



Day-By-Day Itinerary: Trade Routes of the Middle Ages

Days 1-2: Bergen, Norway – Arrive in Bergen and explore this Norwegian treasure. This evening mingle with the locals and dine ashore, as we will be spending the night in port. See the beautiful 18th century wooden houses and visit the Hanseatic Museum on your included tour. Perhaps take an excursion to Troldhaugen, the home of Edvard Grieg, Norway's famous composer. Or take a trip to the top of Mt. Ulriken, where you can savor an Ulriken bun, a cinnamon pastry, with a view that is equally as indulgent.

Day 3: North Sea Cruise – Enjoy a day on board our ship. Attend an illuminating enrichment lecture. Take in the sea views from the Explorers' Lounge. Dine at your choice of venues, perhaps pairing sommelier-selected wines with a carefully prepared tasting menu at The Chef's Table.

Day 4: Amsterdam, The Netherlands – This elegant city was born from the Dutch Golden Age, when merchants fed their coffers from the Indonesian spice trade and commissioned great works of art. You can see many of them, including Rembrandt's "*The Night Watch*", in the excellent Rijksmuseum. Embark on a canal cruise to get acquainted with the city's charms and experience its laid-back rhythm.

Day 5: Bruges, Belgium – Call on Zeebrugge, Belgium's most important fishing port and your doorway to canal-laced Bruges, one of Europe's most remarkably preserved medieval cities. Bruges's early textile trade made it one of the wealthiest trading towns in the world, and the world's most important port. You can explore its cobblestone streets, ascend its towering belfry in the Market Square and shop for lace and chocolate.

Day 6: Paris, France – Arrive in historic Le Havre today, a UNESCO World Heritage Site on a Seine River estuary. This historic port city is the gateway to Paris, so you'll take a scenic drive through Normandy's countryside to the heart of The City of Light. You'll have time on your own to ascend the Eiffel Tower and much more. Alternately, you might choose to pay homage at D-Day beaches or stroll the pretty quay of the artists' town of Honfleur.

Day 7: Portsmouth, England – Enjoy a picturesque arrival into Portsmouth, sailing between Napoleonic forts in the Solent Strait and passing stunning citadels at the harbor's entrance. Then discover the city's prestigious maritime past. This historic naval port houses such historic vessels as Henry VIII's Tudor battleship Mary Rose and Lord Nelson's HMS Victory. Visit the D-Day Museum, commemorating the preparations for the Allied landings of the massive fleet that departed here June 6, 1944.

Day 8: Falmouth, England – Falmouth is the gateway to the dramatic county of Cornwall in the most southwestern corner of England (think PBS Masterpiece Theater's "Poldark"). Admire the architecture and hilltop college of this picturesque port city. Henry VIII built his Pendennis Castle here to defend his country from France and the Holy Roman Empire

Day 9: Cruise Atlantic Ocean — Perhaps you will take a morning workout at the Fitness Center. Enjoy cocktails in the Explorers' Lounge and an authentic Italian meal at Manfredi's Italian Restaurant in the evening.

Day 10: Porto, Portugal — Leixões, the coastal city where we dock for the day, boasts a history that spans 1,600 years. It's a port of call that is sure to inspire you to raise a glass to port wine and to the town for which it was named. Soak in the charm and atmosphere of the celebrated wine town. You'll see its Clérigos Tower, the historic quarter surrounding Santa Catarina Street, the neoclassical wonders along Avenida dos Aliados. Porto is the mouth of the Douro River – the River of Gold.

Day 11: Cruise Atlantic Ocean – Sail through the famed Strait of Gibraltar into the Alboran Sea, the westernmost portion of the Mediterranean. As you cruise, perhaps you'll soothe your body with a hot sauna and a few minutes amid the gently falling snow of the Snow Grotto.

Day 12: Grenada, Spain – Experience firsthand the stuff of Andalusian dreams. Birthplace of Pablo Picasso. An included tour features the 11th century Alcazaba Palace, residence of Arabian caliphs, the ancient Moorish Gibralfaro Castle, the Renaissance Cathedral and Picasso's birthplace.

Day 13: Murcia (Cartenga), Spain – Uncover the rich history of Cartagena today, brimming with remarkable architecture spanning the ages—from the days of Rome to art nouveau. Enjoy an evening stroll down the city's celebrated Las Ramblas Boulevard.

Days 14-15: Barcelona, Spain – Awake in Barcelona, where you will be finishing your journey. From here, you can easily spend a few extra days to further explore this city and its world-class culinary delights or discover other areas of Spain. There are several other pre and post cruise excursions you may consider as well.

Details:



What will it cost?

Staterooms start at \$4,874 (per person, double occupancy) on the veranda decks.

All staterooms have outside verandas. There is no nickel and dime charging on Viking Ocean Cruises. An overview excursion is included free in every port. Alternative excursions are available at a fee.

Beer and wine is complimentary at lunch and dinner; free Wifi; alternative restaurant dining at no extra cost, and free ground transfers if air purchased from Viking Air. Evening performances and resident historian lectures, all shipboard meals, even afternoon tea, are included.

The included value is about \$200 per guest per day.

YMCA Alumni hosts:

Craig Altschul and Peggy Simmons of the Grand Canyon Chapter, who hosted 2019's British & Irish Grandeur trip.