic, the North Sea, the Irish Sea—in what is sometimes described as 'the Irish Sea Cultural Province' Catherine McKenna has studied and taught the history and culture of the northern European world at many different moments in history, from the prehistoric, to the medieval, to the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries and on into our own day. She received her PhD from the Department of Celtic Languages and Literatures at Harvard.



Right photo: Ring of Brodgar

Highlights

- Delight in the cruising Norway during the height of spring when temperatures are mild and flowers carpet the countryside.
- Explore Inverness, the capital of the Scottish Highlands, including its beautiful Old Town and indoor Victorian market selling local specialties and handicrafts.
- Discover how the Vikings held a strategic foothold in the Orkney Islands for centuries and marvel at fascinating Stone Age sites, including the Ring of Brodgar and the 5,000-year-old stone-slab village of Skara Brae, both UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Linger in the dramatic and beautiful landscapes of the Sognefjord, Norway's longest and deepest fjord, including its most dramatic and narrow arm, UNESCO-listed Naeroyfjord.
- Step ashore at peaceful, picturesque fjord side towns and fishing villages off the beaten track—splendid Art Nouveau Ålesund, set on myriad islands stretching out into the ocean; and tiny villages of Å, and Reine in the Lofotens—all of which have inspired artists and photographers for over a century.
- Travel back in time at the Lofotr Viking Museum, boasting the largest Viking longhouse ever excavated.
- Look for wildlife along the cliffs of Runde, one of the largest nesting cliffs in Norway and in the Lofotens, a prime location in June for orcas, porpoises, and the mighty sperm whale.

Activity Level 3:

To make the most of what this expedition has to offer, the trip will be active, requiring you to be in good health and physical condition. The schedule will include long days, with some early departures, and activities scheduled throughout the day and into the evening. 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 Harvard Alumni Travel or Criterion Travel, our tour operator; local staff; and host country laws. The degree of difficulty for each day's activity will be described in daily briefings. This promises to be a memorable journey, but as with all travel, a flexible attitude and a spirit of adventure will enhance your enjoyment of this program. You do not have to participate in all the scheduled activities, except when traveling to the next destination. We are sure you will be pleased with the exciting educational program provided, but we want you to be aware of the pace and activity level



Left photo: Viking Ship Wood Carving / Right photo: Ålesund, Norway

Schedule by Day

THURSDAY & FRIDAY, MAY 29 & 30

Depart U.S. / Inverness

Depart home on overnight flights to Inverness. Upon arrival on Friday, relax before dinner. Kingsmills Hotel (D)

SATURDAY, MAY 31

Inverness / Embark *Exploris One*

Explore Inverness Old Town and its indoor Victorian market, with lunch on your own during free time in town. In the afternoon, you have the option to visit either Clava Cairns, one of Scotland's most evocative prehistoric sites or historic Cawdor Castle with its three spectacular gardens before boarding *Exploris One* this afternoon.

Exploris One (B,D)

SUNDAY, JUNE 1

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) Guided tour of Kirkwall, including the medieval St. Magnus Cathedral, with free time in town; 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 to the ship.

Exploris One (B,L,D)

MONDAY, JUNE 2

Sognefjord Fjord

Enjoy a full day at sea looking for wildlife from one of the ship's spacious decks, indulging in the ship's amenities, and lectures from our team of experts. As evening approaches, arrive at the entrance of Sognefjord just in time for a breathtaking sunset.

Exploris One (B,L,D)

TUESDAY, JUNE 3

Vik & Naeroyfjord

Embark on a privately chartered boat cruise in the morning, exploring 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 mountain-sides, hanging valleys, majestic peaks, snowfields, cascading waterfalls, and quaint hamlets. Disembark in Gudvangen, nestled deep within the stunning Nærøfjord, to explore the Viking Village and enjoy some free time in town. In the afternoon, discover the riches of Vik, a picturesque village situated along the banks of the Sognefjord including the historic Hoppstad 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.' Additionally, visit the Moahugane Burial Mounds or Djupvik, home to a unique mythological garden along the Sognefjord's shores.

