

Your comprehensive guide to selling cruise holidays

cruisetradenews.com

ISSUE 112 | AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2022

cruise

TRADE NEWS



FIT FOR THE FUTURE

How Explora Journeys is setting
new standards for luxury cruising

In association with



Explora
JOURNEYS

FRED OLSEN VIP FAM

A voyage of discovery and
education in Iceland

CRUISE REVIEW

Sailing on Royal Caribbean's
Wonder of the Seas

CTN INVESTIGATES

How the cruise sector
is supporting people in need

EMERALD
CRUISES

LIMITED
TIME ONLY

SUMMER SALE EVENT

SECOND GUEST SAILS FREE*

EUROPE RIVER CRUISES | RED SEA & MIDDLE EAST LUXURY YACHT CRUISES

For more information visit emeraldcruiises.co.uk or
contact your local Sales Manager – agency-sales@emeraldcruiises.co.uk

*Terms & conditions apply. Book by 30th August 2022.

SCENIC° SECOND GUEST SAILS FREE*

In our Summer Savings Event



*Truly all-inclusive 2022 & 2023 Europe river cruises and
North, Central & South America ultra-luxury ocean voyages*

For more information visit scenic.co.uk or
contact your local Sales Manager – agency-sales@scenic.co.uk

*Terms & conditions apply. Book by 30 August 2022.



Cover image: Explora Journeys

EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITOR

Gary Peters
gary.peters@realresponsemedia.com

STAFF WRITER

Lucy Abbott

CONTRIBUTORS

Dave Monk
Deborah Stone
Sarah Holt

ART DIRECTOR

Phil Couzens

SUB EDITOR

Heather Ford

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Barnaby Moore

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

Mark Bennett
mark.bennett@realresponsemedia.com

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

Keith Cartwright
Keith.Cartwright@realresponsemedia.com

COMMERCIAL MANAGER

Suzanne Halil
suzanne.halil@realresponsemedia.com

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Lina Slater

CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER

James Gambling

CEO

Chris Pitchford

For subscriptions & enquiries:

020 8444 2554

info@cruisetradenews.com

All enquiries

+44 (0) 20 8444 2554

Printed in the United Kingdom by Micropress.

Reproduction is not permitted without the express written consent of the editor.

All efforts are made to ensure factual accuracy at time of publication.

cruise
TRADE NEWS

Published by

Real.
RESPONSE MEDIA

Unit 4D, Cally Yard

445 Caledonian Road, London, N7 9BG

ISSN 2059-9986



**CONNECT ONLINE WITH
CRUISE TRADE NEWS**

cruisetradenews.com

@cruisetradenews

Cruise Trade News

Contents

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2022



REGULARS

6 The Briefing

The cruise news you need to know

9 Column

Fred Olsen's Geoff Ridgeon shares his ideas on pitching winter sun cruises

10 Sales inspiration

Training, incentives and support

18 Insight

A spotlight on Southampton's shore power facility

26 At a glance

Explore A-Rosa Sena

33 Tips of the trade

How to sell repositioning cruises

50 Comment

Steve Goodenough, Arena River Cruises MD, on attracting clients

FEATURES

12 Q&A

Regent Seven Seas' Jason Montague

14 Making waves

Discover the Explora Journeys story

20 Analysis

How cruise is giving back

24 Interview

Talking to CLIA's Andy Harmer

28 Fred Olsen VIP fam

Experiencing the Olsen Way

34 Cruise newcomers

The latest ships and what's on board

36 Wave Awards 2022

Hear from our sponsors

38 River cruising

Magical Christmas market sailings

42 Destination focus

All things British await

46 Cruise review

Does Wonder of the Seas live up to the hype?



Lindos, Rhodes, Greece

BOOK BY 31ST AUGUST AND SAVE

COMPLIMENTARY SINGLE CATEGORY UPGRADE*

VOYAGES INCLUDE: GRATUITIES, SELECT BEVERAGES,
EXCLUSIVE CULTURAL EVENTS, AND MORE

Explore the beauty of Europe with us later this year at a more relaxed pace and receive a **Complimentary Single Category Upgrade*** on select 2022 and 2023 voyages. That means you can enjoy an Oceanview Stateroom for the price of an Interior Stateroom or a Balcony Stateroom for the price of an Oceanview Stateroom!

With Azamara®, you can spend more time exploring your destination, by day and night. Watch the sunset from the medieval town of Lindos, just a short drive from ancient Rhodes. Savour paella where it originated, with generations of locals in Valencia, or experience Barcelona's architecture, museums, and restaurants on an exciting overnight stay.

Get to know the world around you with Azamara®. You'll always enjoy inclusive amenities featuring included gratuities, exclusive cultural events, select beverages, and more. In addition, our **Cruise with Confidence programme†** has been extended, giving you the flexibility to change your voyage up to 48 hours before you sail on all 2022 voyages.

BOOK BY 31ST AUGUST 2022 AND SAVE.*



FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE VISIT:
CLUBAZAMARA.CO.UK OR AZAMARA.CO.UK/CATUPGRADE

*Single Category Upgrade applicable on specified dates only. Offer available on selected 2022 & 2023 voyages. See our website for full Terms & Conditions. †Visit Azamara.com/Cruise-With-Confidence for full details.

©2022 Azamara. Ships registered in Malta. "Change The Way You Sea" is an international service mark of SP Cruises OpCo Limited.



Editor's Letter

WELCOME TO THE AUGUST/SEPTEMBER ISSUE

Every cruise is special, there's no doubt about that. However, sometimes, everything clicks, falls into place, and results in a truly special time. That's what I was lucky enough to experience this summer on a VIP fam trip with Fred Olsen Cruise Lines.

Sailing to Iceland on *Borealis*, one of the line's new ships, I joined eight travel agents for 10 days to learn more about the Fred Olsen product and the Olsen Way – 10 key principles that define Fred Olsen and showcase what makes it unique.

The voyage gave agents the chance to immerse themselves in everything on board the ship and take part in some unforgettable shore excursions, with every day and activity designed to showcase an Olsen Way principle. Inside you will find a full report and tips on how you can learn more.

The positivity continues in this issue with our latest investigation focusing on how the sector is supporting charities and humanitarian efforts across the globe, including in the upcoming London Marathon as a group of travel professionals prepare to take on the challenge to raise money for the Family Holiday Charity.

Elsewhere, we look at how Explora Journeys is moving ahead with plans for new luxury



Above: Discovering Iceland on a Fred Olsen VIP fam trip

ships, and report back from a cruise on Royal Caribbean's *Wonder of the Seas*.

We also speak to CLIA UK & Ireland MD Andy Harmer, fresh from the awarding of his OBE in the Queen's birthday honours list, who explains why the future for agent and cruise line relationships looks bright.

Enjoy the rest of the summer.

Gary Peters

Editor, Cruise Trade News

CONNECT ONLINE WITH CRUISE TRADE NEWS



@cruisetradenews



cruisetradenews.com



Cruise Trade News

The Briefing

THE ULTIMATE DESTINATION FOR CRUISE NEWS

IN BRIEF

Amadeus welcomes new ship

● *Amadeus Cara*, the latest addition to the Amadeus River Cruises fleet, has officially launched. The 163-guest ship has an engine that “significantly reduces CO₂ output”, according to the line.

Aurora partnership

● Aurora Expeditions has partnered with UpSchool, an Australian-based education platform, to educate students on the global importance of the Arctic. UpSchool provides free courses and resources for children and teachers and is currently being used by more than 1,000 teachers in 110 different countries.



The newly branded *Silver Endeavour* will be in action for the 2022/2023 Antarctica season

APPOINTMENTS



● Advantage Travel Partnership has promoted two members of its senior team. Leisure director **Kelly Cookes** is now chief commercial officer, while **Paul Nunn**, who is currently operations director, becomes chief operating officer.



● **Rachel Poultney** will join cruise and travel PR agency PR42 in early September. Poultney, who is currently Princess Cruises sales and commercial director for UK & Europe, will work alongside PR42 founder David Sanders.

LUXURY

Silversea acquires Crystal Endeavor

Silversea Cruises has agreed a deal to purchase Crystal Cruises' expedition vessel *Crystal Endeavor*.

Valued at \$275 million, the agreement will see the luxury line rename the ship *Silver Endeavour*, with plans to begin sailing in November 2022.

The vessel will replace *Silver Explorer* for the 2022/2023 Antarctica season. Bookings are open now. Built to PC6 polar class specifications, the ship can operate all of Silversea's current expedition itineraries, according to the line.

Silversea parent Royal Caribbean Group said it will protect the deposits of guests who were originally booked on *Crystal Endeavor* and make a new booking on one of the group's brands –

Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Silversea.

Silversea Cruises president & CEO Roberto Martinoli said: “*Silver Endeavour* will accelerate our strategy of growth, enriching our offering to unprecedented levels and reaffirming our position as the leading ultra-luxury expedition cruise line.

“The expedition cruising industry is poised to resume accelerated growth, driven by demand among high-end, affluent customers.

“With the ongoing support of Royal Caribbean Group, we are enhancing the experience for our guests, unlocking the world's most rewarding destinations in a way that only Silversea can.”

THE NEWS YOU NEED

Subscribe to the *Cruise Trade News* newsletter for all the latest cruise news, features, destination guides, interviews and more.

SIGN UP NOW AT cruisetradenews.com

Image credit: Bernard Biger - Chantiers de l'Atlantique



Utopia of the Seas, Royal Caribbean's first LNG-powered Oasis-class ship

CEREMONY

Royal's Utopia reaches construction milestone

Royal Caribbean International has held the keel-laying ceremony for *Utopia of the Seas*, its first LNG-powered Oasis-class ship.

The ceremony – which took place at Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard in Saint-Nazaire, France – marked the official start of the ship's construction ahead of its launch in spring 2024.

Newly minted coins – representing Royal Caribbean and Chantiers de l'Atlantique – were placed on the ship's first steel block to bring luck during the

construction process as well as while the ship is at sea.

Royal Caribbean International CEO Michael Bayley said: "The keel laying for *Utopia of the Seas* represents the first milestone of an incredible ship and the next step toward a bolder, thrilling future for Royal Caribbean and vacations. *Utopia's* debut in 2024, on the heels of *Icon of the Seas* setting sail in fall 2023, will build on a new, exciting chapter that is set to redefine family vacations and getaways for all ages in ways we'll soon reveal."

INDUSTRY

HAL & Seabourn team changes

Holland America Line has revealed that Karen Farndell will lead the line's UK team as director of sales & marketing.

Farndell – who will be based at Carnival House, Southampton – is currently senior sales manager at Princess Cruises, and will join HAL on 19 September. She will report directly to vice-president international sales Nico Bleichrodt.

Wendy Lahmich, current director of sales for HAL and Seabourn, will move full time to Seabourn as director of sales for the UK and now also Europe. Carly Perkins will be Seabourn's senior marketing manager UK & Europe, with Adam Scholey as trade sales specialist. There will also be a Seabourn Europe team, based in



Holland America Line is restructuring its teams

Rotterdam, reporting to Lynn Narraway, who was promoted to Seabourn UK and Europe MD in February.

Elsewhere, business development manager Lucy Davies and senior business development representative Emma Paolino will remain with HAL and report directly to Farndell. Aaron Myers will also stay with HAL as product, pricing & demand manager for the UK and Ireland, also reporting to Farndell.

MARKETING GURU



Accord Marketing chief client officer **Maria Payne** discusses how best to advertise cruise holidays

A new era of cruising calls for new ways to advertise. Let me introduce you to Microsoft Cruise Ads.

Launched in February 2022, these are rich and eye-catching ad solutions that showcase images with timely and relevant information.

So how do they work? These vertical-specific ad formats appear on the right-hand side of the Microsoft Bing search results and alongside standard text ad placements. They use feed data to match cruise offers to searches, showing the user current prices, destination and departure ports, cruise length and (coming soon) ratings, reviews, inclusions and itinerary links.

"Microsoft Cruise Ads use feed data to match offers to searches"

Queries like cruise name, location and length will automatically trigger the ads to appear, so no need for keywords. However, negative keywords can be used for optimisation. So why use Cruise Ads? Beyond the obvious appeal of them being something new, they are a way for advertisers to deliver a more targeted ad experience that reaches larger volumes for more value.

Driving higher quality clicks, Cruise Ads will save marketers time, with a more hands-off approach and easy set up. Sounds like a win-win to us. To learn more, contact me at maria.payne@accordmarketing.com.



There's still time to make it to the Med.

Send your Sailors on our newest ships to Europe's most extraordinary destinations.

Pristine beaches and medieval castles. Panoramic hikes and cascading hilltops filled with sun-bleached and pastel-colored homes. Late stays at Europe's most iconic ports for epic evenings, capped off with an electric overnight in Ibiza. Our first summer sailing around the Mediterranean Sea is almost over, but it's not too late to show your Sailors what a last-minute vacation can be. 7-day voyages on Valiant Lady depart Barcelona through October 2022, before she sails away to the Caribbean for the winter.

Book Early and Save

See your Sailors daydreaming through winter by getting them booked (way) ahead. 180 days before sailing earns them 10% off the voyage fare, or 5% off if they book between 179 -121 days out. Sail the Med on Valiant Lady from Barcelona or with Resilient Lady from Piraeus (Athens) in summer 2023.

