

The Luck of the Irish

Aboard *Sylvia Earle* | 09 June - 20 June 2025



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Dublin

DAY 1 | Monday 09 June 2025

After a long journey to Dublin airport we met our Aurora Expeditions representative and were transferred to the Iveagh Garden Hotel Dublin. The hotel combines eco-friendly design with modern traditional luxury. It delivered an unbeatable central location: a short stroll to Grafton Street, St Stephen's Green, Trinity College, Temple Bar, and Dublin Castle.



Dublin

DAY 2 | Tuesday 10 June 2025

The size of Dublin made it ideal for a leisurely walking tour. This morning, our local guides entertained us with tales of the city's character-filled history.

[Morning experience: Dublin walking tour with Book of Kells](#)

Our local guide entertained us this morning on a walking tour of central Dublin. We heard stories of Ireland's emotional past through the eyes of its many artists, manic Lord Mayors and rebellious citizens whilst following the park-side alleys of Dublin's 'backyard', St Stephens Green, to the grand Georgian buildings of Ireland's first university, Trinity College. Our path slowed to hear quotes from Dublin's most flamboyant son, Oscar Wilde, passing the historic Huguenot cemetery enroute to our hotel.

Founded by Queen Elizabeth I, the grounds of the college offer 40 acres of academic seclusion from the hustle and bustle of downtown Dublin. Housed within its campus is the 1,200-year-old Book of Kells. This masterpiece of medieval art tells the story of the life of Jesus Christ through the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, making it one of Christendom's most important works.

This evening, we met Ireland's greatest exports, its people, with a self-guided tour of the award-winning EPIC - the Irish Emigration Museum. We discovered what it means to hold Irish heritage when you meet poets and presidents, singers, and suffragettes. We met famous folk and families, from Ned Kelly to the Kennedys, as we followed our souvenir-passport to find out where they came from, why they left and the difference they have made to our everyday lives. In true Irish style we then proceeded to the popular Urban Brewing restaurant for some Irish fare at our welcome dinner.





Dublin

DAY 3 | Wednesday 11 June 2025

Today we explored Dublin's past. If you have ever wondered what it might have been like for Irish emigrants to travel across the seas in the 1800s, this is your chance. Originally intended as a cargo ship the Jeanie Johnston converted her decks to carry a vastly different kind of cargo – desperate men, women and children who were fleeing the famine. Over a million Irish fled to new lands to avoid starvation. We walked in their footsteps as we strolled the upper deck of Jeanie Johnston, before taking a deep breath to go below deck to experience the cramped quarters, where up to 250 passengers spent over 23 hours a day during their seven weeks at sea. Continuing with the ancestry theme, we made our way to Glasnevin cemetery where the stories of 1.6 million people are faithfully preserved. Statues of shamrocks, high crosses and harps abound, each telling a tale of the charge that lies beneath. Our guide shared stories of the colorful personalities who have been laid to rest at this beloved Victorian cemetery, which features epic monuments to Ireland's many famous characters.

After the tour we met at the hotel before our transfer to Dun Laoghaire port, where we embarked on the Sylvia Earle. Once onboard we met our crew and

onboard team and enjoyed a Welcome Dinner as we sailed south along Ireland's east coast.

Onboard we total 120 Explorers along with 12 Exploration team and 83 Ship's crew from all over the world.





Waterford

DAY 4 | Thursday 12 June 2025

Half day experience: The Viking Triangle

It is not a coincidence that Waterford's city center is known locally as the Viking Triangle. Those infamous invaders from across the North Sea settled here 1,100 years ago, bringing with them the wealth of their wares. Our guided walk took us past Reginald's Tower, the strongpoint of the medieval defensive walls that enclosed the city until the 18th century. The highlight of our visit was the Medieval Museum; the only dedicated medieval museum in Ireland. Its building is also the only one on the island to incorporate two medieval chambers; the 1st century Choristers' Hall and 15th century Mayor's Wine Vault. If it is the story of medieval Irish life that fascinates you, this half day excursion is the perfect choice.