Exploris One (B,L,D)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4

Nordfjordeid

Enjoy a morning at sea with time for lectures before arriving in Nordfjordeid. Here choose from various excursion options including kayaking with a guided hike to learn about the local ecosystem, a motorcoach excursion 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 as well as the Norwegian Fjord Horse Center.

Exploris One (B,L,D)

THURSDAY, JUNE 5

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) 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.

Exploris One (B,L,D)



Left photo: Balmoral Castle / Right photo: Giant Water Lilies—Oslo Botanical Garden, Norway

FRIDAY, JUNE 6

Torghatten & Brønnøysund

Begin your morning in Brønnøysund with an exploration of this coastal town. 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. In the afternoon, cruise across the Arctic Circle, keeping an eye out for whales.

Exploris One (B,L,D)

SATURDAY, JUNE 7

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, before indulging in a lunch ashore where you'll learn about the islands efforts of sustainable farming. Conclude the day with the Captain's farewell reception and dinner.

Exploris One (B,L,R,D)

SUNDAY, JUNE 8

Disembark / Home

Transfers to Bodø airport or optional morning tour in Bodø for those with late flights. (B)

Optional Pre-Voyage Extension

MAY 26–30

Scottish Highlands Indepth

Fly from home to Inverness, Scotland, and transfer to a nearby country estate for a three-night stay. Over the coming days, explore the highlights of the Scottish Highlands, including Culloden Moor, the last battlefield of the Jacobite Rebellion, a private cruise on Loch Ness with visit to Urquhart Castle, and a private tasting and tour at a top malt whisky distillery. Enroute to Inverness to join the main program, stop for a stroll through the grounds of Balmoral Castle, the Scottish home of the Royal Family since the mid 1800s.

Optional Post-Voyage Extension

JUNE 8–11

Art & Gardens of Oslo

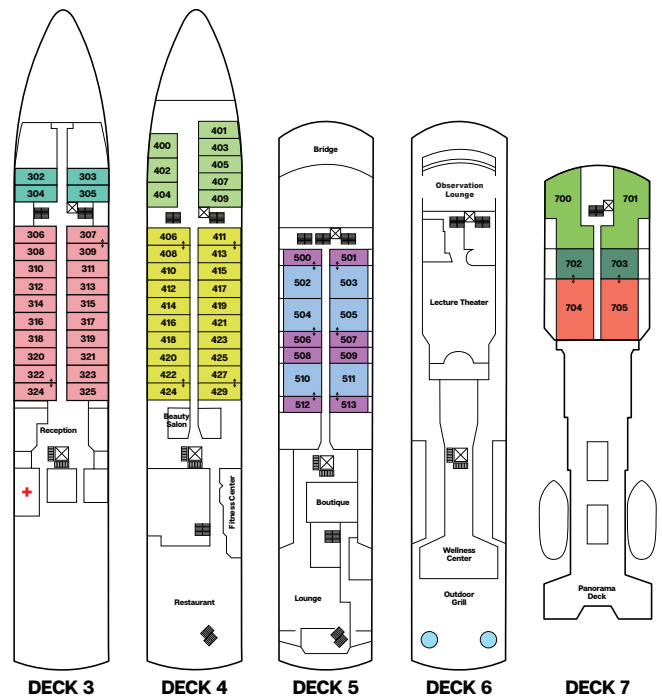
Fly from Bodø to Oslo, for a three-night stay at the elegant and historic Grand Hotel, opened in 1874, and for over 140 years the host to international guests, world leaders, celebrities and the Nobel Peace Prize laureates. Highlights include Hovelsrud Farm and Garden, an award-winning house and garden restored to its 1840's splendor in a stunning lakeside setting; Oslo Botanical Garden, founded in 1814, displaying a wide variety of plants from Norway and around the world, a scented garden, palm house, waterfalls and a large rock garden with 1450 alpine species; and Vigeland Sculpture Park, the world's largest sculpture park made by a single artist, Gustav Vigeland, showing more than 200 of his works in bronze, granite and wrought iron.