LEARN MORE ON [FIRSTMATES.COM](https://firstmates.com)
FOR PACKAGES, VISIT [TRADE-VOYAGESTORE.COM](https://trade-voyagestore.com)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"The design elements and intimate spaces around the ship made it feel like a private yacht. The food was **AMAZING.**" — **Jordan**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"The crew was the friendliest and warmest I've ever experienced. The design is very clever; the ship is gorgeous." — **Noam**

Set Sail The Virgin Way

All our voyages are Adult-by-Design—that means no kids(!)—and include over **\$600** in extras, like dining at 20+ unique eateries, WiFi, essential drinks, tips, and group fitness classes.



SUN SEEKING



A Mediterranean cruise could be just the ticket for customers this winter

In his regular column for *CTN*, Fred Olsen Cruise Lines head of sales **Geoff Ridgeon** shares an insight into how to pitch winter sun cruises

As I write this, the sun is shining and we are enjoying lovely warm days. However, holidaying to warmer climates through the winter months is just as popular with many cruisers, so the purpose of this column is to bring the virtues of journeying at this time of year to the forefront as demand starts to rise through your agencies.

Simply speaking, heading off to those warmer destinations at a time when the British cold sets in and the days get shorter is increasing in demand, especially with those that haven't managed to get that winter holiday in for a couple of years.

It is understandable that many consider jumping on a flight and spending time in a deck chair with a nice sangria but, with news of strikes and queues at our UK airports, I ask you to consider that this isn't the only way for your customers to enjoy the sun this winter. Cruising to the sun from the UK offers an excellent alternative to those guests that consider themselves travellers and not tourists.

“A number of holidaymakers don't understand the benefits of avoiding the airports”

Authentic itineraries

If you were to walk in the shoes of your customers and think of the ease of avoiding airports, turning up at a UK port, embarking on a cruise ship and letting your holiday start right there and then, the idea of a cruise would appeal to many. Admittedly, the British winter will be with them for a couple of days, but with so much to do on board a cruise ship, it won't be long before they're enjoying the warmth of their chosen destinations, as we at Fred Olsen believe in the joy of the journey.

This means we encourage guests to go beyond the standard tourist perspective and use their time on board to discover real insights about the culture and nature of the places they are about to visit. This could include talks, presentations and experiences hosted by a team who are here to entertain and inspire. Or if sitting and relaxing is what your guests do on their cruise, then that's fine too.

There are many amazing warmer destinations to visit by cruise ship this winter. You have access to all the cruise lines' itineraries, so it's certainly worth taking a look. In our case, our hand-crafted itineraries and smaller ships also mean that guests aren't restricted to the larger land package resort

destinations, giving them the chance to experience the authenticity of the countries they choose to visit.

I believe there are a number of holidaymakers who don't fully understand the benefits of avoiding the airports and sailing from the UK, so for you to be able to float (pardon the pun) this idea with those enquiring about their winter holiday options may just open their eyes to how simple and enjoyable a cruise is – it also might just do wonders for your sales targets.

For now, have a great summer season. If you're holidaying yourself then make sure you enjoy what's probably a well-needed break and keep an eye on the demand for winter cruise holidays – they will be here before we know it. ❶



GEOFF RIDGEON
HEAD OF SALES
FRED OLSEN CRUISE LINES

Sales Inspiration

INCENTIVES • ITINERARIES • SPECIAL OFFERS

Princess boosts Alaska cruises

Princess Cruises has announced new Alaska cruises sailing roundtrip from Vancouver, following demand from UK agents.

The 3,080-guest *Crown Princess* will sail on a series of Inside Passage voyages from Vancouver to destinations such as Ketchikan, Juneau and Skagway. One glacier experience is included on every cruise. Prices start from £1,069pp for a seven-night cruise.

Princess Cruises UK and Europe VP Eithne Williamson said: "UK travel agents have been asking for Alaska voyages that sail roundtrip from Vancouver and we listened.

"These new itineraries offer an easier way for UK guests to sail to Alaska, with a shorter flight needed, and provide guests with the opportunity to experience the beautiful city of Vancouver with a pre or post-cruise stay."



Crown Princess will offer Alaska cruises sailing roundtrip from Vancouver

VISIT

cruisetradenews.com

FOR THE LATEST
INCENTIVES & TRAVEL
AGENT TRAINING
MATERIALS



Silver Dawn's Spain and Morocco's Sunshine Coast cruise takes in the sights of Tangier

New voyages for Silver Dawn

Silver Dawn, the latest ship in the Silversea fleet, will operate two new itineraries in November 2022 in Portugal, Spain and the Canaries, before embarking on its first winter season in the Caribbean and Central America.

Both 12-day voyages will start and end in Lisbon, with the first, Casablanca, Cadiz and the Canary Islands, departing on 9 November. It will call at Arrecife, Puerto del Rosario on Fuerteventura and Gran Canaria among other

destinations, with prices starting from £4,300pp.

The second – Morocco and Spain's Sunshine Coast cruise – will set sail on 21 November and call at the likes of Tangier, Malaga and Cartagena. Prices for this itinerary start from £3,900pp.

Silver Dawn, the 10th ship in the Silversea fleet, embarked on its inaugural voyage in April 2022. Silversea said the vessel features "new technology and cutting-edge design".



The 15-day Essential Vietnam and Cambodia itinerary includes Ho Chi Minh City

APT cruise savings

APT has launched its 2023 Asia river cruise and tour programme with savings of up to £3,300 per couple.

The operator will offer two Mekong cruises, while its four-star brand Travelmarvel will operate four itineraries through Vietnam and Cambodia. All APT's luxury 2023 Asia holidays also include free UK airport lounge access.

The 2023 sailing season, with departures from January through to March, and July to December, will see the launch of APT's new ship, the

Mekong Serenity, which will sail two itineraries, including the 15-day Vietnam and Cambodia Highlights voyage. Prices start from £4,495pp (was £6,145).

Travelmarvel also welcomes a new ship to its fleet for 2023, *RV Apsara*, which will operate four Travelmarvel Essential itineraries in 2023, including the 15-day Essential Vietnam and Cambodia, from Ho Chi Minh City to Siem Reap, which starts from £3,195pp (was £4,545).

All savings are available on Q1 bookings made before 31 August.



Authentic Encounters give insights into local produce

Celestyal adds 'authentic' excursions

Celestyal Cruises has created a new small group shore experience programme called Authentic Encounters, which the line said will "allow guests to go deeper into a destination and pursue personal passions".

The excursions are to be offered in ports in Greece and Turkey, with prices starting from £61 per guest.

For example, on Celestyal's Idyllic Aegean itinerary, the new programme will include added options such as a wine tour of the Epanomi Hills region of Thessaloniki.

On the Eclectic Aegean voyage, guests will be able to explore the mountainous Pelion peninsula on Volos, and take part in an exclusive olive oil production and tasting experience.



Scenic Group aims to get agents on board to learn about its extensive portfolio of vessels

Scenic to grow trade relationships

The Scenic Group – which includes Scenic and Emerald Cruises – has stated its intention to increase its engagement with the trade.

The company unveiled a "promise to engage with every agent keen to learn more about its portfolio of ocean, river and superyacht cruising brands". Recruitment for its 10-strong trade team was recently completed with the appointment of Ryan Readman in a new sales support role. He joins a restructured team that

has been bolstered this year with the addition of Jonathan Davies (sales manager north), Louise Tansey (sales manager central) Christina Cooper (trade marketing executive) and Jonathan Edwards (trade support).

They join director of trade sales Andrea Stafford, who arrived from MSC Cruises in March. Scenic Group will also aim to give as many agents as possible the opportunity to get on board Scenic and Emerald Cruises' ships.

GRANDEUR AWAITS

Regent Seven Seas Cruises recently held the keel laying ceremony for its new ship, *Seven Seas Grandeur*. Lucy Abbott speaks to the line's president & CEO Jason Montague to discover more



Photo: RSSC

Jason Montague (left) with Ancona shipyard director Gilberto Tobaldi

How will *Grandeur* elevate the Regent Seven Seas experience?

Every time we bring out a new ship, we always try to step up an additional level. We've completely reimagined Compass Rose, the largest speciality restaurant at sea, because guests can truly customise whatever they want every single night. There's nothing like that in the industry.

We've also changed Chartreuse and Prime Seven, which are two of our other speciality restaurants. *Grandeur* will have her own whole look and feel, so none of our ships are identical from that standpoint. We look at perfecting all the small details.

What are the similarities and differences between *Grandeur* and her sister ships?

They are all 732-passenger ships, but that's where a lot of the similarities stop. They all have their own look and feel. The design choices throughout are different. This ship [*Grandeur*] will be structurally closer to *Seven Seas Splendor*. On *Splendor* we flipped it, so guests walk into the



Photo: RSSC

Compass Rose is the largest speciality restaurant at sea, says Regent

Pacific Rim restaurant, and *Grandeur* will be exactly like that with, again, its own look and feel. We're also completely redoing the spa, so guests will feel like they are on a different ship.

What do luxury travellers expect from Regent?

To me, it's all about customising the experience for the guests – how they want to experience [their cruise] not only on board the ship, but also off the ship. We include more than 2,000 shore excursions, so guests can truly experience the destinations they go to the way they want.

No one is as inclusive as we are. No one has a main dining room that truly

allows guests to customise what they're having for dinner each night. The luxury market hasn't always been at the level that Regent has put it at. We are at the forefront of customising that experience – that to me is what luxury really covers.

How are sales looking for the inaugural season for *Grandeur*?

You know what, we've never been better booked than we are today. That goes for all of our ships. There's definitely an appetite for people to get back out and travel. It's challenging these days obviously because there are still a lot of protocols, there's still a lot of testing requirements, airline issues or independent issues that are going to last much longer, but you can tell from the forward demand that guests want to get back out and see the world.

“Every time we bring out a new ship, we always try to step up an additional level”

What are your main tips for agents selling *Grandeur*?

Travel agents are so important for us because we're the most inclusive and our price point is the highest in the industry, because of that all-inclusive nature that we provide. It's about making sure that travel agents truly understand everything that's included. Agents are critical because they help explain that value proposition that you can't look at the initial price tag.

We basically package everything into one to make it much more efficient. But again, that's where the education comes in, ensuring that travel agents understand that value proposition. Part of the reason we've been fortunate is by developing even stronger relationships with our [agent] partners. 📞



Photo: RSSC

Getting hands-on at the keel laying ceremony for *Grandeur*



Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines

EXPLORE
THE WORLD
WITH OUR
HAND-CRAFTED ITINERARIES

Sail aboard our smaller ships from £399pp



Your customers can explore the world with Fred. Olsen this year and enjoy special savings on No-Fly cruises from as little as £399pp. Aboard our smaller ships, they can journey near and far on itineraries which have been hand-crafted to experience the history, culture and scenery of each destination. Sailing from one of our 6 convenient regional departure ports, your customers will enjoy a stress-free check-in.

DEPARTURE	ITINERARY	SAILING FROM	NIGHTS	SHIP	CRUISE ID	PRICES FROM PER PERSON
19th Aug 2022	Scenic Isles & Lochs of Scotland	Dover	8	Bolette	T2219	£799*
27th Aug 2022	Antwerp & Amsterdam Bank Holiday Weekend	Dover	5	Bolette	T2220	£499*
1st Sep 2022	Vistas & Volcanoes of Azores & Madeira	Dover	13	Bolette	T2221	£999*
5th Sep 2022	Dramatic Coastlines of Iceland & The Faroes	Liverpool	11	Borealis	S2224	£899*
11th Sep 2022	UK Scenic Isles & Celtic Cities	Southampton	12	Balmoral	L2226A	£1,199*
21st Sep 2022	Scandinavian City Break	Dover	6	Bolette	T2223	£499*
23rd Sep 2022	France Short Break	Dover	4	Balmoral	L2227	£399*
27th Sep 2022	Landmarks of Greece & the Adriatic	Dover	28	Balmoral	L2222	£1,999*
12th Oct 2022	Discovering Cultural Highlights of Spain & Portugal	Dover	9	Bolette	T2225	£799*
17th Oct 2022	Scenic Islands of the Azores	Liverpool	11	Borealis	S2227	£999*
9th Nov 2022	Remembrance Beaches & Battlefields	Tilbury	8	Bolette	T2228	£599*

SMALLER SHIPS ✓ | HAND-CRAFTED ITINERARIES ✓ | 6 UK DEPARTURE PORTS ✓



Scan this QR code with your phone or tablet's camera to view our sailings online

For all the details on these sailings, please see our Travel Agent Centre at fredolsencruises.com/agent. To book, please call 0800 0355 144.

Terms & Conditions apply. Savings off valid for new bookings on selected sailings made from 5/7/22 to 31/8/22, inclusive.

*Cruises marked with an asterisk are on Saver Fare. Prices correct at time of going to print 25th July. Full terms and conditions apply, visit fredolsencruises.com/agent for details. E&OE.



FIT FOR THE FUTURE

New luxury cruise line Explora Journeys is set to hit the seas with an elevated on-board experience and innovative sustainability measures



Explora I boasts three outdoor pools and 64 private cabanas

Since the Explora Journeys brand first emerged in June 2021, the line has moved with breakneck speed to develop and showcase a new way of cruising for the next generation of luxury travellers. With a mix of chic design, immersive itineraries that allow guests to discover further and travel deeper, and an ironclad commitment to sustainability, Explora Journeys has the tools to rewrite the rulebook.

While its story – and inspiration – is one that starts back in the 1940s in Sorrento, when Neapolitan ferry captain Gianluigi Aponte, together with the Swiss sweetheart he met when she was a passenger on one of his crossings, went on to create MSC, Explora is wholeheartedly focused on the future.

