



ADVENTURES IN ARCHAEOLOGY IN 2025



SET SAIL IN 2025



## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR 2025 TRAVEL TO EUROPE: EES & ETIAS**

If you are travelling outside of the UK from November 2024 onwards, new mandatory border checks (EES – Entry & Exit System for Visiting the EU) and travel authorisation requirements (ETIAS – European Travel Information Authorisation System) will affect your holiday. Further details can be found at <http://travel-europe.europa.eu>

# SET SAIL IN 2025

Dear Traveller

Welcome to our second edition dedicated cruise brochure for 2025, showcasing a selection of spectacular tours to handpicked destinations. Our exciting cruise programme has proven extremely popular, and whether you are looking to take your first cruise with us or have enjoyed several, you are guaranteed a memorable experience with Andante Travels.

Just imagine relaxing on your ship's sun deck and taking in the rolling hills, iconic landmarks and quiet villages of a picturesque river or enjoying the onboard activities and exploring the various ports of call on an ocean cruise. Whichever you choose, cruising is a wonderful way to soak up the vistas of your chosen destination and gain a different perspective from a host of different waterways. From the Rhône's most important archaeological sites to the Moorish wonders along the Guadalquivir and Guadiana in Spain, there are several returning favourites for 2025. Or, our new Antiquity of the Aegean cruise takes you to the heart of ancient Greek mythology and features fascinating palaces, sanctuaries, tombs, and – of course – the Athenian Acropolis. Featuring the Celestial Journey, this larger vessel provides all the best features of a mid-sized ship – a relaxing spa, a swimming pool, a choice of lounges and bars plus sunbathing decks to admire the passing scenery – bliss!

We are pleased to also present an exciting, brand-new tour; *Vietnam, The Mekong & Cambodia*, where atmospheric cities, enchanting forests and architectural grandeur await on an 18-day trip with an 8-night cruise included. With the highlight being the magnificent temple complex of Angkor Wat, you can expect a wonderful exploration of the Mekong and its waterways, combined with the fascinating history, culture and delicious regional cuisine of both Cambodia and Vietnam.

These cruises combine our usual captivating site visits with the comfort of a waterborne 'hotel,' with our wonderful tour staff on board to answer questions and offer company when needed. Just like our land-based tours, all our cruises include everything in the price, from offshore excursions and all meals, with wine at dinner, to site donations and tips to drivers and hospitality staff. All that is left for you to do is satisfy that souvenir craving!

We do hope you enjoy browsing our latest brochure and we look forward to welcoming you on board in 2025.



*Jackie Willis*

CEO

## GET IN TOUCH WITH AN EXPERT

If you are interested in joining one of our cruises and want to know more, please do give our Specialist Travel Executives a call today. They are ready to help with all of your questions.

01722 786 543 | [ANDANTETRAVELS.CO.UK](http://ANDANTETRAVELS.CO.UK)

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## Sail for less with our Special Offers

### Book by 14th October 2024

#### 2025 SPECIAL OFFER - SAVE up to £550pp\*

Enjoy a saving on all our cruises departing in 2025. See our tour pages for the saving you can make on each departure date.

**Offer ends 14th October 2024.**

#### PAY IN FULL - AN ADDITIONAL SAVING OF 10%

If you pay in full at the time you book, you can take advantage of an additional 10% discount.

**Offer ends 14th October 2024.**

#### TERMS & CONDITIONS:

*We reserve the right to withdraw special offers at any time and they are not valid for any bookings on private groups, travel agent bookings or Study Days.*

*2025 SPECIAL OFFER: The discounts advertised are off the full selling price. Valid for new bookings only made up until 14th October 2024, and on a limited number of places on each tour departing in 2025. \*The discount of £550 per person applies to our Vietnam, The Mekong & Cambodia tour departing on 23rd March 2025 p16. These discounts can only be combined with the other offer detailed on this page.*

*PAY IN FULL - AN ADDITIONAL SAVING OF 10%: The 10% discount is applied to the remaining balance after any discount, customer holiday vouchers or credit notes have been applied. Valid for new bookings only made up until the 14th October 2024, on tours departing in 2025, and on a limited number of places on each tour departure. This discount can only be combined with the other offer detailed on this page.*

## Travel with the experts

Winners of a Feefo 2024 Gold Trusted Service Award for excellence in customer service, also winning a silver at the British Travel Awards 2023 for the Best Travel Company to Italy/Western Mediterranean Islands. And, our very own John Shepherd won the Wanderlust World Guide Award - History & Culture 2023.





# CRUISING WITH ANDANTE TRAVELS

We want you to have a wonderful cruise experience and we have carefully chosen the itineraries, cruise lines and ships for our tours. The size of the cruise ships for our cruises means that they can stop at smaller ports and are well suited to our archaeological and historical cruises. Many sites tend to be in remote locations which are challenging to reach and more easily accessed from our smaller vessels.

One of the highlights of sailing on these smaller vessels is the individualised attention and excellent service you can expect. Fewer passengers means that the crew have time to get to know their guests and build a rapport. Dedicated to making your holiday a delightful experience throughout, they can really make a difference to life on board from attending to special requests to fixing your favourite cocktail.

## ONBOARD EXPERIENCE

Every day is different on a small to mid-sized ship cruise and you can be as busy or as relaxed as you choose to be. We have some full days of site visits, making the most of what there is to see, some more relaxed days with half-day excursions and some days spent sailing.

As we've mentioned, there are many benefits to taking a cruise. One of these has to be the pleasure of not having to pay every time you want a glass of wine (and not having to remember whose round it is). Our cruises include drinks and have a wonderful variety of food on board, and some itineraries include welcome drinks receptions on the first day. More information about this can be found on each tour's specific page within our brochure.

Life on board will be very comfortable, with fantastic standards of cleanliness upheld and great attention to detail shown at every turn. Small to mid-sized ships also mean smaller passenger numbers, which in turn means there will always be somewhere to relax throughout your cruise - relaxation is at the heart of the experience! Cabins all have ensuite bathroom facilities in addition to TVs and other modern amenities, and our cruises typically have a selection of decks to choose from, meaning there is something on offer to suit every budget.

Our cruises are led by renowned Andante Guide Lecturers, who are part of the group rather than simply a leader - someone with whom to converse and laugh with at meal times, as well as someone who is there to share their academic expertise.

The cruises on offer have a slower pace, allowing you to sit back and really take in your surroundings with everything taken care of, but they are still filled with fascinating visits, memorable experiences and all the elements that create lasting holiday memories.

# OUR SUPERB EXPERT GUIDES

We see things differently! All of our guides have an incredible breadth of knowledge, a passion for their specialism and an admirable ability to convey information in an entertaining and engaging way. These are not just guest speakers who lecture on board, but experts who will accompany you offshore and shine a spotlight into the hidden corners and farthest reaches of the places you visit. With our guides you will always enjoy an intimate and privileged introduction to the destination you have chosen.



## JUST A SMALL SAMPLE OF THE LOVELY FEEDBACK WE RECEIVED ABOUT OUR GUIDES:

*"I enjoyed it enormously. Miranda was a superb tour manager, and looked after us so very well. I couldn't have asked for anything more from her. I enjoyed the cultural visits to the sites."*

*"Relaxing, informative, very good company. Felt secure and cared for throughout."*

*"Fascinating archaeology and museums, good company. Plenty to do but some relaxing too - cruise was a new experience and a good one!"*



### JOHN SHEPHERD

Winner of the Wanderlust World Guide Award - History & Culture 2023, John is a specialist in the study of ancient glass and has worked extensively in the field in Europe as an archaeologist, including France, Italy and Bulgaria. Much of John's career has been focused upon Roman provincial archaeology, working at the Museum of London for over 20 years. He leads tours exclusively for Andante Travels.

*Join John on Exploring the Archaeology of the Rhône p6 and Cruising Ancient Dalmatia p8*



### DR DORU BOGDAN

A researcher and lecturer at the University of Alba Iulia in Romania, Dr Doru Bogdan is a specialist in Roman archaeology and has also supervised an array of fascinating excavations. He also directed numerous archaeological excavations and research projects in Transylvania and the Lower Danube/Black Sea area of Dobrudja.

*Join Doru on the Moorish Wonders of the Guadalquivir & Guadiana p10*



### MIRANDA SPITHA

Miranda studied archaeology in Italy and is from Crete, so is very knowledgeable about history and contemporary life in Greece. She is an official registered Greek Guide and has accompanied many of our Greek tours in the past as Local Guide as well as Tour Manager. Miranda speaks excellent English, German and Italian.