Formerly named the *Silver Explorer* under Silversea Cruises' ownership, *Exploris One* embarked on a new chapter in 2023 under the helm of French company Exploris Expeditions. Having known this vessel for many years, we recognize its suitability for intimate small ship voyages. Our exclusive charter will host a maximum of 120 guests, alongside our dedicated staff. Benefit from the vessel's shallow draft, enabling access to secluded areas inaccessible to larger ships. Delight in the expansive deck spaces, perfect for wildlife spotting and soaking in picturesque vistas while cruising. Renovated in 2023, *Exploris One* seamlessly blends adventure with luxurious comfort. Its 60 staterooms and 12 suites, all exterior facing, boast impeccable finishes. Facilitated by 12 zodiacs, all passengers disembark simultaneously for immersive regional explorations. Savor refined French and International cuisine at Le Grand Restaurant and the Outdoor Grill. The Grand Salon and Panoramic Lounge offer sweeping panoramas. Onboard amenities include a dedicated lecture room, a hair salon, fitness center, massage room, sauna, and two hot tubs.

Rates

CATEGORY	DOUBLE
PREMIUM STATEROOM / DECK 3 Two portholes, bathroom with shower, 157 / 167 sq. ft.	\$8,990
OCEAN STATEROOM / DECK 3 Picture window, bathroom with shower, 192 sq. ft.	\$9,790
SUPERIOR STATEROOM / DECK 4 Picture window, bathroom with shower, 175 / 190 sq. ft.	\$10,290
DELUXE STATEROOM / DECK 4 Large picture window, bathroom with shower 192 sq. ft.	\$10,990
BALCONY STATEROOM / DECK 5 French balcony, bathroom with shower, 206 / 216 sq. ft.	\$11,990
DISCOVERY SUITE / DECK 5 One bedroom, living room with sitting area, floor to ceiling glass doors onto two French balconies, a full-sized tub, and separate shower, 422 sq. ft.	\$13,990
NAVIGATOR SUITE / DECK 7 Floor to ceiling glass doors onto a private balcony with furniture, sitting area, a full-sized tub, and separate shower, 400 sq. ft., including balcony.	\$14,490
GRAND SUITE / DECK 7 One bedroom, living room with sitting area, floor to ceiling glass doors onto a private balcony with furniture, a full-sized tub, separate shower, and walk-in closet, 618 sq. ft., including balcony.	\$15,990
OWNER'S SUITE / DECK 7 One bedroom, living room with sitting area, floor to ceiling glass doors onto a large private balcony with furniture, a full-sized tub, separate shower, and walk-in closet, 728 sq. ft., including balcony.	\$16,990
CATEGORY	SINGLE
PREMIUM STATEROOM / DECK 3 Two portholes, bathroom with shower, 157 / 167 sq. ft.	\$13,495
OCEAN STATEROOM / DECK 3 Picture window, bathroom with shower, 192 sq. ft.	\$13,990



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 pre-departure information • Professional tour manager throughout the program

NOT INCLUDED: 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



AIR ARRANGEMENTS 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.



BOOK ONLINE
TO REGISTER

Trip Registration is Easy

Step 1

Visit: <https://alumni.harvard.edu/travel/trips/scotland-norway-2025>

Step 2

Click the Blue “**Register Today**” button and fill out the online form with your contact information and payment details.

Step 3

Look for an **email confirmation** from Harvard Alumni Travels.

All bookings are conducted online only.

Find complete trip-specific terms and conditions on the trip web page (link above).

Cover: Cover Lofoten Islands; Left photo: Atlantic Puffin; Bottom photo: Sognefjord, Norway

REGISTER
alumni.harvard.edu/travel

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800-422-1636

EMAIL US
haatravels@harvard.edu

TERMS AND CONDITIONS
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