Full day experience: The Viking Triangle and House of Waterford

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century. The highlight of our visit was the Medieval Museum; the only dedicated medieval museum in Ireland. Its building is also the only one on the island to incorporate two medieval chambers; the 1st century Choristers' Hall and 15th century Mayor's Wine Vault.

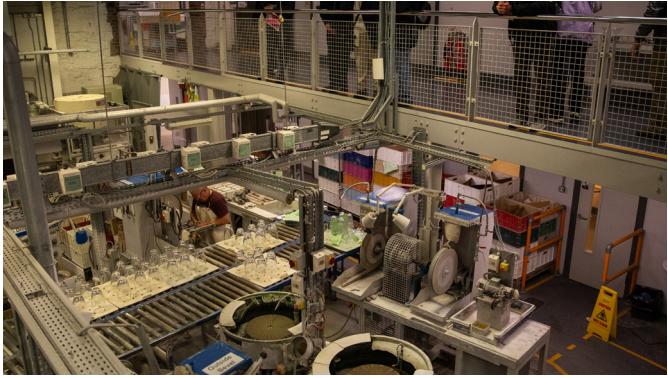
After some time to explore Waterford independently, we were invited to continue our day with a tour of the Waterford Crystal Factory – The House of Waterford. Only a few minutes' walk from the Medieval Museum, the House of Waterford is the factory of the famous glass creations named after their hometown. Opened in 1783, this fine-cut glass is exported worldwide and beloved in every Irish home. We watched the master blowers, crystal cutters and engravers in action as we followed the story of the crystal masterpieces from the initial design right up to the final engraving.

Full day experience: Kilkenny

We started our day with free time in Waterford before heading to the County of Corks favorite city, Kilkenny. Considered Ireland's best preserved medieval city, Kilkenny mixes small town intimacy with a big city buzz. The former home to the seat of the medieval Irish parliaments, it rivalled Dublin

in importance which is evident in its imposing Norman buildings and marble-clad facades, even today. Few buildings in Ireland can boast a longer history of continuous occupation than Kilkenny's monolithic castle and few have a more fascinating family story. Kilkenny Castle's 800 years of history is associated with the rise and fall of the Marshal and Butler families who rose in nobility from Earls to Dukes. In more recent years they were known for their marriages to famous personalities like Winston Churchill's cousin, and Ellen Stager, an American heiress who brought quite a fortune into the Butler family. However, by 1922 Kilkenny Castle was embroiled in political problems when it was occupied by Republicans and besieged by troops of the Free State. In 1967, the family sold the castle to the Kilkenny Castle Restoration Committee for a mere £50.





Cork

DAY 5 | Friday 13 June 2025

Morning experience: Blarney Castle and the Blarney Stone

If every myth, legend and limerick associated with Blarney Castle's indomitable 'stone' were true, the world would be asking it to solve all our problems. Where the stone came from and how its modern-day reputation was conceived is a matter of contention, but there is no doubt that the thousands of travelers who kiss it every week receive 'the gift of the gab'. Thought to endow all those who kiss it with eloquence and the skill of flattery, the Blarney stone is shrouded in stories. Was it a witch who was saved from drowning that revealed its power? Was it the Lord of Blarneys eloquent reply to the land title demands of Queen Elizabeth I? Was it the Goddess Cliodhna's hinted reply to a love-lost Cormac McCarthy?

Morning experience: Cobh and the Titanic Experience

A half hour drive from Cork is the famous port of Cobh, where we joined a tailor-made guided walking tour tracing the story of Irish emigration. Seeking a better life, or simply hoping to survive starvation, hundreds of thousands boarded their vessels bound for foreign lands at Cobh, including Annie Moore, a teenager who was the first immigrant

to be processed at the newly opened Ellis Island in New York City. Sadly in 1912 Cobh, known as Queenstown at that time, boarded passengers on the ill-fated Titanic. We visited the Titanic Experience, housed in the original White Star Line ticket office. This unique museum focuses on the individuals who boarded at Cobh, and we followed their progress through arrival and check-in to hear the story of those 123 passengers and their inescapable fate. We returned to Cork for lunch onboard the ship, and an afternoon at leisure in Cork.