*Join Miranda on Antiquity of the Aegean Cruise p12*



### MIRANDA BRUCE-MITFORD

Miranda specialises in social anthropology, literature, Buddhist Art & Architecture of South and Southeast Asia, and Oriental religious studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London University.

*Join Miranda on Vietnam, The Mekong & Cambodia p16*



# Exploring the Archaeology of the Rhône

*Greeks, Romans and Celts*

9 DAYS FROM £5,210pp

Activity Level ●●●○○

The Rhône was the major conduit of culture in France in Antiquity, transmitting Hellenic culture from Marseille, founded by Greeks in 600 BC, to the cities along the historic river. This cruise examines the role the river played in the ancient world as a channel of trade and culture, and showcases France's most important archaeological and historical sites.

## Tour highlights

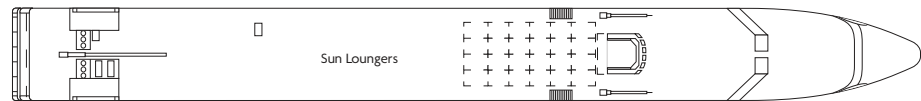
- Explore the exceptional amphitheatre and archaeological museum at Arles
- Visit the Palais des Papes in Avignon, home to the Popes in the 14th century
- View the iconic Pont du Gard, one of the world's most famous aqueducts
- Examine the important site of Glanum with its famous Triumphal Arch and mausoleum
- Enjoy exclusive Andante excursions during the cruise

## MS Van Gogh

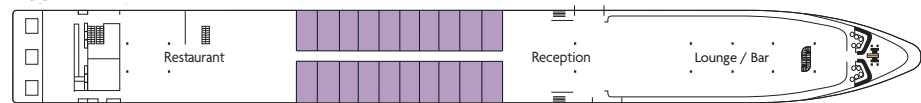
Having been renovated in 2018, the MS Van Gogh has been redesigned to offer bright and beautiful spaces. The two main common areas are located on the upper deck, with the lounge/bar at the front and the restaurant at the back. The ship has 20 cabins on the upper deck which offer French balconies and 34 cabins on the main deck with windows. You can also rest and admire the landscapes on the sun deck. Cabins are 16.5 m<sup>2</sup> in size include a TV, telephone (for internal calls), safe, independent air-conditioning, electricity 220V, Wi-Fi, ensuite bathroom with shower, hairdryer, selection of bath products and towels.



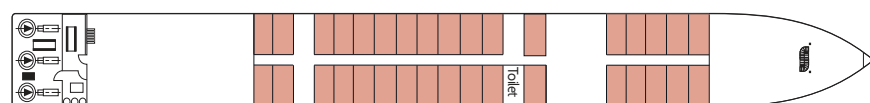
### Sun Deck

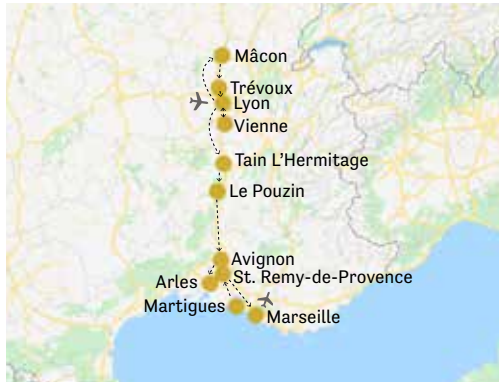


### Upper Deck



### Main Deck





### Day Four | Lyon - Tain L'Hermitage

We wake up in Lyon and spend the morning there before our afternoon sailing to Tain L'Hermitage, famous for its wines as well as for Valrhona, one of the world's most important chocolatiers.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** This morning we embark on a walking tour of Lyon. Here we explore the Jardin Archaeologique, which preserves remains of the ancient Church of Sainte Croix, built on top of ancient remains, as well as the Church Saint Etienne, dating to the 4th century AD.

### Day Five | Tain L'Hermitage - Le Pouzin - Avignon

We awake at the stunning little town of **Tain L'Hermitage**, famed for its wines, whose vineyards can be seen on the hills facing the river. After a little time at leisure here, we return to the ship and then sail south to the medieval city of Avignon. During this day of sailing, we can relax on board, and our Guide Lecturer will arrange a lecture for us as to what we can expect over the remaining days of the cruise.

### Day Six | Avignon - Arles

This morning we wake up in Avignon, the historic city which became home to the Popes in the 14th century and which continued to be held by them until the French revolution, ensuring that it was adorned by a series of artists working to make the city fit for the papacy. In the afternoon, we sail to Arles, ancient Arelate, which became a very important city in Gallia Narbonensis. In the evening we sail to Martigues.



**Exclusive Andante excursion:** We spend the morning exploring the **Palais des Papes**, the largest Gothic palace in Europe and decorated by important artists such as Simone Martini and Matteo Giovanetti. From there we drive to Arles to see the incredible **amphitheatre** and we also explore the important collection of artefacts at the **Museum of Ancient Arles**.

### Day Seven | Arles - Martigues

We wake in Arles and disembark. We spend the morning exploring the stunning natural habitat of the **Camargue**, the largest wetland in Western Europe and famed for its wide variety of wetland birds and white horses. We rejoin the MS Camargue in Port St. Louis and enjoy a gala dinner this evening as the ship sails on to Martigues.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** After lunch on board, we head out to explore the ancient remains of Marseille, the city which has remained important since its Greek foundation in the 7th century BC. Here we explore the **Marseille History Museum** as well as the remains of the Greek walls and Roman docks in the **Jardin des Vestiges**.

### Day Eight | Martigues - Glanum

This morning we disembark and set off for the stunning **Pont du Gard**, perhaps one of the most striking and well-preserved Roman ruins in France. Built in the 1st century AD, it carried water from Uzès to ancient Nemausus, a masterwork of Roman engineering, which remained largely intact because of its use as a customs bridge. In the afternoon, we visit the well-preserved site of **Glanum**, which was never as wealthy as Arelate or Nemausus but which, nonetheless, was able to produce showy remains as the Mausoleum of the Julii and the Triumphal Arch built during the reign of Augustus.

### Day Nine | St. Remy-de-Provence - Marseille - London

Time permitting, we have a walk around the charming town of St. Remy-de-Provence before travelling to Marseille to take our return flight back to London.

**Please note that this cruise is onboard the MS Camargue on the 11th July departure date.**

*Please note that the itinerary can be subject to change before the cruise departs or during the cruise depending on adjusted sailing times and/or any port restrictions.*

## Your expert guide

### John Shepherd

Winner of the Wanderlust World Guide Award - History & Culture 2023, John has worked extensively in the field in Europe as an archaeologist, including France, Italy and Bulgaria.



## Your comprehensive expert guided tour includes

- Expert Guide Lecturer & Professional Tour Manager
- Exclusive Andante excursions with entry to all sites as stated in the itinerary
- An excursion to the Camargue wetland with Croisi Europe, shared with other passengers
- Field Notes
- All taxes (including port taxes) & gratuities

### Included travel

- Return flights from London & all local transport

### Accommodation

- 1 night at the Fourviere Hotel or similar, 6 nights aboard the MS Camargue or MS Van Gogh & 1 night at a hotel in St. Remy

### Culinary inclusions

- 8 breakfasts, 7 lunches & 8 dinners
- At hotels: water with all meals, wine & tea or coffee with dinner
- MS Camargue (July) & MS Van Gogh (September): welcome cocktail and all on board drinks\*, served in the restaurant and in the bar to include tea, coffee, soft drinks, beers, and a selection of wines, cocktails and long drinks

*\*Premium branded drinks at own cost*

### Dates & prices per person

**11th - 19th July & 11th - 19th September**

	Twin/DbI Share	SS
Main Deck Outside Cabin with a high window	£5,510	£5,210 £825
Upper Deck Outside Cabin with French balcony and sliding windows	£5,630	£5,330 £825

**Save £300pp with our 2025 Special Offer**

For full details of this tour visit [andantetravels.co.uk/arnc](http://andantetravels.co.uk/arnc)

### Day One | London - Lyon

After landing at Lyon Airport, we transfer to our hotel and time permitting, visit the wonderful Gallo-Roman Museum of **Lyon-Fourviere**, as well as the adjacent Roman theatre built in the 1st century BC.