In June this year, the line held the float out ceremony for its first ship, *Explora I*, at the Fincantieri shipyard in Monfalcone, Italy. Set to launch at the end of May 2023, its inaugural cruise will be an 11-night voyage from

Barcelona to Athens, and in its first year at sea the ship is set to visit 132 ports in 40 countries.

The second vessel, *Explora II*, will launch in summer 2024 and is under construction, with the keel being laid earlier in May. As MSC Group cruise division executive chairman Pierfrancesco Vago said during the *Explora I* ceremony: “At Explora Journeys we are building ships for tomorrow, utilising today’s latest technologies while being ready to adapt to alternative energy solutions as they become available.”

Environment matters

With the founding family as passionate about preserving the sea as they are about exploring it, *Explora III* and *IV* will be powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG). The two ships will be enlarged by 19 metres to enable the installation of a new generation system based on LNG and hydrogen. This has provided an opportunity to enhance the mix of suites with an increased number of spacious and luxurious Ocean Residences and larger public spaces, which offer a true sense of being at home at sea.

Meanwhile, the line will take things one step further with *Explora V* and *VI*, which will feature a new generation of LNG engines designed to tackle the issue of methane slip. They will also be equipped with industry-first environmental technologies and solutions, including a containment system for liquid hydrogen that will enable them to use this promising low-carbon fuel.

Hydrogen fuel will power a six-megawatt fuel cell to produce emissions-free power for the hotel operation and allow the vessels to run on zero emissions in port, with the engines turned off. The

“Every voyage with Explora Journeys will go far beyond the classic luxury cruise experience”



Ocean Terrace Suites provide unrivalled space and privacy



The spacious suites offer multiple areas to relax, entertain and unwind



A retractable glass roof means the indoor pool can be enjoyed in all weathers



Following its float out in June, Explora I will launch in May 2023

elegance will permeate every detail, while the 461 suites, penthouses and residences – each with sweeping ocean views from their floor-to-ceiling windows and private sun terraces – offer guests comfortable homes at sea, with unrivalled space and privacy.

On board *Explora I* and *Explora II*, there will be three swimming pools and 64 private cabanas, as well as an indoor pool with a retractable glass roof, and spa and fitness studios to ensure guests can do as much (or as little) as they like. The nine on-board culinary experiences promise something for every palate and provide the perfect scene for long, languorous lunches and vibrant evenings. All this is supported by an industry-leading guest-to-host ratio of 1.25 to 1.

While ashore, the newly released selection of Destination Experiences around the Mediterranean will provide a unique blend of well-known destinations such as Ibiza, Spain, discovered through a different lens, and lesser-known ports rarely visited by cruise ships such as Calvi in Corsica, France, or Kastellorizo, Greece.

On sailings between seven and 44 nights, guests will venture on and off the beaten path, with the Inaugural Journeys Collection covering the Mediterranean, Northern Europe, Iceland and Greenland, USA and Canada, the Caribbean, South America, Hawaii and Alaska.

Whether it's treading the cobbled streets of Europe's capitals and exploring the ancient Acropolis in Athens, or navigating the cool of the Norwegian fjords and sailing in the shadows of Svalbard's soaring cliffs, every voyage with Explora Journeys will go far beyond the classic luxury cruise experience. 🌊

two newbuilds will come into service in 2027 and 2028, respectively. Each ship will be RINA DOLPHIN certified for reduced underwater noise, while other sustainability initiatives include no single-use plastic on board or ashore.

Explora Journeys CEO Michael Ungerer said: "These bold moves to amend our construction plans, make significant additional investment in current orders and confirm orders for two more vessels with new technology despite the economic environment, are something only a family company can do.

"This also demonstrates unequivocally our absolute commitment to operate ships that will appeal and attract the next and future generations of luxury travellers. Sustainability is the new craftsmanship and we're honoured to take a pioneering position within the industry and the wider travel sector."

Elegance and space

Something else that all Explora ships will have in common is the high level of design and on-board amenities. European



Explora

JOURNEYS





INTRODUCING OUR JOURNEYS COLLECTION

Explora Journeys is **CREATING** a *collection* of journeys that offer the *perfect BLEND* of *celebrated* destinations and less-traveled spots, both seen from a *new* and **ORIGINAL** *point of view* that will *inspire* and **EXCITE** in equal measure.

All journeys include high speed unlimited Wi-Fi, access to sophisticated dining across a choice of nine culinary experiences, unlimited beverages, fine wines, premium spirits, a welcome bottle of champagne, onboard gratuities, and more.

The Explora Journeys team looks forward to welcoming guests from 31 May 2023.

FEATURED JOURNEYS

A Journey to Blessed Islands of Bohemia

17 JUNE – 25 JUNE 2023
8 NIGHTS

ATHENS • MYKONOS - OVERNIGHT • GOZO •
IBIZA - OVERNIGHT • BARCELONA

Ocean Suite fares from GBP 3,950 pp
Ocean Penthouse fares from GBP 5,350 pp
Ocean Residence fares from GBP 8,100 pp

An Extended Journey to the Sunny Caribbean and Golden California

18 MARCH – 12 APRIL 2024
25 NIGHTS

BRIDGETOWN • ROSEAU • WILLEMSTAD •
ORANJESTAD • CARTAGENA - OVERNIGHT •
PUERTO LIMON • PANAMA CITY (AMADOR) -
OVERNIGHT • QUEPOS • SAN JUAN DEL SUR •
PUERTO QUETZAL • PUERTO VALLARTA •
CABO SAN LUCAS • SAN DIEGO - OVERNIGHT •
LOS ANGELES - OVERNIGHT

Ocean Suite fares from GBP 6,100 pp
Ocean Penthouse fares from GBP 8,250 pp
Ocean Residence fares from GBP 12,500 pp

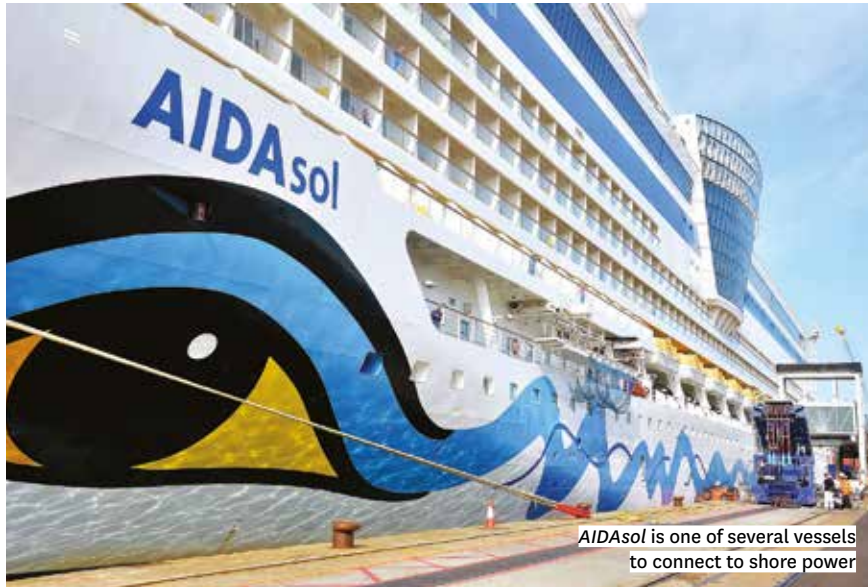
Fares are cruise only, per person; subject to availability, Terms & Conditions apply.

Register and join our community at explorajourneys.com/traveladvisors
or contact 0800 014 8486

Spotlight On

Shore power

ABP's Port of Southampton is the first port in the UK to launch a shore power facility for cruise ships. ABP head of cruise **Rebekah Keeler** shares the journey so far



Seeing *AIDAcosma* successfully connecting to shore power at Horizon Cruise Terminal in March was a true milestone moment for us and the realisation of a long-held goal.

We started looking into shore power over a decade ago, and in 2018 we included it in our Clean Air Strategy. That same year, a successful bid to the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership's Solent Prosperity Fund supported bringing the idea to reality. The fund would provide £4.5m of the total £9m cost, the rest from us. We knew shore power was the right thing to do and, despite inevitable challenges along the way, we were driven to make it happen.

CLIA research published in 2021 revealed the number of cruise ships within the global fleet with shore power capabilities is increasing, and 82 per cent of new cruise ships ordered fitted with shore side capability.

Shore power plays a significant role in our sustainability goals at the port, and air quality is a key priority for our council

"82 per cent of new cruise ships ordered have shore power capability"

in Southampton, too. While road traffic is the biggest contributor to emissions in the city, shipping and industry also have a role to play in reducing their carbon footprints.

Making connections

The key benefit of shore power is zero emissions at berth for ships connecting. A ship can switch off its auxiliary engines and draw all the power it needs while eliminating local emissions of nitrogen oxides and particulate matter. The system works by enabling a ship to connect to a cable management system that sits on the quayside, and the cable management system connects to the port's own electrical network.

We knew we could make shore power work in Southampton and, like any 'first', there has been learning. Following a competitive tender process, we worked with the Danish company Powercon to

deliver the system. We approached our distribution network operator SSE, which operates the electrical distribution system supplying power to the port.

Together, we sought to find a way to make shore power a reality at the Horizon and Mayflower Cruise Terminals. A key consideration was being able to provide the significant power a cruise ship needs while in port.

We've had a few challenges; disruption within the supply chain during the pandemic and then designing a system that would work for different cruise ships taking into account power requirements, connection points and corresponding quayside activities. In addition, we worked with lines to establish the current shore power capabilities and future possibilities, to ensure our specification matches as many as possible.

We are proud to have commissioned shore power for *AIDAcosma*, *AIDA Sol*, *AIDAprima*, *Queen Mary 2* and *Celebrity Beyond*, and we have a variety of vessels booked in over the summer. So far, we've had 17 cruise calls using the system in the first two months of operation and look forward to welcoming many more.

As for the immediate future, we are carrying out feasibility studies elsewhere in the port to explore shore power for other vessel types. We are thrilled to be where we are. 🌟



REBEKAH KEELER
HEAD OF CRUISE
ABP SOUTHAMPTON

Adversity is inevitable but our passion pushes us forward.

RISE TO THE OCCASION.





A FORCE FOR GOOD

The cruise industry is, more than ever,
looking to give back and benefit those most
in need, as **Gary Peters** discovers

The London Marathon is always a spectacular occasion. People from all walks of life coming together, pushing their bodies to the max and reaching lifelong aims, all for the benefit of deserving charities.

This year, a group of travel professionals will take on the challenge in October, in a bid to raise money for the Family Holiday Charity which gives underprivileged families the opportunity to go on holiday.

"In the industry, we know better than anyone how important holidays are to people," says Barrhead Travel president Jacqueline Dobson, who is one of those who has signed up to run the marathon. "We see, day in, day out, the positive impact on wellbeing and relationships that a holiday can impart on families. Getting away relieves us of the pressure of our daily lives, allows us to reconnect with those most important to us, and opens our minds to new cultures and experiences.

"We want to support those unable to book a holiday independently"



Travel professionals will take part in the London Marathon to raise money for the Family Holiday Charity



HAL has volunteered its ship *Volendam* to house 1,500 Ukrainian refugees

"It is a sad reality that not all families are able to look forward to a holiday each year. Whether through illness, financial struggles or unexpected challenges, some families don't get the chance to spend time away together."

Dobson continues: "Supporting the Family Holiday Charity is a signal from the industry that we believe holidays should be available for everyone. We want to support those unable to book independently and help people enjoy the many benefits a family holiday brings."

Of course, Dobson will be able to rely on the support of some of her fellow travel professionals during what is sure to be a challenging day in October. One of these is A-Rosa River Cruises UK & Ireland MD Lucia Rowe, a keen runner, who says she feels it is "a duty" to future generations to give something back.



Lucia Rowe: "This is really a case of every little helps"

"We know how amazing it is to see different places and interact with different cultures and people," she adds. "It's very important for families to widen their horizons. For me, the best thing that a family can do with their kids is, of course, spending time together; the second is learning by exploring."

A helping hand

While the group trains and prepares for the big day, there are many other initiatives ongoing to support those in need. One that generated plenty of attention, and rightly so, was announced back in April, when Holland America Line revealed that its ship *Volendam* was to be used to accommodate approximately 1,500 Ukrainian refugees – displaced due to the ongoing conflict – as part of an agreement announced by the Netherlands and City of Rotterdam government officials.

The agreement was extended in May, meaning that the ship will continue to be used for this purpose until September. As part of the arrangement, HAL provides hot meals, private cabins, housekeeping services, laundry, use of public spaces, fitness facilities, internet access and other services on board.

HAL and Seabourn UK & Europe MD Lynn Narraway says: "We were in the



The industry is keen for all families to enjoy the boost to wellbeing and relationships a holiday can bring



Jacqueline Dobson: "Holidays should be available for everyone"

“These cruise-led humanitarian projects are large in scope and many consist of a sustainability angle”

unique position of being able to provide a ship to accommodate the immediate need for food and housing. It was very important for us to work with the City of Rotterdam and charter this ship.

“HAL was founded in Rotterdam around the mission of helping immigrants find a better life. So today we’re proud to be a small part of a similar mission for Ukrainians who have tragically been displaced. It is vital that we give back where we are able to, from providing communities in the destinations we visit with physical help following natural disasters, appreciating the important role of healthcare workers by offering them extra on-board spend when they take a cruise, to some of the bigger charities and fundraising campaigns that we all support.”

