



Sociable and fun

The coastal bottlenose dolphin is most commonly seen along the Atlantic coasts of Europe from Scotland down to Spain, and their combined population in this region is estimated to be between 3,000 and 4,000. Much larger than other dolphin species, they can reach up to 12 feet in length. The bottlenose is grey with a pale underbelly and has a curved head and stubby beak. Being fast swimmers, sociable, and fond of acrobatics, they are often seen leaping out of the water.



Snout nosed

Harbour seals live in temperate and polar waters along the east and west coasts of the North Atlantic. Their population in this area numbers around 200,000. Adults average around three feet in length and weigh up to 330 pounds, about half the size of grey seals. With their rounded head and snout-like noses, they are distinguishable from grey seals, which have a "Roman nose". Unlike grey seals, harbour seals give birth in the summer months, and have one pup a year.



Seafood lover

The Eurasian Oystercatcher, with its elegant black and white plumage and long, orange-red bill and legs, is very distinctive from other waders. They are noisy birds and are recognisable by their shrill peeping call. Eurasian Oystercatchers feed mainly on molluscs, crabs, earthworms and insect larvae. They use their bills for foraging and to smash open shells. They can also slide their laterally thin bills into mollusc shells and snip the adductor muscle to easily access the flesh.



Coastal wildlife

You'll find an incredible variety of bird, animal and marine life along the shores of Europe among its sheltered islands, reefs and coves, attracted by its cold waters, sand banks, cliffs, mud plains and coastal habitats.

Birders will get a thrill looking out for seabirds and waders along Europe's coastlines. Look overhead from the Observation Deck, or scan with binoculars for birds in the mudflats, creeks, grass-covered dunes, salt marshes, and cliffs, where many seabirds nest.

From the open seas, inland channels and the Koster National Park, there's plenty of marine life to discover ranging from small crustaceans to huge cetaceans. As we cruise along the Atlantic coast of Europe and especially in the Bay of Biscay, we might spot fin and minke whales, while bottlenose, common and striped dolphins swim playfully

behind the ship. Dolphins and harbour porpoises are also a regular sight in southern Scandinavian waters in summer.

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