### Day Two | Vienne

This morning we travel to Vienne, the erstwhile capital of the Allobroges made into a colonia by Julius Caesar. We explore its Roman remains, including the well-preserved **Temple of Augustus and Livia**, built in the 1st century AD, and the nearby **Jardin Archaeologique de Cybele**, which bears precious remnants of the ancient city and the **Roman Museum**. Later, we venture to the site of **Saint Romain en Gal** with its excellent museum. Here you will find artefacts and mosaics from one of the largest Gallo - Roman settlements in the Rhone Valley. We return to Lyon to join our ship and sail to Macon in the evening.

### Day Three | Mâcon - Trévoux

This morning, we wake in Mâcon, a city famous for its beautiful positioning on the Saône and which produces some of the world's finest wines. From here, we set off for our archaeological explorations. We return to the ship in Trévoux and enjoy another evening of dining and cruising.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** Today we visit the **Roche de Solutré**, a prehistoric site that was the centre of Solutrean palaeolithic culture. Here, we will also visit the **Prehistoric Museum** world before continuing to the world-famous abbey at Cluny, a Benedictine monastery that was destroyed during the French Revolution, but whose remains testify to its power and wealth.



# Cruising Ancient Dalmatia

*Journey to the jewels of the Dalmatian Coast*

8 DAYS FROM £4,020pp

Activity Level ●●●○○

We journey along the limpid Dalmatian coast and explore its historical and cultural jewels. Visit islands and coastal cities that have been shaped since antiquity, including the atmospheric Hvar with its medieval walls and well-preserved urban landscape that owes so much to its Venetian period, and Korcula, founded by Corcyra in the 6th century BC. The charm of the Dalmatia is its multi-layered history and exploring it aboard the MS Belle de L'Adriatique allows us to appreciate this magnificent coast the way it should be.

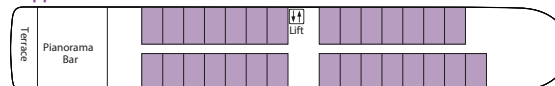
## Tour highlights

- Explore Diocletian's extraordinary palace in Split, including its basements and well preserved Peristyle
- Visit the improbably beautiful Dubrovnik with its evocative streets and the scenic 17th century stradun, which dissects the city
- Enjoy Korcula, a wonderfully preserved renaissance city forged in the period of Venetian domination
- Examine Kotor, one of the best-preserved medieval cities in the Adriatic with its Cathedral of St. Tryphon and its ancient walls

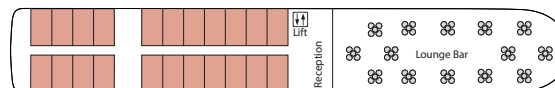
### Sun Deck



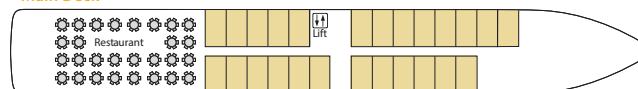
### Upper Deck



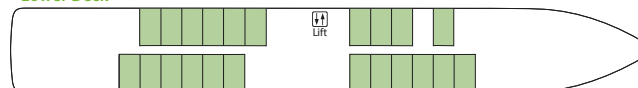
### Embarkation Deck



### Main Deck



### Lower Deck

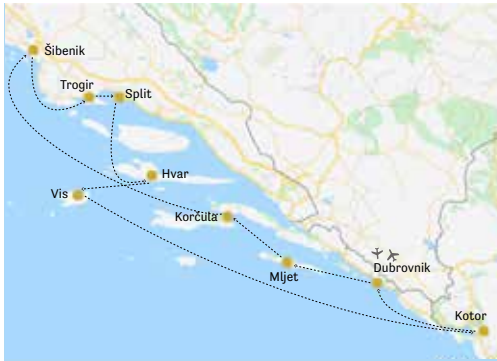


### MV La Belle de L'Adriatique

This premium rated ship has five decks and is comparable to a 4\* hotel. The restaurant is on the Main Deck, the Lounge Bar with dancefloor on the Embarkation Deck, and a smaller piano bar with terrace on the Upper Deck. The Sun Deck has a bar, two jacuzzis and sunloungers. Cabins are 13.5m<sup>2</sup> in size and include a TV, telephone (for internal calls), safe, independent air-conditioning, electricity 220V, Wi-Fi, ensuite bathroom with shower and toilet, hairdryer, a selection of bath products and towels.

Image: Šibenik & MV La Belle de L'Adriatique exterior





Europe. We proceed to **Loggia Square**, one of the most picturesque parts of the city.

### Day Three | Mljet & Korcula

We continue our cruise to Mljet, the most florid of the Dalmatian Islands. We spend time in the picturesque, verdant Mljet National Park this morning before sailing on to Korcula, where we spend the afternoon.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** Mljet, the greenest of the Dalmatian Islands awaits, where we visit the tranquil, beautiful **Mljet National Park**, home to five types of forest, myriad bird species and two deep lakes. Mljet also has a rich cultural heritage, with bright folk costumes and charming traditional handicrafts. We visit the **Roman Villa at Polace**, a spectacular late antique palace with impressive towers and an apsidal hall built perhaps in the 6th century. We proceed to the island of Korcula, reputedly the birthplace of legendary explorer Marco Polo, where we visit the **Cathedral of St. Mark**, a 15th century masterpiece influenced by Venice and complete with works by Tintoretto, as well as the **Korcula Town Museum**, housed in the 15th century Venetian style Gabrielis Palace.

### Day Four | Šibenik†

After sailing overnight, we arrive mid-morning at Šibenik, founded by the Croats in the 9th century AD. After lunch on board, we travel with other passengers to the city where our Guide Lecturer will lead us on an exclusive Andante tour separate from the main group. Occupied by the Venetians between the 15th and 18th centuries, the town has a splendid array of medieval buildings including the **Cathedral of St. James**, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Our afternoon ends at the Krka Falls.

### Day Five | Trogir & Split

After breakfast we visit the medieval city of Trogir and we arrive in Split after lunch for a walking tour.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** Our adventures take us to Trogir, a picturesque medieval and Renaissance town, founded by Greek sailors in the 3rd century BC. This town, whose Venetian historic centre is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is situated on a small island, linked to the mainland by bridge. Explore the town's museum, visit a tiny art gallery and marvel at the impressive **St. Lawrence Cathedral**. We acquaint ourselves with **Split**, beginning by tracing the walls and monuments of the immense **Palace of Diocletian**, interwoven with later medieval houses. Emperor Diocletian, one of the few emperors to

go into real retirement, cultivated his market garden in an attempt to avoid being sucked back into the power politics of the Roman world. We visit the **Cathedral of St. Domnius**, built to house Diocletian's mausoleum and now, ironically, a church dedicated to one of the many victims of Diocletian's persecutions. We continue to the **Temple of Jupiter**, now the cathedral baptistry, and the **Peristyle**, the city's elegant central square once central to the imperial palace.

### Day Six | Hvar & Vis

We arrive in sunny Hvar this morning and later sail on to Vis, once called Lissa and administratively linked to Hvar, or Lesina, under the period of Venetian domination.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** We explore the centre of Hvar, another walled gem enclosing eight centuries of stunning architecture. Highlights of our tour include a visit to the **Cathedral of St. Stephen**, built in the 17th century and a mixture of renaissance and gothic architecture so typical of the Dalmatian coast; the Venetian influence extends to the paintings, including works by Santacroce. We continue to the Arsenal, which houses a 17th century public theatre on the first floor and where Roman ruins have only recently been discovered. **Vis**, founded by Dionysius the Elder has an ethereal quality about it, as though it has avowedly refused to modernise. We visit well-preserved **Roman baths**, whose mosaics have only recently been restored, and continue to the 16th century **Franciscan monastery**, built on the foundations of an imposing Roman theatre which we can see from the outside.

### Day Seven | Kotor

Kotor in the last port of call of our Dalmatian adventure before we head back to the capital Dubrovnik.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** On our last excursion, we visit the Montenegrin town of Kotor, which has been given UNESCO status for its impressive Venetian walls. Here, basking in the charm of its Venetian architecture, we visit the **Cathedral of St. Tryphon**, consecrated in the 12th century and which preserves Byzantine frescoes, as well as an exquisite medieval ciborium.

### Day Eight | Dubrovnik - London

We disembark after breakfast and catch our return flight back to London.

*Please note that the itinerary can be subject to change before the cruise departs or during the cruise depending on adjusted sailing times and/or any port restrictions.*

## Your expert guide

### John Shepherd

Winner of the Wanderlust World Guide Award - History & Culture 2023, John has worked extensively in the field in Europe as an archaeologist, including France, Italy and Bulgaria.



