

Still time for a memorable, fun cruise to St Helena

St Helena spokesperson

THE "RMS" as the Royal Mail Ship St Helena is fondly known, departs from Cape Town for St Helena and Ascension islands approximately every three weeks and is the only regular contact St Helena Island has with the rest of the world.

The ship takes five days to sail from Cape Town to St Helena, and passengers have the option of staying on the island for an average of eight nights or continuing with the vessel for the return shuttle to Ascension Island.

Accommodation and car hire on St Helena Island can be arranged. Ascension Island is a day-call with the ship arriving in the morning and sailing again sometime during the afternoon on the same day. Subject to sea conditions, passengers are able to disembark at the island.

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St Helena is well known for being the last home of Napoleon Bonaparte. It is stunningly beautiful and offers a walkers' and nature lovers' paradise. Various tours of the island are offered and although quite small at 47 square miles, one is never left short of things to do.

The Boer prisoners of war arrived on the island in 1900 during the Anglo Boer War and to this day the graves of those prisoners who died on the island are well maintained and accessible to visitors. St Helena is virtually crime-free, and, in many respects, charmingly old fashioned.

Passengers travelling on the "RMS" can enjoy a bygone era of cruising which is strongly reminiscent of the famous Union Castle Line ships which were once the main form of travel from SA to the UK.

Nightly entertainment is organised by the ship's officers and the fare includes all meals and

teas, while drinks bought at the bar are for the passengers' own expense. The RMS St Helena is an intimate ship and lasting friendships are often forged during the voyages.

This could change somewhat with the opening of the airport which is being built on the island and is due to be completed in February 2016. Sadly, the beloved RMS will then be decommissioned and the "old lady", in her current state will no longer ply the waters of the South Atlantic Ocean.

If you wish to experience the stress-free holiday of a lifetime while you still can, call Suzanne, passenger manager at Andrew Weir Shipping in Cape Town on 021 4251165 or email aws-sa@mweb.co.za.

Current sea fares range from R15 015 a person return sharing.

For more information, see www.rms-st-helena.com or www.sthelenatourism.com.



FUN IN THE SUN: Passengers enjoying themselves on deck.