

2024

HARVARD ALUMNI TRAVELS

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PETRA TO THE PARTHENON

Ancient Civilizations of the Red Sea and Eastern Mediterranean

March 23–April 5, 2024

Aboard the all-suite *Hebridean Sky*

With Harvard study leader **Rita Freed**



HARVARD

Alumni Travels



The Acropolis in Athens

Petra to the Parthenon

Experience four countries and distinct ancient cultures that span 5,000 years of history on this 14-day journey aboard the all-suite *Hebridean Sky*, gazing upon true modern marvels in addition to a fascinating mix of historic wonders.

Begin at the ancient Spice Route outposts of Jordan's Petra and Saudi Arabia's Mada'in Saleh before exploring Egypt's iconic pyramids of Giza and mysterious Sphinx, the mummies of Cairo's National Museum, and the tombs of the Valley of the Kings. Continue to the Bronze Age city of Knossos on Crete, then experience the glory of Greece's Acropolis, including the mighty Parthenon.

Jump forward thousands of years while the ship transits the modern engineering marvel of the Suez Canal, and be immersed in local culture with a traditional lunch at a Wadi Rum desert camp. All along the way, enjoy engaging presentations by knowledgeable local guides and a team of onboard lecturers who will bring ancient times to life and help put people and places into historical context.

Activity Level 3:

A LITTLE MORE TO IT

The pace of this tour is moderately active with considerable walking each day, often over very uneven and cobblestoned terrain, and extended periods of standing at museums and outdoor sites in the summer heat. Some days include long drives and multiple venue changes. Guests should be capable of navigating stairs on rolling seas.

Study Leader



Rita Freed received her BA from Wellesley College and her MA and PhD in Egyptian and Ancient Near Eastern Art and Archaeology from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. She was associate professor of Art at the University of Memphis and founding director of the Institute of Egyptian Art and Archaeology before coming to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, to head the Department of Ancient Egyptian, Nubian and Near Eastern Art (a position she now holds as *Emerita*).

Currently, she is a non-resident fellow at the Hutchins Center, Harvard University, where she is pursuing research in Nubian art and developing methods to make it more widely available. She also teaches Egyptian and Nubian Art at Wellesley College.

Freed has excavated in Egypt at numerous sites from the Delta to Karnak as well as in Israel and Cyprus. The exhibitions she has curated and co-curated include *Egypt's Golden Age*, *A Divine Tour of Ancient Egypt*, *Ramesses the Great*, *Pharaohs of the Sun*, *The Secrets of Tomb 10A* and *Ancient Nubia Now*. Her upcoming book on Nubian art has been accepted for publication by the Getty Museum Press.



Right photo: Karnak-Pillars of Great Hypostyle Hall

Schedule by Day

SATURDAY, MARCH 23 & SUNDAY, MARCH 24

Home / Amman, Jordan

Depart home on international flights to Amman. Arrive March 24th and transfer to the five-star Mövenpick Resort at Petra, just steps from the entrance to the ancient city. Spend the evening getting settled and enjoying views over the stunning desert landscape from the hotel's rooftop garden restaurant. Movenpick Resort Petra

MONDAY, MARCH 25

Petra

Embark on a full-day guided tour through the UNESCO World Heritage site of Petra, one of the true marvels of the ancient world. Reaching its height in the 1st century A.D., the "Rose City" (so nicknamed for the color of its stone) was carved from the sandstone cliffs surrounding the settlement, growing to become one of the most important trading centers of its time. In the evening, enjoy a gala dinner event held under the star-filled desert sky at a nearby Nabatean village, with traditional music and dance entertainment. Movenpick Resort Petra (BLD)

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

Petra / Aqaba / Embark

Join an optional morning walk through Petra in the cool morning if desired, or

relax at the hotel before a drive to the otherworldly desert landscape of Wadi Rum for a traditional Bedouin lunch. Venture into the sands on an optional four-wheel-drive excursion around the surrounding hills or take a stroll along trails from the tented encampment before returning to Aqaba to board the *Hebridean Sky*. On board, enjoy a welcome reception with staff and crew, dine with the group, then relax in your room, at the ship's bar, or on deck as the ship navigates the Gulf of Aqaba toward the Red Sea. *Hebridean Sky* (BLRD)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

At Sea

Relax on board during a full day at sea, cruising between Egypt's Sinai desert and the coast of Saudi Arabia, then into the Red Sea along the Saudi coastline. Enjoy the continuation of the expert lecture series, providing historical context as well as the modern significance of sites and excursions along the journey. *Hebridean Sky* (BLD)

THURSDAY, MARCH 28

Mada'in Saleh, Saudi Arabia

Dock at Al Wajh, Saudi Arabia and board a motorcoach for a ride through the desert to the UNESCO World Heritage archaeological site of Mada'in Saleh, the historic Nabataean trading city with close ties to Petra. This southernmost outpost of the ancient Spice Route is similar to Petra with its massive carved rock facades, but far less visited.