## Your comprehensive expert guided tour includes

- Expert Guide Lecturer & Professional Tour Manager
- Exclusive Andante excursions with entry to all sites as stated in the itinerary
- Field notes
- All taxes (including port taxes) & gratuities

### Included travel

- Return flights from London & all local transport

### Accommodation

- 7 nights aboard the MV La Belle de L'Adriatique

### Culinary inclusions

- 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches & 7 dinners
- MV La Belle de L'Adriatique: welcome cocktail and all on board drinks\*, served in the restaurant and in the bar to include tea, coffee, soft drinks, beers, and a selection of wines, cocktails and long drinks

*\*Premium branded drinks at own cost*

### Dates & prices per person

**28th August - 4th September**

	Twin/Dbl Share	SS
Lower Deck Outside Cabin with porthole windows	£4,320	£4,020 £995
Main Deck Outside Cabin with porthole windows	£4,500	£4,200 £995
Embarkation Deck Outside Cabin with a panoramic window	£4,700	£4,400 £995
Upper Deck Outside Cabin with a panoramic window	£4,900	£4,600 £995

**Save £300pp with our 2025 Special Offer**

*†On this day we share the transport with other cruise passengers to and from a site or venue.*

For full details of this tour visit [andantetravels.co.uk/adcc](https://andantetravels.co.uk/adcc)

### Day One | London - Dubrovnik

We fly to Dubrovnik and transfer to the port to embark our ship, the MV La Belle de L'Adriatique. We spend the remainder of our day in the 'Pearl of the Adriatic', ahead of our welcome dinner on board.

### Day Two | Dubrovnik

Founded by Greeks in the 6th century and conquered briefly in more modern times by Venice, Dubrovnik was the capital of the mighty Republic of Ragusa. Our ship is moored here all day, allowing us to explore the beauties of the city, one of the most important sites on the Dalmatian coast.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** We spend the whole day exploring the city, starting with a visit to the **cathedral** dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady, before continuing to the stunning **Rector's Palace**, a Gothic structure that served as seat of the Rector who oversaw the Ragusan Republic. In the afternoon we continue our exploration of Dubrovnik, starting with the **Walls**, built from the 12th to the 17th centuries to protect the city, and some of the most complex in



Image: Mljet National Park



# Moorish Wonders of the Guadalquivir & Guadiana

*Exploring Andalucia and the Algarve on a cruise*

8 DAYS FROM £3,740pp

Activity Level ●●●○○

Called the Baetis in the Roman period, the Guadalquivir is the most important river in Spain, not just because it is the country's only navigable river but because it flows through Andalucia, the heartbeat of Iberian history. The Guadiana, in turn, meets the Guadalquivir at the Gulf of Cadiz, thereby linking the historically rich Andalucia with the Algarve.

## Tour highlights

- Admire the Alhambra dubbed by Arabic poets 'the pearl set in emeralds' and unique example of Moorish architecture transformed into a Renaissance palace in the 16th century
- Explore Italica, the oldest Roman city outside of Italy, and home to stunningly preserved remains unencumbered by later periods
- Examine the historic remains of Cádiz, including its extraordinary Phoenician and Roman remains
- Visit unique Mosque-Cathedral of Cordoba, a colourful blend of Islamic and Renaissance architecture

## MS La Belle de Cadix

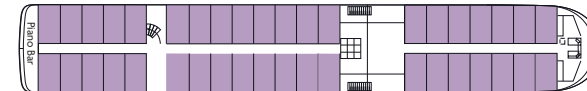
The light and bright MS La Belle de Cadix, comparable to a 4\* hotel, has four decks. The restaurant is on the Main Deck, the lounge and bar on the Middle Deck, the 'Pianorama' Bar is on the Upper Deck and there is a Sun Deck with chairs and deckchairs. Cabins are 13.5m<sup>2</sup> in size and include a TV, telephone (for internal calls), safe, independent air-conditioning, electricity 220V, Wi-Fi, en-suite bathroom with shower, hairdryer, selection of bath products and towels.



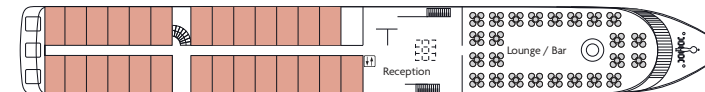
### Sun Deck



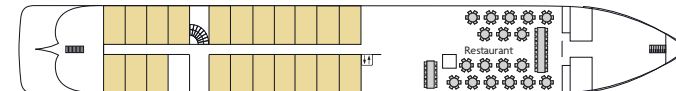
### Upper Deck



### Middle Deck



### Main Deck





### Day Three | Seville - Isla Minima

Today our ship is moored in the vibrant city of Seville before it departs in the afternoon for the Isla Minima set in the Marshlands of the Guadalquivir. Here we have a tour of an Andalusian hacienda before we sail to Cádiz.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** Today we visit two of Seville's UNESCO listed sites, starting with the **Real Alcázar**, built in the 14th century, an important example of mudéjar architecture, which is blending of Moorish and European styles. We continue a short distance to the **Cathedral of Saint Mary of the See**, the largest Gothic cathedral in the world built in order to signal the city's increased importance after the reconquista.

### Day Four | Cádiz

This morning we are in Cádiz, the important port which lays claim to being one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in Europe. Located on a spit of land surrounded by sea, Cádiz retains an old quarter which bears the remains of its ancient past.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** Today we explore the important city of Cadiz founded by Phoenicians in the 9th century BC. We start with the **archaeological museum**, which contains an important collection of artefacts from the city's vast history, before proceeding to the **Roman theatre**, built in the 1st century BC and once one of the largest theatres in the empire. We end the morning with a visit to the **cathedral** built in the city's heyday when the city was enriched by the Transatlantic trade. After lunch, we visit the archaeological site which contains the remains of the Phoenician settlement of **Gadir**.

### Day Five | Alcoutim - Huelva

Today we join the Guadiana which meets the Guadalquivir in Cadiz, and sail to Alcoutim, located in the Algarve, near the border, mid-morning. After a brief stay here, we sail the rest of the afternoon towards Huelva where we arrive in the evening.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** This morning we visit the 13th century **Moorish castle at Alcoutim**, whose imposing position on the right bank of the tributary river of San Marcos made it an important site from the Neolithic period onwards. The current castle belongs to the period of the reconquista when the Portuguese crown undertook defensive measures to stamp their authority over lands they gained.

### Day Six | Huelva - El Puerto de Santa Maria - Seville

We awake in the Huelva, where we spend the morning before sailing in the afternoon towards El Puerto de Santa Maria in the province of Cadiz. In the evening we re-join the Guadalquivir and sail back to Seville.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** Called on 'u ba by the Phoenicians who settled here and later renamed Onoba by Greeks, Huelva was an important Phoenician trading post, exchanging precious metals and fish with cities throughout the Mediterranean. This morning we explore this city's important past at the important **Huelva Archaeological Museum**.

After our exclusive Andante excursion in the morning, we enjoy an evening wine tasting in the area of El Puerto de Santa Maria with other cruise passengers.

### Day Seven | Granada

Having sailed through the night, we return to Seville and end our tour with one of the most impressive cities in Spain, Granada. In the morning we visit the incomparable **Alhambra**, first built as a fortress in the 9th century and turned into a palace fortress in the 14th century by the Emir of Granada. The Alhambra remains the most important witness to the great flourishing of the Muslim period of Andalusia, testament to the vibrant and cosmopolitan culture which made this part of the world unique.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** After lunch, we explore the **Archaeological Museum of Granada**, which sheds light on the city itself as well as on Andalusian history.

### Day Eight | Seville - London

After disembarking the ship, we end our tour by visiting one of the most important Roman sites in Spain, **Italica**. The ancient city, founded in the 3rd century BC, is one of the best preserved in Spain and includes an amphitheatre, a number of elite houses, as well as a Traianum, a shrine to the important emperor who was born there. In the afternoon, we take our return flight back to London.

*Please note that the itinerary can be subject to change before the cruise departs or during the cruise depending on adjusted sailing times and/or any port restrictions.*

## Your expert guide

### Dr Doru Bogdan

A researcher and lecturer at the University of Alba Iulia in Romania, Doru is a specialist in Roman archaeology and has also supervised an array of fascinating excavations.



