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EXPEDITION SPECIAL



It's easy to casually state that cruise demand is strong, but when it comes to expedition cruising, perhaps Mundy

Cruising sales and marketing director Alexander Loizou puts it best when he says that the "growth in expedition cruising has been phenomenal, particularly in attracting new-to-cruise guests".

Part of the appeal to the new-to-cruise segment is the drive to use expedition voyages as a force for good for the natural world, as opposed to simply another holiday experience, which is demonstrated in our investigation article.

Aurora Expeditions UK & Ireland MD Jos Dewing also explains how the line is

using its expedition expertise to protect the environment, stating: "Our mission is to have our passengers disembark knowing far more than when they set out, returning home as true ambassadors of the regions we have taken them to."

Also in this supplement, we speak to Silversea UK & Ireland managing director Peter Shanks, and take a look at a selection of new expedition ships set to launch next year.

Gary Peters

Editor, Cruise Trade News



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NEWS & ITINERARIES

Hanseatic Inspiration will have 26 itineraries available for 2023/24



Hapag-Lloyd unveils 'warm and cold' adventures

Hapag-Lloyd Cruises has said that its 2023/24 itineraries for *Hanseatic Inspiration* will offer the opportunity for guests to experience "cold and warm water voyages of discovery". In total, there will be 26 itineraries on offer.

In autumn 2023, the ship will sail from Milwaukee to Halifax – combining the Great Lakes and the St Lawrence River – a first-time route for Hapag-Lloyd Cruises. The vessel will navigate the North American Great Lakes a total of four times.

Elsewhere, in November 2023, the ship will embark on a route from Colon to Valparaiso, passing through the Panama Canal during a daytime passage, then reaching the Chilean fjords. From December 2023 to February 2024, *Hanseatic Inspiration* will be positioned in Antarctica, reaching Brazil in spring. From there, it will set off for two itineraries on the Amazon.

Come May 2024, the ship will operate two cruises in the North and Baltic seas, before commencing the Arctic season, during which multiple circumnavigations of Spitsbergen will take place.

The 230-passenger *Hanseatic Inspiration* is one of three ships in the Hapag-Lloyd expedition class, alongside *Hanseatic Nature* and *Hanseatic Spirit*.



Silversea Endeavour will operate nine voyages to the Arctic and Greenland

Silversea releases Endeavour voyage collection

Silversea Cruises has revealed a new collection of 25 voyages for expedition ship *Silver Endeavour*.

From May 2023 through March 2024, guests will be able to journey to 116 cold-weather destinations across Europe, the Arctic and Antarctica, including 24 maiden calls for Silversea. The itineraries will range in length from six to 18 days.

The ship will spend summer 2023 exploring the British Isles, Iceland, and the Arctic, including Greenland, Svalbard and the Canadian Arctic. It will then travel south, with itineraries exploring the Antarctic Peninsula, South Georgia and the Falkland Islands. In total, the 200-passenger ship will operate nine voyages to the Arctic & Greenland and 14 to Antarctica.

Silversea SVP of expedition, destination and itinerary management Conrad Combrink said: "Expanding the most diverse polar offering in ultra-luxury expedition cruising, we are delighted to unveil *Silver Endeavour's* new collection of voyages for summer 2023 and winter 2023/2024.

"With state-of-the-art expedition amenities, the industry's highest space-to-guest ratio, and the leading team of experts on board, *Silver Endeavour* will deliver the most enriching experiences for guests in the world's most remarkable destinations, as they journey in unparalleled comfort.

"*Silver Endeavour* represents the commitment of Royal Caribbean Group and Silversea Cruises to pushing boundaries in travel. She is the most advanced ship in her class."



Richard With, Hurtigruten Norway's first fully upgraded battery-hybrid powered ship

Hurtigruten completes first sustainability upgrades

Hurtigruten Norway has launched its first fully upgraded battery-hybrid powered ship, *Richard With*.

The ship – the first of seven in the Coastal Express fleet to be upgraded – has been retrofitted with battery packages and new engines and propulsion systems.

In addition, the hull has been optimised to reduce drag and a new wastewater treatment will help to reduce emissions to sea, Hurtigruten said. The cruise line will also use certified biofuels to cut CO₂ emissions.

All seven Hurtigruten Norway ships will also be fitted with systems to cut NO_x emissions by 80 per cent before the end of summer 2023. The work is part of a €100 million upgrade programme.