Your guide will help you explore and understand this "Capital of Monuments." Return to the ship for dinner on board and depart for Egypt. *Hebridean Sky* (BLD)

FRIDAY, MARCH 29

Luxor, Egypt

Cross the Red Sea to disembark in Safaga, Egypt, for a drive to Luxor and the famed open-air Karnak Temple Complex, whose construction of hundreds of temples spanned nearly 2,000 years across the reign of 30 pharaohs. Take in the grandeur of Luxor Temple at sunset, known in its day as the Southern Sanctuary, famous for its iconic obelisks and avenue of sphinxes. Overnight in Luxor at the luxurious Sonesta St. George Hotel, situated on the banks of the Nile. Sonesta St. George (BLD)

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

Valley of the Kings

Depart the hotel this morning and descend into the earth to explore some of the amazing hieroglyphics and painted walls of the royal tombs dug into the rocky grounds of the Valley of the Kings, including the beautifully decorated tomb of Seti I and the tomb of young pharaoh Tutankhamun. Return to the ship in the afternoon and enjoy lectures that preview upcoming site visits while cruising up the Gulf of Suez toward Cairo. *Hebridean Sky* (BLD)

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Left photo: Mada'in Saleh / Left Photo: Knossos

SUNDAY, MARCH 31

Cairo

Call at Sokhna and drive to Cairo, where you'll experience the sole remaining relic of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World: the Pyramids (and the Great Sphinx) at Giza. Soak in the atmosphere in the morning with an expert guide to reveal the latest insights on the construction, meaning, and continued significance of these historic creations. After a lunch featuring local cuisine, take a tour of the new Grand Egyptian Museum, featuring a comprehensive, multi-millennium-spanning collection of golden relics.

Hebridean Sky (BLD)

MONDAY, APRIL 1

Suez Canal

This will be no ordinary day at sea, as the *Hebridean Sky* sails through the Isthmus of Suez along the 120-mile-long Suez Canal. Stay on deck to watch the nearby landscape and shipping traffic as the vessel completes the transit process. The lecture series aboard will highlight the historic significance of the canal, from the ancient times of the Silk Road connecting Europe with Asia, to the 1859-1869 construction of the canal and the impact it has had on trade and politics ever since. *Hebridean Sky* (BLD)

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

At Sea

Enjoy a full day on board as the *Hebridean Sky* crosses the Mediterranean Sea. Relax in the lounges, on deck, or in your suite, and preview upcoming Greek ports of call with continued insight from expert lecturers.

Hebridean Sky (BLD)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

Knossos, Greece

Dock at Heraklion, the capital of the historic and beautiful Greek Island of Crete. In the morning, join a guided tour through the Bronze Age archaeological site of Knossos, considered by many to be Europe's oldest city, with colorful remnants of its ancient Palace. Feast on a traditional Cretan lunch featuring local delicacies accompanied by a wine tasting that Bacchus would have approved of, only fitting on an island that was producing wines more than 3,500 years ago. After lunch, continue your exploration of Knossos and return to the ship for a farewell dinner. *Hebridean Sky* (BLRD)

THURSDAY, APRIL 4

Athens

Disembark in Athens for a day of guided and independent touring. Begin with an expert-led tour of the iconic white marble structures of the Acropolis, including the famed Parthenon. Stop at a local restaurant

for a gala farewell lunch with the group, then choose either a transfer to the hotel for time at leisure or a guided tour through the Acropolis Museum before a free evening of independent exploration.

Hotel Electra Metropolis (BL)

FRIDAY, APRIL 5

Transfer to the airport for flights home or begin the optional 2-night post-tour extension. (B)

Optional Extensions

MARCH 20–24, 2024

Jordan

Visit history-rich Amman, Jerash, Mt. Nebo, and Madaba during three full days in Jordan, including the Jordan Museum and Crusader-constructed Shobak Castle.