APT has also revealed its Travelmarvel ship *Capella* is being used to provide temporary accommodation for up to 182 Ukrainian refugees. The operator has given exclusive use of the ship to the Hendrik-Ido-Ambacht Municipality in the Netherlands until 30 January 2023 to help support relief efforts.

The line’s head of sales and business development Brad Bennetts says: “It demonstrates a commitment and, in times of need, it’s not what you say, it’s what you do. Having this commitment helps us to give back. We have a hotel

manager on board to make them feel as comfortable [as possible].”

Other projects in the industry spread far and wide, including the MSC Foundation’s Super Coral Programme. This is focused on helping to regenerate coral, of “which the United Nations estimates 1,600 varieties are facing extinction”, says the foundation’s executive director Daniela Picco.

The foundation is working with leading coral and marine experts, says Picco, to research, develop, test and refine methods to reverse the decline in coral reefs in the 64-square-mile marine environment around Ocean Cay – MSC Cruises’ private island in the Bahamas. Picco adds: “The aim is to rebuild the reefs through pioneering the development of coral that is more resilient to environmental threats like ocean pollution and warming.”

Last year, the foundation led 17 emergency relief initiatives in 14 countries, including emergency responses to two volcanic eruptions, one earthquake and one outbreak of wildfires. “Continuing from 2020, the foundation assisted in the delivery of protective personal equipment to hospitals and health ministries in 11 African countries during the pandemic,” says Picco.

“It also supported other national efforts and partners to combat and

mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in Brazil, Italy, Lebanon, Montenegro and Vietnam.”

Global impact

As a global industry, it’s no surprise that these cruise-led humanitarian projects are large in scope, and many consist of a sustainability angle. Last July, Hurtigruten Expeditions partnered with the #WeTwo Foundation, a charity set up to encourage younger generations to care about the environment, to take 10 underprivileged young people on an expedition to Antarctica.

In June this year, following a total of 700 nominations, the two organisations announced the chosen 10 – nominated by teachers, social workers, police officers, parents, and friends from across the UK, and then selected for their plans for sustainability initiatives in their local communities – who will set off on their adventure in November, on *MS Fridtjof Nansen*.

The group will join Hurtigruten’s expedition team for a number of citizen science projects, including seabird distribution with the Antarctic site inventory, tracking individual whales and leopard seals and studying phytoplankton to understand better how they respond to water temperature changes.

At the time, #WeTwo Foundation co-founders Phoebe Smith and Dwayne Fields said: “We are confident the young people we have chosen will help us plant the seeds of change in their communities – and beyond. The ideas that they have for improving their local communities in their ‘pay it forward’ pledges shows that this generation truly cares about making a positive change in their environment, and we can’t wait for them to see first-hand how important their work in their communities is for driving real change on the other side of the world.”

Hurtigruten head of UK sales Mark Walter expands on the idea, telling *CTN*: “It [the partnership] makes complete sense. We had conversations about what their [#WeTwo] plans were, and how can we help. It fits so well with our own environmental rules and sustainable direction.

“It’s about trying to encourage the younger generation to have first-hand experience and how they can have a wider global impact. These 10 have some incredible local initiatives – from beach cleans to recycling projects – but we want to raise that and say ‘look, what you’re doing locally has an impact on the bigger, wider picture.’ Ultimately, when they come back, they can continue [that work] and influence their friends, family, and the local communities.”

APT also has the OneTomorrow initiative, the group’s not-for-profit charitable fund, which aims to make a positive and enduring impact on nature and the communities that the group visits. “It’s not a short, sharp fad – we’ve been doing this for a long period and are committed to it,” says Bennetts. “For me, I think the difference is consistency. If you show commitment and consistency, that really drives longer-term change.”

The way forward

A key reason why lines appear to be keen to bolster their humanitarian efforts comes down to influence – on people and communities. And, of course, the work underway mentioned here is not an exhaustive list of what the industry is doing in this field.



When pressed why the cruise sector should focus on such efforts, MSC’s Picco puts it succinctly: “There’s a straightforward answer to that and it doesn’t apply to the cruise industry alone. There’s one reason above all to implement a process for giving in your business: it’s the right thing to do.”

On the point of what cruise guests believe, Walter adds: “I don’t think people want to compromise on their travel – I think it’s becoming a much bigger part of that decision-making process and we’re seeing feedback that people are starting to choose responsible travel companies and cruise lines. They really want to go to these places, but if they go with an organisation that has clear criteria

and mandate on that [sustainability], then they are more likely to engage and support.”

Perception is one thing, but action is the key. Dobson states that “giving back is an important characteristic of our industry. It represents who we are as people, and it is at the core of what working in travel is all about.”

Dobson also highlights another area in which the travel industry as a collective can give back – recruitment. She continues: “As well as continuing with meaningful charitable and community outreach programmes and events, I think one of the ways we can make a difference is ensuring that opportunities within our industry are open to everyone.

“Ensuring that your recruitment programmes are inclusive for those from all backgrounds – irrespective of education or circumstances – will diversify your workforce while helping those from underprivileged backgrounds launch their careers.”

This point plays into the “legacy” idea that A-Rosa’s Rowe highlights. On the upcoming marathon and what it will mean for those who benefit, she says: “You hear about personal stories and you can really see you’ve contributed to something tangible and real. It’s humbling, emotional and a very rewarding thing to do. I encourage everybody to get involved, in any small way, because this is really a case of every little helps.”

So, as the marathon training continues and other initiatives get underway, cruise seems set to continue its goal to be a force for good. 🌱



” *In conversation with...*



Andy Harmer at May's
CLIA Conference

CLIA's Andy Harmer

Many distinguished people have been awarded an OBE. Now, the industry's very own **Andy Harmer** is part of that pantheon. Gary Peters sits down with CLIA's UK & Ireland MD to discuss the road ahead for cruise

When it was revealed in June that Andy Harmer had been awarded an OBE in the Queen's birthday honours list, there was universal delight that someone who has worked so hard – not least in recent years because of we all know what – was being recognised on such a stage.

For those who know Harmer, it will come as no surprise to learn that he sees the honour not as a mark of any personal endeavours, but rather the combined

efforts of so many to drag the industry off its knees and back into business.

Coupled with a tough but amazing recent climb of Mount Kilimanjaro, it's been an eventful time. "It was a bit of a shock," he says, when asked to describe his initial reaction upon hearing the news. "I had a letter delivered to my house, but I had just got back home from the US, and therefore was jet lagged. So, I went to sleep, woke up and thought, 'I'm sure I have a letter about an OBE'.

"It's great for the industry, as we've built a really close working relationship with the government over the past couple

of years. I think – and this is only my understanding – that's part of where the OBE comes from," Harmer adds. "I'm happy to share it with the real experts, the people who worked so hard over the past couple of years, on resumption [of cruises], but also developing that ongoing relationship with the government – it's very much a shared award."

He continues: "We should be proud of that relationship that we've built because hopefully it will pay dividends in the future. It also allows us to talk to the government and other stakeholders in a bigger way."



MSC Virtuosa was one of three ships on show at the recent CLIA Conference

“We are all working together for the benefit of cruise”

Friendly competition

Harmer is confident that this is not a one-way street, and that the government does also value the greater collaboration it has come to enjoy with cruise. “I think they see cruise as an important part of the UK economy,” Harmer says. “One of the messages that we had over the last two years was the economic importance of cruise not just to the UK economy as a whole, but also the coastal communities that we visited.”

This chain of thought also feeds into the sustainability efforts in cruise and the government’s own targets, as Harmer elaborates: “[We’re] explaining the number of new initiatives and investment in alternative fuels [across the sector], and how that technology will benefit the whole maritime sector.”

The sustainability message was also pushed at the most recent CLIA Conference in May, and Harmer highlights how this year in particular the trade fair was “such an impactful thing”.

He adds: “There were around 40 cruise lines plus destinations, technology providers and so on, all working together, with that friendly competition. For travel agents, that’s really powerful because it shows that we are all working together for the benefit of the sector, as well as of course being competitive in terms of sales and commercial areas.”

Something else that agents have spoken to Harmer about in the weeks since is the range of product on show at the conference, with three ship tours – on *MSC Virtuosa*, P&O Cruises’ *Iona* and Royal Caribbean’s *Anthem of the Seas* – and many panel sessions covering all manner of subjects. “The conference was never about promoting a single brand, but rather promoting cruise as a whole. We all benefit when cruising grows,” he explains.

This year also saw a number of agents – just under 50 per cent – attend their first CLIA event, which “demonstrates new talent or a lot of the people who haven’t maybe switched on to cruise before, seeing the opportunities it offers”, says Harmer, adding: “Having the opportunity to see ships, meet all cruise lines and hear from some great speakers is a really powerful thing to take back and grow sales.”

Genuine appreciation

On this point of agent and cruise line partnerships, Harmer sees a genuine bond between the two, stating: “It’s been an important relationship for as long as I’ve been in the industry and before that, too. It’s a powerful combination, that will support the cruise industry as we go to the next phase of our growth and development.

“We rely on that, and it has helped us through not just the challenges of the past couple of years but previous challenges too, and will no doubt stand us in good stead for the years ahead,” he continues. “Talking to agents, I think they are often surprised at the level of support they get from cruise lines, such as the chance to go online for learning and support. Lines really do set themselves up as a resource for agents to help them with their business.”

CLIA has also continued to develop its own agent training tools, with a new ‘love cruise’ section on its website, offering a practical checklist of the ways in which agents can make the most of their CLIA membership.

These, alongside the resources from lines, will be necessary as the industry continues to evolve, albeit with the knowledge that not all will be plain sailing. “Travel has always had challenges,” says Harmer. “We wouldn’t be the travel industry if we didn’t accept those challenges.

“But, if you look at this year and next, then it’s clear that this is a great opportunity for travel agents. There are many high-profile ships arriving, as well as new itineraries. Also, we should never take for granted the fact that travel more generally is opening up and becoming more easily available.”

He adds: “We have to look at the positives – there’s pent-up demand and a real willingness by holidaymakers to get away and enjoy a holiday. Of course, there’s no better way to do that than on a cruise.”

The conference attracted an encouraging number of first-timers.

Photo: Steve Durlup Photography



A-Rosa Sena

Fast Facts

A-Rosa Sena has been designed to put sustainability and families first. The ship boasts a hybrid propulsion system which combines a diesel engine and a separate electric motor, which is powered by batteries. This means that when approaching a port, the ship can switch to battery power, enabling it to arrive silently and emission-free. The vessel is the only ship on the Rhine to feature four decks of spacious public areas and cabins plus a sundeck that boasts two pools, including a separate children's pool.

280

PASSENGERS

140

CABINS

70

CREW

2

POOLS

1

KIDS' CLUB



1



Cabins

The ship features 121 standard balcony cabins. Each one has a walk-on balcony with space for two chairs plus a lounge area. Guests can also choose from six extra-large suites, which feature a walk-in wardrobe and plenty of space. There are also 12 dedicated family cabins for bigger groups.

2



Kids' Club

A-Rosa Sena is the first European river cruise ship to feature a dedicated kids' club room, located next to the family cabins. Known as Treasure Island, the space has a pirate theme and includes a slide, climbing and cave areas, craft and painting corners and a relaxation area.



3

Spa/Gym

On *A-Rosa Sena*, the line's signature SPA-ROSA is bigger and better than ever. The extra-large wellness area with a gym boasts a Finnish sauna, jacuzzi, two treatment rooms and an ice grotto with ice fountain. The fitness room boasts smart machines, plus space for group sessions.



4

Pools

A-Rosa Sena has also upped the game on pools, with a main pool for adults plus a separate children's pool – a unique offering for a river cruise ship. Both are located on the sundeck and surrounded by ample loungers and sun umbrellas to protect everyone during the hotter months.



5

Restaurants

Dining options offer plenty of flexibility. Guests can enjoy different restaurants, dining areas and bars with the option to dine in or outside. The buffet style A-Rosa Market features a range of local dishes from the regions, while in the Pavilion there is a served dinner using dishes from the buffet.



6

Bars

There are plenty of places to enjoy a sundowner. These include the Up & Down Bar, located on the sundeck. This can be lowered when bridge heights are low. For panoramic views, the Sena Bar is ideal, and if the weather is good, guests can enjoy a cocktail at the Captain's View bar.



Gullfoss is the largest volume waterfall in Europe

The joy of **THE JOURNEY**

Travel agents join Fred Olsen Cruise
Lines for a VIP fam trip to Iceland.
Gary Peters reports live



The attention to detail on *Borealis* means every guest feels like a VIP



First-class service comes as standard with Fred Olsen



"Sailing with Fred Olsen is like coming home and holidaying with friends"

To help agents understand this, Fred Olsen invited agents on board *Borealis* – one of its new ships. The 10-day Whales, Waterfalls & Geysers of Iceland itinerary starts in Liverpool and sails on to Reykjavík, Ísafjörður and Akureyri, among other scenic ports of call.

The cruise has been designed, from start to finish, to immerse agents in everything that happens on board and ashore during excursions. So, how does this help agents when convincing clients to choose Fred Olsen?

Let the learning commence

The learning journey begins as soon as we step on board *Borealis* in Liverpool. Following a simple and easy embarkation process, the first thing that strikes the group is the atmosphere on board and warmth from the crew – as Newmarket Holidays' Stephanie Blackmun explains: "They [the crew] are genuinely interested in you – it doesn't feel forced in any way. It makes a massive difference. Once you experience it for yourself, you believe in it."