Hurtigruten Norway CEO Hedda Felin said: “Becoming a green company means investing in efforts with documented effects, such as the ones we are doing now. As a result, by next summer, we will have three upgraded hybrid ships sailing the coast, and our entire fleet will be more energy efficient, cutting CO₂ emissions by 25 per cent and NO_x by 80 per cent.

“Our goal is to get to zero emissions, and the work to plan the next-generation zero emission vessels has already started. Until that technology has been pioneered, we are investing heavily in giving our existing fleet a green upgrade with the best technology available today, but our plan is to have the first emission-free ship in our fleet by 2030, and we’re working hard on achieving that.”



Guests on Antarctica sailings will encounter penguins

G Expedition returns to Antarctica

The *G Expedition* – operated by G Adventures – is returning to Antarctica, following a hiatus caused by the pandemic. The ship, referred to as a “floating classroom” by the operator, will sail the Antarctica Classic and Antarctica Classic In-Depth voyages. Guests will be able to explore the South Shetland Islands and the Antarctic Peninsula, among other destinations.

G Adventures EMEA MD Brian Young said: “Travellers booking trips aboard our *G Expedition* are not only seeking a once-in-a-lifetime adventure but are also curious about the wildlife and ecosystems they encounter in the Antarctic region.

“The ship’s long-standing citizen science projects and education programme help guests to make the most of their Antarctic expedition. As part of our commitment to environmental protection, our expedition staff also collect data from points in Antarctica where researchers struggle to acquire information.”

On the 11-day Antarctica Classic sailings, guests will pass huge icebergs and encounter whales and penguins, and stunning landscapes few have witnessed. The In-Depth Antarctica voyage lasts for 13 days, including a visit to the South Shetland Islands.

A POSITIVE LEGACY

Aurora Expeditions UK & Ireland MD **Jos Dewing** explains how the line is using its expedition expertise to protect the environment

What key tips can you give agents to convince clients to choose Aurora?

When travelling with Aurora Expeditions, clients are not only receiving 30+ years of experience-led, ship-based adventures to remote destinations, they are also choosing a small-ship, low-impact expedition cruise that provides a deeper connection. Our mission is to have our passengers (now expeditioners) disembark from an Aurora Expeditions voyage knowing far more than when they set out, returning home as ambassadors of the regions we have taken them to and influencing and enriching the knowledge of their friends and family too.

Many clients are now looking for an immersive experience when they travel and our popular Citizen Science programmes enable them to give back while on tour, guided by subject matter experts. Citizen Science is the collection and analysis of data provided by the public in collaboration with polar scientists. Our aim is to have passengers leave our expedition as ambassadors of the planet.

Another reason to recommend Aurora Expeditions is our commitment to the

preservation of the environment. Aurora Expeditions was one of the founders of the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO), which created the environmental protocols for all commercial visitors to Antarctica and is also a member of the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO). In doing so, Aurora Expeditions encourages its passengers to respectfully visit the planet's wilderness areas.

Looking at trade partnerships, how do you intend to build these?

Aurora Expeditions' knowledgeable sales team offers regular, comprehensive and practical product training to the travel industry. In addition, our website has a dedicated section for travel agents filled with useful content, from detailed destination information and expedition leaders' expert tips to detailed itinerary trip notes, regular newsletters, flyers and infographic options for co-op marketing opportunities. We also develop dedicated brochures, such as photography or birding, to assist with specialist marketing and are now finalising a powerful agents' hub offering much more functionality to support agents directly in selling our unique product

We have built up a small but growing base of loyal travel agents and tour operators who continue to increase the number of their clients sailing with Aurora. Agents are further supported by the sales team, who constantly attend trade shows, expos and in-agency sale events. We also offer numerous familiarisation voyages to Antarctica, the Arctic and beyond. Personal understanding is the best sales tool and Aurora will continue to support agents interested in experiencing the magic of an expedition with Aurora.



Jos Dewing

UK & IRELAND MD
AURORA EXPEDITIONS



Aurora Expeditions protects the wilderness areas it visits

“Aurora expeditioners will help to formulate 23 resolutions for global net-zero emission targets”



A key part of expedition cruising is about exploring wild and hidden locations

© Ania Baranek



© Tyson Mayr

© Tyson Mayr

Polar bears in Svalbard

Aurora's ships are purpose-built to travel to the most remote places on earth

As for 2023, how are you keeping your expedition itineraries fresh and interesting?