## Your comprehensive expert guided tour includes

- Expert Guide Lecturer & Professional Tour Manager
- Exclusive Andante excursions with entry to all sites as stated in the itinerary
- A wine-tasting experience and an excursion to the Alhambra with Croisi Europe, shared with other passengers
- Field Notes
- All taxes (including port taxes) & gratuities

### Included travel

- Return flights from London & all local transport

### Accommodation

- 7 nights aboard the MS La Belle de Cadix

### Culinary inclusions

- 7 breakfasts, 7 lunches & 7 dinners
- MS La Belle de Cadix: welcome cocktail and all on board drinks\*, served in the restaurant and in the bar to include tea, coffee, soft drinks, beers, and a selection of wines, cocktails and long drinks.

*\*Premium branded drinks at own cost*

### Dates & prices per person

4th - 11th Sep	Twin/Db'l Share	SS
Main Deck Outside Cabin with a porthole window	<del>£3,990</del> £3,740	£690
Middle Deck Outside Cabin with a window	<del>£4,230</del> £3,980	£690
Upper Deck Outside Cabin with a large floor to ceiling window	<del>£4,430</del> £4,180	£690

**Save £250pp with our 2025 Special Offer**

For full details of this tour visit [andantetravels.co.uk/aggc](http://andantetravels.co.uk/aggc)

### Day One | London - Seville

We start our tour by flying to Seville and, time permitting, visit the **Metropol Parasol** in the city. Afterwards we join our ship, the MS La Belle de Cadix, in Seville.

### Day Two | Seville

We wake up in Seville, the capital of Andalusia, which was once the ancient city of Hispalis and later became enormously wealthy for its crucial role in the Trans-Atlantic trade.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** Today we venture to Cordoba where we begin our exploration with the **Medina Azahara**, the 10th century palace-city built in order to administer the capital. We continue to the city's **Jewish Quarter** where we see vestiges of the multi-cultural medieval city when the city gave rise to lush luminaries as Maimonides and Averroes. We end our visit of Cordoba with the world famous **Mezquita**, or Cathedral Mosque, erected in the 8th century.



Image: Cordoba



# Antiquity of the Aegean Cruise

*Discover Minoan and Hellenic Gems*

10 DAYS FROM £4,395pp

Activity Level ●●●○○

This wonderfully encompassing cruise arcs across the Aegean just as it spans through the rich history of the Greek Mediterranean. The Aegean has been the setting for so much in mythology and history from the Bronze Age, through the Minoan and Mycenaean civilisations, to Classical Greece and Ancient Rome and onward to the Byzantine age. We begin in Athens, the cradle of so much of western civilisation, and sail to the capital of Ancient Macedonia, Vergina, to visit Europe's richest tomb, that of Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great. Continuing to Ionia, we visit one of the most important cities in the ancient world, the prosperous Ephesus which links ancient Greece to Christianity on its route westward. The island of Delos, at the centre of the Cyclades, was not only the site of a major sanctuary dedicated to Apollo, who was born with his twin sister, Artemis, on that island, but was also a major trade centre on account of its location as a stepping point between east and west. The island is surrounded by the Cyclades, which not only give us the striking Cycladic art but also the nearly iconic topography of Greek islands. To the south we visit Crete, the fifth largest island in the Mediterranean, which is not only a stunning island in terms of its natural beauty, but it is also the birthplace of the Minoan civilisation that became prosperous through Mediterranean trade from early times and into the Bronze Age. Not far from Crete, we venture to the volcanic island of Santorini, to explore its remarkable Minoan remains and to consider the impact its eruption had on early Greek history. Lastly, we visit Milos, which might be more famous for its statue of Venus but is more important for its Bronze age remains.

## Tour highlights

- Explore the Athenian Acropolis, the sanctuary in the heart of Athens, with the iconic Erectheum and Parthenon
- Gaze at the Royal Tombs in Vergina including that of Philip II, complete with stunning frescos and gold grave goods
- Wander through the stunning city of Ephesus, famed for its rich architecture, including the Library of Celsus in Ephesus
- Visit the Minoan Palace of Knossos, the centre of Europe's oldest civilisation
- Examine the staggering remains on Delos, including Sanctuary of Apollo, birthplace of the god and his twin sister, Artemis
- Learn about Phylakopi and the important Bronze Age history of Milos, source of obsidian and sulphur in ancient times



Images: Ephesus, Celestyal Journey Exterior Cosmos Cabin and ship exterior

## Celestyal Journey

Celestyal Journey is a medium sized ship, comparable to a good 3\* hotel. Comprising of 14 decks with 630 cabins and suites located across 5 of them, the remaining decks offer a wealth of facilities and amenities. The restaurants included in our cruise package are The Taverna which is buffet style and the Thalassa Restaurant which is a la carte. There are plenty of bars and lounges on board to relax in and reflect on the day, including the Blue Bar and Lounge, the Martini Piano Bar and Lounges and the Ocean Bar and Lounge. The main area for entertainment is in the Ampitheatre Show Lounge. Other facilities onboard include a casino, small shops, a gym, a health & beauty spa, Jacuzzi, sauna and relaxation room. Wi-fi is payable onboard.

There are 2 swimming pools onboard; the Galazio Pool & Terrace with sunloungers, a small bar and seating on Deck 10, and the Halara Cove Pool on Deck 11 which has sunloungers, a bar, seating areas and the Fig & Honey juice bar and gelato stand close by. There is a further sunbathing area on Deck 12.

Our Exterior Cosmos cabins (XD) located on Deck 5 or Deck 9 are 19m<sup>2</sup> in size with a window. Amenities include a TV, telephone (for internal calls), safety deposit box, individually controlled air-conditioning, a hairdryer and an ensuite bathroom with a shower over a bathtub. The 2 lower single beds can be pushed together on request to make a double, and there is also a small sofa.

## Key Facilities & Amenities Onboard

Deck 6 = Walking around deck

Deck 7 = Ampitheatre Show Lounge, Thalassa Restaurant, Photo Shop & Gallery, Reception and Atrium

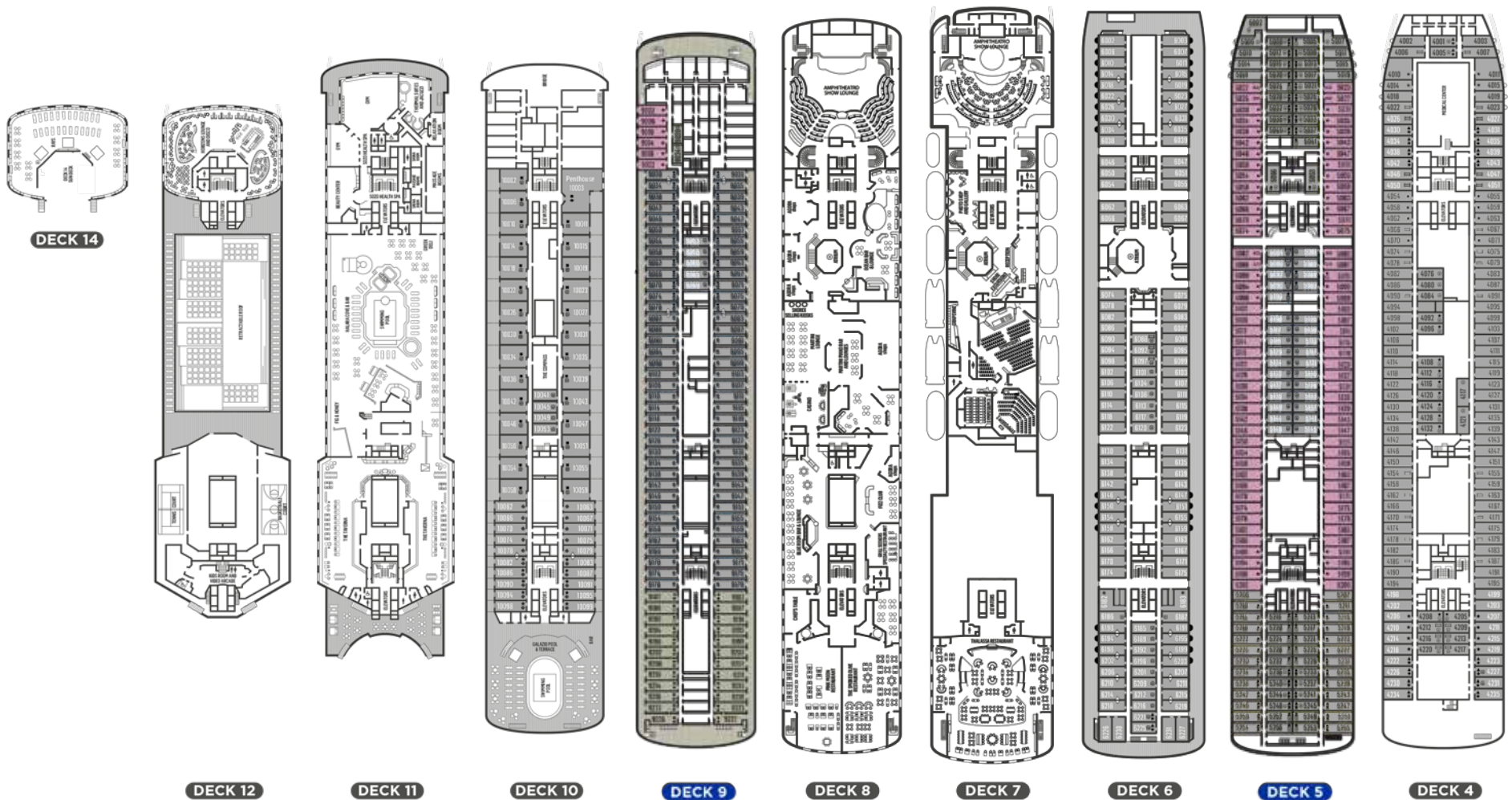
Deck 8 = Restaurants, Bars, Lounges, the Casino, Agora Shops