Full day experience: Cobh, with the Titanic Experience and Kinsale

We explored the port and seaside towns of Cobh and Kinsale to hear the story of the Irish who left their homeland for fairer shores. In Cobh we joined a tailor-made guided walking tour tracing the story of Irish emigration. Seeking a better life, or simply hoping to survive starvation, hundreds of thousands boarded their vessels bound for foreign lands at Cobh, including Annie Moore, a teenager who was the first immigrant to be processed at the newly opened Ellis Island in New York City. Sadly in 1912 Cobh, known as Queenstown at that time, boarded passengers on the ill-fated Titanic. We visit the

Titanic Experience, housed in the original White Star Line ticket office. This unique museum focuses on the individuals who boarded at Cobh, and we followed their progress through arrival and check-in to hear the story of those 123 passengers and their inescapable fate.

In the early hours of May 7th 1915 the Cunard liner, Lusitania was struck, only a mere 11 nautical miles off the coast of Kinsale, by a single torpedo shot from a German U-Boat. The people of Kinsale rallied to assist, but within 18 minutes she sank, with only 764 of the 1959 souls onboard surviving. Before leaving Cobh we visited the Lusitania Monument and Graveyard where many of those killed are buried in the Old Church Graveyard. The monument, designed by Jerome O'Connor commemorates those who died in the tragedy. We visited these memorials, before our journey continued to the quaint coastal town of Kinsale, where we heard stories of naval battles, foreign invasions and shipwrecks. Once a garrison town embroiled with invading navies, Kinsale became the natural landfall for all sailing ships that came from the continent and the Americas. It is in these waters where two of the world's greatest ocean liners were last seen. We spent time exploring Kinsale before returning to Cork late afternoon.









Bantry

DAY 6 | Saturday 14 June 2025

Morning experience: Walk Whiddy Island

A 15-minute ferry crossing took us to one of Ireland's 80 islands - Whiddy Island, with a population of 30. A former World War I US Navy seaplane base known as Bantry Bay Station, Whiddy Island offered an insight into 'island life in Ireland'. At just 3 × 1.5 miles in size, it is an island that is ideal for walking. It is famous for its red and purple hue provided in summer by an extensive planting of fuchsias and birdlife, as Whiddy is also home to kingfishers, little egrets and shags. But it is the story of its people that we have come to hear about, and we could not ask for a more suitable local guide to show us around. He was the local publican, local postal worker, and is locally known as the King of Whiddy Island. We learnt about traditional baking and mussel farming and, of course, we washed it down at his pub with a local brew.

Full Day experience: Ring of Kerry

No this is not a real ring, although its presence is gold for the local economy, as a day spent driving the Ring of Kerry is the touchstone against which all other beauty spots in Ireland are measured. The Iveragh Peninsula is a magical place full of

myths and legends. This landscape of sandstone hills, wooded valleys and pristine lakes has inspired poets and authors to pen many a lament. A photographer's dream, the region is dotted with quaint towns and villages. Its lands have been carved into a series of mountain passes that whisper their story as we follow the trail of the Ring of Kerry.

Evening experience: Dinner at Maritime Hotel Bantry

The wild beauty of Ireland's western coast was on show today, along with the life it offered, past and present. Here we met small town Ireland with an insight into a different side to the Irish. The evening then took us ashore to meet them on an Irish night out. We enjoyed a special performance by award winning international folk band "The Druids"









Dingle

DAY 7 | Sunday 15 June 2025

Afternoon experience: Dingle Peninsula and Tralee

As the Atlantic carves the coast, we watched its waves from our clifftop drive to Slea Head. Our route weaved and twisted as we followed the peninsula, with stops to take in its dramatic scenery as the road narrowed, and we literally drove to the edge of the ocean. An unforgiving land, this peninsula attracted medieval monks who lived in beehive-shaped, stone clochans, which we visited at the Fahan Beehive. On the horizon we saw the deserted Blasket Islands; an unenviable place to live. The islands were evacuated in 1953 due to a dwindling ageing population, but the islanders' stories live on, thanks to the Blasket Centre. This interactive museum tells tales of the islanders who survived in often unlivable conditions. We heard their stories, learnt some 'real Irish' and marvelled at their tenacity, before heading onto the famed town of Tralee for a stroll of its quaint streets.