With a short stop in Belfast up next, agents soon get their hands dirty, quite literally, during an exclusive cooking demonstration, making pastries and decorating cakes, and speaking to the chefs on board in a menu briefing, to understand the meticulous work that goes into catering for all tastes and passengers' dietary requirements.

As Fred Olsen highlights, this is all about attention to detail, making the guest experience personal, and showcasing that everything that happens on board relates back to one key message: it's all about the people – something to emphasise to clients.

We're standing next to the Great Geyser in Iceland, on the outskirts of Reykjavík, when suddenly it comes to life, ejecting water high into the air as all around it gasp at the power of mother nature.

It is for moments such as these that we – eight travel agents and I – have come together on a special VIP fam trip with Fred Olsen Cruise Lines.

In recent times, the line has focused heavily on what it stands for and what sets it apart from other cruise lines in the market. At the forefront of this is The Olsen Way, 10 key principles that define what makes it, and the experiences that it offers guests, unique.

"There is one class of guest; everyone on board is a VIP"

The exclusive access continues on the first sea day as we make our way to Iceland, with a full tour of all cabin grades on *Borealis*, as well as a comprehensive presentation into The Olsen Way principles.

From its hand-crafted, not mass-produced itineraries to the belief that smaller is better, taking guests to hidden-gem ports of call, and the joy of the journey, with painstaking attention paid to every detail, agents have tangible assets and a brand identity they can use when talking to clients.

Kevin Reeves, from Cruise 118, says: "I was surprised at the space [in the cabins]. There is one class of guest; everyone on board is a VIP."

Magical moments

The beautiful sights on board are soon joined by many beautiful sights on land, as *Borealis* arrives in Reykjavík. Here, many in the group opt for the Golden Circle and Hidden Gems excursion, which not only takes us to the famed sights of Iceland – such



Iceland's magnificent geysers are a wonder to behold

"The Fred Olsen experience is different to other cruise lines"



The accommodation on Borealis is elegant and stylish

as the aforementioned Great Geyser and Gullfoss waterfall – but also less-discovered, local landmarks – representing the ‘travellers, more than tourists’ principle, which, again, is a fundamental component agents can lean on.

As for the excursion, Connoisseur Travel Services' Linda Thomson says: "As this is my first time in Iceland, I was looking forward to seeing what makes the country famous – I wasn't disappointed."

This theme continues in Ísafjörður, where, with no other tourists in sight, our guide Gunnar explains more about the community, and we meet local farmer Christian and his family. Even when things don't go according to plan, as is the case in Akureyri, when our RIB tour is cancelled due to bad weather, Fred Olsen goes above and beyond to organise an alternative excursion to spot whales.

Fred Olsen Travel assistant manager Tom Holland says he is thankful to Fred Olsen for helping him to tick off a bucket-list moment: "As with all wildlife, you are never guaranteed to see anything, but our tour guide was determined to make it happen and we kept sailing until we finally saw what we had come to see."

A planned stop in Seyðisfjörður is also called off – again because of weather – but with a minimum of fuss, we soon rejoice in the news that a bonus port of call in Tórshavn, the capital city of the Faroe Islands, has been added to the itinerary. As Alan Witt, from Not Just Travel, says on the day: "Well done Fred Olsen, you continue to do us proud."

Reeves says: "The Fred Olsen experience is different to other cruise lines. For example, guests don't just go for ice cream, rather they see how it is made and speak to the people who make it." Meanwhile, Fred Holidays

marketing and creative design executive Brogan Doyle praises the knowledgeable tour guides throughout the voyage.

'It's like coming home'

Considering the experience as a whole, Lincolnshire Co-op Travel's Lisette Barnes says: "The team has gone over and above to make our cruise special. It has surpassed my expectations in every way." Meanwhile, Appleby Travel's Alice Hook says "everyone on board can have a difference experience", as there is "terrific variety in things to do". Stephanie Blackmun perhaps sums it up best: "Sailing with Fred Olsen is like coming home and holidaying with friends."

All in all, The Olsen Way principles, coupled with the overall Fred Olsen experience, form a formidable selling angle for all agents. 📌



The views inside Borealis are as striking as those outside

📌 VISIT

cruisetradenews.com to watch video interviews with the agents and discover if Fred Olsen met their expectations. You can learn about The Olsen Way principles here:

fredolsencruises.com/the-olsen-way
The Fred Olsen Travel Agent Centre can be found here: **fredolsencruises.com/travel-agent-centre/login**



Brought to you by
cruise
TRADE NEWS

2022 DATES

Norwich	31-Aug	Cardiff.....	11-Oct
Exeter	14-Sep	Southampton....	25-Oct
Nottingham.....	22-Sep	London.....	01-Nov
Newcastle.....	27-Sep	Chelmsford	03-Nov
		Sheffield	07-Dec



“The Cruise Challenge events give you the opportunity to learn in an interactive and fun environment. They are very enjoyable”

Carol Smith - Personal Travel Advisor

SPONSORS



For more information on dates and how to get involved visit

cruisechallenge.evessiocloud.com

@cruisetradenews #CruiseChallenge suzanne.halil@realresponsemedia.com

Dear Agent

**Join the largest global agent rewards programme
to multiply your earnings**

Agents join free today and start earning:

- **Cash**
- **Points for Free Room Nights**
- **Fam Trips, Competitions, & Prizes**
- **Log a booking and we will help you find a reward**
- **Bonus and multiplier reward campaigns**
- **Over 1200 hotels**
- **Over \$500K rewards earned per year**
- **All your cash on one versatile
Mastercard® or Visa®**

**Earn from multiple rewards programs
just for logging one booking!**



**mybooking
rewards.com**

**THE GLOBAL MARKET LEADER IN
AGENT REWARDS INCENTIVES &
LOYALTY PROGRAMS SINCE 2010**

**AGENTS JOIN FREE NOW AT:
mybookingrewards.com**

Win at Selling

Repositioning cruises

A repositioning cruise could be just the ticket for those clients looking for something a little different

Cunard director of UK sales Tom Mahoney does not pull any punches when explaining what makes a repositioning cruise special. “[We offer] guests the opportunity to explore legendary sailing routes to historic and inspiring destinations,” he says. “Guests can bask in the journey, revel in the style and enjoy more days at sea, which bring the luxury of time to discover peace and possibilities on board.”

It is for these reasons, and more, that such a voyage might be worth pitching to clients. With Cunard, for example, at the end of October *Queen Elizabeth* will



Repositioning cruises offer guests the chance to see sights such as the Sri Lanka blue magpie

land stops and the opportunity to visit locations that are off-the-beaten track. Many experienced cruisers are attracted to the transcontinent itineraries as [these are] great ways to see new ports and destinations that they otherwise would not see.

“Trans-ocean cruises are a niche in themselves with their own customer community, those that enjoy the sailing side of cruising, the relaxation and tranquillity that comes with sea days along with the opportunity to become part of an on-board community and get to know and spend time with fellow guests and crew. It’s a very different experience but it’s one that trans-ocean guests keep coming back to.”

SELLING TIPS

“Take time to study different repositioning itineraries, understand their character and features. Deployment planners are always looking for new ways to freshen up itineraries and likewise with product managers and the on-board experience,” says Azamara’s David Duff

• Cunard’s Tom Mahoney says: “A repositioning voyage represents excellent value for money. Those looking for the ultimate escapism, a definitive ocean travel experience, a sense of occasion and an authentic feeling of freedom, would all enjoy a repositioning voyage”

• Duff adds: “Start early: these itineraries are typically keenly priced and often attract interest from cruisers as soon as they go on sale”

“To navigate historic sailing routes on a repositioning voyage is a unique experience”

reposition to Freemantle in Australia. The 28-night voyage will transit the Suez Canal, before taking in the UNESCO-listed Sinharaja Forest in Sri Lanka and Bali’s rice paddies.

Elsewhere, Azamara’s four ships will leave Europe in late November – *Azamara Pursuit* heading west to Brazil, *Azamara Journey* to South Africa, *Azamara Quest* to Dubai and then on to Australia, and new ship *Azamara Onward* sets sail from Lisbon to Miami for the start of its winter itinerary in the Caribbean.

The line’s commercial director David Duff explains: “We typically offer two types of repositioning itineraries: those that are largely trans-ocean, such as crossing the Atlantic, which involve consecutive sea days, or those that are transcontinent, where there are more

Full of character

When it comes to selling such cruises, Duff explains: “Each repositioning cruise can have its own character and merits. Like all cruises, larger ships offer a more comprehensive on-board entertainment and activities, but small ships have the intimacy and comfort that comes with a smaller on-board community.”

Mahoney also believes that the “allure of sea travel” is a powerful tool, as “to navigate historic sailing routes on a repositioning voyage with Cunard is certainly a unique experience”.

There’s no time to waste, however, as Duff highlights: “Many repositioning cruises do see strong early bookings and, of course, booking early often gets the best value and choice of options, which can be important for guests spending more time on the ship than on a regular cruise. Highlighting the often-lower price point is important, as well as that these itineraries allow guests to explore destinations in one, compact itinerary.”

MSC World Europa will offer the ultimate cruise experience plus state-of-the-art technology to reduce emissions



A slide spanning 11 decks, the Venom Drop @ The Spiral is not for the fainthearted

NEWCOMERS

The latest ships in the sector
and what's on board

MSC WORLD EUROPA

As MSC Cruises' first venture into LNG propulsion, *MSC World Europa* aims to deliver a more sustainable cruising experience for its 6,762 guests. Other eco-friendly credentials include water recycling technology and propellers to reduce underwater noise.

On-board spaces include the dining experience, spanning 13 venues and includes an on-board microbrewery, a steakhouse and Latin American-inspired street food.

Guests will be able to enjoy seven swimming pools, from the Zen Pool to the Oasis Pool, and families are catered for with MSC Kids' Club. The bars on offer will include Elixir Mixology Bar and the MSC Yacht Club Sundeck Bar.

The ship will make its first appearance on 20 December 2022 with a special four-night sailing from Doha.

What's unique on board?

- The promenade features what MSC claims is the longest dry slide at sea, the Venom Drop @ The Spiral, at 11 decks high.



The large Sun Deck on *Vega* is the perfect spot to chill out

VEGA

⬆ APT Travelmarvel's *Vega* is the sister ship to both *Polaris* and *Capella*. On board, *Vega* offers a Sun Deck that features a whirlpool, outdoor bar and putting green. *Vega* includes an impressive range of dining options for its size: the Constellations Restaurant features regional specialties in a formal dining setting; the True North Lounge offers a buffet, and the Irish pub, McGeary's Bar, serves classic pub grub. A majority of cabins also have a French balcony. *Vega* set sail earlier this year.

What's unique on board?

● For guests who love being on the top deck, travel agents can mention that there is a Sky Deck Terrace that is half a deck lower than the top Sun Deck, so guests can access it even when passing under low bridges.



Vega's True North Lounge offers a buffet menu with a panoramic view

~~~~~

**In Viking Mars' Nordic Spa, guests can warm up in the thermal suite or sauna, then cool down in a snow room**

~~~~~

VIKING MARS

⬇ One of the latest additions to the Viking fleet, *Viking Mars* set sail on 28 May 2022 for its maiden voyage from Barbados to Bergen. The size of the ship allows it to dock in smaller ports, so guests can explore further and in more detail. All cabins have balconies and are decorated in a clean, Nordic style across all six categories. The Nordic calmness continues through to the entertainment offerings, which range from puzzle making in the Living Room and live classic music, to a Blues and Jazz Lounge.

Guests can tailor their on-board experience through their cabin choice. For example, the most expensive cabin, the Owner's Suite, will provide priority embarkation and stateroom access, four guaranteed priority reservations at every restaurant 100 days prior to departure, as well as priority space treatment bookings. On-board dining includes two speciality venues, both of which are at no extra cost, as well as plenty of other eateries, such as the Pool Grill and the World Café.

What's unique on board?

● Travel agents can highlight the relaxing nature of the ship, pointing out that guests can relax in the Nordic Spa, where after warming up in the thermal suite or sauna, they can enter a snow room to cool down at no additional cost. 📍

Viking Mars has a calm vibe throughout and all cabins have balconies



WAVE
AWARDS 2022



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
Fred.Olsen Cruise Lines

AFTER PARTY SPONSOR
**Royal Caribbean
International**

‘THRILLED TO BE INVOLVED’

We speak to a selection of sponsors for the Wave Awards 2022
to discover why the event is important to them

**Royal Caribbean International
sales director UK, Ireland & Spain
Stuart Byron**

“We’ve partnered with Real Response Media as a sponsor for the Wave Awards for several years now as we see the importance of their audiences and the value that this platform offers. The innovative approach to the event is aligned with our own style and we appreciate that the awards take on board both agent and consumer feedback.”

**Fred Olsen Cruise Lines head of
sales Geoff Ridgeon**

“We at Fred Olsen are so proud to be headline sponsors for the event for 2022. Each year the awards get bigger and better as the industry continues to evolve. It is an exciting time, as together we sail towards brighter futures, and the event will be a real celebration of all we have achieved between us.”

**Riviera Travel commercial
partnerships manager Vicky Billing**

“We are very excited to sponsor this year’s Wave Awards. After an incredibly challenging couple of years for us all, we are confident the bounce-back is well under way. As we continue to overcome the challenges of those difficult years, we wanted to further support an industry we recognise as the best of the best. Good luck to all nominees – we have our fingers and toes crossed for you.”