APRIL 5–7, 2024

Greece

Explore the National Archaeological Museum in Athens and the nearby Peloponnese Peninsula, with stops at the Corinth Canal, Nemea, Nafplio, Mycenae, and Epidaurus.

Further information will be sent to confirmed participants.

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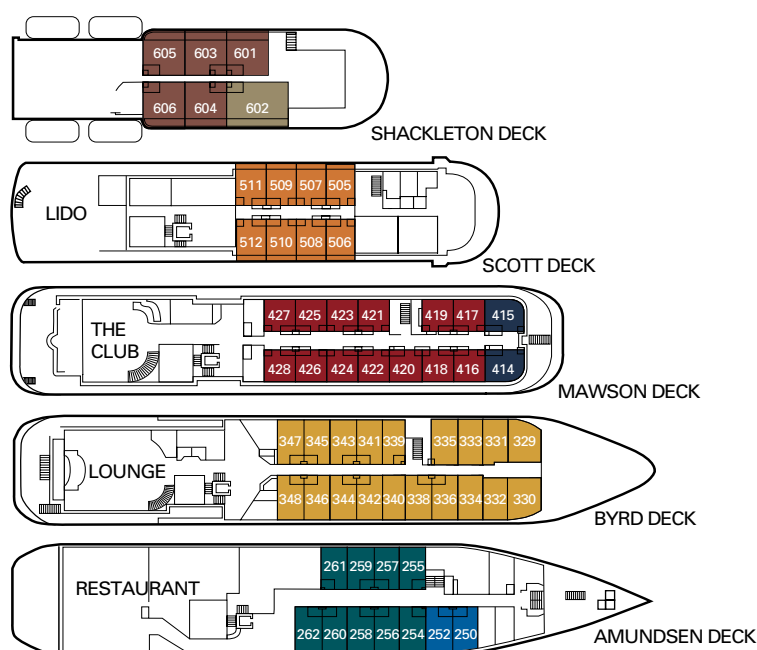
Hebridean Sky

The all-suite *Hebridean Sky* is a spacious, yet intimate, expedition vessel. After a major refurbishment in 2016 and further enhancements since, she now boasts beautifully designed public spaces that include a large lounge, elegant club and bar with piano, library, and two outdoor seating areas. All suites have an ocean view and feature a sitting room, en suite bathroom, TV, spacious wardrobes and dressing table. An elevator services all passenger cabin decks. Wifi is available on board, though signal strength varies depending on location and demand. The *Hebridean Sky's* chefs prepare quality international meals, predominantly Western-style, served at a single open seating. A friendly crew provides exceptional, personalized service, with more than a 1:2 crew-to-passenger ratio. The ship features advanced satellite navigation and communication equipment, roll stabilizers and a fleet of Zodiac landing craft.



Rates per Person

CATEGORY		DOUBLE	SINGLE
A	STANDARD SUITE (FORWARD) Portholes; 238 sq. ft.	\$11,990	\$17,990
B	STANDARD SUITE Portholes; 238 sq. ft.	\$13,990	\$19,590
C	SUPERIOR SUITE Picture window; 226–241 sq. ft.	\$15,990	\$23,990
D	PREMIUM SUITE Picture window; 221 sq. ft.	\$16,490	—
E	CORNER SUITE Picture windows; 224 sq. ft.	\$16,990	—
F	DELUXE BALCONY SUITE 221 sq. ft., plus 40 sq. ft. balcony	\$17,990	—
G	OWNER'S BALCONY SUITE 245 sq. ft., plus 83 sq. ft. balcony	\$18,990	—
H	HEBRIDEAN SUITE 349 sq. ft. plus 83 sq. ft. balcony	\$19,990	—



PROGRAM RATES INCLUDE All accommodations, meals, and excursions as specified in the itinerary, including four hotel nights and eight nights aboard *Hebridean Sky* • Comprehensive program of briefings, lectures, and presentations • Group transfers on group arrival and departure dates • Gratuities to porters, wait staff, guides, drivers, and shipboard personnel for all group activities • Entrance fees and port charges • Welcome and farewell wine receptions • House wine, beer, and soft drinks with all group lunches and dinners • Complete packet of pre-departure information • Professional tour manager 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.



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

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



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