Afternoon experience : Life on land-Past and Present

We heard tales of 'life on the land' this afternoon we visited 'famine cottages' and met the shepherds

and the sheep dogs of the Dingle Peninsula. Our scenic drive followed a route along the dramatic cliffs of the promontory, before heading inland to the farmlands of Dingle.

This land is sheep country. Generations of farmers have survived here through wild weather, outbreaks of disease and of course, famine. The Kavanagh family is one of them. In the 19th century, the densely populated, western counties of Ireland were poverty stricken. The people in these areas were hugely dependent on the potato crop, and when the potato blight arrived in the 1840s West Kerry experienced severe hardship. Neglected by the ruling classes, people endured horrific conditions, forcing many to emigrate, while those who remained starved. We heard tales of extreme poverty and struggles for survival as we visited the family's 19th century cottages, which remain as they were during the great famine.

The story of this land continued in a lighter vein as we enjoyed a sheepdog demonstration. The shepherds 'best friends' took instructions in native Irish as they showed off their skills and won our hearts with their cunning ability to herd even the

most determined of sheep. Off the coast we saw the deserted Blasket Islands: an unenviable place to live. The islands were evacuated in 1953 due to a dwindling ageing population, but the islanders' stories live on, thanks to the Blasket Center. This interactive museum tells tales of the islanders who survived in often unlivable conditions. We heard their stories, learnt some 'real Irish' and marvelled at their tenacity, before returning to the ship.







Galway

DAY 8 | Monday 16 June 2025

Full Day experience: Galway and the Workhouse Museum

We joined a guided exploration of Galway upon our arrival mid-morning. Galway City is rich in culture, art, and history, and has many boutique shops offering the best of Irish crafts, literary works, and artwork. Home to two of the leading colleges in Ireland, Galway has a vibrant culture and is a town for walking. We viewed The Spanish Arch, that, being Irish, has no connection to Spain whatsoever, before boarding our coach for an hour or so drive through the open countryside of County Galway, where we found a testament to Ireland's dark days.

Wracked with poverty and famines, Ireland struggled throughout the 17th – 19th centuries. Many Irish emigrated, but those who could not were often forced to enter institutions simply known as 'The Workhouse'. As the name suggests, inmates were made to work long hours for meagre food and lodgings in terrible conditions. One of the cruelest aspects of the workhouse was that it split families, segregating them into separate living areas of women, men, girls and boys. Often family members would never see each other again. We visited a new museum, located in a former Workhouse, which aimed to show the plight of those who made the

ultimate decision in hopes they, and their families, would survive. The museum displayed artefacts that are relevant to workhouse life, some of which are the only remaining link to the people who once lived there. After our visit we returned to Galway and tendered to the ship.

Full Day experience: Burren Badlands and Birds of Prey

We discovered the rugged beauty of The Burren, where expansive cracked formations showcased the region's remarkable karst bedrock. This ancient limestone, sculpted by glacial activity into striking cliffs, caves, and fossils, unveils a lesser-known side of Ireland's stunning landscapes. As we navigated through this craggy terrain, charming villages and small communities awaited, making this journey an essential experience in Ireland.

Our scenic route led us to an unexpected highlight—the captivating world of birds of prey. At the Birds of Prey Center, we delved into the historic bond between Ireland's elite and these magnificent raptors. Here, we witnessed some of the world's top predators in free flight and learnt about the reintroduction of rare species, including the majestic Red Kite. The center's mission focuses

on conserving birds of prey through education and awareness while actively fundraising for raptor conservation across Ireland. We got up close with eagles, owls, vultures, and hawks as handlers shared fascinating insights into their unique traits and the modern challenges the birds face. After our encounter we enjoyed a hearty lunch before returning to Galway, where we had some free time to explore this seaside town before we tendered back to the ship.