Marella Cruises MD Chris Hackney

“We’re thrilled to be a sponsor for this year’s Wave Awards and are very much looking forward to celebrating. It’s brilliant to see the awards back in full swing to allow us to recognise, celebrate and reward some incredible talent across the sector. We’d like to thank our colleagues for all their hard work and dedication.”

**Accord Marketing CEO
Sally Winfield**

“As an agency dedicated to working with a range of ocean and river cruise lines and agents, Accord Marketing is, once again, delighted to be a sponsor for this year’s Wave Awards. We look forward to joining our clients and partners at the awards evening in November, where we will celebrate the crème de la crème of cruise lines, industry expertise, agency excellence, and so much more. Good luck to everyone who has entered.”

**Seabourn UK and Europe MD
Lynn Narraway**

“These awards unite an industry that has faced ongoing challenges but has collectively demonstrated positivity and perseverance throughout. What’s more, these awards present a fantastic opportunity for members of the industry to reunite at the ceremony.”

The Wave Awards 2022 will take place on 16 November 2022 at the Pan Pacific London.
Go to **thewaveawards.com** to book your tickets for the ceremony.

SPONSORS

In partnership with



After Party sponsor





COMPLIMENTARY SUITE UPGRADES | LOW DEPOSIT
FLY/CRUISE FROM £3,799PP

Seabourn is a world of all-inclusive, all-suite ultra-luxury, where space is generous and crowds are few; where names and wine orders are remembered, preferences noted, and wishes granted before they are spoken. A concept designed around an intimate boutique hotel, which combines visits to marquee cities with hidden gems.

When your clients take off on a Seabourn voyage, they'll wake up to a whole new view. Book selected voyages departing between October 2022 and November 2023 and your clients will enjoy a complimentary two-category veranda suite upgrade - with a reduced deposit - from just £250 per person.



THE SEABOURN DIFFERENCE

- Intimate ships with a private club atmosphere
- Intuitive, personalised service provided by staff passionate about exceeding guests expectations
- All ocean-front suites, luxuriously appointed
- Complimentary premium spirits and fine wines available on board at all times
- Welcome Champagne and complimentary in-suite bar stocked with your preferences
- Tipping is neither required, nor expected
- World-class dining, further enhanced through a culinary partnership with Chef Thomas Keller
- All dining venues are complimentary, dine where, when and with whom you wish

CONTACT YOUR SEABOURN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TEAM | CALL 0344 3 38 8614 | EMAIL: SALESSUPPORT@SEABOURN.CO.UK



Terms & Conditions: *Featured prices are per guest based on double occupancy and promo codes NB, JE & JB. Prices are inclusive of Cruise Fare, Taxes, Fees & Port Expenses in Pounds Sterling. All savings amounts are included in the prices shown. Complimentary Veranda Suite Upgrades are subject to availability at time of booking on these voyages. Upgrade will be reflected in fare paid for selected Suite category. Reduced Deposit offer is valid on select sailings that are outside of standard penalty periods. Reduced Deposit amounts vary by class of ship: Ocean Fleet Seabourn Odyssey, Seabourn Sojourn, Seabourn Quest, Seabourn Encore and Seabourn Ovation reduced deposit of £250 per guest; Expedition Fleet Seabourn Venture and Seabourn Pursuit reduced deposit of £500 per guest. Reduced Deposit offer is based on promo DD. Europe Inclusive Business Class Air (BCA) offer is subject to availability, valid only for guests residing in the UK and applicable to the 1st & 2nd guests sharing a Suite only. In the event that BCA is not available (at the sole discretion of Seabourn) or for guests not wishing to utilise the promotional air offer - a cruise credit in the amount of £300 per guest on select Europe cruises will be applied to the booking amount, based on promo code NV. Promotional air offers include complimentary transfers between the airport and ship. BCA offer is based on promo code JB. All offers are capacity controlled and may be modified or withdrawn at any time without prior notice. Other restrictions may apply. Seabourn reserves the right to correct errors. Ships' registry: Bahamas. ©2022 Seabourn.



14-NIGHT EXOTIC CARIBBEAN IN DEPTH

7, 21 Jan; 4, 18* Feb; 4 Mar 2023

SEABOURN OVATION

Roundtrip Barbados

Cruise from £4,599pp

Fly/cruise from £5,399pp

Visits: Port Elizabeth (Bequia); Trois Ilets (Martinique); Basseterre (Guadeloupe); Charlestown (Nevis); St Johns Antigua; Carambola Beach (St Kitts & Nevis); Philipsburg (St Maarten); Sopers Hole (Frenchmans Cay); Basseterre (St Kitts & Nevis); Gustavia (St Barts); Terre-de-Haut (Iles des Saintes); Rodney Bay (St Lucia); Saline Bay (Mayreau)

- Complimentary 'Caviar in the Surf' beach party
- Suite Upgrade
- £250pp low deposit
- 10% Early Bonus saving

*Lead fare based on 18 Feb 2023

16-NIGHT AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

5, 21~ Dec 2022;

6, 22~ Jan; 7* Feb 2023

SEABOURN ODYSSEY

Sydney to Auckland

Cruise from £6,199pp

Fly/cruise from £7,699pp

Visits: Phillip Island; Melbourne; Milford Sound & Cruising Fjordland National Park (New Zealand); Oban (Halfmoon Bay); Port Chalmers (Dunedin); Timaru; Kaikoura; Picton; Wellington; Matiatia Bay.

- Suite Upgrade
- £250pp low deposit
- 10% Early Bonus saving

~Itinerary in reverse. * Lead fare based on 7 Feb 2023

7-NIGHT AEGEAN ALLURE

23 Apr*; 21 May; 25 Jun; 23 Jul;

17 Sep; 5 Nov 2023

SEABOURN ENCORE

Piraeus (Athens) to Istanbul

Cruise from £3,799pp

Inclusive Business Air

Visits: Spetsai; Agios Nikolaos (Crete); Kusadasi (Ephesus); Mykonos, Skopelos; Skiathos; Bozcaada (Turkey).

- Complimentary Evening at Ephesus
- Suite Upgrade
- £250pp low deposit
- 10% Early Bonus saving

*Lead fare based on 23 Apr 2023



The holiday spirit

Fairy lights sparkle, music plays in the background, friends greet each other and specially decorated mugs of steaming gluhwein perfume the air: Christmas markets are magical, feel-good experiences. **Deborah Stone** reports

It's only in the past decade or so that people have cottoned on to the popularity of Christmas markets in the UK, but even our biggest (Birmingham) and best (Lincoln, Bath, and Edinburgh) are pale imitations of the truly great Christmas markets that brighten up Europe's cold dark December nights.

During the four weeks of advent up to Christmas Eve, cathedral cities and many smaller towns along Europe's rivers – particularly the Rhine and Danube – set up Christmas stalls in cathedral grounds and public squares. They are traditionally the place to buy wooden nativity sets and

tree decorations but also a meeting place for family and friends during the festive season, where they get together to eat bratwurst or klobasa (German and Czech sausages), lebkuchen (giant gingerbread cookies) and sticky sugared almonds, pistachios or hazelnuts.

These markets have a special atmosphere. On the Rhine, Germany's cathedral city of Cologne has half a dozen or more festive markets, including a family area where St Nicholas is pulled in a sleigh by real reindeer while Christmas characters hand out sweets to children.

On the Danube in Vienna, which also has multiple markets, the famous

Christmas market at Rathausplatz in front of the City Hall is known for being decorated like a giant advent calendar.

Although Germany and Austria are renowned for their Christmas markets, there are equally impressive – if different – displays in France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

In France, particularly in Provence, Christmas nativity scenes are extremely popular and santons – the nativity figures – are regarded as works of art. CroisiEurope has early December Rhône cruises where these can be seen along with Christmas markets in places like Avignon and Arles. Amsterdam, the



Riviera Travel's MS William Wordsworth can set the mood with live festive music in the lounge and bar

“Is there anything more Christmassy than enjoying a Gluhwein in the cold with a spectacular cathedral in the background?”

start of many Rhine cruises, has several Christmas markets – with one in front of the Rijksmuseum where many of Holland's greatest paintings are on display.

Emerald has Christmas cruises that start in Amsterdam and the city is also a highlight of Dutch and Belgian waterways cruises, with stops to see the Christmas markets at Antwerp, Brussels and Ghent on cruises such as AmaWaterways' Best of Holland & Belgium (Christmas).

Fast sellers

But there is one problem with Christmas cruises: they book up fast and the advice from Riviera Travel sales development manager Paul Mellon is to encourage clients to get in early. “Riviera runs 20 cruises over Christmas and the New Year and all sailings get booked up quickly,” he says.

These itineraries are on the Danube and Rhine, the most popular rivers for Christmas market cruises – although they offer very different experiences, adds Mellon. “The Enchanting Rhine and Yuletide Markets river cruise sails only in Germany, which is world-famous for its markets, while our Danube's Imperial Cities and Yuletide Markets cruises offer traditional Christmas markets from three different countries in three different capital cities,” he says.

John Fair, UK sales director at CroisiEurope, agrees that Christmas markets in German towns such as Cologne, Rudesheim and Heidelberg on the Rhine are “difficult to beat” but markets at Strasbourg in France – also on the Rhine – and Colmar, with half-timbered houses and canals just a cruise excursion away, “are also spectacular”.

At Mundy Cruising, sales and marketing director Alex Loizou champions the Danube: “It's a firm favourite of ours for Christmas markets, with Salzburg, Vienna and Budapest easily among the best of the numerous markets,” he explains. “Add to this the chance to add a Prague extension and it's a hands-down winner.”



Expert VIEW

“Understand exactly guests' preferences. River cruises, and in particular Christmas market itineraries, can be bewilderingly similar across operators, so knowing the particular needs and tastes of your guests will allow you to recommend the right line and itinerary.”

ALEX LOIZOU

Mundy Cruising sales and marketing director

But why will clients book Christmas cruises year after year? According to Amadeus River Cruises UK account manager Jenny Wade, it's because of the extraordinary experience. “They are magical and are about experiencing different festive traditions, enjoying the food and drink and generally embracing that Christmas spirit,” she says. “Is there anything more Christmassy than enjoying a Gluhwein in the crisp cold with a spectacular cathedral in the background?”

The ships themselves are also a selling point. Wade adds: “The river ships look fabulous during the festive season. They are all decked out with beautiful garlands and a big tree on board. And with the ships' musicians playing seasonal music, they not only have a wonderful Christmas ambience, but they are also extremely cosy and welcoming.”

“Amadeus ships also feature seasonal menus on board, so these reflect the festive period and further add to that Christmas spirit. For guests who are on board for Christmas itself there are special celebrations – with a Christmas dinner, mulled wine party and opportunity to enjoy mass in the cathedral at Dürnstein or Speyer.”



Experience Christmas in Provence on MS Anne-Marie

Picture: CroisiEurope



Historic Salzburg Christmas market is guaranteed to get you feeling festive



It's easy to relax in comfort on MS William Wordsworth

ITINERARIES

Riviera Travel

• Prices for the eight-day Christmas on the Danube cruise from Budapest on *MS William Wordsworth*, start from £2,089pp, departing 22 December 2022.

↳ Rivieratravel.co.uk

Amadeus River Cruises

• The five-day Magic of Advent on the Rhine itinerary, from Cologne to Strasbourg, on *MS Amadeus Imperial*, is priced from £664pp cruise only, or £999 with flights, departing 9 December 2022.

↳ amadeus-rivercruises.co.uk

CroisiEurope

• Prices for the line's five-day Christmas Traditions and Santons of Provence on the Rhône voyage on *MS Anne-Marie* start from £755pp cruise only, departing 6 December 2023.

↳ Croisieurope.co.uk

CroisiEurope has a similar mix of Christmas decorations and carol singing. Prominent on board, says John Fair, is "great Christmas-themed food and drink".

It's the same story for Riviera cruise ships: "Guests get the superb service, fine dining and luxury accommodation as with all our cruises, but the ship will be fully adorned with stunning Christmas trees and decorations, plus lovely touches such as festive gingerbread houses around the ship," says Mellon.

Beyond the festive

While the Christmas experience is at the heart of these cruises, guests can enjoy the architecture and culture on offer all year. "Just because there are Christmas markets doesn't mean that the numerous galleries, museums and historic buildings can't be visited," says Mundy Cruising's Loizou. "City walking tours, cycling excursions, sampling local food and wine – all are available in addition to the joys of the market visits."

Wade adds: "Amadeus River Cruises offers a festive excursion programme, which incorporates special festive-themed activities but still includes things such as walking tours, classical concerts, and wine tasting excursions."

The line's Magic of Advent on the Rhine voyage, for instance, has excursions such as a walking tour of Strasbourg, taking in its old town and its cathedral, Strassburger Münster, as well as free time in the Christmas markets. Meanwhile, Riviera Travel's Christmas on the Danube cruise includes a full day in Vienna with a guided tour of the main sights such as the Hofburg complex, where the Spanish Riding School can be found as well as several museums.

Guests are also taken to Schönbrunn Palace on the outskirts of town, the summer residence of the

SELLING TIPS

Christmas market river cruises basically sell themselves and start selling out up to nine months before the sailing, so encourage clients to think ahead

• Clients will thank you for recommending a cabin in the middle of the ship rather than at the back, where engine noise is the worst – especially on older ships

• Christmas markets appeal to people of all ages so they're a good way to introduce under-50s – and younger – to cruises, especially as people repeat book when they get hooked on visiting different markets

Habsburg family that once ruled the Austro-Hungarian empire. In December, not only is the palace open but there's a colourful Christmas market outside selling gifts.

