

## Totality in the Mediterranean:

2026 Solar Eclipse Cruise Aboard the MV *La Belle des Océans*August 7-14, 2026











# **Totality in the Mediterranean:**

TRAVELS

2026 Solar Eclipse Cruise Aboard the MV La Belle des Océans

August 7-14, 2026

Embark on a once-in-a-lifetime Mediterranean cruise to witness the 2026 total solar eclipse alongside renowned astrophysicist Feryal Özel and Chautauqua Travels. This journey blends Chautauqua's signature commitment to lifelong learning with an unforgettable event, offering expert insights and breathtaking natural beauty. Begin and end in the glamorous city of Nice, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its glimmering beaches and tree-lined promenade and enjoy ports of call in Barcelona and the sunny islands of Menorca and Mallorca, where optional shore excursions include walking tours and a stargazing experience at a planetarium. When the sky darkens and the stars emerge on August 12, you'll have one of the best vantage points in the world for experiencing the total solar eclipse — at sea, directly in the path of totality, with an unobstructed view of the moon as it passes between the Earth and the sun. Your western Mediterranean cruise aboard the elegant *La Belle des Océans* provides an ideal balance: an expert scientist who will offer fascinating lectures and insights into the astronomical phenomenon that occurs during an eclipse; the natural beauty and delicious cuisine of the Mediterranean; and the opportunity to experience one of nature's most spectacular shows from the deck of a small expedition ship.











## **Trip Highlights**

- **Total Solar Eclipse** On August 12, 2026, witness a solar eclipse from the deck of a stylish small ship ideally positioned in the Mediterranean's path of totality.
- **Barcelona** Enjoy a full day in the vibrant city of Barcelona, from strolling the famous Las Ramblas to taking a deeper look at the fanciful architecture of Antoni Gaudi. In the evening, gather for a unique stargazing experience at one of the world's oldest astronomical observatories.
- Menorca Visit the charming city of Mahón, known for its gothic cathedral, local art galleries, and picturesque harbor.
- Mallorca Explore the "pearl of the Mediterranean" on a guided small-group shore excursion through its bustling capital city to a stunning church filled with beams of natural light. Join a private star party at the Observatorio Astronómico de Mallorca, the first astronomical center in the Balearic Islands.
- At Sea Spend two relaxing days sailing through the sparkling Mediterranean, with time at leisure to lounge
  on the sun deck, take a dip in the swimming pool, and attend insightful lectures by your onboard experts.
  And at nighttime, enjoy the Mediterranean skies without any surrounding light pollution.



## **Itinerary**

#### Friday, August 7: Bienvenue

Arrive on individual flights into Nice's Côte d'Azur Airport. Spend the day at your leisure, transferring independently to the MV *La Belle des Océans* for embarkation at 5:00 PM. (Luggage may be stored on the ship earlier in the day.) After time to settle into your cabins, gather with expert Feryal Özel and your fellow travelers this evening for a celebratory welcome dinner as you cruise along the French Riviera at night.

Included meal: Dinner

Accommodations: MV La Belle des Océans

#### Saturday, August 8: At Sea

Enjoy a day at sea aboard the MV *La Belle des Océans*. Relax on the sun deck, visit the fitness center, take a dip in the swimming pool, and converse with your fellow travelers over a beverage in the lounges and bars. In the afternoon, join Feryal for an introductory lecture on the science behind solar eclipses. Afterwards, enjoy the beautiful scenery as the ship sails towards Barcelona.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner **Accommodations:** MV *La Belle des Océans* 

#### Sunday, August 9: Barcelona

Arrive in Barcelona early this morning. After breakfast, explore this capital of Catalonia on a guided panoramic bus tour. Those who wish may return to the ship for lunch. The afternoon is for independent explorations in Barcelona or to relax onboard the ship. In the evening, attend an exclusive after-hours visit to the Observatorio Fabra, the world's fourth-oldest astronomical observatory still in operation and the perfect location for an evening of stargazing. Enjoy a private guided tour of the observatory, explore distant constellations with the assistance of local astronomy experts, and gather for dinner overlooking the city of Barcelona. Return to the ship and set sail for Menorca.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner **Accommodations:** MV *La Belle des Océans* 



#### Monday, August 10: Menorca

A morning of sailing brings you to the island of Menorca. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure in Mahón, Menorca's charming capital city. Stroll along the waterfront for views of one of the largest natural harbors in the world, explore the vibrant boutiques and galleries, and sample local specialties like a glass of gin or Mahón cheese, known for its distinctive orange rind. History buffs may choose to visit Santa Maria de Maó, a 14<sup>th</sup>-century gothic cathedral and home to a magnificent organ, or take a short walk to Fort Marlborough, which offers insights into the island's British influence. Return to your ship this evening for dinner and overnight in the port of Menorca.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Accommodations: MV La Belle des Océans

#### Tuesday, August 11: Menorca y Mallorca

This morning, delve deeper into the natural beauty and fascinating history of Menorca on a guided walking tour. Return to the ship for lunch and cruise across to the island of Mallorca. After dinner on board, gather for a private star party at the Observatorio Astronómico de Mallorca, which has undergone extensive renovations and is scheduled to reopen in 2025. Hear from Observatory staff about current research and key discoveries, tour the building's scientific domes and observational facilities, and enjoy a clear view of the night sky as seen through the lens of a powerful telescope. Overnight in the port of Palma.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Accommodations: MV La Belle des Océans