Killybegs

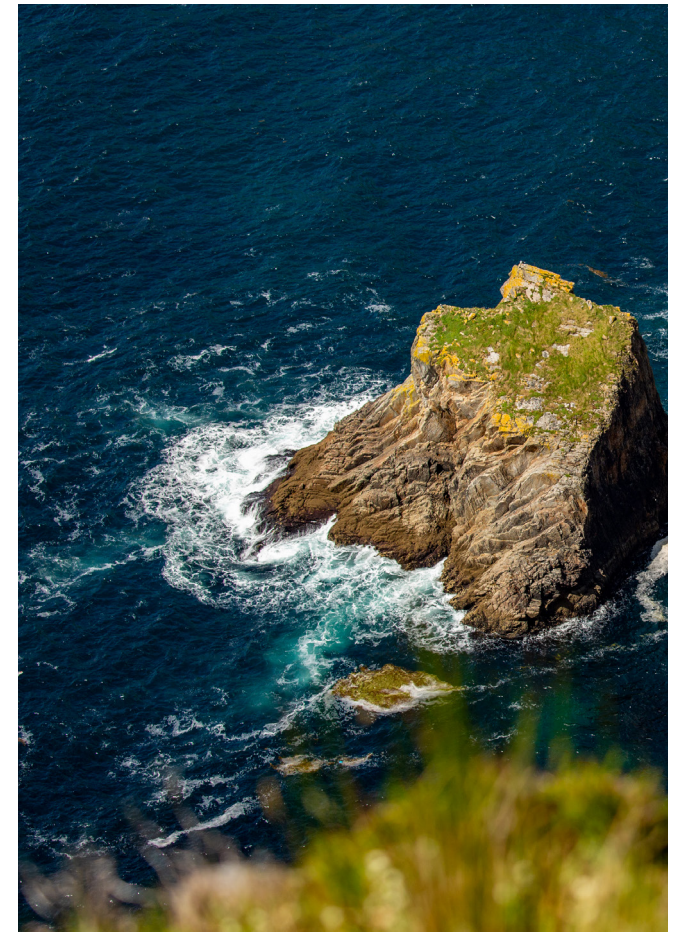
DAY 9 | Tuesday 17 June 2025

Afternoon experience: Ardara and the Ardara Distillery

One of the five designated heritage towns in County Donegal, Ardara has built itself a reputation as a village of craftsmen and women. The movement towards uniquely Irish goods is a growth market for the villages scattered throughout Ireland's isolated peninsulas. It provides work for young people and whole families are typically involved in the production. As home to the popular Triona Design, visitors enjoy weaving demonstrations based on traditional methods. Steeped in tradition the Ardara Distillery operations produce An Dúlamán Irish Maritime Gin and Sliabh Liag Whiskeys. Established by two 'scatterlings', James and Moira Doherty, who returned to the Sliabh Liag peninsula to build a legacy, the distillery employs 30 people in the village of 700. We toured the distillery to appreciate a sustainable, boutique side of Irish whiskey making. One inspired by the almost lost tradition for a smoky style of spirit, brought up to date with the best distillation know-how. We learnt about the history of Donegal's distilling heritage and saw skilled workers breathing new life into it. All tied together by a tasting of this unique brew.

Afternoon experience: Scenic Slieve League Cliffs

Slieve League is Ireland's ultimate sea cliff experience and a signature point on the Wild Atlantic Way. Believed to be Europe's highest accessible sea cliffs, they rise 2,000 feet from the ocean below. The lookouts here offered unspoiled views of the Atlantic as it slammed the coastline of Donegal. Slieve League boasts a raw landscape and challenging lifestyle for those who call County Sligo home. We met some of these stoic characters at the Tí Linn café and craft shop for a hot drink and scones. The Slieve League Cliffs Centre supports local artisans by selling their handmade specialties including items from the Donegal Tweed company and Triona, a company located only a few miles away at Adara.