Budapest is another Danube gem. It has a Christmas market at Vörösmarty Square but most cruises to Hungary's capital will include excursions to Fisherman's Bastion, where Christmas lights and festive stalls in the square outside Matthias Church make it even more attractive than during summer. This is one key reason why Christmas cruises are ideal, whether clients are new to cruise or sail regularly: the festive celebrations make the experience better than ever – even if the ports of call are exactly the same as the rest of the year.

"In truth, the cruises normally sell themselves," explains Fair, who says special offers or enhanced commissions are sometimes available for the few last-minute sales. Christmas cruises are also particularly good for solo passengers who want to be away over the festive period but like the idea of celebrating with others.

Similarly, these itineraries suit empty nesters facing Christmas without their grown-up children, although they're also great for families who just want a change. No wonder Christmas cruises start selling fast every year. ①

WAVE
AWARDS 2022



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
Fred.Olsen Cruise Lines

AFTER PARTY SPONSOR
Royal Caribbean
International

THE WAVE AWARDS 2022

The Oscars of cruising

16th November 2022 - Pan Pacific, London

BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW

Visit **thewaveawards.com**

Join us at the Wave Awards 2022 for an unforgettable evening as we celebrate the finest achievements in the industry.

The Wave Awards include public votes and awards judged by leading industry figures, ensuring it is the biggest and best awards night in cruise.

thewaveawards.com

cruise
TRADE NEWS

SPONSORS

In partnership with



SEABOURN

SAGA

TIMES Travel



After Party sponsor



Most British Isles sailings stop off at Liverpool, a rich mine of culture and history to dig into including, of course, pop icons The Beatles



A BRITISH BONANZA

Thanks to a diverse collection of itineraries and a range of ship options, customers are chomping at the bit when it comes to UK cruises, **Sarah Holt** discovers

At the start of summer 2022, jubilee fever hit the UK. Miles upon miles of red, white and blue bunting flapped everywhere, neighbours came together for afternoon teas and an ocean's worth of Pimm's, and 20,000 people took to London's streets to wish the Queen a happy 'platty joobs'.

While it's still too early for cruise lines to say if this fervour for all things British has had an official impact on interest in British Isles cruises, the ongoing celebratory spirit that's present across the region – combined with the increased interest in UK cruises that was brought on by the pandemic – means that there's never been a better time to sell a closer-to-home sailing.

"As more holidaymakers look to travel closer to home in recent years, an increasing number of UK and Irish guests are choosing to cruise around the British Isles," says Princess Cruises UK & Europe director of sales and commercial Rachel Poultney. "Guests on a British Isles cruise can look forward to experiencing the UK and Irish coastline from a whole new perspective, as well as have the chance to spot coastal wildlife, such as minke whales and bottlenose dolphins, and learn about thousands of years' worth of history."

The Brit parade

Stretching more than 900 miles from top to tip, more than 400 miles from east to west and featuring more than 200 inhabited islands, the British Isles is a goldmine of sights. This is a land of lochs,

glens, elemental islands and cities that were formed before records began.

These rich pickings also mean cruise itineraries are very rarely exactly the same. On the city front, most sailings call at Belfast, Cork and Liverpool. Beyond this trinity, cruise lines sprinkle in stops at cities like Dublin, Galway, Waterford and Londonderry, and sail into destinations such as Newhaven or South Queensferry for Edinburgh, and Greenock for Glasgow.

Other popular mainland sights include Portland – the springboard for Stonehenge – and Invergordon, from where passengers can visit Loch Ness. A handful of cruise lines offer stops at some lesser-known destinations, too. Some Oceania Cruises sailings, for example, call in at Killybegs in Ireland where guests can take an excursion to see Sliabh Liag – the highest sea cliffs in Europe at twice the



No trip to Scotland would be complete without a visit to the legendary Loch Ness

height of the Eiffel Tower – and Ullapool in Scotland, a small fishing village that's wrapped up in a landscape of lochs, gorges, crags and national parks.

Every British Isles itinerary also features a different pick and mix of islands. Some sailings only go to one island or island chain, others go to several, but options include the Isle of Man, the Orkney Islands, the Isle of Skye and the Isle of Mull in the Inner Hebrides, the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides and the Scilly Isles and Channel Islands to the south of England.

Expanding horizons

The experiences passengers can have during a British Isles cruise are as Heinz 57 as the itineraries they can choose. They can tick off activities like touring the whiskey distilleries of Scotland, kissing the Blarney Stone at Blarney Castle near Cork, scaling the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland, tucking into a tea of Welsh cakes and sticky bara brith in the Welsh countryside, and seeing the Shetland ponies roaming wild in Shetland.



British Isles sailings have been popular on *Ambience*, Ambassador's flagship



The spectacular Stonehenge is easily accessible from Portland

Then they can take part in some slightly more unusual activities, such as playing Gaelic football in Cork (available on Oceania's Belfast to London itinerary), watching sheep shearing and sheepdog skills in the Shetland Isles (available on Viking's 14-night British Isles Explorer sailing), and visiting Abbotsbury Swannery, home to a colony of 1,000 mute swans (on Princess Cruises' 10-day Ireland and Scotland itinerary).

Of course, clients don't even need to get off the ship to enjoy one of the greatest USPs of a British Isles cruise – the coastal scenery. Cunard dedicates an entire day of its 12-night British Isles itinerary to Scottish Isles scenic cruising.

"Britain has some of the most awe-inspiring coastlines in the world," a Cunard spokesperson explained. "There is arguably no finer way to see it than from the sea and in the luxury of Cunard's *Queen Victoria* on a cruise where guests can enjoy the sites of England, Ireland and Scotland, with time to unwind during the uninterrupted sailing days".

What's new?

Launched in April 2022, Ambassador Cruise Line is now offering sailings around the British Isles. Highlights for 2023 include the 11-night Easter British



Expert VIEW

“The beauty of the British Isles really is far too underrated. The ports of call offer so much more than you can possibly imagine. Lochs, mountains, scenery, quaint villages and towns, castles and country homes, fascinating cities and so much more. We are finding more and more people are wanting to take British Isles cruises, because they are nervous of travelling via airports due to the current ongoing issues.”

CLARE DUDLEY
Ponders Travel MD

Isles Discovery and the 12-night Round Britain – Coronation 70th Celebration. Both cruises sail from Tilbury calling at the Orkney Isles, the Isle of Skye, the Isle of Mull, the Scilly Isles, Belfast, Guernsey and more.

Both of these cruises will take place on Ambassador's flagship *Ambience*. Facilities on this 1,400-passenger ship include 11 different lounges and bars, the Palladium theatre, a library, a crafters studio and a spa. Ambassador Cruise Line chief commercial officer Phil Gardner explains: "As the first British cruise line to launch in a decade, we felt it pertinent to explore the British Isles within our itineraries.

"We have seen significant demand for further exploring our stunning and historic British Isles. These sailings have been some of our most popular this year, allowing guests to experience first-hand our outstanding cuisine and amazing entertainment on board."

Disney Dream will also offer its first summer season cruises in the British Isles in 2023. The seven-night British Isles Cruise will sail roundtrip from



The rugged coastline of Killybegs in Ireland, where guests can marvel at the cliffs



A cruise allows visits to remote Scottish destinations that are often difficult to reach by road

Southampton on 10 September, stopping at Belfast, Greenock for Edinburgh and Glasgow, Liverpool, Ringaskiddy for Cork and Portland for Stonehenge.

Also still fairly new to the region is *Celebrity Apex*. This 2,910-passenger ship, with its Magic Carpet viewing platform and interiors by Kelly Hoppen, will offer two British Isles itineraries in 2023. The May sailing will last 11 nights while the September sailing will last for 12. Both have similar itineraries, sailing from Amsterdam to Portland for Stonehenge, Cork, Waterford, Liverpool, Belfast and Shetland. The 11-night cruise

“British guests who sail with us enjoy seeing their own shores from a different perspective”

also squeezes in stops at Greenock for Glasgow and Inverness, while the 12-day sailing offers more time at sea.

On the excursion front, meanwhile, Regent Seven Seas has launched a duo of educational Eco Connect experiences on its British Isles itineraries, including its 12-night Belfast to Southampton and Southampton to London sailings. In Killybegs, Ireland, passengers can book a biodiversity and regenerative architecture farm tour to learn about eco-friendly agriculture. Then in Cork, they can journey to Spike Island to join a beachcombing session and discover how plastic waste is impacting local wildlife.

Brit hop

While most British Isles cruises embark and disembark from Southampton, Tilbury or Dover, and focus entirely on British ports of call, the odd itinerary either begins in Europe or includes a quick hop across to the continent.

Viking's British Isles Explorer, for example, sails from Bergen to London or vice versa and, according to the line, this itinerary is so popular it sells out way in advance every time.

Neil Barclay, the line's head of sales, says: “The British Isles Explorer has always proven a popular itinerary with guests from around the globe – in fact, all the 2022 sailings are now sold out with limited availability for the 2023 dates. Good news is that the 2024 dates are now open for booking.

“I think British guests who sail with us on this itinerary enjoy seeing their own shores from a different perspective compared to if they were to road trip around the destinations for example. The coastline is dramatic and rugged. The itinerary also visits remote Scottish destinations, which fewer people visit due to the difficulty in reaching them.”

Other itineraries that factor in time in Europe include Princess's 12-day British Isles with Orkney Islands that stops in Le Havre for Paris, Ambassador's 11-night British Isles Discovery that calls into Honfleur in France, and Cunard's 14-night Iceland and the British Isles sailing, which includes four stops in the land of fire and ice. ❶

SELLING TIPS

Encourage repeat bookings by emphasising how different British Isles itineraries are from each other. There's nothing cookie-cutter about cruises in this part of the world

• Refresh your sales pitches by telling clients about the ships that are new or nearly new to the region – from *Ambience* to *Disney Dream*

• Give clients an extra incentive to book by filling them in on itineraries that include a hop over to France, the Netherlands or Iceland, as well as the full British Isles experience

• Get clients to commit to cruises by hitting home how easy it is to embark on a cruise from a UK port

ITINERARIES

Ambassador Cruise Line

- 12-night Round Britain – Coronation 70th Celebration sailing from Tilbury on *Ambience*, departing 1 June 2023, is priced from £1,239pp.
- ambassadorcruiseline.com

Princess Cruises

- The line's 12-day British Isles with Orkney Islands itinerary, from Southampton on *Regal Princess*, departs 1 June 2023 and is priced from £1,479pp.
- princess.com

Celebrity Cruises

- An 11-night British Isles sailing from Amsterdam on *Celebrity Apex* on 14 May 2023 is priced from £1,084pp.
- celebritycruises.com

There's still
time to get away
this summer and
autumn with the
Ambassador Agent
Concession Scheme

Grand Canada, Greenland & Iceland

Departs London Tilbury
12 September 2022 - 34 nights
Price from **£1,360pp**

Autumn Fjordland

Departs London Tilbury
16 October 2022 - 7 nights
Price from **£280pp**

Grand Mediterranean

Departs London Tilbury
23 October 2022 - 32 nights
Price from **£1,280pp**

Canaries, Madeira & Morocco Winter Sun

Departs London Tilbury
24 November 2022 - 15 nights
Price from: **£600pp**

**For more information and to book
please contact the Trade Sales team:
agentcruise@ambassadorcruiseline.com**



Visit ambassadorcruiseline.com

Call 0808 102 8476

Terms and conditions apply, subject to limited availability.
Fares shown are based on two adults sharing a twin inside cabin.

DISCOVER OUR **A** GENT CONCESSION SCHEME



Available on any
2022 sailing

From £40pp per night

15% discount on any
drinks package

25% discount on
port parking at
London Tilbury

2023 sailings also
available on
Ambience up to
31 March '22 on
cruises up to
15 nights

Royal Caribbean takes the title of the
world's biggest ship with its latest
Oasis-class vessel, *Wonder of the Seas*



A world of WONDER

Dave Monk reports on his time on board
Wonder of the Seas, the latest addition to the
Royal Caribbean International fleet

As I walk along deck 15, I have some incredible views. Not just of the gentle waves and the glowing evening sky as the sun sets, but way below me where Central Park and the Boardwalk are lighting up.

I'm off the coast of Spain on *Wonder of the Seas*, the fifth Oasis-class ship from Royal Caribbean. Originally destined for China, Covid intervened and she instead made her debut in Florida in March. Now she's reached the Mediterranean, where I boarded in Barcelona.

This latest holder of the title of the biggest cruise ship in the world is 1,188ft long, 210ft wide and has 17 passenger decks. At double occupancy she carries 5,734 passengers – 6,988 if every berth is used – along with 2,300 crew. However, *Wonder of the Seas* dazzles with far more than just statistics.

Entertainment galore

One night I settle in the AquaTheatre at the stern of the ship to enjoy a high-energy show by an all-women team of dancers and acrobats, diving from as high as 55ft or seeming to fly above the audience's heads on lines and harnesses. A guest male performer flips and spins on a slack line suspended above the pool, spraying water everywhere. Another international act juggles a dazzling number of balls effortlessly.