Our 2023 Arctic expeditions are rich and diverse, with awe-inspiring landscapes, mesmerising wildlife encounters and a plethora of exceptional activities such as polar diving, rock climbing and kayaking. The Arctic encompasses Greenland, Iceland, Norway's Svalbard and the Canadian Northwest Passage – each with an unparalleled highlight. Aurora Expeditions is offering a range of 11 curated itineraries from 11 to 24 days, each showcasing many of these highlights.

Tell us more about *Sylvia Earle*, and what makes the ship unique?

Launching in 2022, our new purpose-built ship the *Sylvia Earle* is a floating ambassador for the planet. The ship honours Dr Sylvia Earle, who the United Nations has dubbed the 'Champion of the Earth'.

In a world first, each of the vessel's public decks bear the names of other pioneering women in conservation – Dr Carden Wallace AM, Joanna Ruxton, Sharon Kwok, Bernadette Demientieff, Dr

Asha de Vos and Hanli Prinsloo – along with a deck dedicated to Dr Earle herself. The scientists are inspiring leaders in their fields and, as part of the deck theming, will educate our expeditioners on the impressive and important conservation work they continue to do.

How important is the on-board and ashore experience?

It is important for passengers to have a comfortable and safe base from which to explore. They want to be fed well and to have a great crew and expedition team. However, an expedition cruise is about getting out in the destination and spending time immersing themselves in the surroundings, involving themselves in the multitude of activities like kayaking or polar diving.

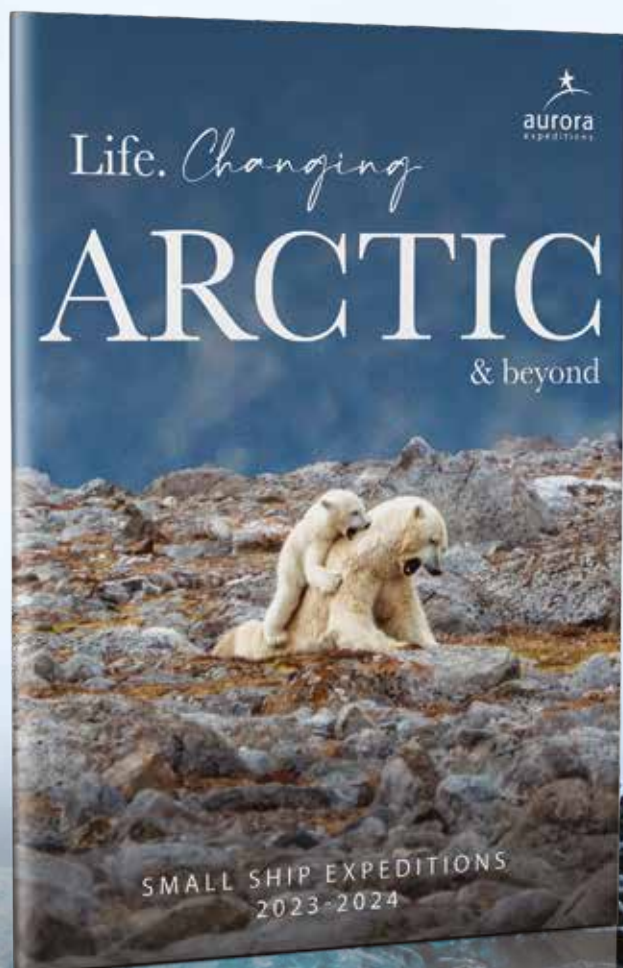
Operating intimate vessels means we can explore wild and hidden locations and have expeditioners on shore multiple times a day – weather permitting, of course. They love opportunities where they can contribute and feel needed.

You have your climate expedition cruise in February 2023. What do you hope this voyage will achieve?

Aurora and Dr Sylvia Earle will host an Antarctic Climate Expedition to drive public and government awareness of the importance of the Antarctic, and to address the warming climate and loss of sea ice in the southern polar region as a direct threat to the future of human life on this planet. Expeditioners will help formulate 23 resolutions to inspire transformative changes for global net-zero emission targets by 2035. 🌱

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To order or download a copy of our new
2024 Arctic & Global brochure visit:
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For more information contact Aurora Expeditions
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EXPLORE THE AURORA WAY MORE TIME OFF SHIP

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For more than 30 years our expert Expedition Team have always been about sharing their knowledge and understanding of some of the most remote and unspoiled destinations in Antarctica, the Arctic and beyond.