Londonderry

DAY 10 | Wednesday 18 June 2025

Full day experience: Dunluce Castle, Giants Causeway

Northern Ireland is blessed with impressive natural scenery: vast valleys, glittering lakes and cliffs hoisted up from the Atlantic. We visited its most famous natural attraction, the Giant's Causeway. Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Giant's Causeway consists of some 40,000 interlocking basalt columns lifted from the ocean by volcanic activity over 60 million years ago. Of course, according to legend, giants strode across columns over the sea from Scotland, creating what looks like a giant pathway of stepping-stones that start on land and disappear into the ocean. After lunch at a local restaurant, we followed the Scenic Causeway Road to Dunluce Castle. Once the headquarters of the MacDonnell clan, the castle fell victim to a violent storm and was abandoned. Its ruins and spectacular backdrop have been popular recently, after it was used as the Castle of Pyke in the famous television show Game of Thrones. Returning to Londonderry, we enjoyed a short driving tour before returning to the ship.

Full day experience: Derry – past, present, future

Having lived through the tumultuous times of 'The Troubles' as the locals refer to it, their first-hand experiences immersed us in the era, where a word to the wrong person, a stroll on the wrong side of the street or a misplaced glance, could cost you your life. In recent years the artists and youth of Londonderry have painted emotive murals on walls around the city. We passed several of these as our guides explained the city's tumultuous past. A number of monuments in the Bogside neighborhood shed even more light on key events such as the Hunger Strikes that marred the city. After lunch at a local restaurant, we finished our tour at the guildhall. In the early 1600s, Derry defended itself by building towering 26 feet-high walls around the original city. They are among the best-preserved fortified walls in Europe. We walked atop a section of the ramparts on the way to Guildhall before returning to the ship.









Belfast, Dublin

DAY 11 | Thursday 19 June 2025

It is fair to say that Belfast has had its share of turbulent times. Famines, disease, invasions and recessions paint a picture of a tough town, but it is in the city's more recent times, known aptly as 'The Troubles', which tarred it with the brush of division. Images of barbed wire, armed soldiers and constant searches for bombs kept tourists away. Today, thanks to open political dialogue and foreign investment, Belfast has a new air about it. It appears lighter somehow, as if a heavy burden has been lifted from its shoulders.

Our day in Belfast was filled with stories; of the workers who toiled for 14 hours a day to build the world's most glamorous ship, the Titanic, the employment it created, and the race to finish her. Had they taken their time would things have been different for the Titanic? Located on the site where the ship was built, the dockyard's Titanic Experience answered a few of our questions. From the dockyards, our tour skipped ahead to the days of 'The Troubles' as we were guided through Unionist, and Nationalist neighborhood. The occasional security gate is a reminder that the island is still contested, but nowadays the city is split into virtual quarters rather than walled ones. The city quarter with its City Hall and St Georges Market, the

Cathedral Quarter – the oldest streets in Belfast full of cafes and galleries, the Queen's Quarter, with its leafy gardens and treasure trove of shops. We took a peek at Belfast's 'quarters' before we turned south and returned to Dublin for our final night in Ireland's capital.

Our evening was a farewell to our fellow explorers and a celebration of all things Irish as we kicked up our heels with some traditional Irish dancing at Abbey Tavern, a few 'jars' and a traditional Irish dinner.