Deck 10 = Galazio Pool & Terrace, Bar, Sunbathing Area

Deck 11 = The Taverna Restaurant, Halara Cove Swimming Pool, Sunbathing Area, Fig & Honey, Health & Wellness Facilities

Deck 12 = Horizons Lounge & Disco, Sunbathing Area, Sports Activities

Deck 14 = Sundeck sunbathing Area





state of the art museum but it has an archaeological area, which includes baths, houses and workshops.

### Day Three | Athens

This morning we head out on foot to the **Agora**, once the city's market centre and also the site of its mint and where legal trials were held, including that of Socrates. Here we see the remarkably well-preserved Doric Temple of Hephaistos, which overlooks the Agora. We also see remnants of Athenian democracy, such as the kleroterion which was used to select names at random in order to allocate the various magistracies which were responsible for running the city. Moving on to the Stoa of Attalus, which also serves as the **Agora Museum**, we remember the many philosophers which used it and other stoai to meet their followers and discuss their views of the world. We continue to the extensive and important **Kerameikos cemetery**, named after Keramos, the son of Dionysus and Ariadne. A usually peaceful site infrequently visited by tourists, this was a major crossroads in antiquity, and you can see remains of the massive **Dipylon Gate**, where most roads converged, and the **Sacred Gate**, where participants in the Panathenaic Festival gathered before heading through the Ancient Agora and ascending to the Parthenon. It is also the spot where Pericles gave what was probably his most famous speech honouring those who had fallen in the first year of the Peloponnesian War. After lunch we make our way to the ancient port of Piraeus, where we embark upon our ship Celestyal Journey. After settling into our cabins, we have our first dinner on board and set sail toward Thessaloniki.

### Day Four | Thessaloniki

Thessaloniki is today Greece's second largest city and boasts of being more cosmopolitan than Athens. Founded in the end of the 4th century BC by Cassander, the son in law of Philip II, it rose in importance in the Roman period, becoming the capital of the province of Macedonia. In the morning we join an excursion to visit the Royal Tombs at Aegae, modern Vergina. Here, in the company of our Andante Guide Lecturer we explore the extraordinary royal tombs, including the tomb of Philip II, the father of Alexander, which includes his shield and breast plate, as well as the god casket which bears his remains and gold diadems

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** After lunch on board our ship, we explore the important remains of Thessaloniki, which have been proclaimed a UNESCO

world heritage site. An important city in Roman times, Thessaloniki rose to become the second most important city in the Byzantine period. Today, we visit the Roman forum as well as the agora before seeing the palace complex of Galerius, which include his triumphal arch and incredible rotunda, which was converted into a church in the late antique period and has an impressive series of mosaics. After dining on board, we set sail for Ephesus.

### Day Five | Kusadasi (Ephesus)

We arrive in Kusadasi and after lunch onboard we join other passengers on the Celestyal excursion to **Ephesus**. Probably originally a Hittite city, it was colonised by Attic and Ionian Greeks, becoming one of the richest cities in Asia Minor for centuries. Ephesus was famed for its gigantic temple and sanctuary of Diana/Artemis, which was built in around 550 BC and was reckoned one of the wonders of the ancient world. We visit the rich remains dating to the Roman period, which include the delightful Magnesium and Temple of Hadrian, as well as the agora and bath complex, complete with an intact latrine. We also explore remarkably well preserved terraced, two storey houses which were the height of comfort in the ancient world, having a hypocaust system which kept them warm in the winter. The highlight of the site is the Library of Celsus whose stunning façade is the symbol of the city.

Built by the son of the Roman senator, Tiberius Julius Celsus Polemaeanus, it doubled up as a monumental library and mausoleum. Ephesus was also an important Christian city and the ancient theatre, which could seat up to 24,000, was where St. Paul preached to the citizens. It is also the city that the apostle John the Beloved went to live with the Virgin Mary after the ascension of Jesus. In the evening, we board the ship to sail on toward Crete.

### Day Six | Heraklion

We awake in the beautiful Cretan city of Heraklion whose well-preserved 17th century; Venetian city fortifications can be seen from afar. We start the day with a trip to the neighbouring **Knossos**, where in the company of our Andante Guide Lecturer we explore the wondrous Minoan remains excavated and reconstructed by Arthur Evans in the beginning of the 20th century. One of the most famous sites in the world, Evans identified Knossos as the home of the legendary King Minos on the basis of the labyrinthine layout of the palace, which has since been identified as a city more than a palace. The complex is complete with beautifully coloured frescos, including those in the so called Throne Room and one depicting the famous bull-leaping scene. The Palace complex covers some three acres and has extensive functional aspects: large areas for storage of wine, oil and grain make use of large



Images top to bottom: Galazio pool & Thalassa restaurant onboard

pithoi. There is also sophisticated water management which makes use of aqueducts and cisterns. As well as the use of airshafts and porticos to make best use of the sea breezes in cooling the buildings in hot summers. We return to the boat for lunch and then venture back into the city for the afternoon.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** This afternoon, we take in the **Archaeological Museum**. Housed here are stunning remains and artefacts from the Minoan age. Many of the frescos from the archaeological sites are here as well as intricately worked jewellery. A highlight is the bull's head rhyton carved from black steatite and used to make ritual libations to the gods. The artefact shows the level of skill possessed by the Minoans in stone carving. Back on board we set sail onward to Santorini.

### Day Seven | Santorini

The ship is moored in the spectacular island of Santorini, famed for its natural beauty, as well as the eruption of volcano in the 17th century BC which shaped the island, making it horse shoe shaped, as well as Bronze Age, perhaps causing the decline of Minoan culture. The whole day is spent exploring the remains of the remarkable history and remains of the ancient island. Late evening we sail toward Mykonos.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** Our day begins at the **Prehistoric Museum in Fira**, home to dazzling wall paintings from the Minoan buildings at Akrotiri, including the fresco of the Blue Monkeys. There are also a large number of artefacts found in various excavations

from across the island. Cycladic art is prominent in the collections. This dates from the Middle period of 1800 to 2000 BC, and among the items on display is the noted statue of the golden goat, discovered in Akrotiri in 1999.

After lunch we visit **Akrotiri** which was buried and preserved in the volcanic debris and its archaeological excavation opens a window into the Minoan world. Artefacts from across the Mediterranean show extensive trade links while richly coloured and carefully executed frescoes point to the wealth and culture of the inhabitants. Among these paintings are the Fresco of the Monkeys. The houses themselves are sophisticated in design and execution, being on several stories and making use of drainage and water management systems.

### Day Eight | Mykonos (Delos)

We arrive in Mykonos in the early morning and see the iconic windmills support its nickname of the Island of the Winds. Today famed for its spectacular surroundings, in ancient times, Mykonos was a supply centre for nearby Delos. We spend the whole day exploring Delos, an important island, the birthplace of Leto's twins, the deities Apollo and Artemis. Late evening our ship sets sail for Milos.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** As well as housing the important **sanctuary of Apollo** and Artemis, the island was the base for the Delian League, set up as a defensive alliance of Greek city states against the threat from the Persian empire. It was also a major centre

in the Mediterranean slave trade even into Roman times. We spend the morning exploring the sanctuary including its propylon, as well as the **Terrace of the Lions** that overlook the Sacred Lake. In the afternoon, we continue our exploration with a visit to the theatre, as well as **Doric temples** as well as the remains of several houses, including the better-preserved ones of Dionysus and of Cleopatra.