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We have the most comprehensive activity program, supported by the most experienced Expedition Team

on hand, dedicated to making each experience action packed and immersive in the natural environment.

Our expeditions are designed to put you in the action as much as possible. To maximise your time in the incredible destinations we visit, we offer a range of included activities including Zodiac cruises, walks & hikes, birdwatching historical sites, photography, expert lectures as part of your voyage as well as a range of optional activities such as sea kayaking, snorkelling, snowshoeing, camping, scuba diving and more to live out your wildest dreams.

**For more information contact Aurora Expeditions
0 808 189 2005 | auroraexpeditions.co.uk**

**All our landings, adventures and activities are subject to weather conditions and activity options do vary by itinerary.*



Part of expedition cruising's allure is getting close to wildlife and exploring challenging landscapes

BRAVE NEW WORLD

Lesley Bellew explores the boom in expedition cruising – not least among new-to-cruise guests – and what's to come

Photo: Ponant-Gilles Trillard

Ponant's *Le Commandant Charcot* is bright and spacious



Scenic Eclipse provides expeditions on helicopters, submarines, zodiacs and kayaks



The gloves are off. Expedition cruising is one of the fastest growing sectors of the cruise market, attracting cruise fans looking for adventures in new destinations while travelling in five-star comfort – but it is also attracting a new breed of passengers who are realising the best way, or sometimes the only way, to visit the world's most far-flung destinations is on a small cruise ship.

It is not just the polar regions. The South Pacific, the Amazon, West Africa, the Galápagos and even the Canadian Lakes are featuring on expedition cruise itineraries so passengers can get close to wildlife and explore remote landscapes.

Passengers, still predominately over 50s, are often seeking to become citizen scientists, putting great value on educational activities and research while learning alongside teams of experts in the fields of geology to marine biology, with environmental issues a cornerstone of studies.

Traditional cruise lines have been adding polar-class vessels, with ice-breaking hulls, to their luxury offering, ready to compete against established and new adventure fleets. More than two dozen expedition ships have launched in the past three years and there are more scheduled to come into service over the next few years.

Mundy Cruising sales and marketing director Alexander Loizou says, “growth in expedition cruising has been

“More than two dozen expedition ships have launched in the past three years and there are more scheduled to come into service”

phenomenal, particularly in attracting new-to-cruise guests”. Loizou reports bookings for the Mundy Adventures brand are up 76 per cent compared to 2019 and he adds: “It's a huge attraction for new-to-cruise guests driven by a desire for once-in-a-lifetime trips to the polar regions and Galápagos. We've invested in staff training this year, sending the team to the Arctic and Antarctica so they can talk through their experience to help guests choose between the range of itinerary and operator options.”

Engaging clients

While it is easy enough to sell the delights of smaller ships (expedition ships tend to range from 100 to 400 passengers with high guest-to-crew ratios) for exceptional levels of personalised service, cruise lines are pitching themselves against each other on range of criteria driven by the critical demands and ambitions of potential passengers.

First up, sustainability. Guests are now choosing their cruise with a commitment to sustainable travel, and, in turn, cruise lines are using hydro-electric options or LNG to fuel expedition ships. Guests want to engage with nature, culture, science and history at every destination while also wishing to mitigate their carbon footprint.

This also leads into study and research options, with most expedition cruise lines offering extensive on-board enrichment

programmes, such as collecting data to contribute to international scientific research organisations' work from monitoring weather patterns to water sampling and logging wildlife sightings.

One of the most alluring factors in expedition cruising is ‘access all areas’ to get close to wildlife and explore exciting, challenging landscapes. However, pricing of tours is proving key – if kayaking and zodiac tours are complimentary, it can mean savings of hundreds of pounds. If it is a helicopter or submarine ride that is chargeable, costs can be around £500pp.

If a cruise is booked well ahead of the departure, it is wise to note when bookings open for tours and activities to

The *SH Minerva* has an ice-strengthened hull to deal with difficult conditions





A zodiac is perfect for exploring hard-to-reach parts of Antarctica

“We try to make clients remember this is a cruise about the destination and experience first”

avoid disappointment as spaces can be limited. Expedition clothing is another bargaining chip; if supplied free on board it avoids an expensive outlay and having to travel with heavy boots and jackets.

Expedition cruise fares tend to be higher than mainstream cruises but, like all other cruise sectors, cruise companies are continually reviewing this balancing act to attract the right people to the right ship. However, with so many ships coming to market there is room for healthy competition.