BBQ







Our Explorers

Roberta Alberding	Nancy Capistran	Michelle Gombert	Steve Lindquist	David Olson	Jerry Skelly
Cindy Allard	Rufus Carr-Martindale	Danielle Gordon	Pat Long	Lynda Olson	Sue Stein
Christopher Alonzo	Kathryn Caulfield	Gail Gullickson	Brent Long	Barbara Pachucki	Rodney Stein
Mary Aspholm	Anne Christensen	Leanne Hansen	Leslie Lowe	John Pachucki	Mark Stevens
Glenn Aspholm	Bob Chrobak	Rod Hansen	Ben Lowe	Cookie Patruznick	Dianne Taft
Tom Averitt	Chuck Collins	Alina Healey	Jim Margerum	Gerald Patruznick	Judith Vang
Norma Averitt	Luann Croy	Louisa Horsey	Shirley Margerum	Linda Pettis	Nancy Whitson
Kathleen Aylsworth	Julia Dadekian	Jane Huessener	John McGroary	David Pettis Jr	Lloyd Whitson
John Aylsworth	Robert Dadekian	Lee Huessener	Kevin Merrill	Carol Postulka	Larry Wilson
Ann Baker	Butch Davies	Prem Kamath	Darlene Merrill	Robin Rolston	Mary Wilson
George Baker	Glenn Davis	Rina Kamath	Richard Monck	Brett Runyon-Shadwell	Michael Wolfe
Jo-Anne Berlinguette	June Davis	Valerie Kratzer	Marty Moon	Debbie Sacks	Tawn Wolfe
Stephen Blythe	Cindy Doan	Robbin Kratzer	Sheryle Morgan	Barbara Schmidt	Debra Woodruff-Capper
Kathleen Blythe	Darryl Dobras	Linda La Chapelle	Andrea Mucci	Rosemary Schwartz	Lydia Zager
Mark Bodenheim	Mary Ann Dobras	Bebe Landis	Marsha Mucci	Bob Scott	Larry Zager
Mary Bodenheim	Ronald Eberly	Dave Leber	Bob Murphy	Jean Scott	
Kevin Bogan	Terry Eberly	Geraldine Leon	Ellen Murphy	Arthur Brent Shadwell	
Claire Boland	Joseph Fulco	Bruce Leon	Bobbi Nall	Stan Shadwell	
Molly Boyle	Susan Fulginiti	David Lewis	Doug Nall	Gail Shadwell	
Judy Brandau	Daniel Gelber	Ron Lewis	JoAnn Noonan	Anna Sherwood	
Mark Capistran	Nancy Gelber	Janice Lewis	Tom Nunns		

Exploration Team

Cruise Director: Konstantin Patschke

Shore Excursion Manager: Monica Matos Nogueira

Shore Excursion Manager: Justine Bornholdt

Tour Host: John McGroary

Genealogist: Claire Bradley

Tour Manager: Ania Baranek

Tour Manager: Amani Armanious

Tour Manager: Rafi Wirth

Tour Manager: Sabine Bruchmann

Tour Manager: Cybele Cardoso

Photographer: Pia Harboure

Musician/Entertainment: Fran Kelly

Musician/Entertainment: Gus McKinstry

Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Jorge Alexis Ferdinez

Chief Officer: Viktor Koshelets

Second Officer: Marko Vuksan

Safety Officer: Iaroslav Prykup

Bosun: Leo Francis Marzan

Ship Doctor: Juan Nicolas Diaz Rodriguez

Chief Engineer: Artem Vyshnevskyi

First Engineer: Sergii Luba

IT Officer: Rene Antoine Reyes

Hotel Director: Balvant Singh

Chief Purser: Caroline Sabrina Papenfuss

F&B Service Manager: Narendra Seeram

Head Bartender: Sheenie Landauz

Executive Chef: Cristiand Carlos

Sous Chef: I Gusti Ketur Purnawirawan

Hotel Controller: Romat Nurhidayat

Receptionist: Angela Manuel

Receptionist: Jonathan Valdez

Head of Stateroom: Florante Lusong

Deck Cadet: Rodrigo Vigario Pinto

Able Seaman: Anthony John Brosas

Able Seaman: Rosendo Cruz

Able Seaman: Rajiv Rauniyar

Able Seaman: Eduardo Aloyan

Able Seaman: Ferdy Noel Diaz Roque

Able Seaman: Lexter Fadriquela

Photography thanks to:

Pia Harboure





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