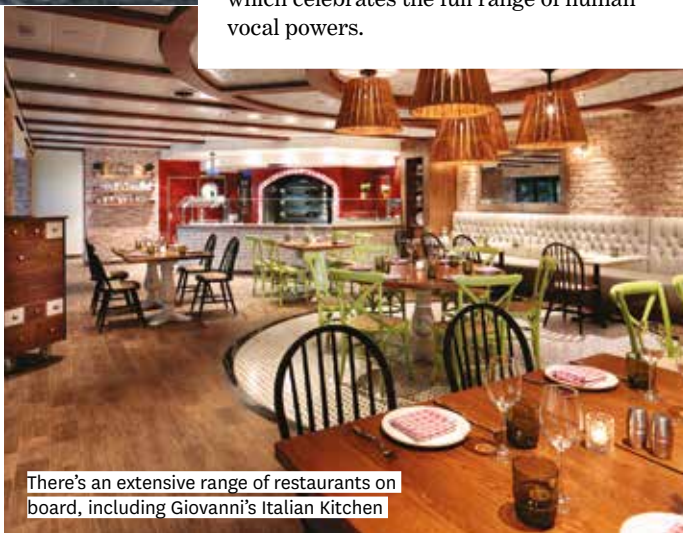
Other shows around the ship include an impressive display of coordinated drumming and tap dancing called Tap Factory and a moving musical production called Voices: An Intimate Performance on a Grand Scale, which celebrates the full range of human vocal powers.



Tots and teens alike will enjoy the vibrant pools, waterslides and fountains of Splashaway Bay



The AquaTheatre is the setting for mesmerising aerial acrobatics and spectacular high dives



There's an extensive range of restaurants on board, including Giovanni's Italian Kitchen



A talented troupe perform in Studio B



The Suite Sun deck has a plunge pool and bar

Singers on stage seamlessly sync with performers on screen, who produce all the backing sounds of beats, clicks and rhythm so no instrument needs to be involved. Down on the ice rink in Studio B is 365: The Seasons On Ice, a story of the changing times of the year.

Later this year, Royal Caribbean's own superheroes The Effectors return for a show in the Royal Theatre, where they battle with their archnemesis Crash and his new sidekick Burn.

SELLING TIPS

Wonder of the Seas is the first Oasis-class ship to have an eighth suite neighbourhood with its own sun deck, private lounge and restaurant. The most expensive rooms sell first, so advise clients to move fast if they want that extra luxury

Highlight the wide dining range, with favourites such as Chops Grill, Windjammer and Giovanni's Italian Kitchen joined by The Mason Jar, serving Southern food

Describe The Vue Bar as a new place to enjoy a chilled glass of wine as the sun sets, creating a perfect photo moment when the colourful mosaic canopy comes to life, says Royal Caribbean UK head of sales Torey Kings-Hodkin

Hitting new heights

The evolution that began with the launch of *Oasis of the Seas* in 2009 has produced a series of floating resorts increasingly packed with new attractions, such as the Ultimate Abyss dry slide first introduced on *Harmony of the Seas*. I've been on three of the previous Oasis-class ships and never cease to be amazed by the scale and engineering feats they involve.

New features for *Wonder of the Seas* include The Mason Jar, an American South restaurant serving comfort food such as fried green tomatoes, chicken pot pie, shrimp'n'grits, ribs and burgers – all while a house band belts out country music.

The bar is stocked with 19 US whiskeys to wash it down. The Vue Bar on the port side is a new popular al fresco drinking venue near the all-weather, adult-only solarium, matching up with The Lime & Coconut bar further along the deck.

Another new addition is the Wonder Playscape, an underwater-themed play area that provides outdoor fun for youngsters, with slides, climbing walls, games and interactive activities. Mini-golf course Wonder Dunes has also been given a makeover.

However, probably the most significant change on *Wonder of the Seas* as far as the rest of the cruise industry is concerned is a new, eighth neighbourhood that's exclusively for suite guests.

It's following a trend to give more space and comfort to the higher-paying customers. The Suite Sun deck, with a plunge pool and bar, has been moved, but restaurant Coastal Kitchen and the Suite Lounge remain.



The Boardwalk neighbourhood features an array of entertainment and places to grab a bite



The indoor-outdoor Solarium retreat offers extensive views while guests relax



Royal Promenade's bustling thoroughfare has shops, eateries and entertainment

I never cease to be amazed by the scale and engineering feats of the Oasis-class ships

fortune-telling machine, the Boardwalk conjures up memories of an English pier. For those wanting to catch the Mediterranean sun, pools, hot tubs and loungers are all around the top decks.

One of the delights of a new ship is checking out the artwork and *Wonder of the Seas* has an eye-catching variety from astronaut figures, a two-headed seahorse dangling between the lifts and a giant steel stetson sat in the Royal Promenade.

Wonder of the Seas will be sailing seven-night western Mediterranean cruises to destinations such as Naples, Florence, Palma de Mallorca and Provence. After finishing the inaugural European season, the ship will return to Cape Canaveral, Florida, to offer year-round Caribbean sailings.

A sixth Oasis-class ship, *Utopia of the Seas*, is due to join the fleet in 2024. Asked during a press conference on board if there would be a seventh, Royal Caribbean International SVP Sean Treacy simply replied: "Stay tuned." Pressed to be more specific, he said: "It's not a no, not a yes, we're evaluating."

Whatever the future holds, this ship will be a thing of wonder for years to come. 🌟

DETAILS

- A seven-night eastern Caribbean Cruise on *Wonder of the Seas*, departing Port Canaveral on 5 February 2023, is priced from £718pp.

The Ultimate Family Suite now sleeps up to 10 people and is still occupied while I am on board by guests who had sailed the transatlantic crossing. The other top accommodation, the Royal Loft Suite, is booked until autumn even with a price tag of \$40,000 a week.

Eat, drink and be merry

"It's our upper-end space that sells first," says Royal Caribbean EMEA vice-president Ben Bouldin. He denies, however, that other passengers are missing out, adding: "The goal of introducing more suites is not at the expense of anybody else on the ship."

Every guest has the choice of eating in the main dining room or other venues such as the Park, Vitality and Promenade cafes, El Loco Fresh, and the Solarium Bistro, where I enjoy a healthy lunchtime

salad. One evening I walk into the Windjammer buffet just as it is being set up for dinner and am entranced by a tempting assortment of meats, fish, fruits, vegetables and desserts.

Among the speciality restaurants are venues serving steaks, Italian, seafood, sushi and burgers, along with a Starbucks outlet. Aside from the robots in the Bionic Bar, human cocktail makers can be found in 10 other bars and lounges, including an English pub, the Cask & Clipper, in the two-level shopping and dining mall Royal Promenade. An enlarged karaoke bar is a throwback to when the ship was heading to China.

Many favourites have returned from previous Oasis-class ships, such as the Flowrider surf machine, Perfect Storm water chutes and outdoor movie screen.

With its wooden carousel and Zoltan

The last word

Arena River Cruises MD **Steve Goodenough** outlines the operator's plans to boost trade partnerships and explains how it intends to attract more clients to river cruising

It was March 2020 and final arrangements were being made for more than 100 guests to travel to Amsterdam to celebrate the launch of our new flagship, the *MS Arena*. Having undergone a full refit and rebrand, the ship was contracted for four years and we were eagerly anticipating a packed schedule of cruises on the Dutch Waterways, Rhine and Danube. Then, of course, the pandemic struck and the world stopped.

Fast forward two years though and we are finally back on the waterways of Europe. The *MS Arena* has completed its first spring sailing season, soon to be moving down to the Danube for the summer and we are fortunate to have had many industry colleagues on board the inaugural sailings, all celebrating finally being back on the water.

The *MS Arena* is a four-star river cruise ship, targeted fully at the UK market with all elements of the on-board experience designed to appeal to British travellers, from the menus and bar offering to the evening entertainment. The product is designed to be accessible and affordable, ideal for those trying river cruising for the first time or looking for a more budget-conscious experience.



"We plan to expand our celebrity-led and special interest cruises"

Reaching a wider audience

In recent years, awareness of river cruising has increased, but it is still seen by many as a luxury option and our aim is to provide an entry-level product that appeals to a wider audience. We also offer a flexible product, with a choice of joining options available on all cruises. Recognising that many people now have an eye on their carbon footprint, the most popular choice is to join by rail or coach from the UK, but cruise-only packages are also available.

Many of our first-time cruisers come to us via the escorted touring market and one of our top tips for agents is to look at opportunities to switch sell. There are plenty of similarities between river cruising and coach touring, including the progressive nature of the itinerary, with many stops along the route.

One of the main advantages of a river cruise is that the accommodation moves with the tour, so clients only need to unpack once. Other positives include being based in the centre of vibrant cities such as Budapest, Vienna, Amsterdam or Cologne, stepping off the

ship into the heart of a destination, or soaking up the dramatic scenery of the Rhine Valley from the middle of the river.

As well as getting cruises aboard the *MS Arena* well underway, we plan to expand our offering of celebrity-led and special interest cruises. This year already we have hosted gardening-themed cruises with guests including Charlie Dimmock and Helen Yemm, and other guests including wine guru Oz Clarke and antiques expert Paul Martin. We also cater for special interest groups including crafting cruises and bridge players, and



The menus and bar offerings on *MS Arena* are designed with British travellers in mind

in the future we hope to add activities including walking and cycling for more active guests keen to see destinations from a different perspective.

Alongside launching a new ship and adding to our cruise portfolio, a major development for this year comes in our approach to working with agents, with the launch of a new online portal for agents, allowing 24/7 access to availability and bookings.

We have also boosted our sales team and welcome approaches from new agents, as well as offering dedicated training, marketing support and resources for existing agents. We hope that, together with our partners in the trade, 2022 will continue as planned without any further challenges and that 2023 will be a positive year. 🍀



MS Arena is ideal for first-time river cruisers or budget-conscious clients

BE REWARDED DIRECTLY FOR EVERY NCL BOOKING YOU MAKE!

Earn points for every NCL booking, where the amount rewarded is based on stateroom category booked, and exchange them for some fantastic rewards. The more points you earn, the higher you climb our reward tiers, unlocking additional benefits and perks!



INCREASING
BIRTHDAY REWARDS



CONCIERGE
REWARD SERVICE



EXCLUSIVE ANNUAL
AMBASSADOR EVENT



PRIORITY INVITATIONS
WITH EXCLUSIVE
ONBOARD EXPERIENCES

For the full list of benefits and tier details visit nclfreestylerewards.com/tiers

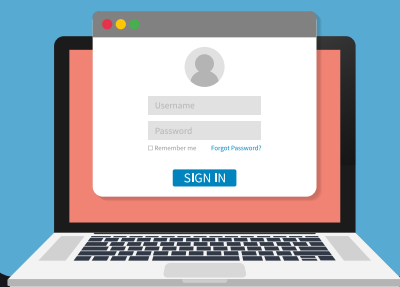
HOW IT WORKS

1

APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP

at nclfreestylerewards.com, ensuring you provide the correct ABTA/ATOL that will be on your NCL bookings.

Within 48 hours, you will receive an invitation email to complete your registration.



2

EARN POINTS

for every NCL booking based on room type and length of stay!



3

SPEND POINTS

on fantastic rewards from the NCL Freestyle Rewards online catalogue - there are 1,000s of items to choose from!



THESE AGENTS ARE TELLING US THEY **LOVE** NCL FREESTYLE REWARDS

I love love love NCL Rewards, not only have I done all my Christmas shopping with my vouchers, but I was also able to pay for all my garden to be finally done!

KERRI MCNEILL IGLU

Getting stuff for free just for doing your job? What's not to like about NCL freestyle rewards?

CHRIS WORRALL MERLIN TRAVEL

Love that you get more points for the durations and cabin grade and it's not just luck – your hard work is rewarded.

NICOLA KRZYSIAK CRUISE CIRCLE

REGISTER NOW AT **[NCLFREESTYLEREWARDS.COM](https://nclfreestylerewards.com)**

Experience THE CARIBBEAN

FROM ABOARD OUR
SMALL AND LUXURIOUS SHIPS



FREE Airfare*

plus choose one:

FREE Shore Excursions

FREE Beverage Package

FREE Shipboard Credit

plus inclusive amenities:

FREE Internet

FREE Speciality Restaurants

FREE Room Service 24 Hours a Day

FREE Shuttle to City Centre

FREE Fitness Classes

FREE Still & Sparkling Vero Water

FREE Soft Drinks & Speciality Coffees

FREE Launderette

and more

With over 50 diverse voyages around the Caribbean islands in 2023 and 2024 onboard our stunning ships, explore your world your way with Oceania Cruises. Our tropical voyages offer abundant sunshine, colourful cultures and an opportunity to escape from it all.

SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN GEMS

✈️ 🚢 ORANJESTAD TO ORANJESTAD 🚢
10 days | 10 March 2023 – SIRENA



Choose one:

FREE 6 Shore
Excursions

FREE Beverage
Package

FREE US\$600
Shipboard
Credit

CATEGORIES AND OLIFE CHOICE FARES PER GUEST FROM*

VERANDA	CONCIERGE	PENTHOUSE
£4,409	£4,529	£5,219

LEARN EARN AND CONNECT

Oceania Trade Connect is the one site that brings together all of our trade resources in one place.
www.oceaniatradeconnect.co.uk

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ADDITIONAL CARIBBEAN VOYAGES VISIT WWW.OCEANIACRUISES.COM.
TO REQUEST BROCHURES AND OTHER DIGITAL ASSETS, PLEASE CONTACT
AGENCYSALES@OCEANIACRUISES.COM OR CALL 0345 505 1920