Ask the questions

As Ponders Travel managing director Clare Dudley says, “affordability is a big consideration”. She explains: “We find the only way to help new-to-cruise clients is to ask lots of key questions about what they are looking for and their expectations. Then it’s a case of matching the clients’ needs to the right product. We always try to make clients remember this is a cruise about the destination and experience first, not the cruise itself. We also consider age and agility so they can enjoy the experiences.”

Zoe Palmer, of Travel Counsellors, says expedition cruising is “opening up a travel style to those who may traditionally have just considered land touring”. She adds: “My clients are asking about Australia, New Zealand and

South America. The concept of travelling on a floating boutique hotel with a team of knowledgeable experts and being able to experience so much in one trip is attracting a wider audience.”

Hurtigruten is one of the longest established expedition fleets, founded in 1896, but it is not becalmed by the increasing competition, having introduced the world’s first battery-hybrid powered cruise ships.

Mark Walter, the line’s head of UK sales, says: “Hurtigruten Expeditions takes guests to more than 250 destinations in more than 30 countries and provides the curious traveller with a unique opportunity to discover some of the lesser-explored destinations in the world. For travel agents, the best way to understand the benefits of a UK expedition sailing is to use the Hurtigruten Expeditions’ agent portal. The platform offers agents everything they need.”

Viking is among the newcomers, adding two expedition ships to its fleet of river and ocean vessels in 2022. *Viking Octantis* launched in spring and sister ship *Viking Polaris* debuted in September. Accommodating 378 guests, both ships feature an in-ship marina, The Hangar, where guests can board zodiacs and the £1m special operations boats inside the ship before launching down a slipway.



Le Commandant Charcot’s outdoor area and Blue Lagoon pool

Photo: StudioPonant Olivier Bland

Each has two yellow submarines which offer 270-degree views and can dive to a depth of 1,000 feet. Rides are free but need to be booked early.

Viking UK managing director Wendy Atkin-Smith explains: “Viking is on a mission to perfect expedition cruising. We have partnered with world-class institutions including the University of Cambridge’s Scott Polar Research Institute, whose scientists undertake fieldwork on our expedition ships and share their expertise with our guests. We have also worked with partner agents to train them on the product and give them the best insights possible. As well as visiting agents in person we have hosted virtual presentations.”

Ponant was one of the first out of the traps after the pandemic, leading the way on 270-guest *Le Commandant Charcot*, a hybrid ship that runs on LNG. The PC2 ship is fitted with laboratories, used as a platform for in-depth observation, research, and analysis.



“Scenic Eclipse guests enjoy an almost 1:1 staff-to-guest ratio and a 15-strong Discovery team”



Trips to places like Galápagos are a draw for new-to-cruise guests

Photo: Ashton Ray Hansen

Ones to watch

Meanwhile, Seabourn entered the expedition ship market this summer with its purpose-built expedition ship *Seabourn Venture*, which is built to PC6 class standards. The ship combines Seabourn's established luxury and comfort with a 26-strong expedition team of wilderness experts, scientists, historians and naturalists. The ship's marina houses zodiacs, kayaks and two submarines.

The line's managing director UK & Europe Lynn Narraway says: “The Seabourn business development team have been hosting webinars and training for agent partners on our ultra-luxury expedition product and the immersive experiences, learning about the wildlife viewings that travellers will enjoy on 132-suite *Seabourn Venture* and *Seabourn Pursuit*, due to launch next year. We are also working with a number of new partners that sell overland expeditions over cruise.”

Looking like a huge yacht, *Scenic Eclipse* is luxury travel company Scenic's first ocean cruise entry. The 228 guests (200 in polar regions), enjoy an almost 1:1 staff-to-guest ratio, butler service and a 15-strong on board Discovery team. Flights, transfers, fine dining, premium drinks and excursions are included, except helicopter rides, which start from £550.

In addition to polar regions, Swan Hellenic's three ships *SH Vega*, *SH Diana* and *SH Minerva* offer cruises that focus on nature and biodiversity in destinations such as the Raja Ampat islands, Indonesia and the West Coast of Africa.

New ship *Silver Endeavour* is also one to watch. Silversea bought 200-passenger *Crystal Endeavor* to strengthen its position in the ultra-luxury expedition cruise market and the maiden voyage to Antarctica this November cuts out the Drake Passage by flying passengers to King George Island, providing the fastest, direct route to the White Continent.