### Day Nine | Milos

We arrive at the beautiful island of Milos, dramatically shaped by volcanic activity and explore its beautiful scenery. The blue of the water and the white of the stone are almost a caricature of the Cycladic islands. It was famous throughout history as a source of mined materials, in particular obsidian and sulphur. The island was visited by St. Paul, inadvertently on his voyage to Athens when he was shipwrecked. Christianity took root and remains of this early encounter are visible in the catacombs of Milos, which were the reason for the island's being declared a Holy Island in 2014. We sail back to Athens in the evening.

**Exclusive Andante excursion:** This morning, we venture to the Bronze Age site of **Phylakopi** which is particularly important because its remains span the entirety of the Bronze Age, from the 3rd millennium to the end of the Bronze Age in the 12th century. We continue to Klima where explore the Hellenistic and Roman remains, including a Roman amphitheatre that was carved into the rock, as well as an agora. Not far away, we also visit the archaeological remains of the Greek theatre. The morning ends with a visit to the Paleo-Christian Catacombs. After lunch back onboard, we head out in the afternoon to visit the Archaeological Museum which hosts a vast array of remains dating from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age periods, including Cycladic, Minoan and Mycenaean remains. The highlight of the museum is the so called Lady of Phylakopi, a 14th century BC terracotta statue.

### Day Ten | Athens - London

We arrive back at Piraeus in Athens. After disembarking our ship we transfer to the airport for our return flight to London.

*Please note that the itinerary can be subject to change before the cruise departs or during the cruise depending on adjusted sailing times and/or any port restrictions.*



Image: Acropolis, Athens

## Your expert guide

### Miranda Spitha

Miranda studied archaeology in Italy and is from Crete, so is very knowledgeable about history and contemporary life in Greece. She is an official registered Greek Guide and has accompanied many of our Greek tours.



## Your comprehensive expert guided tour includes

- Expert Guide Lecturer & Professional Tour Manager
- Exclusive Andante excursions with entry to all sites as stated in the itinerary<sup>1</sup>
- Excursion to Ephesus with Celestyal, shared with other passengers
- Field Notes
- All taxes (including port taxes) & gratuities

### Included travel

- Return flights from London & all local transport

### Accommodation

- 2 nights in an Athens hotel & 7 nights cruise aboard Celestyal Journey

### Culinary inclusions

- 9 breakfasts, 8 lunches & 9 dinners
- At hotel: water with all meals, wine & tea or coffee with dinner
- Celestyal Journey: drinks served with meals are teas, coffee, soft drinks, beers and house wines

*\*Premium branded drinks at own cost*

*<sup>1</sup>Please note that on some excursions we share the transport with other cruise passengers to and from a site or venue.*

### Dates & prices per person

**29th May - 7th June & 9th - 18th October**

Twin/DbI Share SS

Exterior Cosmos Cabin  
with window on Decks 5 or 9

£4,695 £4,395 £570

**Save £300pp with our 2025 Special Offer**

For full details of this tour visit  
[andantetravels.co.uk/aaac](https://andantetravels.co.uk/aaac)



# Vietnam, The Mekong & Cambodia

*Journey through the heart of Indochina on this unique and immersive tour*

18 DAYS FROM £9,445pp

Activity Level ●●●●○

Led by Miranda Bruce-Mitford lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London, this tour offers a splendid combination of travel by land and water, exploring the history, cultural complexities and staggering natural beauty of Vietnam and Cambodia. We uncover Vietnam's ancient past, partly shrouded in the myths of dragons and kings, and explore Cambodia's great Khmer kingdom centred at Angkor. We will also investigate sites relating to colonialism, communism, the Viet Cong and the Khmer Rouge in order to understand these nations' more recent history.

In Ho Chi Minh we board our river boat and embark on an exploration of the Mekong and its waterways. This vast, vibrant life-giving river starts as snowmelt in the Tibetan plateau and ends in the huge delta, renowned for its intricate network of canals and paddy fields before flowing into the South China Sea. Travelling along the narrow Chao Gao Canal, we cruise up the Delta towards Cambodia, relaxing into the rural way of life, stopping at villages, temples and pagodas along the way. Disembarking at Siem Reap, we continue to Angkor where we spend three days visiting the magnificent temple complexes built by the Angkor dynasty between the 9th and 13th centuries.

## Tour highlights

- Explore the iconic Angkor Wat temple complex, the largest religious monument in the world and an architectural marvel
- Enjoy a relaxed week cruising up the Mekong River, from Ho Chi Minh City along the Chao Bao Canal to Siem Reap, observing rural life in the Delta
- Discover Banteay Srei, an exquisite 10th century temple of pink sandstone with exceptional carvings
- Highlights in northern Vietnam include the stilt house and mausoleum of Ho Chi Minh, Tran Quoc Pagoda, the Cu Chi Tunnels and the Ho Chi Minh City Museum of History
- Spend a full day in Phnom Penh, Cambodia's capital where visits include the old Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda, and the National Museum of Cambodia



Image: Tran Quoc pagoda & Sa Dec market

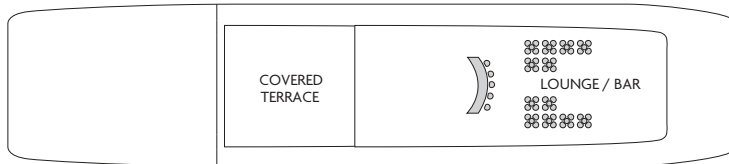


## RV Indochine I

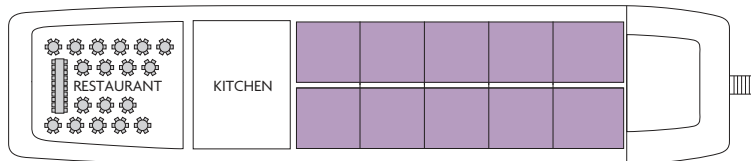
The RV Indochine I is an intimate-sized standard ship, made entirely of wood panelling, it combines colonial-style comfort and charm. A total of 24 cabins are spread over two decks, and the Upper Deck is where the restaurant is located which has large picture windows to allow guests to fully enjoy the surrounding environment while cruising. The Sun Deck has a lounge/bar with seating and a covered terrace. Cabins amenities include a safe, air-conditioning, dressing table, electricity 220V, an ensuite bathroom with sink, shower, toilet, hairdryer and bathrobes. Each cabin has large exterior windows that overlook the exterior passageway. Wi-Fi is available in public areas, free of charge.



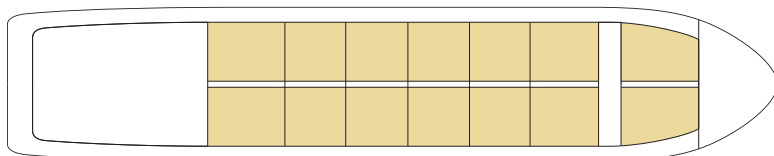
### Sun Deck



### Upper Deck



### Main Deck



### Day One & Two | London - Hanoi

We depart from London in the morning to take our flights to Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam. Arriving on Day Two, we transfer to our hotel and take the rest of the morning to acclimatise. After lunch, we spend the afternoon exploring some of the city with our Guide Lecturer, taking in **Ma May Ancient House**, an example of the traditional Hanoi shop-house, restored in 1999, we continue to **Bach Ma Temple**, thought to be the oldest temple in Hanoi, and **Chuong Gate**, the only remaining city gate, with its famous watchtower. Before dinner this evening we enjoy a performance by Vietnam's famous water puppets.

### Day Three | Hanoi

We explore more of this city today, first visiting the **Vietnam National Museum of History**, which contains bronzes from the Dong Son culture of 3 BC. In the afternoon we visit **Ho Chi Minh's simple traditional Stilt House**, his **Mausoleum**, which demonstrates the honour still paid to him today. We take a walk past the walls of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, a UNESCO World

Heritage Site built in the 11th century, to the **Temple of Literature**, a Confucian temple for scholars which dates from 1070.