#### Wednesday, August 12: Total Solar Eclipse

Start your day in the stunning city of Palma, Mallorca, on a guided small-group tour of La Seu Cathedral, the city's iconic gothic church that was restored in the early 20th-century by Antoni Gaudi, and a stroll through Palma's enchanting old quarter filled with historic mansions and bustling squares. Return to the ship for lunch and set sail for the path of totality. As the moon moves across the sun, the sky will darken into a surreal twilight over the shimmering Mediterranean. Feel the collective excitement build on deck as totality approaches and enjoy your unforgettable view of cosmic alignment.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Accommodations: MV La Belle des Océans

#### Thursday, August 13: At Sea

Enjoy a day at sea aboard the MV *La Belle des Océans*. Relax on the sun deck, visit the fitness center, take a dip in the swimming pool, and converse with your fellow travelers over a beverage in the lounges and bars. In the afternoon, attend a lecture by Feryal. As your ship sails towards Nice, raise a toast to your journey of sea and sun during a farewell dinner on board.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner **Accommodations:** MV *La Belle des Océans* 

#### Friday, August 14: Disembarkation

Disembark after breakfast and transfer independently to the Nice airport for flights home or onward.

Included meal: Breakfast





**Feryal Özel** is the Chair and Professor in the School of Physics at Georgia Institute of Technology. Her research in astrophysics focuses on theoretical and computational studies of the properties, formation, and environments of black holes and neutron stars. She developed new techniques to determine the properties of neutron star surfaces and interiors. She made predictions of black hole images that guided the development of the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT) and helped constrain physics beyond General Relativity. Özel is a founding member of the Event Horizon Telescope collaboration, a former member of the EHT Science Council and lead of the Modeling Working Group. In 2022, she led the announcement of the first image of the black hole at the center of the Milky Way Galaxy. She was co-chair of NASA's Next

Generation Large Mission Concept Study for the Lynx X-ray Observatory and has served for three years as chair of NASA's Astrophysics Advisory Committee. Prior to joining Georgia Tech, she was a Professor of Astronomy and Physics and the Associate Dean for Research at the University of Arizona.

## **Your Cruise Itinerary At-A-Glance**

	Day/Date	Title	Location/City
1-	August 7	Welcome Aboard	Nice, France
2-	August 8	At Sea	At sea
3-	August 9	Barcelona	Barcelona, Spain
4-	August 10	Menorca	Port Mahon, Menorca
5-	August 11	Menorca y Mallorca	Menorca to Mallorca
6-	August 12	2026 Total Solar Eclipse	Palma, Mallorca
7-	August 13	At Sea	At sea
8-	August 14	Disembarkation	Nice, France



Photo by: Alexandre Sattler

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Photo by: David Hancock

#### MV La Belle des Océans

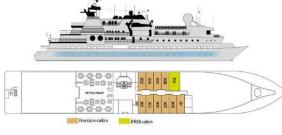
An elegant small ship designed for an intimate cruising experience, all 5 decks of this luxury vessel provide modern comfort and personalized service. Renovated in 2014, the 65 spacious cabins and suites offer exterior views, Wi-Fi, flat-screen televisions, a writing desk, and refrigerator. On board, travelers can enjoy a range of amenities including a sun deck, beauty salon, fitness center, swimming pool, and comfortable lounges. A casual grill restaurant near the pool provides a relaxed atmosphere in which to take in the magnificent views, while the main dining room serves contemporary Mediterranean-inspired cuisine with a focus on fresh, locally-sourced ingredients. Chautauqua Travels will be sharing the ship with two other likeminded organizations. A program of on-board lectures by the three experts on board will be open to all passengers.



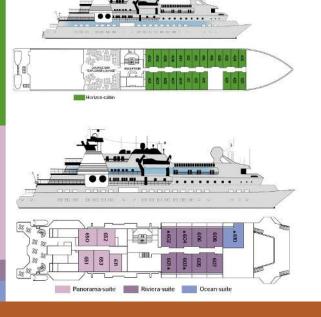
### MV La Belle des Océans

Deck Plans plans & technical details:

Deck 3

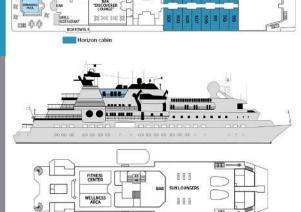


Deck 4



Deck 5

Deck 7



Deck 6





## PRICES

(prices per person)

Deck 6 Riviera Suite \$11,895

Deck 6 Panorama Suite \$11,295

Deck 5 Horizon Cabin \$10,495

Deck 4 Horizon Cabin \$9,745

Deck 3 Horizon Cabin \$8,995

Single Supplement \$6,650 \*limited availability

Deposit upon enrollment \$1,000

You will be allocated a cabin within Chautauqua's allotment, specific cabin requests cannot be guaranteed.





### What's Included

- · All accommodations for the duration of the cruise
- All meals
- Unlimited drinks on board the ship, including coffee, house wine, beer, and standard alcoholic beverages
- All sightseeing and guided visits as noted in each itinerary
- · Staffing: Expertise of an expert, travel director, and local guides throughout the tour
- All gratuities for on-tour guides and bus drivers. Gratuities for the crew on the cruise are not included
- All on-tour transportation, unless otherwise noted
- Listening devices to facilitate audibility on tour
- The assistance of an ATA professional travel team to assist with pre-trip questions, travel arrangements, including flights and other services
- Comprehensive pre-departure mailings and materials with information about the destination and what to expect on tour, including a suggested reading list
- Emergency evacuation insurance