Adventure lines G Adventures, Quark Expeditions and Aurora Expeditions also add to the mix, offering active guests, hikes, snorkelling and zodiac rides – but while all expedition ships open up a world of adventures, there is one thing they have in common with the earliest intrepid explorers – the weather.

Lifetime wish-list ports of call and helicopter or submarine rides can be scuppered in the blink of an eye and passengers new to this style of cruising do need to understand their cruise and tours are particularly at the mercy of the elements. Of course, the upside is that their ship will be awash with creature comforts, from spas, pools and saunas to the finest dining, alongside cosy on-board viewing points.📍

The addition of *Silver Endeavour* to the fleet has allowed Silversea to expand its expedition offering

NEW ENDEAVOURS

Gary Peters speaks to Silversea UK & Ireland MD

Peter Shanks about the line's purchase of *Silver Endeavour*
and plans to expand trade partnerships





When, earlier this year, it was announced that Silversea had agreed a deal to purchase the expedition vessel *Silver Endeavour* – or *Crystal Endeavor*, as it was known in its previous guise – the line's president and CEO Roberto Martinoli said it would “accelerate our strategy of growth, enriching our offering to unprecedented levels and reaffirming our position as the leading ultra-luxury expedition cruise line”. That last line is perhaps the most relevant. With a reputation that has been honed and refined over the years, Silversea is without question one of the go-to brands for clients looking for ultra-luxury adventures.

“We’ve been in the privileged position of being the market leader in expedition space for a number of years now,” explains the line’s UK and Ireland MD Peter Shanks. “With the backing of the Royal Caribbean Group, it won’t be a surprise to hear that we’ve been looking at the potential of adding to our expedition fleet.

“[When *Endeavour* became available] it was an opportunity for us to move quickly to add capacity with a beautiful new ship. We were quick to act on that and it’s given us a ship that will enter service in late November, which is going to greatly enhance our overall expedition offering.”

Shanks continues: “It really fits the Silversea style extremely well in terms of the luxury concept and the luxury on the ship. Crystal did a remarkably good job in designing and building the ship and it does reflect the quality that we will be offering across the other new ships we have brought into our fleet.



The elegant Explorer Lounge is ideal for before and after expeditions



Relax on the Marina Deck and take in the breathtaking scenery



Silversea UK & Ireland
MD Peter Shanks

“It has all the things you need for an expedition ship, but it also has brilliant spa facilities and a pool”

“Where it adds to us is the ship has a nice variety of experiences on board. It has all the things you need for an expedition ship, be it the mud room or facilities for lectures, but it also has brilliant spa facilities and a pool, which is something we don’t have on our current ships.”

A step up

The excitement surrounding *Silver Endeavour* is palpable, and the inaugural voyage will take place on 21 November, with the ship departing King George Island. During the cruise, guests will hear from a range of experts, such as marine biologists, historians, anthropologists, naturalists, filmmakers and more.

Destinations on the cruise include Antarctic Sound, where travellers can see towering ice formations as they

approach the northernmost point of the Antarctic Peninsula. They will also have the opportunity to explore the landscape, says Silversea, with hiking excursions, zodiac tours, and kayaking, hosted by the expedition team.

For summer 2023 and winter 23/24, *Silver Endeavour* will visit 116 of what Silversea describes as the “planet’s most beautiful and remote cold-weather destinations across Northern Europe, the Arctic, and Antarctica”. The ship’s voyage collection will include 25 expedition voyages, ranging in length from six to 18 days, and 24 maiden calls, including to the Canadian High Arctic, Hudson Bay and Ellesmere Island.

“It’s a real step up for us,” says Shanks. “We have a wonderful expedition fleet at the moment, particularly with *Silver Cloud* and *Silver Wind*. We also built *Silver Origin*, fit for purpose for the Galápagos. Now [with *Endeavour*] we have a ship which, if you like, is fit for purpose on our polar destinations, be it Antarctica or the Arctic. So, not only does it fit us perfectly, it moves us forward – it gives us a much quicker step forward than we had been planning.”

As mentioned, the ship’s name has been changed, but as for on-board areas, there’s not a huge amount of work for

Silversea to complete. “There will be a few touches [and changes] on board,” explains Shanks. “We’ll make sure we have the right crew and our own expedition team, but the ship is ready to go. All we’re doing is some small touches to the branding and look.”

Growing relationships

The introduction of *Silver Endeavour* is also a great opportunity for travel agents, including those who currently sell Silversea and those who do not. Shanks says: “We’re taking a number of our global travel agent partners down to Antarctica in November to experience the ship for the first time. That’s going to be something very special.”