### Day Four | Nom Village & West Lake

Leaving the hustle and bustle of the city behind we visit the 200-year-old **Nom Village**. The centre of this little town reveals a beautiful architectural complex. Our first visit is to the holiest place in the village, **Nom Pagoda**, embedded in a century-old pine forest which is famous for its ancient Buddhist statues. We then explore the narrow brick roads and visit another antique house and engage in a conversation with the host over a cup of traditional tea to learn more about local life and the traditions that define this community. Afterwards we head to **Long Thuong Village** which is home of a community of bronze casters since the 13th century. In the afternoon, we visit **Tran Quoc Pagoda**, a majestic and ancient Buddhist temple nestled on an island in Hanoi's West Lake.

*Continued...*



#### Day Five | Hanoi – Ho Chi Minh City

This morning we fly to Ho Chi Minh City. Formerly known as Saigon, it was the scene of key military events that shaped the war during the 1960's and 1970's and we spend the afternoon exploring sites associated with the city's recent past. We will visit the **Independence Palace** to see the 'war room' and the monument to **Thich Quang Duc**, the Buddhist monk who immortalized himself, photographed by Malcome Brown in 1963. We continue to the city's most famous

landmark - the **Reunification Palace** which is now preserved as a museum. Our afternoon ends at a former 'revolutionary' hideout, once the secret base operations of the Viet Cong now a museum with hidden tunnels.

#### Day Six | Ho Chi Minh

We start our day with a **walking tour of the city**. An ideal opportunity to gain an insight into this vibrant capital, exploring its atmospheric markets, walking through the narrow alleyways teeming with life to the wide streets lined with charming French-era architecture. Afterwards we join our fellow cruise

passengers at the Liberty Central Riverside Hotel for lunch and spend the afternoon together discovering the Reunification palace, Notre Dame cathedral and Central Post office. We will also visit **Cholon**, the Chinese-influenced section of the city, including its lively market and **Ba Thien Hau Pagoda** which is dedicated to the sea goddess Mazu. Afterwards we board our boat, the RV Indochine I, our home for the next eight nights of the tour. Before dinner we will meet the crew and enjoy a welcome cocktail.

#### Day Seven | Ho Chin Minh - Chao Gao Canal – Long An

We travel by coach to visit the notorious **Cu Chi tunnels**, a vast labyrinth of underground passages used by the Vietcong during the Vietnam War as hiding spots during combat, as well as serving as communication and supply routes, hospitals, food and weapon caches. In the afternoon we visit the **Ho Chi Minh City Museum of History** which houses a varied collection of artefacts reflecting early Vietnamese history and cultural heritage. Afterwards we return to our boat and cruise along the very narrow Chao Gao Canal.

#### Day Eight | Long An – My Tho – Cai Be – Sa Dec

After mooring overnight at Long An we cruise early morning for approximately three hours along the Chao Gao canal to arrive at My Tho where we have the first of two short visits today. The first of which is to visit **Vinh Trang Pagoda** one of the best-known Buddhist temples in the region which stands on a 2-hectre block filled with fruit trees and its architecture is an unusual blend of East Asian and European styles. After lunch back onboard we cruise on to Cai Be. Our visits this afternoon are to two rural industrial plants which produce bricks, pottery, rice paper and rice alcohol. Few tourists decide to peek behind the scenes here, but these traditional factories provide a fascinating glimpse into local commerce and how life works in the Delta.

#### Day Nine | Sa Dec – Chau Doc, Cambodia

A relaxing day today and we have plenty of time this afternoon to watch life along the river. In the morning we visit the **home of Huynh Thuy Le**, a Vietnamese merchant whose affair with a French girl became the subject of Margueritte Duras' autobiographical book 'The Lover'. The house itself is an interesting mixture of Vietnamese, Chinese and French styles. Before we return to our ship for lunch we have some free time in Sa Dec. This afternoon we sail to Cambodia, arriving in Chau Doc mid-late afternoon.

#### Day Ten | Chau Doc – Phnom Penh

Located on the border between Cambodia and Vietnam, the prosperous city of Chau Doc is home to a large Cham community, some of whom live in floating houses above fish farms. Early morning we visit **Ba Chua Xu Temple** and **Tay An Pagoda**, and then return to our ship mid-morning to continue cruising for the rest of the day to Phnom Penh, arriving early evening.

### Day Eleven | Phnom Penh

The capital of Cambodia, Phnom Penh is the most populated in the country and is located at the junction of the Mekong and Tonlé Sap rivers. A full day of exploration lies ahead, and we begin our day with a visit to the **Royal Palace**, one of the most impressive examples of Cambodian Architecture. Here we admire the Silver Pagoda which stands in its grounds so called because of the 5,000 silver tiles, weighing more than 5 tonnes, which cover its floor. It also houses many precious Buddha images. We continue to the **National Museum of Cambodia**, the city's largest museum of cultural history and is the country's leading historical and archaeological museum. After lunch we visit **Tuol Svay Prey High School** a former detention centre run by the Khmer Rouge during the civil war. There is free time afterwards to visit the market before making our way back to our ship. Before dinner this evening we enjoy a traditional Apsara dance show.

### Day Twelve | Phnom Penh – Koh Chen – Kampong Tralach – Kampong Prasat

Our day starts with a short visit to the small island of **Koh Chen**, located in the south of Tonle Sap Lake where craftspeople specialise in silver and copper work. After lunch onboard we arrive at Kampong Tralach to visit the vihara at **Wat Kampong Tralach Leu Pagoda**, an ancient Buddhist monastery dating back to the last century. In order to access the pagoda we need to cross the village of Kampong Tralach in “tuk tuk”, moving along a small road that runs perpendicular to the river in the middle of magnificent rice fields.

### Day Thirteen | Kampong Prasat – Kampong Chhnang – Prek Dam

This morning we visit **Kampong Chhnang**, one of the largest fishing ports on Tonle Sap Lake. The region is best known for its fine traditional pottery which is a major source of revenue for the entire country. After lunch on board we continue our cruise on Tonle Sap Lake, the largest freshwater lake in southeast Asia and the heart of the hydraulic system of the Mekong. On our last night on board we enjoy a farewell cocktail and gala dinner.

### Day Fourteen | Prek Dam – Siem Reap

We disembark our ship early in the morning and make the long journey (approximately 6 hours) to Siem Reap where we will leave our fellow cruise passengers and continue our tour. After lunch we visit the remote

temple complex of **Banteay Srei** ('Citadel of Beauty') where exquisite Angkorian reliefs shine out from pink sandstone, many as detailed and precise as if they had been carved only yesterday, not several centuries ago. It is dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva, the only Angkorean temple not built by a king. Among the many highlights here are the ornate library buildings, and the three central towers, adorned with deities.

### Day Fifteen | Siem Reap

Travelling by “tuk tuk” we start our day discovering one of Cambodia's lesser-known temples, **Ta Prohm**, a Buddhist monastery held together by banyan and strangler fig roots. Afterwards we explore the fortified city of **Angkor Thom**. An astounding location dominated by giant stone heads of the Buddha, and which features the stunningly carved ceremonial Terrace of Elephants and the Leper King, the temples of Phimeanakas, Baphoun and Bayon, and the Royal Palace. In the afternoon we visit some of the **Roluos** group of 9th century temples – some of the earliest Khmer structures ever found, and once the seat of the ancient Khmer capital Hariharalaya.



Image: Monument to Angkor Wat

### Day Sixteen | Siem Reap

An early start brings us to Cambodia's most famous wonder: the outstanding **Angkor Wat**. We cross the moat into the site just after sunrise and maximise our time exploring this enormous complex, with its assortment of Khmer capital buildings; a testament to the powers of this incredible civilisation. As well as taking in the site's best-known monuments, we also visit the smaller temples of **Ta Som**, **Preah Khan** and **Baray Reach Dak**, which are rarely visited by Western tourists. This afternoon, we will have some time at leisure.

### Day Seventeen | Siem Reap

Our morning is spent at the impressive **Angkor National Museum**. The museum's eight galleries cover the history of Khmer civilization, and it is particularly noted for its fine collection of sculpture from the Angkor period and later. We will have some free time this afternoon in Siem Reap ahead of our flight to Ho Chi Minh City where we enjoy dinner on our last night together as a group.

### Day Eighteen | Ho Chi Minh City - London

Our tour ends as we transfer to the airport for our return flight back to London.

## Your expert guide

### Miranda Bruce-Mitford

Miranda specialises in social anthropology, literature, Buddhist Art & Architecture of South and Southeast Asia, and Oriental religious studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London University.



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