As for agent relationships more broadly, Shanks underlines Silversea’s commitment to its UK agent partners, saying: “We’re so grateful for the support they’ve given us over the past two tricky years. We’ve had an extremely strong performance in 2022 in terms of our booked revenues and we have got off to a very strong start for 2023/24 and also for 2025.

“We have retained our full sales teams and we now have a larger sales force than we had before the pandemic. What’s more, we’ve introduced two new business



The Pool Deck offers panoramic views



The Classic Veranda Suite provides generous living space for guests

development managers, who will be focused on finding and partnering and nurturing new agents to Silversea. [Overall], we've had terrific support from our strong partners that we've worked with for many years, and now we're working on finding new partners, particularly in the smaller independent travel agent category, who have a desire to move back into the cruise or to move into ultra-luxury and expedition for the first time."

The continued support for long-term agent partners and the ambition to expand will run side by side. "We get extremely good support from a

number of our members, but there's an opportunity for us to further penetrate those relationships," says Shanks. The line is also keen "to go out and find travel agents who have all the right guests but who just don't know yet that they want to go on a Silversea expedition or ultra-luxury cruise", he adds.

"There are a number of brilliant luxury travel agents out there who do really well in the world of safaris, touring holidays, luxury, and there's a lot we do that we think will appeal to their customers. Of course, the earning opportunity for those agents is good because we are at top end of the market, and we've seen an increase in our in the average price as we've come back into operation."

Nova to come

While much of the recent focus has been on the launch of *Silver Endeavour*, Silversea is also introducing *Silver Nova*, the first ship in its Project Evolution. Set to be delivered in summer 2023, the ship will be the "first hybrid, luxury cruise ship free of local emissions at port", the line says.

It will use liquefied natural gas (LNG) as its main fuel. The new hybrid technology will allow the ship to achieve a 40 per cent overall reduction in its greenhouse gas emissions per double suite, when compared to its previous class of ships (the Muse class).

Shore power will also enable *Silver Nova* to shut down its main generators at select ports and plug into the onshore energy supply, thereby cutting on-board local emissions to zero. As for some of its itineraries, *Silver Nova* will depart on 4 January 2024 for a Central and South America Grand Voyage, visiting a total of 38 destinations in 18 countries.

"It's wonderful for us to be able to tell the story of bringing in *Silver Nova*," explains Shanks. "She'll be the first to run on batteries for the full time when it's in port with no emissions – that's a game changer. I think the environment will play a much larger role over the coming years in people's decisions and desire to travel."

On sustainability, Shanks highlights his own recent personal experiences in the Galápagos Islands. "I was lucky enough to go with my wife earlier this year. It was incredible, and you feel good about it. We have the *Silver Origin*, which has a whole range of environmental measures such as global positioning systems so it doesn't need to drop anchor, which could interfere with the seabed.

"Looking at sustainability in the round, we've made steps to make sure that ship is as environmentally good as we can be at this stage. At the same time, what we're putting back into the Ecuador and Galápagos economy is significant."

He continues: "We have a foundation in partnership in Galápagos to support the education of children, because many leave Galápagos for the mainland. We ask guests to contribute to that on each cruise. If they put in \$1,000, we give them \$1,000 in future cruise credit. We're raising hundreds of thousands of dollars. So, with all of that, guests go there feeling they are making a positive contribution."

While the immediate future for Silversea revolves around *Silver Endeavour*, in the longer-term for the ultra-luxury expedition sector Shanks believes the destination will continue to play a pivotal role in people's choices, stating: "Destination is probably something that will get stronger and stronger and become a more important part of the decision process." ❶



There's a perfect blend of open air and shelter on the Sun Deck

FINISHING TOUCHES

Lucy Abbott highlights a selection of expedition vessels set to launch in 2023



The incredibly light and spacious Yacht Club dining area on *Scenic Eclipse II*

Ocean Albatros

Sister ship to *Ocean Victory*, *Ocean Albatros* will join the fleet of Albatros Expeditions in May 2023, sailing to destinations such as the Arctic and Antarctica. The ship has 95 cabins on board, including 12 solo cabins without a single supplement, with 90 per cent of staterooms having a balcony.

Two restaurants, a wellness area, a lecture lounge, two jacuzzies and an infinity swimming pool will also be available for use. The ship's green credentials include four diesel engines and two electro engines, which are all controlled electrically to minimise fuel emissions.

What's more, *Ocean Albatros* boasts the highest polar code 6, ice class 1a, as well as X-Bow, to help with stable sailing in difficult weather conditions. To top it off, the ship will have 18 zodiacs to allow guests to immerse themselves in each location.

SH Diana

Swan Hellenic's *SH Diana*, with a capacity of 192 guests, will arrive in early 2023 and sail to the Mediterranean for a range of cultural expedition cruises.

Personal service is a focus, with a crew of 140 tending to guests across all spaces on board – from the Observation Lounge to the Swan Restaurant. *SH Diana* also features a polar class 6 ice-strengthened hull and large stabilisers.

SH Diana will feature 96 staterooms, including 11 suites. Each cabin contains a flame-effect fireplace, TV, espresso machine, mini-bar and sofa.

The ultra-luxury *Scenic Eclipse II* will have a helicopter and submarine

Scenic Eclipse II

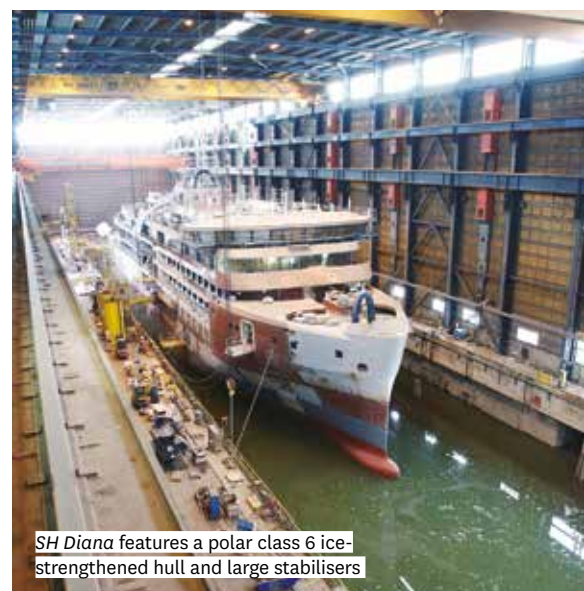
Following the successful launch of *Scenic Eclipse*, sister ship *Scenic Eclipse II* will be hitting the waters in early 2023, visiting the likes of the Caribbean, the Americas and both polar regions.

This ultra-luxury 228-guest ship has an on-board helicopter and submarine, and, if that wasn't enough, there are 10 dining experiences and a large spa, too. Suite guests will be able to enjoy the service of a personal butler.

A king-sized bed, shoeshine service, stocked mini bar, TV and a Bose sound system are just a few of the suite features. Elsewhere on board, guests can use a yoga and pilates room, climate-controlled mud room and much more. Outdoor spaces include the Observation Terrace and Sun Terrace, as well as multiple plunge pools. 📍



Ocean Albatros has 18 zodiacs to let guests fully explore their surroundings



SH Diana features a polar class 6 ice-strengthened hull and large stabilisers



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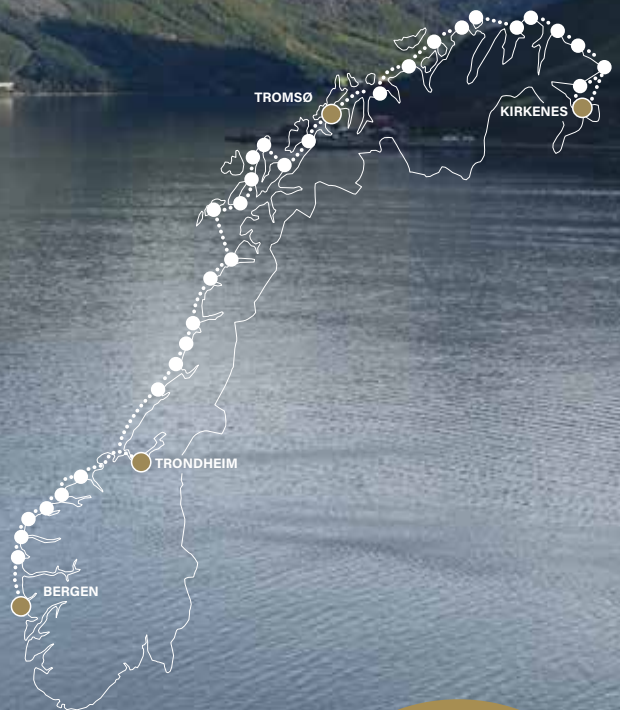
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